



Kevin McCauley
Editor-in-Chief

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271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750
www.odwyerpr.com; jobs.odwyerpr.com

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MD'S CHARLES CO. SEEKS ECODEV BOOST

Charles County, which is located in southern Maryland, is looking for a firm to support the PR, marketing and advertising efforts behind its five-year economic development program.



It ranks in the top 40 wealthiest counties in the US, and tops the list of incomes in a majority Black county.

As part of the Washington DC metro region, the federal government and its contractors power much of Charles County's economy.

Charles County has been using the tagline "Close to the Capital. Far From Ordinary" to play up assets such as proximity to DC, possession of a well-educated workforce, and lower cost of doing business than other areas of the metro capital area.

The selected firm will update and create content for the MeetCharlesCounty.com economic development site; oversee Facebook and LinkedIn activity; write press releases for local, regional and national distribution; and assist in preparing government reports and presentations.

Charles County will issue a one-year contract with options to renew for another four years.

Responses are due Dec. 5 at the County's [electronic portal](#). [Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

H&K HIRES EX-CAMERON AIDE

Tara Singh has signed on at Hill & Knowlton in London as managing director and head of its UK public affairs business.



Tara Singh

She joins from Shell, where she was global lead for integrated power policy and advocacy. During her nearly five-year stint, Singh helped manage Shell's reputation and develop policy strategies for offshore wind, e-mobility and hydrogen power.

Earlier, she was a special advisor to then-UK prime minister David Cameron. She worked on energy and environmental issues and represented Cameron during meetings

with corporate leaders.

Cameron earlier this month returned to the UK government as foreign secretary.

H&K says Singh will bolster its PA offering around data and analytics and support clients on policy and regulatory matters.

Singh reports to H&K UK CEO Simon Whitehead.

FGS GLOBAL ACQUIRES CANADA'S LONGVIEW

[FGS Global](#) acquires Longview Communications and Public Affairs.

Longview serves clients across Canada and abroad from offices in Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Montréal and Victoria, advising clients on corporate and financial communications, issues and crisis management, special situations, government relations, regulatory affairs and foreign direct investment approvals.

The firm has been renamed FGS Longview and will continue to be led by Longview partners Josh Pekarsky, Bruce Drysdale, Ian Hamilton and Hugh McFadyen.

"Extending our reach into Canada broadens our geographic footprint and enhances our ability to deliver for our clients," said FGS CEO, North America Winnie Lerner. "We have known and respected Longview for a long time, have partnered successfully on many prior client assignments and are thrilled to welcome them to FGS."



FTI HANDLES TELEGRAPH AUCTION

FTI Consulting represents Telegraph Media Group and The Spectator as the British publications were put on the auction block after the owning Barclay family defaulted on a loan.

The sale process is currently on hold pending a Dec. 4 court date.

Jeff Zucker, former NBCUniversal CEO and CNN president, is among bidders for the conservative *Daily Telegraph* newspaper and *Spectator* magazine.

His Redbird private equity firm and an Abu Dhabi investment fund are offering \$1.4B for the media outlets.

British politicians, though, have raised concerns over RedBird's bid due to concerns about foreign ownership of the UK press. RedBird said it is committed to maintaining the independence of the Telegraph and Spectator.

FTI Consulting has John Waples, Rob Mindell, Mitch Barltrop and Tom Hufton working the deal.



DISINFORMATION STAYS TOP CONCERN IN US

The American public has grown increasingly concerned about disinformation and the role it plays in political polarization as well as the threats it poses to our elections and democracy, according to a report from the Institute for Public Relations.



The IPR report, which asked Americans about their perceptions of disinformation's impact on society, found that nearly two-thirds (61 percent) of respondents now consider misinformation and disinformation as a major issue and a more pressing threat than other noteworthy concerns such as border security (57 percent), the budget deficit (56 percent), climate change (55 percent), domestic terrorism (44 percent) and international terrorism (43 percent).

