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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

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CANADA PLANS PRO-TAR SANDS BLITZ

The Government of Canada plans a $24M two-year promotional pitch to defuse opposition to development of tar sands energy resources in Alberta, which critics believe will intensify global warming.

Resistance has crystalized during the debate over TransCanada's plan to build the Keystone XL Pipeline to carry Alberta's heavy oil to the U.S. Gulf Coast. President Obama hasn't yet decided on approval of the project.

Natural Resources Canada issued an RFP to counter "intense and sustained PR campaigns," against tar sands. The effort will go after environmental and political critics in the U.S., Europe and Asia.

NRC envisions a mix of traditional earned/paid media, social media, "rapid response" teams and websites aimed at high-level corporate executives, according to a report on Canada.com. It seeks to correct the "inaccurate information" that has become part of the public debate about tar sands.

The two-year drive is also designed to position Canada as a "world leader in the responsible development of natural resources," and "a stable and secure energy choice compared to international alternatives."

Messaging will tout Canada's enhanced regulatory system, commitment to safeguard the environment and natural resources investment opportunities.

Canada.com calls the $24M budget the "costliest advertising campaign NRC has undertaken in recent years." That entity spent $5M for ads during the past year.

The tar sands push will begin in January with full implementation pegged for April.

TWC's VENECH JUMPS TO CHARTER

Justin Venech, VP-PR at Time Warner Cable for the past ten years, has jumped to Charter Communications, the nation's No. 4 cable TV company, as VP-comms.

He will handle PR, media relations, government affairs and financial outreach for the Stamford-based company. Venech reports to Alex Dudley, senior comms./PA.

Dudley called Venech "a proven leader who brings with him a wealth of industry knowledge and expertise" in developing and executing strategic communications.

Prior to TWC, Venech was at Rainbow Media Holdings, which is now part of the AMC Networks.

TWC, on Oct. 7, announced a $600M deal to acquire DukeNet, which provides high-capacity broadband services to wireless carriers, data centers, corporations and governments in five southeastern states.

It completed a high-profile battle over retransmission fees with CBS Corp. last month.

Q3 PR RISES, NET FALLS AT OMNICOM

Omnicom said PR revenue rose six percent in the third quarter to $332.5M while net income across all OMC units for the quarter fell 3.9% to $196M.

Organically, PR revenues at units including Ketchum, Porter Novelli and Fleishman-Hillard were up 4.6% for the period and up 3.4% to $987M for the first three quarters of the year.

Overall, revenue for the quarter ticked up 2.5% over Q3 of 2012 to nearly $3.5B, including a 3.2% gain the U.S. to $1.8B and a 1.6% increase on the international front to around $1.7B.

Advertising climbed 3% (4.8% organically) to top $1.6B for Q3.

OMC spent $106.4M on acquisitions and earn-outs this year, including marketing shop Bruce Clay Australia and HDI Youth Marketers (South Africa) in the third quarter.

HAIR, BEAUTY BRAND SEEKS PR MAKEOVER

Joico, the hair care and beauty unit of Japanese cosmetics giant Shiseido Co., is calling for pitches to guide PR and communications as it eyes a larger profile among consumers and stronger connection to a growing younger audience.

The agency of record account covers Joico, Beth Minardi Signature and the Minardi Luxury Color Care products.

The account carries an $8K monthly retainer.

Proposals are due Nov. 7.

View the RFP: http://bit.ly/16bt08M.

KOCH BROS. SIGN ICE MILLER

Koch Companies Public Sector has signed Ice Miller Strategies for issues regarding cybersecurity and chemicals.

A focus will be on the Dept. of Homeland Security's chemical facility anti-terrorism standards program, which is its first security regulation of the chemicals industry.

CFATS is a performance-based compliance program which represents a shift in the current environmental regulatory structure.

IMS founding member Graham Hill, former staff director of the House Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee, heads the four-member lobbying team.

Koch spent $5.8M in first-half lobbying outlays.

CORNELL TECH TO DISRUPT UNIV. MODEL

Dan Huttenlocher said Cornell Tech is going to shatter the traditional model of universities by actively encouraging engagement between the academic and private sector communities.

The dean of the New York City Cornell/Technion—Israel Institute of Technology partnership spoke Oct 10 at the NYC Health Business Leaders event held at the Alexandria Center. More than 125 people packed the room.

Huttenlocher, a veteran of Xerox's legendary PARC research facility in Palo Alto, said colleges are "not involved with the outside world." He's hiring facility members who have directly interacted with the world and who possess an "external vision."

For instance, experience in "founding something outside the academic sphere" is a faculty employment requirement. The dean noted that Greg Pass, former chief technology officer at Twitter, joined Cornell Tech last year as founding entrepreneurial officer.

