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NM WANTS TO BOOK TOURISM PR FIRM

The New Mexico Tourism Department is scouting for a PR firm to position the “Land of Enchantment” as a primary destination for venturesome travelers.



The NMTD created the “New Mexico True” brand more than 10 years ago to eliminate misconceptions that the 47th state is a dry, arid, barren place with nothing to do, according to the RFP.

The selected firm will strategically align with the New Mexico True brand promise of “adventure steeped in culture.”

It is to forge strong, positive relationships with, and become a trusted go-to source for, travel writers, editors, producers and influential individuals within the travel and lifestyle space.

NMTD wants a rolling editorial calendar that can serve both short and long-lead pitches.

The editorial calendar should fuse timely and timeless content strategies that tap New Mexico’s unique cultural and outdoor amenities and experiences, and incorporate familiarization trips, media missions and other tactics.

NMTD plans to offer a contract of up to four years.

Responses are due March 29. They go to [Survey Monkey](#).
[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

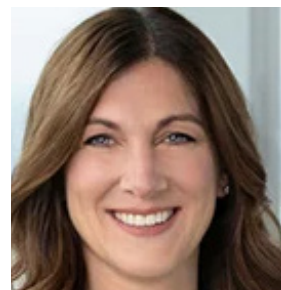
WELLS FARGO’S BONITATIBUS JOINS PAYPAL

Wells Fargo’s Amy Bonitatibus is joining PayPal Holdings on May 28 as chief corporate affairs and communications officer.

At Wells, she was chief communications officer, leading all aspects of the company’s media relations, public affairs, internal communications, employee engagement and reputation management.

Earlier, Bonitatibus held several senior marketing and communications positions at JPMorgan Chase, including chief communications officer of Chase.

She has also managed executive communications and media relations at Fannie Mae and was



Amy Bonitatibus

deputy press secretary to Sen. Hillary Clinton.

In her new position, Bonitatibus will be responsible for leading the global communications team and social impact and sustainability efforts across PayPal’s family of brands, including Venmo.

RUDER FINN ACQUIRES FLIGHTPATH

[Ruder Finn](#) has acquired Flightpath, a 30-year-old New York-based digital marketing shop with 25 staffers.

The firm, which is headed by founder/CEO Jon Fox, focuses on the healthcare, petcare, consumer, financial services, and non-profit sectors.

It has worked for AkzoNobel, United Nations, Partnership to End Addiction, Goya Foods, Newman’s Own, NYU Langone Health, New York Council on Problem Gambling, Zoetis, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, and The Broadway League.

The acquisition bolsters RF’s digital integration group and AI-powered RF Studio53.

“As communications channels diversity and consumers become more advertising averse, engaging existing and new customers requires smarter, intent-driven targeting through personalized dialogue and experiences,” said Kathy Bloomgarden, RF CEO. “Flightpath brings the expertise and tools to help us continue to enhance how we shape interactions and drive marketing impact for our clients,” she said.

Fox will report to Bloomgarden.



Jon Fox

INVARIANT NAMES EX-H&K US PRESIDENT COO

Erin Gentry, who spent more than a decade at Hill & Knowlton, has joined Invariant as chief operating officer.

She served as H&K US president and EVP-global co-lead of client services before switching to WPP sister firm, Group SJR, in 2019 as North America president and chief client officer.

At Invariant, Gentry will lead, scale and drive operational excellence for the firm, which has doubled in size over the past year.

Heather Podesta, Invariant founder/CEO, said Gentry’s “experience fueling agency growth will help enhance and operationalize our strategy as we continue to be sought out by leading companies, attract top talent, and expand our footprint across the country.”

Washington-based Invariant opened a New York office in January. Former Washington Post chief communications officer Kris Coratti Kelly leads that outpost.



Erin Gentry

MCKINSEY REACHES OUT TO HARBINGER

McKinsey & Co. has reached out to Republican shop Harbinger Strategies to educate policymakers about the activities of the embattled management consultancy.



