



Jack O'Dwyer  
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# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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## PRETTO IS FIRST WOMAN CHAIR OF WISEMEN

Christina Pretto, head of communications and PA at Lone Star Funds, has been named chair of the Wisemen, a private PR group started in 1938 by John Hill.

Hill, who founded Hill and Knowlton, started the group at a dinner party at his apartment in 1938. There were no women members for many years. Dinners were held monthly at the University Club and included a speaker of note. It is also known as "The Group."

Pretto was a senior VP of communications at American International Group from January 2010 until 2015 after serving as VP of corporate media relations at AIG from January 2009 to January 2010. She succeeds Gerard Meuchner, chief communications officer, Henry Schein.



Christina Pretto

She oversaw all aspects of AIG's corporate media relations, including developing and implementing AIG's media relations strategy, counseling senior management on media affairs, and coordinating media activities with AIG's communications professionals worldwide.

She joined AIG from Citigroup where she served as managing director and global head of PA, serving as chief media spokesperson. She was global head of corporate

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## FORD FIRES CEO FIELDS. COMMS. HEAD DAY

Ford Motor Co. has named James Hackett to succeed CEO Mark Fields and is replacing CCO Ray Day with Mark Truby.

Fields reported has been under pressure because of the lagging stock price. Criticized is Fields' emphasis on investments in driverless cars and electric vehicles. The stock is down nearly 40% since Fields succeeded Alan Mullally in 2014.

Hackett headed Ford's Smart Mobility operations. Day has been group VP, communications, since 2007. He joined Ford in 1998 as director of global product communications.



James Hackett

Truby moves from his post as head of Asia Pacific communications.

Ford recently cut 1,400 jobs including some in marketing. The company's ad agency is GTB, part of WPP. Billions have been invested in self-driving cars and ride-sharing experiments, according to trade press reports.

## LINKEDIN GETS LABOR LAW LOBBYING COUNSEL

Professional networking platform LinkedIn has retained Washington, D.C.-based consultancy Capitol Hill Partners for support on legislative issues related to labor.

According to May lobbying registration documents, the Mountain View, CA-based jobs networking service has hired CHP for counsel pertaining to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which was signed into law by President Obama in 2014 and took effect the following year.



WIOA is a federal jobs training bill designed to help prospective workers find employment, education, training, and support services. The bill, which passed with wide bipartisan support, reformed the public workforce system by consolidating previous job training programs under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amending the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act, as well as reauthorizing programs under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

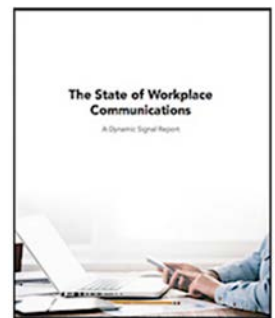
A three-person team manages the account, which includes Lee Foley, former White House domestic policy advisor and chief of staff to the Department of Health and Human Services' Community Services office; John Colbert, former chief of staff to the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration; and Jim Sourwine, a longtime staffer to the U.S. Senate Appropriations committee.

## WORKPLACE COMMS. OFTEN DISCONNECTED

Nearly three-fourths of communications departments claim to have problems keeping employees "on brand and on message" when sharing company news and information, according to a [recent survey of communications professionals](#) conducted by San Bruno, CA-based employee communications platform Dynamic Signal.

The survey, titled "The State of Workplace Communications," sought to analyze some of the challenges communicators currently face when disseminating important information internally.

The survey suggests that when it comes to workplace communications, many companies appear stricken by a lack of awareness regarding the effects poor internal communications can have on work teams (case in point: 59 percent admitted they don't know the fiscal impact that poor internal communications can have



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## PRETTO IS FIRST WOMAN CHAIR OF WISEMEN

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affairs for Citigroup's corporate and investment banking division, responsible for media relations, internal communications, branding, advertising, digital media, community affairs, and external positioning.

Prior to joining Citigroup in 2001 as deputy directory of PR, she served as the Director of Communications at S&P Global Ratings Inc., and worked as a journalist covering global debt capital markets and U.S. public finance. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin.