Huttenlocher, who likened his professors to baseball "free agents," expects pushback as he rethinks the "big and lumbering" mindset of academia.

He welcomes it because "you can't do interesting work without conflict."

The Cornell Tech campus will feature an open floor plan that is the hallmark of tech companies. There will be a resident venture capitalist on the Roosevelt Island campus, start-up incubator, in-house product development space and a corporate presence in a third of the 12-acre complex.

The three hubs of the graduate school's programs are healthier life, connective media and built environment. The first seven students began their studies in January at Google's NYC facility on Eighth Ave. There are now 30 students.

The Roosevelt Island campus will begin to open in 2017. Site demolition will start next year

Though Huttenlocher has a "grand vision" for the school, he has "no concrete plan of how to get there."

SHELL OIL TAPS INTERIOR DEPT. ALUM

Shell Oil has retained a Dept. of the Interior veteran to handle extension of offshore drilling leases in the outer Continental Shelf.

Peter Schaumberg spent more than 25 years in the department's Office of Solicitor as associate deputy for mineral resources. He joined Beveridge & Diamond in 2006.

Shell in 2008 spent $2.1B to lease blocks in Alaska's Chukchi Sea, which could hold more than 15 billion barrels of oil.

It began preliminary drilling in 2012, but stopped after an accident. Shell then suspended 2013 drilling there.

The Interior Dept. plans to release new regulations regarding Alaskan offshore development next year.

Shell CEO Peter Voser told the *Financial Times* on Oct. 7 that Alaska is a long-term investment, but he doesn't know if "we'll go back in 2014 or 2015."

DISNEY, YAHOO, GOOGLE: MOST LOVED

Walt Disney Co., Yahoo and Google are the "most loved companies," according to research of more than 70K people in 15 countries conducted by APCO Worldwide.

The firm's "emotional linking" model rated more than 600 companies on a person's understanding, approachability, admiration, identification, pride, curiosity, empowerment and relevance ratings.

Bryan Dumont, president of APCO Insight, believes the ranking provides a "highly predictive tool for consumers' purchase decisions."

APCO found tech companies scored high on relevance, but less well on curiosity.

Sony, Nestlé, French retailer Auchan, Netflix, Whole Foods and Apple round out the Top 10.

Canon, Mars, Caterpillar, Bayer, MasterCard, Berkshire Hathaway, Starbucks, Nissan, Visa and CSX number 90 through 100.

KKR RELIES ON RLM FINSBURY IN $1B DEAL

KKR, the equity firm founded by Henry Kravis and George Roberts, is using WPP's RLM Finsbury in its $1B takeover of The Crosby Group and Acco Material Handling Solutions from Melrose Industries.

Tulsa-based Crosby, which launched in 1885, provides engineered equipment to the oil & gas, mining and construction sectors. It employs 1,300. York, Pa.-based Acco makes specialized handling gear like industrial cranes, hoists, trailers and monorails. It has 130 workers.

Pete Stavros, head of KKR's industrials group, said both companies produce high-quality goods from dedicated work forces and are poised for global expansion.

The deals are expected to close by the end of the year. RLM's Nina Suter and Michael Turner are handling the acquisition.

KKR has $83B+ in assets under management.

RUSSIANS ZAP ZIPPO PR

Zippo Manufacturing Co. pulled its social media campaign, which cashed in on the embarrassing Red Square flame-out of the Olympic torch during a Vladimir Putin-attended ceremony on Oct. 6 to mark the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.

A member of Putin's security team relit the torch held by 60-year-old former champion swimmer Shavarish Karapetyan, who had been waving it and pointing to the top of the extinguished torch.

Zippo quickly posted a video on Facebook and launched the #ZippoSavesOlympics on Twitter.

Dmitry Chernyshenko, president of the Sochi organizing committee saw the Twitter site and had officials contact the Pennsylvania company to express their concern over the improper use of the Olympics logo.

Zippo killed the campaign Oct. 8 after a meeting of its social media team. Dave Warfel, global marketing director of Zippo, told *RIA Novosti* that his company "never meant to imply that somehow we had any relationship or sponsorship with the Olympic committee at all." He called the campaign "a bit of whimsy."

FT CONSOLIDATES PRINT EDITION

The *Financial Times* will publish a single global newspaper beginning in the first-half of next year, according to editor Lionel Barber.

He said the relentless pace of technological change is driving the shift at the Pearson-owned property.

In a staff memo, Barber noted that the "1970s-style newspaper publishing process – making incremental changes to multiple editions through the night – is dead."

He said the print FT will get its news from the web, not vice versa. It will concentrate on long-form pieces, opinion, features and analysis and graphics.