The move follows calls from GOP lawmakers to ban McKinsey from federal contracts following news that a think tank led by the consultancy helped develop China's five-year plan.

Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL), who is vice chair of the Senate intelligence committee, and Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX), chair of the House foreign affairs committee, said McKinsey's work for the Chinese undermined US security.

Bob Sternfels, McKinsey global managing partner, told Congress on Feb. 6 that he was unaware that his firm worked for China's government.

Harbinger's five-member McKinsey team includes Jonathan Stemrod, former aide to Rubio and Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX), and John Leganski, deputy chief of staff to House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA).

FINN STARTS 'GLOBAL HEALTH IMPACT GROUP'

Finn Partners has established the "global health impact group" to offer policy, advocacy and media expertise to advance health outcomes and economic growth worldwide.



Richard Hatzfeld, senior partner in Finn's DC office; Mark Chataway, managing partner in the EMEA region; and Christopher

Nial, EMEA senior partner, co-lead the new unit.

The group will initially focus on public policy and communications support for routine immunization & new vaccine development, water & sanitation, healthcare system infrastructure, climate change impact, pandemic preparedness and maternal & child health.

It will operate at a global scale, covering about 100 nations including nearly every country in Africa, according to Hatzfeld.

NARRATIVE STRATEGIES TAPS BLOOMBERG VET

Narrative Strategies has recruited Jesse Westbrook, an 18-year veteran of Bloomberg, for the managing director slot.

At Bloomberg, Westbrook rose to the managing editor of US financial coverage role, after serving as a member of Bloomberg's financial services regulation team in DC, and editor of the financial enforcement group in London.



Jesse Westbrook

He led coverage of the European hedge sector, and reported on the Securities and Exchange Commission and the US insurance business.

After Bloomberg, he co-founded Capitol Account newsletter that covered financial regulations.

Narrative Strategies CEO Ken Spain said Westbrook "understands the financial world inside and out." and will provide unparalleled insight and experience to Narrative

Strategies as it expands in the financial services sector.

Clarion Capital Partners, a New York private equity firm, took a stake in Narrative Strategies last month.

NEWS OF FIRMS

Stagwell reaches an agreement to acquire **WHAT'S NEXT PARTNERS**, a French digital brand and marketing consultancy. WNP will become the first co-branded member of Stagwell's Anomaly Alliance in a partnership model designed to expand Anomaly's global footprint beyond its existing offices in New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, London, Berlin and Shanghai. The acquisition of WNP is intended to deepen Anomaly's presence in Europe and add capabilities in scaled digital content and AI-enabled CRM and data, as well as the leadership in-market to compete for and service larger European accounts. WNP founder and CEO Guy Chauvel, who previously served as EVP of J.W.T. and CEO of Europe at Havas, will drive the creation of new client solutions for WNP and the Anomaly Alliance alongside Anomaly founding partner and executive chairman Carl Johnson.



Allison launches Allison AI, an integrated suite of products and consulting services focused on securely and responsibly leveraging AI for their clients' business needs. Allison AI's initial external and internal services span three categories: advisory and consulting, training and products. The suite of products was developed by a team led by Allison global CEO of marketing innovation Cathy Planchard along with agency partners Karyn Barr, president, technology and Brent Diggins, managing director, performance and intelligence. The Allison AI suite is available now to clients and agency partners. Additional products are slated for release later this year.

Dukas Linden Public Relations forms a partnership with the Private Equity Women Investor Network, an organization that aims to raise the profile of senior-level women in the private equity industry with the goal of increasing diversity in private markets leadership over time. DLPR will work in tandem with PEWIN's executive leadership team to support its communications and advocacy platform while also providing educational programming and resources to its membership.

CORE Public Relations, a division of CORE IR, launches CORE Advance, an expanded suite of tailored communications and brand development services. The suite includes Strategic Brand Elevation (approaches to enhance the perception, visibility and value of brands); True Voice (creation of a cohesive voice that retains continuity and impact); Positioning Pull-Through (positioning of clients' narratives through a diverse set of mediums); Amplified Content (original content ranging from press releases to written articles to marketing collateral); Digital Authority (consistent and impactful brand presence development and management); and The Advisory Circle (a think tank of experts guiding communications).



