



Kevin McCauley
Editor-in-Chief

O'Dwyer's

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271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750
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SF BAY COMMISSION SEEKS PR

The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission is seeking a firm to handle communications and outreach to partners in its Bay Adapt program designed to protect people and the natural/built environment from rising sea levels.



The RFP calls for robust communications and outreach to connect and share adaptation stories around the region, celebrate regional adaptation progress, and promote trust-building and knowledge sharing, especially with vulnerable frontline communi-

ties, according to the RFP.

The selected firm will engage with the public, local governments, private sector, special interest groups, and academics.

It will run training, tours, and other strategies to educate public officials about frontline communities and build trust in conjunction with SFBCDC's environmental justice advisors.

SFBCDC plans to award a three-year contract.

Proposals are due Nov. 30. They go to: Solicitation # SF-BC-P-22-10; Chenee Williams, Contract Analyst; 375 Beale St., Ste. 510; San Francisco, CA 94105.

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

NASDAQ'S DITMIRE DRIVES TO STELLANTIS

Ed Ditmire, Nasdaq's VP-investor relations for the past ten years, will join automaker Stellantis on Dec. 1 as SVP-IR. He will report to CFO Richard Palmer.

Prior to Nasdaq, Ditmire worked in sell-side equity research at a number of firms including Macquarie Group, Prudential Securities and Bear Wagner.



Ed Ditmire

Palmer said Ditmire's "trusted relationship with the investment community, especially in the U.S. market, will help drive our investor engagement as we execute Dare Forward 2030, our long-term strategic plan."

At Stellantis, Ditmire replaces Andrea Bandinelli, who is being re-assigned elsewhere in the company.

Stellantis' brands include Chrysler, Dodge, Abarth, Alfa Romeo,

Citroën, Dodge, DS Automobiles, Fiat, Jeep, Lancia, Maserati, Opel, Peugeot, Ram and Vauxhall.

Its stock trades at \$14.82. The 52-week range is \$21.92 and \$11.37.

BCW EYES \$750K FEE FOR COP28

[BCW](#) has filed its contract to serve as climate envoy for the United Arab Emirates, which will host the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 28) in Dubai from Nov. 6 to 17 of next year.

The WPP unit will receive a fee of \$750K under the pact that went into effect Sept. 30 and runs through Nov. 30, 2024.

The work includes developing a communications strategy, PR, media relations and stakeholder outreach.

Hill+Knowlton Strategies, BCW's sister firm, is handling COP27, which has just concluded at Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.



UNIV. OF MD SEEKS COMMS. CONSULTANT

The University of Maryland's Eastern Shore campus is soliciting proposals from communications consultants.

The land-grant research institution, located in the town of Princess Anne on the east side of the Chesapeake Bay, is looking for an agency that can help integrate the university's various marketing departments.

It needs a consultant that can evaluate UMES's communications efforts and organizational structure, provide recommendations for improving these efforts for efficiency and effectiveness and help with the creation of an implementation plan.

Scope of the work includes developing and assigning missions and values for various communications units, assisting in job duties and position hierarchy and developing an implementation plan for recommended changes.

Proposals are due by 2:00 p.m. (EST) on November 28 and should be mailed to: University of Maryland Eastern Shore; Office of Procurement; Student Development Center, 2nd Flr.; 30617 Backbone Road; Princess Anne, MD 21853

Technical and financial proposals should be submitted simultaneously but in separately-sealed packages. Packages must be labeled with the RFP number (ES22/23-008), due date and offeror's name.

Questions are due by 12 p.m. (EST) on November 21 and should be emailed to procurement@umes.edu.

[Download the PFP \(PDF\)](#).



MARKETERS PLAN TO UP SPENDING IN 2023

Nearly nine in ten CMOs and senior marketing executives (89 percent) plan to up their marketing investments in 2023—and 44 percent say that those increases will be “substantial.”



That’s the finding of the [Matter Marketing Outlook Survey](#), which collected responses from more than 200 CMOs and marketing execs across sectors including B2B technology, healthcare, retail, professional services and customer experience.