The future FT will have a small print team supported by a larger integrated web staff focused on putting breaking news on computer screens, tablets, smartphones and soon-to-emerge informational platforms.

FREEDOM BUYS PRESS-ENTERPRISE

Freedom Communications has purchased the *Press-Enterprise* (Riverside, Cal.) from A.H. Belo for $27.3M.

The firm of entrepreneur Aaron Kushner owns the Orange County Register and was reportedly mulling an offer for the *Boston Globe*.

Belo CEO Jim Moroney said Kushner "will continue to support journalism as we have in the critical inland southern California region."

The Dallas-based company had owned P-E, which traces its history to 1878, for 16 years.

Kushner bought the Register in July 2012 and added 350 staffers plus a raft of new sections.

WSJ BOLSTERS TECH COVERAGE

The *Wall Street Journal* has hired technology reporters Doug MacMillan and Jeff Elder, according to a staff memo from global tech editor Jonathan Krim.

MacMillan was reporting in San Francisco for Bloomberg. He focused on pre-IPO consumer Internet companies, IPOs (Zynga and Groupon) and local mainstays (Facebook, Twittter and Yahoo). He handled daily news wrap-ups on Bloomberg West TV show, and earlier reported for *BusinessWeek*.

Elder wrote investigative pieces for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and served as social media editor for its SFgate site. He also wrote for the *Charlotte Observer*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and *Stars & Stripes*.

BLOOMBERG'S AD CHIEF TO DOW JONES

Trevor Fellows, Bloomberg's head of media sales for the U.S. and U.K., is joining *Wall Street Journal* parent Dow Jones & Co. to replace the retiring Michael Rooney, who is stepping down after a 35-year run at the company.

Lex Fenwick, CEO of Dow Jones, said Rooney will take a "well-deserved sabbatical" to travel the world with his wife.

In a staff memo, Fenwick praised Rooney as "one of the loudest cheerleaders for the Journal's franchise."

The departing executive "built a strong sales team and laid the groundwork for our current and future growth," wrote Fenwick.

MARIMOW AXED AT PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Bill Marimow, editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for 18 months, was axed by publisher Robert Hall due to "philosophical differences" between the two men.

Marimow

"The decision to terminate Bill Marimow as editor of the Inquirer was made by me and associate publisher Mike Lorenca, which is within our authority to make such a decision," said Hall in a statement.

The move to let Marimow go was approved by five of the six directors/owners of Interstate General Media, which owns the paper and sister publication *Daily News*.

Marimow told the DN "we tried our hardest to produce excellent journalism under extreme difficult economic circumstances and I believe we've done a good job."

He will be paid until April 30.

Marimow had been teaching journalism at Arizona State University when he was offered his old editor job.

He joined the Inquirer in 1972 and took the editor slot in 2006, but was ousted by then publisher Greg Osberg.

Stan Wischonowski is the acting editor of the Inquirer. He also replaced Marimow as editor in 2010.

ATLANTIC RIPS 'NON-PROFIT' NFL

Taxpayers fund stadiums of the National Football League, broadcast deals escape antitrust laws, the NFL is technically a 501/c/6 "non-profit," and commissioner Roger Goodell makes $30 million yearly, says the October *Atlantic* in an article titled, "How the NFL Fleeces Taxpayers."

"It's time to stop the public giveaways to America's richest sports league – and to the feudal lords who own its teams," says a subhead of the piece written by Gregg Easterbrook.

One part tells how the NFL, although a "non-profit," tried to evade a section of the non-profit law that calls for pay packages of top executives to be in the 990 tax return.

A lobbying battle took place after non-profit disclosure rules were strengthened in which the NFL sought an exemption.

Among those leading the fight was Joe Browne, executive VP of communications and public affairs. He was the longest-serving employee of the NFL, having been with it since 1965.

Browne Claimed $150K (But Made $2M)

Browne, according to the Atlantic, claimed a salary of only $150,000 in 2008 but the 990 revealed his pay package was about $2 million.

This is the passage in the Atlantic: "Browne told The *New York Times*, 'I finally get to the point where I'm making 150 grand, and they want to put my name and address on the [disclosure] form so the lawyer next door who makes a million dollars a year can laugh at me.' Browne added that $150,000 does not buy in the New York area what it would in Dubuque, Iowa." (Cont'd)

ATLANTIC RIPS NFL (CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

"The waiver was denied. Left no option, the NFL revealed that at the time, Browne made about $2 million annually."

Browne, currently a senior advisor to Goodell, remains involved with NFL Congressional and other political issues in Washington as well as local legislative matters in NFL markets. He is also active in NFL Charities, USA Football, and the NFL Youth Football Fund.

He lives with his wife Karyn and two sons on Long Island.

A native New Yorker, he was the first scholarship basketball player at Archbishop Molloy High School in Brooklyn Heights.