Four in 10 respondents (40 percent) said they see disinformation almost every day, while a third (33 percent) said they encounter it at least once a week.

Americans still don't consider disinformation our single biggest threat—at least not yet. The issues currently considered to be the top problems facing Americans today are inflation (73 percent), healthcare costs (72 percent), crime (71 percent) and gun violence (68 percent).

Three-quarters (75 percent) of Americans believe that disinformation undermines our election process, and a similar number (74 percent) consider it a threat to our democracy. Others think disinformation will increase the polarization of political parties (73 percent) and that it also infringes on human rights (61 percent).

Americans also think the spread of artificial intelligence will only further accelerate disinformation's deleterious effect on society: More than half (55 percent) of respondents believe that AI platforms will be responsible for disseminating even more disinformation in the future.

Most Americans believe that social media platforms are to blame for the majority of the disinformation that the public sees today. The top three social media platforms seen as being at least "somewhat" responsible for spreading disinformation are Facebook (73 percent), TikTok (65 percent) and X (formerly Twitter) (62 percent).

When it comes to who bears the responsibility in combating disinformation, most Americans primarily view it as a role for the U.S. government (62 percent) or President Biden (60 percent). Various federal agencies, cable news companies, newspapers, Congress and journalists followed (all at 58 percent).

As usual, while Americans appear leery about others' ability to discern truth from fiction, they seem particularly confident in at least one party's ability to weed out and combat disinformation: themselves. When asked what source combats disinformation in the media at least "somewhat well," 65 percent said "me," followed by an additional 60 percent who said "people like me." Local broadcast news, fact-checking websites and local newspapers followed (at 48 percent, 48 percent and 46 percent, respectively).

IPR's annual "Disinformation in Society Report" was based on a survey of more than 2,000 Americans between July and August. Research was conducted by polling and marketing research firm Leger.

IPR is the nonprofit PR research organization based at the University of Florida.

ON THE MOVE

KCD Paris brings on Burberry director of marketing and communications **Laurence Lapierre** as SVP, media relations, effective in January. Before joining Burberry as communications manager in 2008, Lapierre was press and PR manager at Chloé. In her new post, she will oversee several of KCD's main clients and help the European office develop new business across the media relations, digital and creative divisions. "Her marketing and digital experience and exceptional industry insight are notable assets she will bring to our clients," said KCD Paris partner Alexis Arnault.

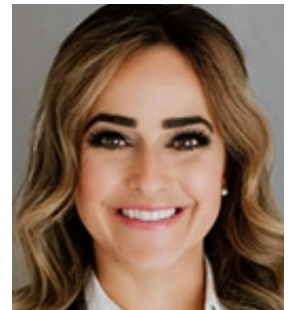
Club Quarters Hotels, a hotel brand and management company, names **Kendall Viola** as VP of marketing. Viola joins the company from Virgin Hotels, where she was director of marketing. She has also served as corporate director of brand & marketing at Gerber Group; director of sales, marketing & PR at The Hollywood Roosevelt; and director of sales, marketing & PR for Dream Hotel Group. At Club Quarters, Viola will oversee all aspects of marketing including brand management, digital marketing, customer acquisition, and market research.



Kendall Viola

Evolv Technology, which develops AI-based weapons detection security screening systems, hires **Courtney Cunnane** as CMO. Cunnane was most recently SVP of growth marketing at software company SmartBear, leading a team of more than 30 marketers. She previously served as VP of marketing at Experian Data Quality. At Evolv, Cunnane will lead the company's marketing organization.

KCSA Strategic Communications hires Alessandra Nagy as SVP on the PR team within its health and wellness practice. Nagy joins KCSA from **Bospar**, where she was co-lead of the healthcare and fintech practice. Before coming to Bospar, she worked at Grayling. In addition to having extensive experience leading global companies through IPOs and billion-dollar acquisitions, Nagy is also the co-founder and an active board member for Project for a Village, a non-profit that provides healthcare to women and children in rural villages in Nepal.