Grasslands: A Journalism-Minded Agency, which has focused on cannabis and psychedelics PR and marketing since its founding in 2016, is expanding into the broader natural products and wellness sector—addressing both the wider normalization of cannabis and psychedelics, and the growing synergy and overlap between these industries and the mainstream natural wellness market.

GETTING THE BEST FROM INFLUENCERS

Influencer marketing has surged in popularity in recent years—remarkably at the very same time leading commentators from the [New York Times](#) and elsewhere have reported on the decline of the news media and its troubling future. Even non-celebrity endorsers offer enormous power over people in a world where regular social media users are comprised



Paavana Kumar, Michael Lasky

of a younger and more impressionable demographic. Social media is now where most young people consume their “news”. It is thus critical for brands and their agencies to have robust practices in place to distinguish marketing

content from editorial content. Marketers also must ensure that consumers understand the material connections between endorsers and brands.

Public relations and marketing communications firms need to follow six key rules to work most effectively with influencers

1. **Select the Right Influencers.** The process for selecting influencers should include a thorough evaluation of both celebrity and micro-influencers to ensure alignment with the brand’s values and to uncover any potentially questionable behavior or statements from the past. Before finalizing the partnership, agencies should analyze the influencer’s past content, audience demographics, engagement rates, and any potential controversies to assess their suitability for representing the brand effectively.

2. **Update Your Influencer Agreement.** The right form of contract is vital to align expectations and responsibilities between brands and influencers. The contracts should include specific objectives, key performance indicators (KPIs), and clauses on ownership, usage rights, and exclusivity to prevent misunderstandings and enhance accountability. All agreements should require influencers to comply with their obligations under the Federal Trade Commission’s disclosure guidelines.

3. **Simplify Influencer Policies.** It is vital to have influencer policies written in plain English so that influencers fully comprehend their responsibilities within the partnership. A PR firm’s standard influencer policy should also specify expectations for the posting of third-party content (e.g., influencers must not post unlicensed music on platforms such as TikTok), confidentiality, and permitted marketing activities. Firms should revisit their influencer social media policies periodically to ensure they are sufficiently clear and up to date. This useful [FTC brochure](#) provides tips for making adequate disclosures.

4. **Balance Creative Freedom with Brand Guidelines.** A PR firm should consider providing influencers with creative briefs outlining key messaging points while allowing them flexibility in content creation to showcase products or services in a way that resonates with their audience and boosts impressions authentically.

5. **Prioritize Transparency.** Prioritizing transparency not only helps you to build trust with the influencer but it also inspires confidence in the agency relationship from the brands that your firm represents. Prioritizing transparency also reduces legal risk. The FTC is increasing enforcement to hold pr and marketing firms accountable for influencers’ non-disclosure of material connections or dissemination of unsupported claims. Because of this, every PR firm contract-

ing with influencers should know what the FTC Updated Endorsement Guide means to both their agreements and their practices. If a firm has not already received a deep dive through the updates, now is the time to pay attention to the FTC’s key disclosure and transparency principles. These are listed below:

- Remember that an endorser is not only an individual, group or institution, but also any entity that *appears to be one*, such as a virtual influencer.
- Marketing or promotional messages, such as mere tags in social media posts, can qualify as endorsements that require an accompanying disclosure.
- “Clear and conspicuous” now means “unmissable.” The FTC, in a departure from previous industry practice, has stated that if an endorsement is made in visual and audible media, the disclosure should be made in *both* visual and audio.
- Add the brand name to the influencer’s disclosure. The FTC has opined that disclosures such as “sponsored by brand” or “promotion by brand” are likely more effective to communicate the paid relationship than just placing “sponsored” or “promotion” at the beginning of a post.
- Don’t rely on built-in social media platform disclosure tools. In the FTC’s own words, “the big-picture point is that the ultimate responsibility for clearly and conspicuously disclosing a material connection rests with the influencers and the brand—not the platform.
- Remember your audience. As a pr and communications professional, understanding your audience is your area of expertise.