About two-thirds of respondents (66 percent) said that public relations and social media would be top priorities when allocating their marketing budgets for 2023. Marketing operations, analytics and mar tech were also deemed important, with 59 percent of respondents saying they plan to invest in those areas. Content marketing (50 percent) and video marketing (38 percent) followed, with such areas as internal communications (13 percent) and demand gen (11 percent) down the list.

When asked what areas have resulted in the highest ROI over the past year, respondents once again put public relations and social media (69 percent) in the top spot, followed by content marketing (49 percent) and video marketing (39 percent).

Citing data from KPMG which indicate 80 percent of CEOs think there will be a recession in 2023, Matter’s survey asked respondents what they think will be the biggest challenges facing their departments over the next year. Almost a third (31 percent) said that measuring marketing performance looks to be a big hurdle, with almost the same number (30 percent) citing economic uncertainty.

The 48 percent of respondents who say they cut their marketing investments in 2020-21 seem for the most part to have changed their minds, with 90 percent of them now planning to increase their marketing investments for next year. That may be at least partly due to the results experienced by the 34 percent who raised their marketing expenditures over that period. More than seven out of 10 of them say their experienced “substantial or moderate growth.”

Matter’s survey was fielded on Sept. 29 and 30.

FTI HIRES ROBINHOOD ALUM DROBNYK

FTI Consulting’s strategic communications arm has added Josh Drobnik as managing director, financial services.

The DC-based Drobnik has crisis experience gained via his VP-corporate relations job at Robinhood, the online trading platform.



Josh Drobnik

Robinhood was fined \$70M in 2021 by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority for misleading customers and system outages.

That levy was the largest ever imposed by FINRA, which is the financial sector’s self-regulator.

Ahead of the fine, Robinhood recruited Drobnik from FINRA, where he was senior VP-corporate communications in charge of a

more than 30-member department.

Prior to FINRA, Drobnik did a nearly two-year stint as deputy chief of staff to Obama administration’s Treasury Secretary Jack Lew. Most recently, he was VP-communications at Caribou, an online auto finance platform.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

[Zapwater Communications](#) is retained by [AYANA Resort Bali](#) to support the grand opening of AYANA Segara Bali, opening this winter. Zapwater’s scope of work will include ongoing media relations, familiarization trips, media partnerships, thought leadership and industry awards. The agency will also continue to represent AYANA Resort Bali in North America in partnership with Indonesian travel specialist agency Scop3 Group.



[LDPR](#) is named agency of record for [Wyndham Palmas Beach & Golf Resort](#) in Puerto Rico and the [Islamorada Resort Collection](#) in Islamorada, FL. For both clients, the agency will oversee the overall media relations and media visit program for the US. Wyndham Palmas Beach and Golf Resort, a 107-guestroom property located in the Palmas de Mar community on Puerto Rico’s East Coast, is preparing to unveil Phase One of a multi-million-dollar transformation. The Islamorada Resort Collection, situated within the village of Islamorada in the Florida Keys, is comprised of Amara Cay Resort, Pelican Cove Resort & Marina, Postcard Inn Beach Resort & Marina, and La Siesta Resort & Marina.

[Viral Nation](#) signs on as agency of record for [Parabellum Sports](#), a company that is a subsidiary of React Gaming Group. The agency has been enlisted to help Parabellum scale by securing global partnership and sponsorship opportunities, as well as representing its business interests within the esports ecosystem. Its services will also encompass esports talent management, team sponsorships, brand development and consulting services.

[Clarity](#) is tabbed to lead the UK communications and content for email signature management company [Exclaimer](#). The agency is tasked with establishing a strong voice for Exclaimer and cementing its position as a leading solution of choice for marketers and IT teams, employing media relations and thought leadership, as well as content strategy and creation. Exclaimer, which provides solutions that allow email signatures to act as a marketing channel, is used by over 50,000 customers worldwide, including Sony, BBC and the Bank of America.