Alessandra Nagy

Arm Holdings, a semiconductor and software design company, hires **Ami Badani** as CMO. Badani comes to the company from NVIDIA, where she was VP marketing and developer products. Before that, she was CMO at Cumulus Networks and a director of product marketing at Cisco. At Arm, Badani will lead the company's global marketing organization.

Linnworks, an inventory management system, order management system and warehouse management system solutions provider, appoints **Georgia Leybourne** as CMO. Leybourne was most recently CMO at transportation management platform Transporeon. In her new role, Leybourne will be responsible for overseeing Linnworks' marketing efforts, enhancing brand awareness, and creating strategies to effectively reach and serve a diverse customer base.

USAID LOOKS TO FIGHT XENOPHOBIA IN PERU

The US Agency for International Development plans to award a \$2.2M contract to combat disinformation / misinformation and promote positive narratives about Venezuelan migrants who fled to Peru to improve their lives.

More than 1.5M Venezuelan migrants live in Peru—largely in Lima, Arequipa, and Trujillo. It is one of the largest displacement crises in the world today.



“Xenophobia in Peru against migrants is on the rise,” according to the USAID’s RFP.

USAID wants a partner to help foster a national conversation about xenophobia through creative strategies based on “communication for development and social change” methodologies to reduce xenophobia and discrimination in their most violent forms.

The USAID’s contract will run for 18 months.

Responses are due Dec. 4.

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

BALLARD ENROLLS IN NEW COLLEGE

Ballard Partners is monitoring federal education and infrastructure legislation for the New College Foundation.

The Sarasota-based New College of Florida is the poster child of Governor Ron DeSantis’ war on “woke” indoctrination.



He installed six conservatives to the board of trustees at the one-time progressive school and appointed a political ally and ex-Speaker of Florida’s House as interim president of the school.

NCF, which fell 24 places to the No. 100 spot in US News and World Report’s 2024 rankings of national liberal arts schools, wants to raise \$400M in state funding over the next five years to achieve its vision of fostering a “community of free thinkers, risktakers and trailblazers.”

Brian Ballard, who was Donald Trump’s chief fundraiser in the Sunshine State, and Daniel McFaul, ex-chief of staff to Florida Republican Matt Gaetz, work the New College Foundation.

FINN PARTNERS ADDS EDELMAN’S BEHRMANN

[FINN Partners](#) brings on [Edelman](#) head of new business and client experience APAC Annouchka Behrmann as senior partner in its Hong Kong office.



Annouchka Behrmann

Before joining Edelman in Hong Kong in 2017, Behrmann was managing director brand at MHP Communications in London and head of retail and leisure at Hill + Knowlton Strategies.

At FINN, she will report to Cathy Feliciano-Chon, managing partner, FINN Partners Greater China.

“Her intimate knowledge of this region, coupled with her expertise in strategic communications and campaign development, make her the ideal person to mobilize our teams and partner with clients,” notes FINN founding partner Howard Solomon, who has responsibility over Asia.

MAKING A BAD DAY MANAGEABLE

At about 9 a.m. on April 17, 2008, an executive vp at Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide asked me to come to her office. I had no idea why, least of all at so early an hour.

But as soon as I entered her office, I had an inkling. Also in attendance was another colleague and, more ominously, someone from Human Resources.

The firm was struggling to get through the latest recession, the exec vp said, and so our office would be reorganizing. A few minutes later, the HR person said, “We’re terminating you.”

Another HR person, Dianna, accompanied me back to my office. She brought in boxes so I could gather my keepsakes.

I soon realized that deciding what to take could easily take me all day. Dianna must have noticed how forlorn I looked. “Take your time,” she said. “Nobody’s going to rush you.”

Some hours later, Dianna walked me out. “You’re going to land on your feet,” she promised.

Later that day I emailed Dianna from home. “Thank you for being so gracious today,” I wrote.

So went the worst day of my 32-year career in PR. But Dianna, with the sincerely sympathetic expression on her face and just a few words, made it manageable for me.