6. Implement Monitoring and Termination Protocols.

Establish a written and robust monitoring mechanism to track influencer activities and have clear processes in place for terminating partnerships if necessary.

By implementing these best practices and closely tracking influencer activities, firms can forge successful partnerships with influencers while also safeguarding their clients’ interests and reputation in an ever-evolving digital world.

Michael Lasky is founder and chair of [Davis+Gilbert’s Public Relations Law Practice](#) (mlasky@dglaw.com). Paavana Kumar is a partner in [Davis+Gilbert’s Advertising + Marketing Practice](#) (pkumar@dglaw.com).

WISCONSIN TARGETS GAMBLING DISORDERS

Wisconsin’s Dept. of Health Services is accepting proposals for an educational campaign to combat gambling disorders.

The Badger State’s 11 Indian tribes operate 22 gaming facilities, all of which are no more than a two-hour drive for its residents.

The Ho-Chunk Nation is building Wisconsin’s first off-reservation casino in Beloit.

The Health Dept. estimates 333K Wiconsinians are at-risk, problem or compulsive gamblers.

It wants to promote evidence-based prevention, treatment and recovery programs to multiple audiences, including annual conferences in the Department’s five regions.

The selected non-profit group or tribal organization will maintain a 24-hour help line that provides resources, crisis intervention and referral services.

Proposals are due March 24.

[Read the RFP \(PDF\).](#)



ROCHESTER MARKET NEEDS SOCIAL BOOST

Rochester is looking for a firm to manage marketing and social media activity for the city-run public market.



The Rochester Public Market is open year-round on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, as well as up to 60 additional dates. It attracts more than 3M customers and guests each year.

The RPM has an extensive web presence as well as Facebook, X and Instagram accounts. It also issues press releases and media advisories.

The selected firm will have a Rochester presence and “experience in creating and managing marketing and social media for a large organization with a diverse audience and varied programs,” according to the RFP.

Responses are due March 14. They go to Rochester Dept. of Recreation and Human Services’ staffer Jim Farr at farrj@cityofrochester.gov.

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

LONGACRE SQ. AIMS AT NORFOLK SOUTHERN

Longacre Square Partners represents Ancora Holdings Group as the investment advisory wages a proxy fight at Norfolk Southern.



Ancora claims Norfolk Southern CEO Alan Shaw “presided over industry-worst operating results, sustained share price underperformance and an effective and tone-deaf response to the preventable derailment in East Palestine, Ohio.”

It has proposed an eight-member slate of directors for election at the 2024 annual meeting. That group includes John Kasich, former Ohio governor, Congressman and candidate for the Republican presidential nomination.

Norfolk Southern on March 4 charged Ancora with misrepresenting its safety record and distorting the facts regarding its executive compensation. The company claims to have engaged constructively and in good faith with Ancora but believes its proposed changes to the board would undermine the important progress that it has made.

Longacre Square Partners has Greg Marose and Charlotte Kiaie representing Ancora.

FGS ALUM SHAPIRO SIGNS ON AT REEVE MARK

Adam Shapiro, who helped develop [FGS Global](#)’s digital strategy, has joined [Reeve Mark](#) as its digital head.

He spent seven years at FGS and Sard Verbinen & Co., one of its predecessor firms. Shapiro also did a four-year stint at Bully Pulpit Interactive.



Adam Shapiro

He has experience in stakeholder engagement, proxy contents, reputation management and crisis management.

Brandy Bergman, Reeve Mark CEO & founding partner, said the combination of her firm’s “be-spoke, hands-on approach and deep experience in strategic communications” with Shapiro’s digital expertise, position Reeve Mark to excel in high-stakes situations where the ability to reach multiple stakeholders across multiple platforms drives results.