## WORKPLACE COMMS. OFTEN DISCONNECTED

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on a company.).

As a result of this lack of awareness, many companies continue to rely on outdated modes of communication when attempting to share information. Only 17 percent of respondents reported that their company had invested in software for internal communications purposes. And most cited email as the most effective current means of inter-team communication, even though more than half of the global workforce currently does not have a corporate email address and can't be easily reached by email. More than half — 55 percent — said some form of mobile application would be better for helping them become more informed and engaged with their company.

While ensuring that staff feel informed and connected was cited as a top concern among communications departments, the survey suggests that disconnection amid widening gaps between distribution channels now characterizes today's increasingly remote workforce, all factors that can lead to poor internal communications.

Indeed, 44 percent of communication professionals said they felt frustrated by the current tools and lack of platforms available to reach employees in a timely, effective and measurable fashion.

The study also reported that 37 percent of respondents claimed that internal silos pose the greatest challenges for communications professionals when it comes to effective workplace communications.

The Dynamic Signal report interviewed more than 300 global communications professionals in February and March employed by companies staffing between 100 and more than 10,000.

## AMP3 TO LAUNCH PR BOOT CAMP

AMP3 Public Relations is set to launch its PR boot camp on June 30 at its SoHo headquarters. The program, dubbed "CAMP3," is designed to mentor students studying PR, marketing and communications in the New York City area with an interest in fashion.

The day will include real world training and guest speakers such as a journalist covering the dos & don'ts of pitching and a top influencer speaking to the current brand marketing landscape. Other activities will cover pitch creation, an NYFW crash course, social media publicity tactics and data analysis, how to excel at a PR internship, and a Q&A with the agency's co-founders, Alyson Roy and Dion Roy.

Apply at [AMP3PR.com/camp3](http://AMP3PR.com/camp3).

## AILES' LEGACY IS A STORY OF SUCCESS. EXCESS

By **Ronn Torossian**, CEO of **5W PR**



There's no doubt that Roger Ailes made a massive impact on television news. Some would argue that, outside Rush Limbaugh, Ailes is the single most important media figure in at least 30 years. Sure, he was never in front of the camera or microphone, but he completely changed the landscape of what TV news could be, and his fingerprints on Fox set the bar for everything that would come after.

That could have been the sum of his legacy. Instead, Ailes, who died last week at the age of 77, will also be remembered for the sexual harassment allegations that destroyed his career and created a domino effect at the network he created, the fallout of which is still reverberating.

But that doesn't take away from the man's genius. Ailes understood, perhaps more than any of his contemporaries, the powerful media one-two punch of attracting and then guiding his audience. When Fox News was founded, it was billed as a "safe place" for conservative political viewpoints. Many on the right at the time felt underrepresented in the media, especially on cable news. Ailes saw that opportunity and turned those feelings of frustrated disenfranchisement into the most profitable news channel on the dial.

As that evolved, other stations were forced to change their formats to keep pace. Instead of being center left, as many were, they pushed further left ... and Fox moved further right. Discourse was coarsened as the brands continued to both play to and develop a choir. This shift was as much a reflection of the leader as it was a profit-driven consensus.

A brash and combative personality, Ailes relished confrontation, and that attitude slowly trickled down into the programming he oversaw. By the time social media platforms had people screaming at each other nonstop, they'd been conditioned to do so after years of watching their favorite pundits do the same thing on TV. Bubbles of political opinion developed on both sides, as did the "us against them" mentality.

While he could be combative and vindictive, sources who knew Ailes well said he could also be very funny. Not always appropriate, but funny. That trait, too, was felt in Fox coverage with humor, which often disparaged the political opposition and delighted the fan base. Once again, it was Ailes' fingerprint.

It's not surprising, then, that the verdict was split when the news of Ailes' ouster was announced. For a generation who grew up despising Fox and all it stood for, this was reason to cheer. But, for others, many of whom felt they had found a home at Fox, Ailes failings were forgivable.

How will history judge him? That probably depends on who tells the best stories.



## SYNAPTIC LEVERAGES SMT CONTENT FOR SM

Broadcast and digital communications company Synaptic Digital is offering a new service to **capture the content created during a satellite media tour** and use it across multiple social media channels.