The list of colleagues I have to thank for making my occupational difficulties more manageable is long. But on this Thanksgiving, let me name at least a few.

I hated my first PR job and reached out in desperation to my friend Neal Hirschfeld, then a reporter for the *New York Daily News*. Neal told his friend Morty, who ran a small PR firm and needed to fill a fresh vacancy.

Mortimer – aka “Morty – Matz of Matz Associates hired me despite my having almost zero PR job experience. I shared an office at Matz for more than two years with George Shea. Because I was new to full-time PR, I asked George umpteen questions about anything and everything. Fortunately, he unstintingly came back with umpteen answers.



Bob Brody

That layoff turned out to be for the best. Two months later, Powell Tate hired me as a media strategist and editorial specialist. That job lasted 12 years, the longest of my career.

The other day brought me briefly back to April 17, 2008. Dianna, the HR person who showed me such kindness, sent me a Facebook message. Her mother had recently died and Dianna had chanced across an email about me.

In the course of our exchange, I discovered some surprising details about my layoff. Dianna confided to me that higher-ups at Ogilvy originally asked her to play executioner and deliver the news that I was a goner. But she had declined.

She had gone the extra mile and then some, the revelation casting my layoff in a different light all these years later. And for that, I once again thank her, but now I do it publicly.

So make it a best practice once in a while to say thank you to those special colleagues who shepherd you through a lay-off or other workplace hardship. If you’re lucky, you might find out they’re as grateful to you for getting the opportunity.

Bob Brody, a consultant and essayist, is author of the memoir “Playing Catch with Strangers: A Family Guy (Reluctantly) Comes of Age.” He is a former senior vice president of Rubenstein, Ogilvy and Weber Shandwick.

SPECTRUM PICKS UP CROWDPHARM

[Spectrum Science](#) acquires CrowdPharm, a full-service healthcare advertising company and its partner consultancy, Hot Iron Health. This is the first acquisition Spectrum has completed since its strategic partnership with growth-oriented investment firm Knox Lane earlier this year.



The move establishes its strategic advertising and consulting pillar, which will be led by Mike Myers, managing director and partner of CrowdPharm, who will serve as president and lead day-to-day operations.

CrowdPharm develops brand communications in healthcare, medical and pharmaceutical marketing, while Hot Iron Health leverages financial modeling and diverse data sets to deliver planning and thinking across the entire commercial life cycle of a brand.

CYBER SECURITY NONPROFIT NEEDS PR

The Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams, Inc. is soliciting proposals from agencies providing public relations services.

FIRST, a membership-based association specializing in the information security and incident response fields, is looking for an agency that can develop and propose a PR plan. Scope of the work includes: developing and maintaining a list of key messages; engaging with media outlets; receiving and responding to media inquiries; proposing and implementing a social media action plan; and coordinating with FIRST on event-specific social media posts.

Terms of the contract call for a commitment of two and a half years, starting on Jan. 1, 2024 and ending Sept. 30th, 2026.



Proposals are due by 5 p.m. (ET) on Dec. 7 and should be sent via email—in PDF format—to: rfp-response@first.org.

All questions should be sent to FIRST

Executive Director Chris Gibson, rfp-response@first.org.

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

CORNERSTONE ADDS DEMOCRATIC OPERATIVE

Cornerstone has recruited Hyma Moore, chief of staff to Democratic National Committee chair Jamie Harrison, for its public affairs practice.

Moore served as Harrison's point of contact to Members of Congress and federal agencies and liaison to elected officials and outside stakeholders. Earlier, he was the DNC's battleground states press secretary.



Hyma Moore

Prior to the DNC, Moore was VP for external affairs at Greater New Orleans, and communications advisor to the city's former mayor Mitch Landrieu.