ON THE MOVE

[Prosek Partners](#) promotes **Jim David**, the head of its Washington office, to partner. David joined the firm in January 2022 to open the DC office. He advises clients on complex issues and strategic positioning programs across sectors, notably financial services, private markets, health care and energy. Before joining Prosek, he was a partner at Hamilton Place Strategies, where he focused on mission-critical public affairs assignments, including M&A advocacy, legal and regulatory matters, and other special situations.



Jim David

Sedgwick, which provides claims management, loss adjusting and technology-enabled business solutions, names **Emily Fink** CMO. Fink was most recently president, marketing and distribution at Liberty Mutual. Before joining Liberty Mutual in 2013, she was associate director, global marketing at Colgate Palmolive. In her new post, Fink will further define and implement Sedgwick’s global marketing and communications vision and strategy in support of company objectives.

Big Think Capital, a business lending services company, appoints Ami Dviri as CMO. Dviri joins Big Think from New York Life, where he served as CVP, corporate marketing. Before that, he was VP, marketing operations and analytics at Deutsche Bank and VP, product strategy at JPMorgan Chase & Co. In his new role, Dviri will lead all marketing functions, including brand, communications, merchant marketing, and partner marketing, reporting to the company’s president, David Brown.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness hires **Ann Andrews Morris** to serve as chief communications and marketing officer. Morris joins the organization from And-More Communications, where she served as principal. She is an active leader in the Public Relations Society of America, including serving as board chair of the mid-Atlantic district, chair of the Honors and Awards Committee, and as a senior judge for the Silver Anvil awards. In her new role, Morris will oversee all internal and external communications, public relations, marketing, and advertising efforts.



Ann Andrews Morris

Brunswick Group names **Elaine Li**, who leads its financial services practice in Asia-Pacific, head of the firm’s Hong Kong office. Li joined Brunswick as a director in 2015. She was previously investor relations director at oil and gas company China Sunergy and has served as an auditor at Deloitte. The first of Brunswick’s six Asia-Pacific offices, established 20 years ago, the Hong Kong team comprises experts across the financial, regulatory and political, and social spheres who advise clients in the region and internationally.

True Wind Capital, private investment firm, brings on **Emily Brakebill** as partner, head of investor relations. Brakebill joins the firm from HMI Capital Management where she was a co-founding partner and served as partner, head of investor relations, COO and CCO; she also served on the management committee and investment committee. She will serve on the investment committee at True Wind as well.

SUSTAINABILITY KEY WHEN MESSAGING GEN Z

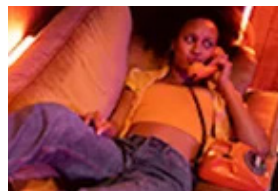
A global pandemic, ongoing political polarization, wars, financial crises, gun violence, climate change and decades-high inflation might explain why Generation Z is often characterized for its pessimism—perhaps for good reason.

Perhaps it's also no surprise why this generation places such high value on social and environmental issues, and why these issues affect what brands Gen Z members are loyal to.

According to a new study by Milwaukee-based advertising agency Hoffman York, understanding these habits underscores the need for brands to craft marketing strategies that align with the values of this cohort born between 1997 and 2012, which now accounts for the second-largest generation and commands \$360 billion in buying power.

The study, which surveyed Gen Z members, found that 75 percent of them said they'd pay a premium for environmentally friendly products, and 71 percent would do the same for products that used recycled materials. More than two-thirds (68 percent) said they'd pay more for organic food. Gen Zers are also more likely to follow sustainability practices (24 percent) and support brands that donate to causes they care about (21 percent). Finally, they're most likely to work for a company that invests in DEI initiatives (30 percent).

So, why does this generation place such a premium on supporting products and services that align with their values? The study suggests that it's a reflection of living in a world fraught with ever-present challenges. The survey discovered that less than a third (31 percent) of Gen Z respondents reported being happy, and only 16 percent said they're optimistic about the future of the country.



Gen Z members were asked: How much of a premium would you pay for products within each of the following categories?

