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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

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TEXAS HEALTH UNIT LOOKS FOR PITCHES

Texas' \$16B health and human services agency is re-viewing its multimillion-dollar PR and communications account with an RFP process through mid-June.

The Austin-based Texas Health and Human Services Commission, overseeing large programs like Medicaid, food stamps and (controversially in the past few years) family planning, unveiled an RFP on May 12 to designate a firm or firms for the HHSS and its five sister agencies.



Sherry Matthews Advocacy Marketing, which has offices in Austin and Washington, D.C., is the incumbent.

Work includes development of public awareness campaigns, outreach materials and products, social media, creative and advertising, media relations, digital/website, and recruitment of public and private collaborators, among other tasks.

Average annual budget for the work has been \$5M per year since 2008.

Proposals are due June 19.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/SKPHRe>.

EX-CONGRESSMAN SPEAKS FOR GOLDMAN

Former North Dakota Congressman Earl Pomeroy is helping Goldman Sachs navigate the Washington regulatory and legislative thicket in the areas of financial services, commodity markets and tax issues.

The "Blue Dog" Democrat and senior counselor at Alston and Bird served in Congress from 1993 to 2011 and sat on the powerful House Ways and Means Committee.

Prior to D.C., he was the Peace Garden State's insurance commissioner, where he honed his regulatory savvy.

Joining Pomeroy are A&B's Bill Anaya and Robert Jones, who served as aides to powerful Democrats John Dingell and Barbara Mikulski, respectively.

Goldman Sachs also uses the politically connected Breau Lott Leadership Group, which was acquired by Patton Boggs; Elmendorf Ryan; Duberstein Group and Gephardt Group.



Pomeroy

CERVONE JUMPS INTO GM'S HOT SEAT

Tony Cervone is returning to General Motors for the senior VP-global communications role, leaving his executive VP-global communications post at Volkswagen's US operation.

He succeeds Selim Bingol, who left GM in April to pursue other interests.

Cervone is in charge of overall responsibility for GM's global communications, including global products and brands, corporate, social media, executive support, and internal communications.



Cervone

The 51-year-old executive, reports to CEO Mary Barra, who has worked with Cervone.

She believes he's equipped with the "ideal mix of outside perspective and experience that complements a deep background in GM and today's global auto industry."

Prior to Volkswagen, Cervone was senior VP-communications at United Airlines where he helped handle its merger with Continental Airlines.

In his first stint at GM, Cervone rose to VP-global communications strategy and operations. He joined the No. 1 car company from Chrysler.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration slapped GM with a \$35M fine on May 16 for failing to report a defect that resulted in 13 deaths.

"What GM did was break the law," Anthony Foxx, the Dept. of Transportation, said at the press conference. The fine was the largest ever imposed on a car company.

The automaker on May 15 announced a recall of 2.7 Malibus, Cadillacs, Corvettes and trucks for various malfunctions.

CALIF. REVIEWS ANTI-TOBACCO PR

California's Department of Public Health is preparing to review its mid-six-figure anti-tobacco PR account with an RFP process to begin this week.

The California Tobacco Control Program expects to award a one-year pact with three option years for PR to reach the general market and select ethnic and priority populations.

Allison+Partners is the four-year incumbent.

Budget is \$1.3M over the next two years.

The RFP will be released on May 27 with proposals due June 23. A voluntary pre-proposal webinar is slated for May 30.

Details: <http://bit.ly/1rcYnz2>.

OBAMACARE 'DEATH PANEL' RE-SETS IMAGE

A Washington-based non-governmental organization created by the Affordable Care Act to study medical treatments for effectiveness has reached out for communications support.

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute was founded under the healthcare law as an independent operation to analyze outcomes, clinical effectiveness



and "appropriateness" of various treatments by evaluating existing studies and conducting its own. The Institute, which has awarded more than \$464M for research projects, was a target of ACA critics during the health reform debate that said the organization would lead to rationing of healthcare for the elderly or even "death panels."

The PCORI, which has worked with GolinHarris, released an RFP on May 14 to develop a public-facing communications plan for its consortium of 29 research networks, a "complex and highly visible" 18-month initiative running through September 2015.

A 15-month PR contract is expected to result from the search. Proposals are due June 4.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/SKSI3P>.

MWW ROLLS STRIKE WITH BOWLMOR

MWW, which enjoys solid experience in the bowling business, has picked up agency of record duties for Bowlmor AMF, the largest operator of alleys with 264 here and eight in Mexico.

Upscale/entertainment-oriented Bowlmor merged with more traditional lane operator AMF in 2013.

Tom Shannon, CEO of BAMF, believes independent MWW enjoys a deep understanding of consumer media, brand activation and a passion for bowling.