[North 6th Agency](#) signs on as public relations agency of record for Local Logic, which provides companies in the residential and commercial real estate industries with location-based data. The agency will work to increase brand awareness of the company’s mission, data capabilities, and partnership network. Local Logic says its services offer clients a complete picture of an asset’s value, encompassing data on the surrounding area and allowing for more informed real estate decisions. “N6A’s team spirit combined with their strategic outcome-based strategy made them a perfect fit,” said Local Logic EVP of growth Pierre Calzadilla.

[Bluelvy Communications](#) is awarded a second three-year contract to be the official public relations agency of the [Delray Beach Open](#), an annual tennis tournament (part of the ATP Tour) next taking place Feb. 10-19, 2023. Bluelvy is responsible for creating media opportunities and securing media placements for all the tournament’s off-court happenings and events.

WHY A RECESSION MAY NOT BE BAD FOR TECH

Debate rages on regarding whether or not major global economies, including the US, are currently in—or headed towards—a recession.



Sabrina Guttman

I'm not an economist, so I won't opine on what to call what we're currently living through, but with the NASDAQ off more than 30 percent since the beginning of the year, and with every tech company, from Amazon and Apple to Zillow and Zoom announcing hiring freezes or layoffs, there's no doubt that winter has come for the tech sector.

In May, [I wrote that a correction in the tech industry](#) would mean "a return to fundamentals, in business and in how we communicate." Today, after more than a decade of growth and irrational exuberance, tech companies, large and small, public and private, are experiencing an undeniable slowdown.

While I'm sad for the people who have lost their jobs and incomes, I view this period as an opportunity for tech to get back to its roots. Without the pressure of keeping up with crazy expectations regarding growth and valuations, this is a great time for tech companies to remind themselves, their employees and their shareholders why they do what they do. And why what they do matters.

A return to fundamentals

As we move into this period of economic uncertainty, now is the perfect time for anyone running communications at a tech company to take a moment to examine their corporate story with a few things in mind:

1. It needs to come from the top. A corporate story shouldn't be a work of fiction; it should reflect the beliefs, knowledge and passion of those running the company. As such, executive leadership needs to not only buy into the importance of a strong and ownable corporate story—they need to be actively engaged in developing and preaching it.

Asking a marketing communications team and/or agency to create a corporate story without direct participation from the people who run the company and interact with its customers every day is a recipe for failure.

2. Context. Startups always have a Founders Story, typically used when talking to investors and prospective employees; it is meant to inspire.

The Founders Story looks at the founding purpose of the company, the problem or opportunity those who started the company could see and had the passion and know-how to solve or seize. Reconnecting with that Founders Story is a good way to provide a unique context to your corporate story.

3. Ask why. In his book, [The Moral of the Story: A Storyteller's Guide to Helping Brands Build Relationships with People](#), my colleague Jeff Freedman introduces the theory of "five whys" to get to the heart—or the "moral"—of a brand's story. He encourages his reader "to listen carefully and find the place or places where there is an opportunity to go deeper by asking why. And then (...) keep asking it until you can't dig any further."

4. Go long-form. In the corporate world, we have all become slaves to The Deck. And while you may want to ultimately develop a deck to tell your story, that is not where you should start. By developing an actual narrative, you have

the space to consider context and connection points that lead you to what actually matters.

5. Invest in communicating internally. A tech company's employees can be its biggest asset—or liability—in communicating why what they do matters.

My colleague Betsy Henning, the Founder of AHA, a FINN Company, and leader of FINN's Employee Engagement Practice, [recently wrote](#): "We stand at a launching point where the solutions, bonds and trust built throughout these challenging times can be seen for what they truly are—an opportunity for every company to become its better self—trusted in the eyes of the world, their clients and, most importantly, the employees who are the true beating heart of every company, every brand."

When I started my career more than 25 years ago, I believed wholeheartedly in the world-changing power of technology and the people who create it. Over the last decade or so, as the industry has matured and we've seen profits win over progress, it's been difficult not to view things with a more jaded eye.