Cornerstone president Campbell Kaufman said Moore's campaign and private sector experience will be invaluable to clients, and his national network will help the firm expand across the country. DC-based Cornerstone has 150 staffers in 15 offices.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

The Weinbach Group is selected to handle marketing communications, including PR and creative campaign development, for the **Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works**, which operates the 15th largest public transit system in the U.S. and the largest transit agency in Florida. The firm will promote DPTW's system, including the launch of new bus routes, new transportation infrastructure, and novel public works projects, like the Underline, a 10-mile linear park and trail that runs under Metrorail's elevated tracks. Among its first tasks, Weinbach will develop a comprehensive, strategic communications plan to help the Department effectively disseminate information to its diverse audiences and to promote departmental assets within the public transit system.



[The Brandman Agency](#) picks up **Graubunden Tourism**, an area that is one of Switzerland's most visited destinations. Brandman will be responsible for introducing Graubunden and its hospitality partners to the US media through a targeted campaign of media outreach, media missions and hosted press trips. The largest region in Switzerland, Graubunden makes up almost 20 percent of the country's total land area and features Michelin-starred dining, world-class spas, nature adventures, and luxury experiences..

AdvisIRy Partners is named investor relations and communications firm for **Latham Group, Inc.**, the largest designer, manufacturer, and marketer of in-ground residential swimming pools in North America, Australia and New Zealand. The agency will work with Latham founding partner Lynn Morgen, partner Eric Prouty and senior director Vicky Nakhla on investor relations strategies, messaging and outreach.

[Hemsworth Communications](#) signs on as PR agency of record for **Maison & Co.**, a Florida-based brand that fulfills kitchen, bathroom and lighting design needs for home and business owners, developers and designers. The agency is responsible for crafting a public relations strategy that highlights the brand's growth, showcases its e-commerce platform and highlights its unique business approach. Maison & Co. offers an immersive, full-service design plan

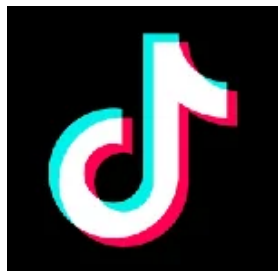
[BizCom Associates](#) adds **Fowling Warehouse DFW** to its roster of clients. The agency is tasked with generating a steady stream of news and publicity for the first Dallas-Fort Worth branch of the chain, which features Fowling, a game that combines football and bowling. The first Fowling Warehouse location in opened December 2014 in Hamtramck, Mich and there are now five outposts nationwide.



[RHC \(Rachel Harrison Communications\)](#) is appointed agency of record for **Limelight Hotels**, which is owned and operated by Aspen Hospitality. RHC will be leading media relations and supporting PR strategy and implementation for the client. Limelight Hotels operates properties in Aspen, Snowmass and downtown Denver in Colorado; and Ketchum and Sun Valley in Idaho. Two new Limelight Hotels are scheduled to open in Mammoth, CA and Boulder, CO in 2025.

TIKTOK EMERGES AS TOP NEWS PLATFORM

A growing number of Americans—particularly young Americans—are getting their news from TikTok, according to new analyses from the Pew Research Center.



The report found that the share of U.S. adults who now say they regularly get their news from TikTok has more than quadrupled in the last three years, from 3 percent in 2020 to 14 percent in 2023.

Americans under 30 are by far the largest consumers of news on the wildly popular short-form video platform. About a third (32 percent) of U.S. adults between the ages of 18-29 now get their news regularly from TikTok, according to the report, compared to about a quarter (26 percent) last year, 18 percent in 2021 and only 9 percent in 2020.

The only other demographic that comes close is Americans between the ages of 30-49, where 15 percent said they regularly get their news from the app, less than half the 18-29 cohort.

Another clear indication of TikTok's rapid rise as a news platform can be found in the growing percentage of the site's users who now regularly get their news there. According to the report, the share of TikTok users who regularly turn to the platform for news has nearly doubled since 2020, from 22 percent in 2020 to 43 percent in 2023.

The report comes the same week that media outlets reported on a series of TikTok influencers who had posted viral videos on their apparent admiration for Osama bin Laden's 2002 "Letter to America," in which the al Qaeda leader attempted to justify the killing of nearly 3,000 American civilians on September 11, 2001.