The Jersey-based firm MWW has been AOR for Bowling Proprietors of America and Strike Ten Entertainment for the past six years. It also is counselor to the US Bowling Congress. On behalf of Bowlmor AMF, MWW is readying a national push to position bowling as America's Saturday night activity.

HITLESS WONDERS METS HIRE PR POWER

Recently ridiculed by a Facebook survey showing a lack of majority fan base in every single zip code in the US and plagued by another losing record, the New York Mets have put Harold Kaufman in the PR batter box. He led PR for the NBA's Hornets for more than two decades, first in Charlotte and then New Orleans.

Kaufman joins the Mets on June 23 from the Ehrhardt Group in New Orleans, where he was senior counselor. He takes the new post of executive director-communications in charge of off-field business, entertainment, community and lifestyle coverage.

Kaufman, who began his career with the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, will work with long-time Met publicist Jay Horowitz (68) and report to David Newman, senior VP-marketing & communications.

APCO WINS ALBANIA PITCH

APCO Worldwide and its StrawberryFrog ad unit have won a unique competitive pitch to guide travel PR and marketing for Albania, the Southeastern European country on the eastern shores of the Adriatic Sea.

The NATO country that is on a path to joining the European Union said it wants to move on from a negative image and held a global competition for the account, broadcasting the tourism marketing competition on TV that culminated with the APCO-StrawberryFrog win on May 16. APCO's pitch, titled "Albania, Go Your Own Way," beat four other finalists and includes creative, media relations, stakeholder outreach, digital and social media, as well as a short film competition.

The country said 110 companies pitched the competition, which was advised by UK PR guru Alistair Campbell, who also served as part of a seven-member jury. Finalists included second place Interface Tourism Group, MEC Medianetwork, CNN and third place Hemington.

Albanian tourism got a boost earlier this year when the country landed at No. 4 on the *New York Times*' 52 Places to Go in 2014 list published in January, noting the Maryland-sized country combines the rugged beauty of Croatia with undiscovered ruins of Turkey or Greece.

APCO acquired StrawberryFrog in 2012.

VISA CHARGES QUINTAGLIE WITH GLOBAL PR

Michele Quintaglie, who led communications for Fidelity Investments' asset management operation, has moved to Visa as senior VP of global corporate communications.

Doug Michelman left the top Visa PR post in April 2013 amid a revamp of its communications and marketing operations.

Quintaglie spent five years at Blanc & Otus and parent firm Hill+Knowlton in Boston and Washington, D.C., before nine years with Fidelity in Boston. She was previously based in Kenya, working PA and publication for the United Nations and serving as copywriter for McCann Erickson in Nairobi.

Quintaglie, who oversees media relations, executive communications and PA, reports to chief brand officer Antonio Lucio.

BRUNSWICK AIDS TOP CHINESE RETAIL IPO

JD.com, the Chinese retail website headed for a US initial public offering last week that raised \$1.7B+, is working with Brunswick Group for communications support.

A \$1.78B take when the company went public on May 22 on the Nasdaq market valued JD.com at nearly \$26B, according to Bloomberg.

JD.com is an acronym for Jingdong Mall and was renamed from 360buy.com last year. The portal is China's top B2C retail hub with 47.4M active user accounts and 35K suppliers. It has seven centers around China to fulfill orders and 214 pickup stations in 495 Chinese cities.

Josh Gartner, an associate partner at Brunswick in Beijing, handles JD.com. Brunswick is one of at least three firms working the massive Chinese e-commerce IPO for Alibaba.com.

TIME INC HEADS SOUTH

Time Inc. is abandoning its midtown Time & Life Building corporate headquarters of the past 55 years for 700K sq. ft. in the former World Financial Center complex in downtown Manhattan across the street from the World Trade Center.

The WFC, which has been recast as Brookfield Place (225 Liberty), is undergoing a \$250M upgrade featuring a European marketplace, high-end retail, chef-driven restaurants, water front dining and outdoor entertainment space.



Time chief Joe Ripp said he scouted various sites in NYC and New Jersey before selecting six floors of the Brookfield tower, a decision sweetened by \$10M in tax breaks to keep the publisher in the city.

In a release, Ripp thanked Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Empire State Development Corp. for the incentive package that “drove our decision to stay in NYC.”

He touted lower Manhattan as “a new destination for creative businesses.”

Time has “ambitious plans for a modern open workspace designed to foster a greater sense of community and collaboration across the company, and it will deliver significant cost savings,” according to its CEO.

The 2015 relocation will cost Time about \$125M related to tenants improvements.

Time’s lease on its T&L space expires in 2017.