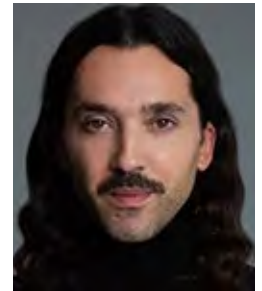
My hope is that by taking a step back and focusing on their *raison d'être*, the tech industry, and all of us who work in it, come out of this recession—or whatever we wind up calling it—with a greater sense of purpose.

Sabrina Guttman is Global Tech Practice Leader at Finn Partners.

CERCIO LEAVES LOUIS VUITTON FOR GUCCI

Gucci names Benjamin Cercio as global communications director. Cercio comes to Gucci from Louis Vuitton, where he most recently served as international director of press, influencer and entertainment.

Reporting to Gucci executive VP, chief client and brand officer Susan Chokachi, Cercio will be responsible for all brand communications globally, overseeing PR activities, special events, social media and influencer marketing, as well as art projects, exhibitions and communications for the Gucci Garden and Gucci Archive.



Benjamin Cercio

COLONIE (NY) LOOKS FOR ECODEV BOOST

The Colonie Industrial Development Agency is looking for an economic development and/or marketing firm to help spur growth in the Albany County town of 90K people, which is known as the "Crossroads of the Capital District."

The selected firm will conduct studies of the regional economy to determine how Colonie fits into the overall picture.

The IDA also needs help in scouting for potential grant opportunities and applying for the applicable assistance.

It plans to issue one or more two-year contracts with options to renew for another one-year term.

Proposals are due Nov. 30. They go to: Town of Colonie; Attn. Andrew Clermont, Acting General Services Director; 545 New London Road; Latham, NY 12110

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



AVISA PARTNERS ACQUIRES FORWARD RISK

Avisa Partners acquires Forward Risk and Intelligence, a firm that conducts investigative due diligence, business intelligence research, and international risk assessments for investors, corporations and law firms.



The firm will now be known as Forward Risk (An Avisa Partners Company) and retain its existing and independent website, branding, leadership team, and client roster. Its 30 employees will integrate into Avisa's US headquarters in

Washington, and its co-founders—Luke DiMaggio, Andrew Wooster and Brendan Foo—will become partners of Avisa. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Established in 2016, Forward Risk is based in DC and also has an office in New York. Its team includes former lawyers and law enforcement officials, experts from the intelligence community, political advisors and investigative journalists.

Avisa says that Forward Risk's services complement and integrate seamlessly with its current advisory offerings, "delivering a competitive edge for global corporations, private equity and hedge fund investors, law firms, international institutions and high-net-worth individuals."

"Joining Avisa Partners is a perfect fit given their scale and diverse advisory solutions that will yield immediate value for our clients," said Foo.

The acquisition follows Avisa's December 2021 acquisition of 35°Nord, an agency specializing in communications and influence strategies on the African continent.

AMW PR WORKS UKRAINE REFUGEE CRISIS

Poland's state bank has signed AMW PR, a top New York-based media relations shop, to pitch the refugee and humanitarian crisis brought on by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

AMW is to work with US and Canadian journalists, producers, bloggers, and podcasters under the six-month \$150K contract with Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego.

More than 7.6M Ukrainians arrived in Poland since the February invasion, though many must have moved on to other countries or have returned home.

Poland will spend \$8.3B by the end of the year for housing, health and other services for Ukrainians, which is more than any other country in Europe.

There's a growing vocal anti-Ukrainian minority in Poland as the crisis plods on, reports the New York Times.

AMW's job "is to create clear messaging that aligns with Poland's values and mission," according to its contract with BGK.

It is to submit weekly media reports about "stories that affect Poland's image and the key ideas that are being spoken about in U.S. media that mention or pertain to Poland or the campaign."

AMW is headed by CEO Adam Weiss and president Angela Gorman.

BGK also has [MikeWorldWide](#) working the refugee beat under a contract worth \$3M.