Nearly two-thirds of American adults – 62% – get news from a social media site, according to a new survey from Pew Research Center.

In addition to a day of media interviews, Synaptic will “reimagine” content into Facebook videos, Pinterest posts, Instagram stories, YouTube Serialized Shorts and Twitter tips, extending your SMT message and getting it out to new audiences.

“With all the ways people are getting their news and sharing content, there is a true opportunity to better leverage the time you have with a spokesperson at your tour to develop additional media campaigns that will live across multiple channels,” said Jason Rockman, managing director at Synaptic Digital.

Dan Schwartzberg, senior VP of product development, explained to O’Dwyer’s that in order to come up with the right blend of social and digital channels and strategies, his team first discusses the target audience and existing social strategy of the client. Then it’s just a matter of capturing the key elements to push out to social media.

“As a company that sends out more than 3,000 pieces of social content a month, we understand how to create the most relevant content for each social channel and audience. A video that works for TV is not the same as one that will resonate on Facebook or Instagram,” Rockman said.

Tagging is used to quantify the performance of the content distributed throughout social media and track the customer journey.

## iONE DIGITAL UPS ANTE WITH ACQUISITIONS

iONE Digital, formerly known as Interactive One, has acquired digital media properties Bossip.com, HipHowWired.com and MadameNoire.com from Moguldum Media Group.

The move solidifies iONE as the largest digital player in Black culture and media, ahead of BET.

“The decision to acquire these brands falls in line with our overall strategy of building a portfolio of ‘meaningful brands’ that are rooted in Black culture but have strong millennial and total market audiences,” said Detavio Samuels, president of iONE Digital & One Solution.

The newly-acquired brands will be packaged under the moniker “BHM Digital” alongside existing iONE Digital brand properties, HelloBeautiful, NewsOne,



**Jason Rockman**



**Dan Schwartzberg**



**Detavio Samuels**

GlobalGrind and the company’s new site and master brand, Cassius.

The combined BHM Digital brands boast an audience of 6 million monthly unique visitors with little overlap with iONE Digital’s current audience. BHM Digital will operate as a separate division within the company with dedicated editorial, marketing, and sales teams with future plans to fully integrate and maximize synergies among the brands for better solutions for our clients.

“Whether brands are looking to grow their share of the 1.3 trillion dollars Blacks spend every year or grow their total market dollars by tapping into the power and influence of Black culture, iONE Digital is the dominant player in the digital space,” Samuels said.

## HOTWIRE INKS 3DOODLER AS AOR

Global tech PR specialist **Hotwire** has been named communications agency of record in the U.S. and the U.K. for 3D printing pen brand 3Doodler.

Billed as “The Pen That Draws in the Air!” 3Doodler is the world’s first 3D printing pen, allowing users to create 3D objects via dispensed plastic that solidifies immediately via an integrated fan.



Launched in 2013 by tech company WobbleWorks, Inc., 3Doodler was the result of one of the most successful Kickstarter launches of all time, raising a total of \$3.9 million through two campaigns. The pen, which is now sold by retailers such as Amazon, Target, Best Buy and Bed Bath & Beyond, surpassed \$20 million in revenue last year.

Hotwire, which is owned by Australia’s Enero Group Limited, is one of the top PR firms in the country with more than **\$13 million in net fees in 2016**, increasing more than 322 percent from the year prior.

## ACG BOSTON PICKS BACKBAY FOR DEALFEST

ACG Boston, the premier member-based association in New England helping middle-market M&A professionals build and maintain trusted networks, has named **BackBay Communications** as its marketing and PR agency partner.

First project on tap is the organization’s signature DealFest Northeast event June 7-8 in Boston, the largest M&A gathering in the region bringing together 600 middle-market professionals from across the country. ACG Boston conducts over 30 local events each year.

“ACG Boston is one of the most respected organizations among M&A professionals working in the middle-market,” said Bill Haynes, president and CEO of BackBay Communications. “We look forward to helping ensure members and attendees are able to leverage the comprehensive value ACG Boston offers.”