Time Closes Books on Ex-CEO, EIC

Former CEO Laura Lang, who exited Nov. 2, earned \$11.5M during 2013, according to the firm’s proxy statement related to the spinoff.

She’ll continue receiving a \$1M base salary through Nov. 15 and be bonus-eligible up to an award target set at \$1.8M. The company provided career counseling and outplacement services to Lang through May 2, 2014 at a cost of up to \$30K.

Former E-I-C Martha Nelson earned a \$6.8M package through the end of last year. Her \$1M salary contract with a discretionary bonus of 200 percent base pay runs till yearend.

Meanwhile chief content officer Norm Pearlstine, who joined from *Bloomberg Businessweek* in Oct. earned \$1.6M in overall compensation.

Pearlstine, who was Time’s E-I-C for a decade has a \$1M salary.

NPR CUTS MORE

NPR is cutting “Tell Me More,” which is aimed at black people, in its drive to cut a \$6M budget deficit.

The seven-year-old program hosted by Michel Martin aired on just about 140 stations, which falls between the minimum 300 stations needed to be a self-sustainable stand-alone program.

Martin will partner with stations to do live events, according to a memo from Margaret Low Smith, NPR’s

senior VP for news.

Twenty-eight jobs (eight of them are now unfilled) are to be eliminated due to the shutdown of TMM.

NBC LANDS SNOWDEN INTERVIEW

NBC News has landed an exclusive interview with ex-National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden to air in prime-time on May 28.

"NBC Nightly News" anchor Brian Williams interviewed Snowden in Moscow this week over several hours. He also interviewed Snowden with journalist Glenn Greenwald, who has written a book about Snowden and the trove of documents about the NSA and US government spy programs around the globe.



Williams and Snowden

NBC News' PR unit calls the interview a "rare and revealing in-person conversation" that was "shrouded in secrecy due to Snowden's life in exile since leaking classified documents about US surveillance programs a year ago."

Williams interviewed the duo about how they came to work together and the "global debate sparked by their revelations."

TRIBUNE PROFITS PLUNGE IN Q1

Tribune Company reported first quarter gains in its broadcasting operations offset declines in publishing as revenues climbed 21% on the \$2.5B acquisition of Local TV, but net income fell 29.6% to \$41.1M.

Tribune is planning a midyear spinoff of its print operations – including the *Chicago Tribune* and *Los Angeles Times* – to separate the business from its broadcast and real estate holdings.

Overall revenues hit \$852.2M, including \$144.8M from Local TV, which added 19 TV stations to the media giant when the deal closed in late December. Stronger ad revenues and retransmission fees were the root of gains in that segment, which chalked up a 67% increase to \$398.4M in Q1.

Publishing revenues fell 2.6% to \$453.8M mostly on declines in advertising, commercial print and delivery services, despite gains from its \$170 acquisition of Sony's entertainment data property Gracenote in February.

CEO Peter Liguori said the company is "encouraged" by the prospects for political advertising in the second half of 2014 as Congressional mid-term elections are expected to spark a spending frenzy.

“Additionally, our newspapers continued to deliver very good results in a challenging environment, and we are confident in the prospects for that business as we move closer to spinning it off from Tribune Company,” he said.

The company couldn't find a buyer last year for its newspaper group.

MEDIA NEWS**NYT DIGITAL CHIEF EXITS FOR GUARDIAN**

Aron Pilhofer is giving up overseeing the *New York Times* digital operation of 40 people for a freshly created post at Britain's Guardian News & Media Group.

As executive editor of digital, Pilhofer's responsibilities include *The Guardian* and guardian.com.

Janine Gibson, editor of the Guardian US launch, called Pilhofer a "visionary editor" who understands the future of digital journalism.

The Guardian's site cracked the 100M monthly unique visitor mark in April.

Pilhofer will work in New York for a few weeks before shipping out to the UK. He will develop digital initiatives help build worldwide readership.

Gibson also is returning to London this summer to assume the editor-in-chief slot of guardian.com.

Alan Rusbridger is Guardian editor-in-chief.

**Pilhofer****NYT'S GELB DIES AT 90**

Arthur Gelb, a journalistic fixture at the *New York Times* for 45 years, died from complications of a stroke May 20 at his home in Manhattan. He was 90.

Hired as a copy boy, Gelb rose to critic, chief cultural correspondent, metropolitan editor, deputy managing editor and retired in 1989 as managing editor.

During his tenure, Gelb was expanding the reach of the Old Grey Lady by introducing stand-alone sections such as Sports Monday, Science Times, Dining, Home and Weekend.

Gay Talese, who once worked under Gelb, recalls him as a "lanky creative tower of tension."