White House spokesman Andrew Bates blasted the creators of these videos, calling bin Laden's words "repugnant, evil and antisemitic lies" and referring to the TikTok videos as "conspiracy theories" and an "insult" to the 9/11 victims.

TikTok has said it will erase all mentions of the letter across its platform.

TikTok growth bucks digital news trend

It goes without saying that some social sites serve as better news platforms than others. But TikTok's emergence as a news platform effectively bucks a trend that's seen news consumption fall among social media sites in recent years. Six of the 11 platforms analyzed in the Pew study have witnessed a decrease in news consumption in the last three years, but TikTok's growth now has that site tying with Facebook for second place among the share of those sites' users (43 percent) for whom those sites double as news platforms.

The report, which polled Americans on their news-consumption habits—including social media, websites, TV, radio and podcasts—found that half of Americans overall now get their news from social media sites at least sometimes.

Digital now far outweighs traditional mediums for news consumption: Americans are almost twice as likely to say they prefer getting their news from digital devices (58 percent) than from TV (27 percent).

Pew's findings were based on a survey of more than 8,800 U.S. adults and was conducted from Sept. 25 to Oct 1. Respondents were drawn from the nonpartisan think tank's American Trends Panel, a nationally representative list of randomly selected U.S. adults.

ONTARIO HEALTH UNIT NEEDS PR BOOST

Ontario's Public Services Health & Safety Assn., which provides training and resources to reduce workforce risks, is looking for marketing & communications support on an as-needed basis.

PSHSA is responsible for a market of more than 10K companies and 1.2M workers across the health & community care, education, culture and municipal and provincial government sectors.

It has a "small, nimble and capable marketing team" that sometimes needs help on projects to meet PSHSA's standards and client expectations," according to the RFP.

The selected firm may get involved with developing PR strategies; writing press releases, articles and website content; coordinating media activity; and handling stakeholder outreach.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development funds PSHSA.

Proposals are due Dec. 6 at the [Merx electronic portal](#). [Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).



EDELMAN ALUM LANDS AT MISSION NORTH

Jamey Boike, who founded and served as general manager for [Edelman](#)-backed tech PR firm Revere, has moved to Mission North, where he is an EVP.

Before starting up Revere, Boike was EVP and head of emerging tech at Edelman, building the firm's tech practice in both New York and Seattle. He was previously a group director at A&R Partners, which was acquired by Edelman in 2006.

At Mission North, Boike will be tasked with moving the agency forward in a range of future tech disciplines, particularly in adjacencies around such enterprise technologies as AI, robotics and sustainability.

"Jamey brings a wealth of experience and insight to our team, especially during significant momentum and expansion within our Enterprise practice," said Mission North co-CEO Tyler Perry. "His unique perspective and industry knowledge are invaluable as we continue to grow and welcome new clients such as Zoom, Brex, Mozilla, and Portland General Electric."



Jamey Boike

FH DELIVERS DAVOS PITCH FOR UAE

FleishmanHillard has signed on to provide PR services in the US to promote the United Arab Emirates participation in the 54th World Economic Forum set for Davos from Jan. 15-19.

The Omnicom unit will focus on the UAE pavilion activities in Davos, distributing press releases, background information and coordinating interviews and briefings for journalists.

The effort, which is budgeted at \$45K, is intended to boost the reputation of the UAE rather than influencing US policy.

FH's contract is with the UAE's government's media office. It covers the period from Nov. 17 to Feb. 15.



COMMENTARY



Bret Stephens

While public trust in the media is at an all-time low, the media's self-regard remains high, Bret Stephens, *New York Times* opinion columnist, said at PRSA/New York's Big Apple Awards celebration.

Stephens said members of the news media need to remember that they're in "the humble but essential business of supplying reliable information and independent analysis to people who need it." Lofty goals

such as saving democracy or championing social justice are just grandiose causes that simply flatter vanity and obscure judgment and purpose.