NEWS OF FIRMS

[Marathon Strategies](#) has released [Meet the Freshmen](#), a guide to the new members of Congress. It provides access to the background of incoming House members, as well as listing their positions on such issues as the economy, trade, crime, energy and climate. It features an interactive map, whereby zooming in on individual congressional districts users can learn about every new member. They can also sign up on the site to receive updates as additional races are called.



Yes& merges with **Lipman Hearne**, a Chicago-based firm with expertise in higher education and philanthropy marketing. The newly merged unit will be known as Yes& Lipman Hearne and will include staff members from both organizations. Alexia Koelling, executive VP of consulting and account management at Lipman Hearne, and Kirsten Federke, senior VP of enrollment marketing, will lead the new unit.

The Diversity Marketing Consortium brings on talent acquisition platform Workable. The platform is DMC's first-ever software partner and service offering outside of its suite of marketing services. All of DMC's present and former clients will now have access to the full spectrum of the Workable platform for six months at no cost. Workable helps users manage hiring through one centralized workspace, attract more candidates with advanced job board integrations, provide candidates with a seamless interview experience and automate basics tasks.

[Allison+Partners](#) releases its first [Social Discovery Survival Guide](#), a trends report based on data showing that approximately 40 percent of Gen Z shoppers now use social platforms like TikTok and Instagram to discover new brands and products, rather than typing keywords into a traditional search engine. The guide was put together by the agency's newly formed Social Discovery Squad, a group of subject matter experts spanning social strategy, content marketing, influencer, platform and search expertise. The squad's approach will continue to evolve as consumers across demographic groups increase adoption of visual discovery and each of the major platforms introduce new features.

Publicis Groupe acquires **VIVnetworks**, an affiliate marketing agency in Central and Eastern Europe, with a client portfolio of over 900 merchants across 27 countries. VIVnetworks will be integrated with Publicis Groupe's global performance marketing platform, CJ. It will operate under the leadership of Publicis senior vice president EMEA Tobias Allgeyer, based in Munich. VIVnetworks' founders, CEO Vladan Hejnic and COO Robert Studený, will join CJ's executive management for Central and Eastern Europe.

Horizon Media launches **Horizon Sports & Experiences**. The company says that the new firm, which includes the merger of Horizon's Scout Sports and Entertainment division, was created to provide a comprehensive approach for clients engaging in sports and experiential marketing. HS&E will be led by the team of David Levy, founder of Back Nine Ventures and former president of Turner, and Chris Weil, former chair & CEO of Momentum Worldwide, who will serve as co-CEOs and equity partners in HS&E. Michael Neuman, head of Scout, will become EVP of HS&E, reporting to Levy and Weil.



BUSINESSES FACE DIVIDE ON SOCIAL STANCE

For years now, companies operating in our politically polarized environment have been inculcated by an increasingly conscientious public to the notion that they must take a stance on some of the pressing social, environmental and political challenges facing the world today.



According to a [recent report by APCO Worldwide](#), however, many Americans feel put off when businesses begin preaching politics—and a sharp partisan divide arises when it comes to what issues companies speak out on and how they do it.

APCO's report, which surveyed Americans in an effort to understand their views on Environmental, Social and Governance initiatives and what role they think companies should take in influencing these conversations, put a spotlight on the intense debate surrounding the topic of purpose-driven issues as well as the precarious position in which companies find themselves when navigating today's politically divisive environment.

According to APCO's report, a majority of Americans (82 percent) believe companies should stay out of politics altogether. Instead, most Americans believe the U.S. government is the preferred authority in addressing political issues. For example, 50 percent believe it's the government's responsibility to tackle racial inequality as opposed to businesses (21 percent), 51 percent believe the government is better suited to deal with our ongoing political polarization instead of the private sector (21 percent) and 50 percent believe it's the government's job to fight climate change, not companies (20 percent).