NYT publisher Pinch Sulzberger said in a statement that Gelb "brought great energy and insight to our journalism."

**Gelb****TIMES-MIRROR EXEC ERBURU DIES AT 83**

Robert Erburu, who led the expansion of Times-Mirror Co. from its Los Angeles market and drove its flagship *Los Angeles Times* to double its circulation to 1.1M, died May 11 at 83.

He joined TM in 1961 as legal advisor to then-chairman Norman Chandler and rose to president in 1974, CEO in 1980 and chairman in 1986 taking over from Otis Chandler.

Under Erburu's leadership, TM acquired the *Denver Post*, *Long Island Newsday*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Dallas Times Herald*, *Popular Science*, *National Journal* and TV stations.

Due to profit pressure at TM, Mark Willes, former vice chairman of General Mills, replaced Erburu in 1995. Tribune Co. acquired TMC in 1980 for \$8M.

Erburu was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease in 2006.

**Erburu****FIRMS ADVISE \$48.5B AT&T-DIRECTV DEAL**

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher and Brunswick Group are working AT&T's \$48.5B acquisition of top satellite TV provider DirecTV.

Dallas-based AT&T announced the stock-and-cash deal on Sunday, May 18 with approval of both boards and the intent to create a company with "unprecedented capabilities in mobility, video and broadband services."

The deal is intended to provide a counterweight to the \$45B Comcast-NBC megamerger and follows AT&T's failed \$39B push for T-Mobile.

Darris Gringeri is VP of PR for El Segundo, Calif.-based DirecTV.

Joele Frank partner Kelly Sullivan is advising DirecTV on the PR front for the deal.

Larry Solomon is senior VP of corporate communications and Brad Burns is VP of global media relations for AT&T. Burns told O'Dwyer's that AT&T works with Brunswick Group year-round, including for acquisitions.

The deal is expected to close in 12 months.

FTC SUES MARKETERS OVER FAKE NEWS SITES

The Federal Trade Commission on May 15 sued the marketers of Pure Green Coffee, charging a handful of companies and their owners of using bogus weight loss claims and fake news websites to tout the product.

The FTC said the marketers started selling the \$50/month product after green coffee was touted on "The Dr. Oz Show" and used an online push to back its phony claims of weight loss.

"To induce consumers to purchase Pure Green Coffee, [d]efendants have used websites designed to look like legitimate consumer news sites or blogs that were in fact paid advertisements," the FTC said in its complaint, filed in federal court in Florida.

Those sites featured mastheads for news organizations like *Women's Health Journal*, *Healthy Living Reviews* and *Consumer Lifestyles*, while including the logos of actual news organizations like CNN and MSNBC, as well as footage from the Dr. Oz show.

The sites also featured comments posted by purported customers.

The FTC argues: "Reporters or commentators pictured on the sites are fictional, and they never conducted the tests or experienced the results described in the reports. The FTC said the phony news sites did not disclose "in a clear and conspicuous manner" that they were not objectively evaluating the product.

The federal regulator is charging the parties -- Nicholas Congleton, Paul Pascual, Bryan Walsh and their companies -- with four counts, including making false or unsubstantiated efficacy claims, false proof claims, failure to disclose material connection regarding the testimonials, and misrepresentation for the fake news reports.

**Phony news site used to promote Pure Green Coffee.**

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**BRAND USA EYES SOCIAL, CONTENT HELP**

Brand USA, the public-private tourism campaign touting US travel, is scanning the horizons for a content and social media firm to support the release of a film about America's National Parks next year.

The Washington, D.C.-based marketing entity, which has worked with WPP firms like Hill+Knowlton and Ogilvy PR, released an RFP on May 16 for the digital PR work. Brand USA tapped MacGillivray Freeman Films (known for IMAX features "To Fly," "Everest") to produce the feature film, which is slated to debut in August 2015 as part of a centennial for National Parks. Launch events are planned in 10-14 markets, along with a consumer campaign and travel trade outreach.

Brand USA, which has partners in all 50 states and Washington, D.C., wants an interactive and social media-driven campaign, as well as sponsorship opportunities.

The content/social campaign is expected to last 20 months to stretch from the start of filming (July 2014) through release in 2015.

Proposals are due June 10 but firms must express intent to bid by May 30.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/1opPVuk>.

U. OF HOUSTON REGISTERS PR SEARCH

Texas' University of Houston system, comprised of four universities and five off-campus learning centers educating 66,000 students, has kicked off a review of its marketing communications business, encompassing duties from advertising and PR to event planning and digital.

A three-year contract with two options years for a single agency or multiple firms is up for grabs.