Of course, Gen Z's views are informed by a heavy, daily diet of social media, and almost half (42 percent) of these digital natives cited social media platforms as their primary source for news, underscoring its significance for marketers as a channel by which this cohort engages with content and brands. An overwhelming majority of Gen Zers reported using YouTube (88 percent), Instagram (81 percent), TikTok (80 percent) and Snapchat (78 percent). As such, social media makes a pronounced impact on what brands they'll buy. Gen Z members are also far more likely to say that they'll buy a product if an influencer or celebrity uses it (23 percent) or if it was designed by an influencer or celebrity (19 percent).

Gen Z members are also more likely to admit that social media negatively impacts their mental health (29 percent). Nearly a third (32 percent) even consider themselves addicted to it. Oddly, the same number (32 percent) also said they view social media as something that's generally positive.

Perhaps the most novel finding of this study, however, was the discovery that, unlike their Millennial elders, Gen Z appears to enjoy being in the office. Only a third (33 percent) of respondents reported working remotely, and only 41 percent said they would rather work from home.

Hoffman York's study, "Gen Z Unraveled: A Marketer's Guide to Understanding the Misunderstood Generation," surveyed more than 1,300 U.S. residents who identified as Gen Z members. The survey was fielded in July 2023 by research company Cint.

ROBINSON BIZ SCHOOL WANTS PR AOR

Georgia State University's J. Mack Robinson College of Business wants to enroll a PR firm as agency of record to increase its brand awareness and reputation.

Robinson, which is one of the three largest business schools in the South, boasts one of the most diverse student populations in the country, including many first-generation college students. It has more than 80K alumni.

The school wants to upgrade its PR effort, which has been primarily reactive and tactical, to a more strategic focus to raise its profile in local, national and higher education media.

The selected PR partner is required to have experience developing and activating PR campaigns for B2B and B2C in an environment with a multi-product portfolio and multiple audiences, according to the RFP.

A diversity marketing background is a must.

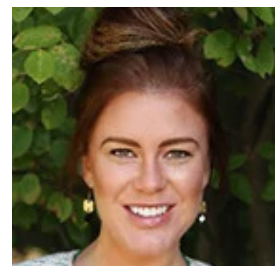
Proposals are due March 18. [Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).



INGRAHAM JOINS CLARITY AS PRESIDENT, NA

Clarity appoints Kristen Ingraham as president, North America. Ingraham has been running her own consulting and communications business since exiting Padilla, where she was a senior VP, in March 2023.

She was previously an SVP at Buffalo Agency, a VP at Porter Novelli and a senior director at PMK*BNC. In her new position, Ingraham will spearhead Clarity's growth in North America from its current base of offices in New York and California.



Kristen Ingraham

The announcement of Ingraham's hire coincides with the appointment of a new executive committee to support Rachel Gilley, who became CEO last month to drive the next phase of Clarity's global growth.

BRAITHWAITE DIES AT 63

Hugh Braithwaite, founder of Braithwaite Communications in Philadelphia, died Feb. 28. He was 63.

The Philadelphia Inquirer called Braithwaite "a creative and engaging expert in crisis communications, PR, marketing and branding" who handled countless companies, institutions, associations and individuals.

His shop, which launched in 1996, served clients such as Wawa, General Electric, Merck and Hasbro.

Prior to starting his own shop, Braithwaite was founding VP at Tierney Group, account supervisor at Porter Novelli and senior account executive at Cohn & Wolfe.

Donations in Braithwaite's name should go to:

[Heights Philadelphia](#)

Director of Finance and Administration
123 S. Broad St., Suite 850
Philadelphia, PA 19109



Hugh Braithwaite

COMMENTARY

Hats off to TikTok for finding a way to end the bitter partisanship that has tied the US Congress in knots.

The Chinese-owned video app staged a ridiculous stunt on March 7 that all but guarantees that it will be split from its corporate parent ByteDance Inc.



As the House Energy and Commerce Committee began debate on a measure that would require ByteDance to either sell TikTok to a US company or face a ban, TikTok's crack-jack communications team jumped into the fray.