Founded in 2005, Backbay has 15 employees and is one of the top financial PR and investor relations firms in the country, as **ranked by O’Dwyer’s**.



## PR OPINION

**PR grads, who are now flooding the job market, need current info on what jobs are where.** Many jobs will be in PR firms. Some grads can set up in their own homes.

There's lots of good advice in the archives of [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com).

Jim Weiss, CEO of W2O Group, which had \$122.7 million in revenues in health-care, tech and consumer product



**Jim Weiss, CEO of W2O Group**

accounts in 2016, told 200 students at San Jose State University Nov. 5, 2013 that his firm is looking for grads that have passion, computer and social skills and who "play to win vs. playing not to lose."

He wants recruits "who are ready to step on some toes, tick some people off." Ability to work fast is a requisite at his firm.

Successful applicants will have developed a "positive personal brand." A "service-oriented" personality is much desired, he said.

"Real world experience" is preferred and especially experience as an entrepreneur.

Traditional skills such as writing ability are still at the top of the list of desired qualities, he said.

Weiss, who gave the keynote address that was followed by a panel discussion conducted by four counselor executives, said rapidly developing new ways of getting and transferring information are stealing the thunder of traditional media.

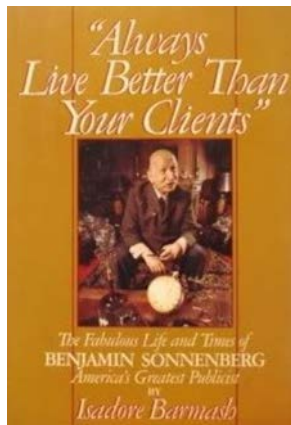
Most of what we now learn comes through friends and our own expanding networks rather than mainstream media, he said, such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook and video.

Survey show that 65% of people say they are visual learners, he said. "Visual trumps copy" was one of the lines in a [slide show that Weiss presented](#).

### "Knock on Doors," says Genova

Jane Genova, veteran writer, PR pro and host of a website, says fledgling PR careerists should "knock on doors" of local businesses, offering help with publicity and doing some small tasks as a way of earning their trust, she says. She has done this herself at times when there is a slowdown in PR.

Ben Sonnenberg, a New York PR pro whose success in PR allowed him to fill a 12-story townhouse with art



treasures, tried to find out what was in the "heart of hearts" of clients and then he would work on that. Sometimes it was not a business problem but a personal one such as [enrolling a child in a desirable college](#).

PR employers tell us that what they look for in PR grads is how many PR internships they have served. This is even more important than what the grad majored in, they say.

### CPRF Seeks Top Students

Also speaking on the San Jose program was Kathy Cripps, then president of the Council of PR Firms, which was staging a series of career forums at colleges.

She conceded that snaring a job right out of college can be tough but said those who are good writers and understand how to help clients solve problems will have the best chances.

Serving in internships is "incredibly important" as well as "making as many connections as you can," she said. "Keep in touch with people. This is a shortfall of many students. They'll meet someone but they won't keep in touch with them."

The career series got its start when a CPRF survey found that "young people really don't know what PR was or what it was like to work at a PR firm."

"You have to be clever and have an entrepreneurial spirit and take control of your career. Talk to a lot of people. Each agency has a different culture and speakers love to talk about their agencies," said Cripps.

### Tools Needed Include O'Dwyer Products

Newcomers to the PR job market need all the source tools they can get their hands on including the databases compiled by the PR trade press.

Veteran PR pro Phil Ryan, who teaches an introduction to PR course at City College of New York, raffles off copies of the May ranking issue of *O'Dwyer's* magazine as first prize in a student contest. He says the students regard the issue, which has the main, geographical and specialty practices indexes to the 120+ PR firms in the rankings, as "like gold for the undergrads." It also has profiles of many PR practices.

Winner of the award in 2016 was CCNY PR student Ashley Mason.

Executives and staffers of many local PR firms and corporations have addressed the Ryan class.

— Jack O'Dwyer



**Prize-winning student Ashley Mason, who took Phil Ryan's Introduction to PR course at City College of New York, with Rich Chernela, PR pro who judged the contest.**