Proposals are due June 11.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/1puYgKB>.

ABI LANDS IN CHINA

New York-based global B2B PR firm ABI has opened a Shanghai office to increase focus on the Asia-Pacific region.

Founder/CEO Alan Isacson said the firm, which has offices in Singapore and London, saw it as key to be "on the ground" in China as its economy grows, particularly in the B2B e-commerce sector, which expanded by nearly 23% from 2012-13.

Juliet Zhu, a China native who was promoted to managing director for the Asia-Pacific region, runs the Shanghai office.

CONE MEASURES ISSUE ENGAGEMENT

Cone Communications, Boston, has created a diagnostic social impact tool, Cone Social Return Assessment, to help companies gauge and promote progress in how they address critical social issues. The tool looks at three key elements -- awareness, engagement and impact -- and provides a plan to leverage business and social return surrounding an issue.

Senior VP Rich Maiore noted most companies are implementing programs in the marketplace in response to consumer demand, but Cone is trying to fill a growing need for companies to better gauge the impacts of such efforts.

NEW ACCOUNTS**New York Area**

5W PR, New York/Cluck 'n Moo, beef/chicken burger brand, for PR development and execution.

Pagani PR, White Plains, N.Y./Today's Students Tomorrow's Teachers of White Plains, non-profit school-based mentoring program for economically challenged high school students who want to be teachers, for PR for its 20th anniversary.

East

Buffalo Communications, Vienna, Va./Mystical Golf, owner/operator of The Witch, Man-O-War and The Wizard golf courses in Myrtle Beach, S.C., as AOR for PR.

Southeast

rbb PR, Miami/Apple Leisure Group, vertically-integrated hospitality company, as AOR. ALG's brands include Apple Vacations, tour operator to Mexico and the Dominican Republic; Travel Impressions, wholesaler with a global portfolio; CheapCaribbean.com, and AMResorts, a marketing and brand management company for six luxury resort brands.

Mountain West

Snapp Conner PR, Salt Lake City/Bank of American Fork, BizVision, Boostability, CHAR Poles, David Bradford (Up Your Game), DevPoint Labs, Everyone-Social, Hero Partners, Lumos, Michael Best & Friedrich LLP, GreenSmartLiving, Squatty Potty, thingCHARGER and Vivint Solar.

Wall Street Communications, Salt Lake City/Archimedia Technology, as media relations and content marketing AOR. AT makes software to facilitate the processing, conversion, and playback of mastering formats for the professional broadcast, digital cinema, and video archival industries.

Southwest

Penman PR, Houston/Procyron, medical devices, as AOR for PR for the marketer of Aortix, a catheter-deployed circulatory assist device intended for long-term use in the treatment of chronic heart failure.

West

Xanthus Communications, Seattle/TimeXtender Consulting, Danish business intelligence company, for PR as it plans an official launch event Clueless in Seattle at the Hard Rock Cafe in Seattle on Tuesday, June 10.

North 6 Agency, San Francisco/Pacific Telecommunications Council, for media relations, social media and outreach for the Honolulu-based organization for information and comm. technology professionals.

PMBC Group, Los Angeles/Nudge, health, wellness and lifestyle iOS app, for publicity. The app uses diet, sleep, fitness and activity level while synching data from other apps and wearables like MapMyFitnessUp by Jawbone and FitBit, to name a few.

JMPR Public Relations, Woodland Hills, Calif./Larte Design, Europe-based "tuning" company for luxury SUVs, as North American AOR for its US launch. The campaign will focus on automotive, lifestyle and trade media for Larte, which markets tuning kits geared to enhance the front and rear automotive fascias of vehicles made by Infiniti, Land Rover and Mercedes.

NEWS OF SERVICES**SERVICE AIMS TO PREVENT SOCIAL GAFFES**

Social media application developer Crisp is offering a service it says can prevent social media gaffes like recent digital blunders of brands like US Airways, Home Depot and Kenneth Cole.

The U.K.-based company, which has a New York operation and was formed to develop technology to protect children online, said it employs a hybrid human and automated approach that stops every tweet or post to ensure it complies with a brand's policy or guidelines.

Crisp CEO Adam Hildreth said the platform protects brands from intentional or inadvertent posts that could be offensive by eliminating the risk associated with engagement online.

"You could be fine for years with a traditional community manager, but it only takes one accidental copy and paste or one disgruntled employee to make you the next brand trending on Twitter," he said.

Crisp said the service is available 24/7 in 50 languages.

VOCUS OWNER TAKES CONTROL OF CISION

Cision, the target of a takeover bid from Chicago-based GTCR Investment, said two executives of GTCR were elected to a new board of directors, including the chairman slot, in a special meeting May 20 in Stockholm.