When broken out by party affiliation, the role Americans think companies should take when it comes to addressing social issues and challenges becomes stark along partisan lines. Among those who identify as Republican or Republican-leaning, 93 percent think companies should focus on providing products and services as opposed to politics, compared to 73 percent of Democrats. More than half (57 percent) of Republicans said they think companies should focus on their core business mission and stay away from current-event issues, while 39 percent of Democrats said they believe companies should speak out, take action or advocate on current events and issues as they relate to their business and in areas where they can make a meaningful difference. Similarly, 40 percent of Republicans think CEOs should stay quiet on current events and issues, compared to only nine percent of Democrats. Democrats, on the other hand, were far more likely (91 percent) to take the view that companies have an important role to play in addressing the major challenges facing society, compared to about two-thirds (66 percent) of Republicans.

That said, most Americans (79 percent) appear to agree that companies do have a role to play when it comes to addressing society's most pressing challenges. And nearly three-quarters of the public (73 percent) expressed having a favorable view of ESG strategies, with social and governance initiatives receiving the most support (both 89 percent), followed by environmental (84 percent). Not surprisingly, Democrats were more likely to say they have a favorable

impression of ESG (89 percent) compared to Independents (59 percent) or Republicans (61 percent).

More than anything, Republicans and Democrats appear particularly divided when it comes to what social and political issues they believe are appropriate for companies to take a stand on. Republicans especially believe businesses should stay away from issues such as abortion, gun control, refugees and border security, immigration, global conflicts and LGBTQ+ equality.

By contrast, Democrats most passionately believe companies should speak out on issues such as access to healthcare, mental health, income inequality, racial equity and discrimination.

Regardless of partisan affiliation, Americans widely believe that actions speak louder than words when it comes to corporate-issue advocacy. More than three-quarters (78 percent) think making changes via internal policy is the most appropriate response to a current social event or issue, as opposed to external actions such as speaking out on an issue to the media (61 percent). When broken out by party affiliation, Democrats, Republicans and Independents all agreed that taking action internally is preferable to a company simply speaking out on an issue publicly.

APCO's report, "Pulse Check: It's Time to Recalibrate—Surprising Truths About Corporate Advocacy," was based on a survey of more than 2,000 U.S. adults in October.

FORT SMITH AIRPORT FLIES MARKETING RFQ

Fort Smith Regional Airport, the public-use and civil-military airport serving the city of Fort Smith, Arkansas, is a consultant that can provide marketing services.

Located near the Arkansas–Oklahoma state border, Fort Smith is the third-largest city in Arkansas. The Fort Smith Regional Airport currently services more than 50,000 passengers a year.

FSM is looking for a firm with expertise in marketing and website development/management as well as a knowledge of airport marketing that can develop a marketing strategy that retains passengers and increases awareness of the airport among consumers living in the region through a marketing campaign that includes television, radio, newsprint, billboards, internet, social media and printed materials.

FSM is seeking Statements of Qualifications from firms that can develop and implement successful creative concepts; assist the airport in developing and preparing strategic airport marketing efforts; review, critique and edit airport marketing and advertising materials; provide expertise in various types of promotional media (namely, digital and social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube); conduct website development; and provide public relations management including press releases, developing media contacts, and delivering media stories.

Terms of the contract call for a one-year commitment with the possibility of extension for up to two one-year periods.

Statement of Qualifications are due by December 7 and should be submitted via email to Michael@flyfsm.com.

[Download the RFQ \(PDF\)](#).



COMMENTARY



Ivanka Trump

Make America Great and Glorious Again!!!! That's all you got, Donald.

Geez. No wonder staffers at Mar-a-Lago were handing out packets of No-Doz during your announcement that you are running for president once again.

Trump's low-energy, boring speech had people wondering: Why?

He can't even generate enthusiasm for his campaign from his closest advisor.

Here is what former First Daughter posted on Instagram.

"I love my father very much. This time around, I am choosing to prioritize my young children and the private life we are creating as a family. I do not plan to be involved in politics."

"While I will always love and support my father, going forward I will do so outside the political arena. I am grateful to have had the honor of serving the American people, and I will always be proud of many of our Administration's accomplishments."