Snarky posts on social media and slanted stories just undermine our own authority, Stephens said. He called for an end to the cult of celebrity in the news business.

For Stephens, there's a "warm bath of intellectual conformity in too much of today's mainstream media—that includes Fox News as much as MSNBC and all places in between."

That is not to say Stephens doesn't have plenty of biases of his own, but he couches this with the defense that he lays his cards on the table. "I don't offer objectivity, but I try to offer independence, honesty and hopefully, sometimes, good judgment," he said.

More so than ever, a flourishing and free society needs a news media that understands it's proper role and wins over and over, day after day, hour after hour, the public trust," Stephens concluded.

Stephens accepted the chapter's Daniel J. Edelman Award at the event.

A timely PR release. Amid the chaos surrounding Sam Altman and OpenAI, the Public Relations Society of America released "[Promise and Pitfalls: The Ethical Use of AI for PR Practitioners](#)."

The guidance provides best practices on preventing and managing the potential ethical challenges that may arise from the improper use of generative AI tools.

The technologies offer the promise to "transform the way we work, enhancing productivity by aiding in content creation for materials such as emails, news releases and presentations, as well as preforming research, data analysis and language translation," according to the document.

The AI tools also free up PR people to engage in "high-value critical thinking."

Since PR people shape and maintain reputations, along with relationships between organizations and the public, they are obligated to consider the impact of their actions and decisions on the greater good.

"Without due diligence, the use of AI tools to improve a campaign's results, for example, may end up doing harm by exposing proprietary or personal data, perpetuating biases or similar unforeseen consequences," says the guidance.

In releasing the report, Michelle Egan, 2023 PRSA chair,

said AI will revolutionize how PR people do their jobs. "The release of 'Promise & Pitfalls' will contribute to the ongoing discussion around AI, and advance the important work being done around the ethical use of the technology in the PR profession," said Egan.

That's a lotta lobbyists. More than 7,200 fossil fuels lobbyists have attended the United Nations climate talks over the past 20 years, according to a report from the Kick Big Polluters Out advocacy group.

The Big Five oil giants of ExxonMobil, Chevron, Shell, BP and TotalEnergies sent 267 lobbyists to the UN Conference of the Parties sessions, while fossil fuels trade groups had 6,581 representatives in attendance.

The outlook for fossil fuels interests looks pretty good at the COP28 session, which is slated for Dubai from Nov. 30 to Dec. 12.

Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, head of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, will preside over COP28 as president-designate. He is the first corporate CEO to lead a UN climate conference.

Al Jaber is unlikely to kick any of the fossil fuels interests out of his big show.

Disaster lies ahead... The election of Donald Trump to the US presidency poses the biggest danger faced by the world in 2024, [according to The Economist](#).

His victory would signal to US adversaries, such as China, that American democracy is dysfunctional while countries in the Global South consider "American appeals to do the what is right are really just exercises in hypocrisy."

The Russian dictator would rejoice over the Trump victory, knowing that the US would cut off support for Ukraine.

Zanny Minton Beddoes, *Economist* editor-in-chief, said the decision of the Republican Party to nominate a man who tried to overturn the results of the previous election dims America as a democratic beacon.

She believes another Trump presidency would transform American into a loose cannon with isolationist tendencies at a time of grave geopolitical peril.

Trump has a coin-toss probability of winning the 2024 election, of which the consequences would be catastrophic for democracy and the world.

Losing Ukraine to Russia... The influential Institute for the Study of War, a DC-based nonprofit group, has warned US policymakers that the current stalemate in Ukraine is not a permanent reality.

"Ending or significantly curtailing American military support to Ukraine will enable Russia to win the war on the battlefield," Frederick Kagan, a former professor of military history at West Point, [wrote in an essay](#). "That would be a catastrophe not only for Ukraine, but for NATO and for the US."

Will the Republicans abandon Ukraine and hand it over to Russia? We will soon find out. —Kevin McCauley