Competitor Meltwater withdraw a competing bid for Cision on May 16, paving the way for GTCR's Blue Canyon Holdings to acquire the company.

GTCR principal Lawrence Fey was elected chairman and managing director Mark Anderson was also tapped for a seat on the board, which was reduced from seven members to five at the special meeting.

The other three seats were filled by new members Cedric Bradfer, Peter Lundin, and Ronan Carroll.

GTCR's Blue Canyon Holdings, which requested the May 20 meeting ahead of Cision's May 27 annual meeting, had acquired 71.9% of Cision's shares as of April 25.

GTCR acquired Vocus and took the company private in a \$447M deal in April.

Cision posted first quarter revenue of around \$31.6M.

The new board said May 21 that it applied to de-list Cision shares from the Nasdaq OMX Stockholm exchange as Blue Canyon now holds a 74.3% stake, well above Meltwater's 15.4%. "On this basis the Board of Directors of Cision has concluded that the basis for a well-functioning, appropriate trading in Cision's share, which can motivate a continued listing, does not exist," the board said.

It has also postponed the company's annual meeting until June 25.

BRIEFS: **Vocus** has tapped San Francisco-based ON24 Webcast Elite to handle demand generation and customer engagement webinars. You Mon Tsang, chief marketing officer of the PR software provider, said webinars were one of the top contributors to the company's marketing success last year. He praised Webcast Elite's social media integration, as well.

PEOPLE**Joined**

Kevin Galvin, a former *Boston Globe* editor who is senior communications director for Harvard University, to Arizona State University, Tempe, Ariz., as VP for media relations and strategic communications. He takes over for **Virgil Renzulli**, who held the post for 12 years and is taking a faculty position in ASU's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication. ASU named a new chief marketing officer, Dan Dillon, in September, part of university president Michael Crow's "New American University" push to make it a global institution. Galvin handled PR for Harvard's management and \$32B endowment, in addition to directing news and media relations. He joined the Ivy League institution in 2008 after stints as deputy national editor and technology and innovation editor at the *Globe*. He started out with the Associated Press in Beantown before posts in Washington and Latin America.

**Galvin**

Chris Iafolla, director of healthcare, W20 Group, to Chandler Chicco Companies, New York, as team leader of digital and social strategy. Rich Sharp, senior VP, Edelman Digital, joins as digital and social integration lead and Matt Merlin, research director, Cision Global Analysts, signs on as insights and analytics lead.

Margie Fox, co-founder of Maloney & Fox, to DeVries Global, New York, as global creative director overseeing the firm's creative & strategic services group, starting June 16. She started out at Ogilvy & Mather and in 1997 opened M&F, which was sold to Waggner Edstrom in 2003.

Scott Leightman, who has 20 years experience in sports PR, to USA Swimming, as PR/comms. director. He will also rep day-to-day communications and be national spokesperson for the governing body of US swimming in Colorado Springs. He joins from Buffalo Communications, where as VP he handled 10 clients of the golf/lifestyle shop. Previously, he was PR director at TaylorMade-Adidas Golf, VP/PR at the Charlotte Bobcats and director of basketball communications at the Phoenix Suns.

Scott Monty, the social media guru who managed Ford Motor Company's global digital and multimedia communications, has left the automaker. "After nearly six years with the company, I will be pursuing something else - the subject of another announcement that I'll make soon," he said in a post on his blog. Monty joined Ford in 2008 from the digital agency crayon and quickly became the face and voice of the company on social media, particularly Twitter.

Promoted

Elana Mandelup to VP, corporate comms., AMC Networks, New York. She joined in 2011 to handle PR for its SundanceTV and Sundance Channel Global.

Maher Al-Haffar to executive VP of IR, corporate communications and public affairs, Cemex, the Mexico-based building materials giant. Al-Haffar is based in Mexico.

IPG's ROTH RUNS CRISP ANNUAL MEETING

Interpublic chairman Michael Roth on May 21 presided over a crisp, 31-minute (with video reel) annual meeting in New York, quickly dealing with the top concern of the estimated 150 shareholders in attendance: How did he get a black eye?

Immediately diving into that issue, Roth said the shiner may prove he's willing to fight hard for clients, or that the ad/PR conglomerate has a very active board. His personal favorite: "You should have seen the other guy!"

He then fessed up, saying recent eye surgery is the reason for the black eye, a letdown for some of the people at the session held in the auditorium of the McGraw-Hill Building in New York City.

In his presentation, Roth referred to the continuing fallout connected with the breakup of the Publicis/Omnicom merger, which has sucked up most of the oxygen in the ad/PR press. IPG "prefers to keep its head down and let the press write about other companies," said Roth.