They thought it wise to urge its users to: "Let Congress know what TikTok means to you and tell them to vote NO,"

[a pop-up message](#) on the app said.

The over-the-top message said Congress wants to strip more than 170M Americans of the Constitutional right to free expression. The bill would result in "damaging millions of businesses, destroying the livelihoods of countless creators across the country and denying artists an audience."

TikTok's message overwhelmed the phone lines of Congress and enraged lawmakers voted 50 to 0 to advance the bill for a floor vote that is scheduled for this week.

President Biden has said he will sign the bill into law, though the measure may find tough going in the Senate.

Congressman Mike Gallagher (R-WI), the driving force behind the bill, has denied that Congress wants to put TikTok out of business.

The chairman of the "House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party" just wants China out of the picture.

"This is not a ban. Think of this a surgery designed to remove the tumor and thereby save the patient in the process," he said at a March 6 press conference.

His message is break up with the CCP or lose access to American users.

The huge response to TikTok's untimely message against the bill showed how much influence that it has in the US. It also made the House's case.

ByteDance has 14 lobbyists representing TikTok. The company shelled out \$8.7M for lobbying DC in 2023.

They must have been sleeping on the job when the "Let Congress Know" message went out.

CEOs expect economic recovery to take hold... The Business Roundtable reports that its Q1 composite index of CEO plans for capital spending, employment and sales expectations for the next six months rose above its historic average for the first time since 2022.

Plans for capital spending and sales jumped by double digits from the previous quarter, while hiring rose by five points.

"This quarter's survey results underscore the resiliency of the U.S. economy," said BR Chair & Cisco CEO Chuck Robbins. The trade group, of course, said the way to ensure good times are ahead is by slashing "excessive regulation

and overreaching antitrust actions," according to CEO Joshua Boltan.

BR's forecast is a good one for Biden's re-election campaign.

Letitia James Loves the "E" in ESG. Wall Street may be down on ESG but the New York attorney general has given a full-throated endorsement of environmental PR.

In filing a greenwashing suit against JBS USA Food, the American unit of the world's largest producer of beef products, James noted that consumers worldwide are increasingly concerned about their impact on the environment and put greater trust in companies and brands that pledge to be sustainable or climate conscious.

James alleges that JBS' greenwashing is ripping off consumers who are willing to spend a little more for products that are better for the environment.

The AG believes JBS' pledge to be "Net Zero by 2024" is bunk. She claims that JBS Group and JBS USA have never calculated the their total greenhouse gas emissions, and therefore had no way of knowing whether they could successfully reduce those emissions to net zero by 2040.

Her lawsuit seeks to stop JBS from making the net zero claim, disgorge all ill-gotten profits and pay penalties.

On its website, JBS still features the Net Zero in 2024 line.

To achieve that goal, it promises to invest \$1B to upgrade facilities and \$100M for R&D by 2030, reduce emissions corporate wide by 30 percent, use 100 percent renewable energy and tie executive comp to environmental performance.

That sounds good on paper, but AG James isn't buying it.

Wake up to the prison crisis, America... Hats off to The Sentencing Project and Meraki Communications Group for taking top honors in the 2024 Anthem Awards' global awareness category for their PR effort to end the 50 years of mass incarceration in the US.

America's 2M prison population, disproportionately Black Americans, has soared nearly 500 percent since 1973.

Kara Gotsch, executive director of The Sentencing Project, said the "mass incarceration crisis represents a failed system that prioritizes punishment over rehabilitation and retribution over community investment."

The campaign earned more than 6,500 news articles and broadcast news clips, and 30-plus 30 op-eds placed across national and state media outlets.

Meraki and The Sentencing Project also collaborated to on webinars, panels, and press events in Connecticut, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas.

Morgan Dye, founding partner at Meraki, looks forward to working with The Sentencing Project to "continue confronting uncomfortable truths about America's approach to public safety, dismantling entrenched prejudices, and creating a more just, equitable society."

Meraki, which is Greek for doing something with soul, creativity, and passion, is based in Alexandria. It has lived up to its name.

—Kevin McCauley