Is Tiffany ready to fill in for Ivanka?

At the podium, Trump talked about a fantasy America that exists only in his mind.

"America has been mocked, derided and brought to its knees, perhaps like never before," he said without providing a clue to what he was referring to. He blamed the "decline of America" on "Joe Biden and the radical left lunatics."

Trump spoke just after his endorsed candidates were repudiated by midterm-election voters who preferred those so-called lunatics.

The Cook Political Report found that Trump-endorsed candidates got five percent less of the vote than non-endorsed ones.

NBC News says of the most competitive races, 42 Trump-backed candidates won and 29 lost. Not a sterling performance.

Those losers include Kari Lake and Blake Masters (Arizona), Mehmet Oz (Pennsylvania), Adam Laxalt (Nevada), Lee Zeldin (New York) and Don Bolduc (New Hampshire).

So why is Donald running? Alyssa Farah Griffin, his former White House director of strategic communications, says her old boss is unfit for office and is a clear and present danger to democracy.

My hunch: Trump is running to sell MAGGA hats, shirts and other junk to the cultists who make up about 40 percent of the Republican party.

Ivanka has more of a chance to become president than her dad.

Think twice before plugging a product.... Tom Brady, Steph Curry, Shaquille O'Neal, and Larry David are defendants in a class action suit lodged against cryptocurrency exchange company FTX Group, which went bust.

Their legal entanglement stems from their starring roles in TV ads that encouraged viewers to invest in the FTX exchange.

From the lawsuit: "Although the defendants disclosed their partnership with FTX Entities, they have never disclosed the nature, scope, and amount of compensation they personally

received in exchange for the promotion of the deceptive FTX platform, which the SEC has explained that a failure to disclose this information would be a violation of the anti-touting provisions of the federal securities laws."

The suit alleges that the celebs failed to do any due diligence before agreeing to pitch FTX's products.

Celebrity endorsers should do their homework before agreeing to plug a product or service.

Pay no attention to Sam. In a November 17 bankruptcy court filing, FTX Group CEO John Ray declared that former chief Sam Bankman-Fried is no longer employed by the debtors and does not speak for them.

It reads:

"Mr. Bankman-Fried, currently in the Bahamas, continues to make erratic and misleading public statements.

"Mr. Bankman-Fried, whose connections and financial holdings in the Bahamas remain unclear to me, recently stated to a reporter on Twitter: "F***regulators they make everything worse" and suggested the next step for him was to "win a jurisdictional battle vs. Delaware."

Ray, who has 40 years of legal and restructuring experience, says he never saw such a financial mess as FTX.

That's a tough statement coming from a guy who handled the Enron reorganization.

Fall of FTX deals a blow to "effective altruism."

Bankman-Fried was a leading player in the EA or "earning to give" movement.

Prior to the November 17 collapse of FTX, the media profiled Bankman-Fried's plan to donate billions to charity. His personal wealth topped the \$15B mark in early November.

His do-gooder image may have deflected "the kind of scrutiny that might otherwise greet an executive who got rich quick in an unregulated offshore industry," [according to the Washington Post](#).

William MacAskill, a founder of EA, tweeted that the community has "emphasized the importance of integrity, honesty, and the respect of common-sense moral constraints."

If FTX funds were misused, MacAskill frets that Bankman-Fried thought he was above the EA tenets.

"I had put my trust in Sam, and if he lied and misused customer funds, he betrayed me, just as he betrayed his customers, his employees, his investors and the communities he was a part of," tweeted MacAskill.

EA has taken a big PR hit.

Rat City.... [The Economist](#) has dubbed mayor Eric Adams "New York's Pied Piper" for his war on rats.

The magazine says the rat is as much a quintessential image of the Big Apple as the Statue of Liberty and Empire State Building.

Reports of rat sightings to the 311 hotline are up 70 percent during the first nine months of 2022.

The focus on New York is good news for Chicago, which the Orkin pest-control company has called America's "rattiest city" for eight consecutive years.

—Kevin McCauley