CFO Frank Mergenthaler told the JPMorgan investment conference in Boston on May 19 that his company didn't see a "massive client flight" from Publicis/Omnicom, but it did receive a pick-up in resumes from uneasy talent at the former suitors.

The parent of Weber Shandwick, DeVries, Cassidy & Assocs., pmk.bnc, Rogers & Cowan and GolinHarris is "in the strongest financial position that its been in for many years," according to Roth. The company has succeeded on multi-team pitches because it "deals with the needs of clients rather than meeting our own silo needs." Roth said IPG has won four of its last five holding company pitches, including the recent Microsoft pickup.

Challenged on Pay

During a Q&A, a single shareholder had questions for Roth in the area of compensation.

After complimenting IPG for compiling a "diverse, talented and brilliant" board, the questioner challenged the \$225K fees/benefits paid to board members.

Roth said IPG was in line with compensation guidelines for board pay in the communications sector, hardly ranking in the top level. In noting that Roth's incentive-driven compensation package exceeded \$10M, the shareholder asked if he felt worthy of his bonus since IPG failed to achieve target goals for margin growth. Roth said that was a "fair question" and explained that his bonus is also based on other targets that were met.

After adjourning the meeting, Roth left the stage and talked with the shareholder. The long-haired, shorts-wearing dissenter from New Jersey, who feels IPG's proxy statement is good bus reading material, may have used that quality face time to express his dismay that lox wasn't served during the pre-conference buffet.

He made the same request last year.

MERIDIAN-CHILES FOLDS

Lexington, Ky.-based ad and PR firm Meridian-Chiles has gone into bankruptcy, shuttering after a 26-year run.

The agency filed for Chapter 7 in US Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky on May 21 listing assets of \$676K against liabilities topping \$5.1M.

Clients have included Ball Homes, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, and Equestrian Events.

Lawrence Chiles, who bought out partner Jim Jordan in 2006, signed the filing, which came after an emergency meeting of the firm's six-member board on May 15. Chiles owned 100% of the business, according to the filing. The firm listed gross profit of \$1.2M in 2012, \$1M in 2013 and \$264K through April 2014. Meridian Communications merged with Jordan-Chiles Advertising in 2008 to create one of the top five advertising firms in Kentucky, according to the *Lexington Herald-Leader*.

OMC HOLDS BRIEF ANNUAL MEETING IN DC

Omnicom, holding its annual stockholders meeting May 20 outside of New York City for the 12th year in a row (the Interpublic meeting is always in New York), dispensed with it in 15 minutes.

Chairman Bruce Crawford sped through the required formalities in 15 minutes, obtaining approval of the board until 2015, re-appointing KPMG as the auditor, and approving executive compensation plans.

There were no questions from anyone in the audience of about 25 who appeared to be mostly employees of FleishmanHillard, Washington, D.C., where the meeting was held. Reporters were not allowed. We attended because the O'Dwyer Co. is a stockholder.

No one dared to raise the issue of the colossal pay packages of CEO John Wren and CFO Randy Weisenburger which brought them a total of \$114.8 million in 2012-2013 (\$71.4M for Wren and \$43.4M for Weisenburger).

Perquisites and other personal benefits for Wren included \$124,582 for personal use of aircraft. Weisenburger had \$123,581 in such benefits. They are the only two executives getting use of aircraft hours. SVP Philip Angelestro and treasurer Dennis Hewitt each had auto allowances of \$7,200.

The pay package of Wren put him among the 15 highest paid executives in the U.S. in 2012 according to a tabulation by Bolt Insurance. For some reason, his pay has never been mentioned by the *New York Times* although it has run many features on high executive pay.

No Pix, No Audio

A handout given to those at the meeting said comments by stockholders are welcome but the purpose of the meeting would be observed and Crawford would stop discussions that are:

- Irrelevant to the business of the company or the conduct of its operations.
- Related to pending or threatened litigation.
- Defamatory, derogatory or otherwise inappropriate.
- Unduly prolonged (longer than three minutes).
- Substantially repetitious of statements made by other shareholders, or
- Related to personal grievances.

Wren spoke briefly about what he said was the failed "merger" with Publicis although Maurice Levy had called it an attempted takeover since the top three executives of the new company would be from OMC—Wren, Weisenburger and general counsel Michael O'Brien.

OMC, with about \$15 billion in revenues, is about twice the size of Publicis, with \$7B in revenues.

Bans on audio-taping, picture-taking, press coverage, discussing certain topics, and lack of name badges mar meetings of journalism, biz and PR groups.

O'Dwyer reporters have attended meetings of a half dozen PR, J groups and businesses in recent days and find they presented a mixed-communications bag. They seemed to be about blocking communication as much as facilitating it.

A meeting May 22 brought 39 members of Investigative Reporters & Editors to the Beer Authority on Eighth ave. and 40th st. The 700 New York members are the largest single group among 4,780 members. The last national meeting of IRE in New York was in 2000. Omnicom had its last stockholders' meeting in New York in 2002, and PR Society of America last met in New York in 2004. No NYC meetings are planned.

Since almost none of the 25 New York PR groups that existed in the 1970s-80s are still around, we're grateful that any groups of journalists or PR people are meeting.

There are flaws in IRE-NY even though its organizers say there is no such thing. Sarah Cohen of the *New York Times* is the main "organizer" and no elections are in sight although there should be. Current meetings, including one last Sept. 10, are "social only," meaning no serious topics can be raised and no speeches by anyone.

A problem with the latest meeting was noise. The decibel level in the main area, where the journos gathered, rivals that of an arriving subway train. Conversation was difficult. The thought occurs that maybe IRE-NY does not want its members communicating with each other, just hoisting a few beers and making light comments.

Name Badges Missing

Name badges, which facilitate meeting new people, were not provided. Also, no one had any business cards (or they wouldn't give them out). There seems to be a fear of betraying one's identity. IRE-NY will not supply e-mails or other contact points of the attendees. Cohen and co-organizer Maurice Tamman of Reuters enforced the "no speeches" rule.

IRE/national is based at the University of Missouri J School. Its meeting this year is in San Francisco June 26-29 while last year's was in San Antonio. Boston was the locale in 2012. IRE had \$3.9M in cash/savings as of 2012 of which \$3.1M is "permanently" restricted.

IRE/national hosted an all-day meeting Jan. 24 attended by 220 at City University of New York that had talks by 32 journalists including Walt Bogdanich and Dave Barstow of the New York Times, who have each won three Pulitzer Prizes.

The investigative techniques used by both, including pretending not to know much when approaching story targets, offering to provide information rather than looking for info, and nabbing subjects before they are "lawyered up," were the two most important speeches.

Tapes would have been invaluable for PR people and reporters but, astoundingly, IRE said there was an

equipment glitch and only four of the talks were properly recorded (not including B&B). Executive director Mark Horvit said IRE only had a single recorder and it "failed."

This strains credulity because the question arises as to when flaws in the equipment were discovered. The CUNY J school was bristling with video and audio equipment so it's like someone dying of hunger in a supermarket. We spent the entire day at the CUNY session and no one told us about any recording problems. It was nearly two months before that explanation came out. We asked to address the group Jan. 24 but Horvit said there was no room although there was plenty of time between sessions.

The talks of B&B should have been videotaped and marketed widely to journalistic and PR audiences. Luckily, two Al Jazeera reporters, Lam Thuy Vo and Joanna Kao, took notes which were published on the O'Dwyer website. They are also on the IRE website but seekers will have to work to find them.

Omnicom Meeting Tight

Worst meeting from a communications standpoint was the OMC stockholders session in Washington, D.C. May 20. Not only were reporters banned, but stockholders could not take pictures or record anything, could not speak longer than three minutes nor make personal grievances, and could not mention pending or threatened litigation. OMC had just blown \$55-\$60 million on the failed takeover attempt of Publicis so there might have been questions about that.

Good meetings included the Spring Seminar of the Arthur W. Page Society in New York April 3-4 where all sessions were on-the-record and open to the press and name badges were provided. The Interpublic stockholders meeting, which unlike OMC's is always in New York, was open to the press and public.

USS Liberty Survivors Seek Recognition

The May 22 *New York Post* hailed with a front page story and a full page feature inside the arrival in New York harbor the day before of the USS Cole, the destroyer that was attacked while in Aden Harbor, Yemen on Oct. 12, 2000, resulting in 17 sailors being killed and 39 others being wounded.

NYT all but ignored the occasion, mentioning the Cole in one paragraph that was buried in a story headlined: "Fleet Week Shrinks."

Survivors of the USS Liberty, an intelligence-gathering ship that was attacked by Israel during the 1967 Middle East war, costing 34 lives and injuries to 174 others, said that while the crew of the Cole deserves the recognition it is getting, there has been a lack of recognition for the Liberty. Israel has said the attack was a mistake in the heat of war and issued an apology. Abraham Foxman, national director, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, said in a letter published Aug. 31, 1988 in NYT, that Israel went searching for a ship that reportedly was shelling its troops and in the "chaos and confusion" of war, mistakenly attacked the Liberty.

— Jack O'Dwyer