His duties included generating publicity for the Super Bowl, which the NFL says is the most popular one-day sporting event in North America.

Easterbrook writes that the 12 NFL teams have made a profit on their stadium subsidies alone, receiving more money than needed to build their facilities.

NFL got its 501/c/6 status in the 1960s when Congress gave antitrust waivers to the NFL and American Football League. They were allowed to merge and have a common draft, and jointly auction TV rights.

Easterbrook feels the merger was good for football while "stabilizing" it while ensuring quality of competition, but that Congress "gave away the store while getting almost nothing for the public in return."

Greg Aiello is currently senior VP-PR. The NFL and Browne have been asked if they have any comment on the Atlantic article.

STUDENTS TO MEDIA: 'HOW DO WE MAKE $?'

Max Robins, contributor to Techonomy Media; Shafqat Islam, CEO, NewsCred; Martin Nisenholtz, former chief digital officer, New York Times, and Elizabeth Spiers, Flavorpill Productions, former editor-in-chief, The New York Observer.

Five media figures on Oct. 8 discussed the economic plight of news media, saying the wrenching changes also present new opportunities. But they were hard-pressed to explain just how grads or anyone can earn a living under the new conditions.

"Media Disruption: The New Normal," was the topic of the evening session at the New School hosted by the Center for Communication, a non-profit that brings together media figures and students in the New York area.

The audience of 253 consisted mostly of students and jobseekers. Some seniors were also present.

They peppered the five panelists with questions about how money can be earned in what have become "battle conditions" in the media arena.

Almost no hard answers were given to them.

One exception was speaker Shafqat Islam, co-founder and CEO of NewsCred, which licenses content from the *New York Times*, *Economist* and other media for use in branded marketing programs.

He said his company is noted for paying writers and contributors well. Articles are often purchased at prices from $500 to $1,000. Islam invited interested writers to contact him since he is building up a network of contributors. Islam cited Red Bull Media House as "an interesting pocket of quality" that is doing well.

The company focuses on sports, culture and lifestyle.

Max Robins, contributor to Techonomy Media; Shafqat Islam, CEO, NewsCred; Martin Nisenholtz, former chief digital officer, *New York Times*, and Elizabeth Spiers, Flavorpill Productions, former editor-in-chief, *New York Observer*.

Photo: Sharlene Spingler

Nisenholtz Sees New Era of Reporting

Martin Nisenholtz, former chief digital officer of the NYT who retired in 2011, said media have thrown off the shackles of unions and the costs of paper, printing and distribution, and can now focus on reporting.

He said the search for talented journalists is on again.

Some students wondered if media had thrown off the "shackles" of income since online news portions of publications have not come close to replacing ad revenues that had been generated by their print operations. U.S. newspaper ad revenues have dropped from $49 billion in 2006 to $23 billion last year.

Nisenholtz led the acquisition of About.com from Primedia in 2005. NYT paid $410 million for the website and sold it in 2012 for $300M to Barry Diller of IAC.

Elizabeth Spiers, former editor-in-chief of the *New York Observer* who is now acting editorial director of Flavorpill Productions, which covers cultural topics, said media have been "re-democratized" and wrestled out of the hands of the bigwigs of previous generations. The result will be more emphasis on "merit," she said.

Max Robins, contributor to Techonomy Media, said his articles for *Forbes* are paid based on how much traffic they draw. He sees his goal as covering subjects that will bring the maximum amount of visitors.

Some in the audience said that that Robbins appears to be compromising his journalistic principles. Nisenholtz said Robbins' concern with traffic could be "corrosive." Ben Smith, who joined BuzzFeed in 2012 after being a senior political writer for *Politico* from 2007 to 2008, said journalism is best learned on the job rather than in classrooms.

However, recent grads and other journalists who can't find jobs are enrolling in degree and certificate-granting programs in a bid to catch the attention of media.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS

DUKAS FORMS FINANCE-SAVVY SOCIAL UNIT

Dukas PR has formed a social media practice group focused on asset management and financial services clients, citing increased demand from clients that were previously averse to the developing space.

The firm promoted director Stephanie Dressler to VP and head of digital strategy to oversee the new unit and advise clients on digital strategy. Dressler noted the 10 largest global asset managers -- including BlackRock, Vanguard, Goldman Sachs… -- are now using social media to communicate with investors and clients, despite tight regulations.

The firm reps hedge funds, ETF sponsors, mutual funds and investment banks, among other clients.

Digital services offered include content development, social community creation and outreach, video, SEO, measurement and analysis.

RLM LANDS IN SINGAPORE

RLM Finsbury has opened an office in Singapore, an Asian extension of its China operation based in Hong Kong.

Simon Moyse, a firm partner who set up its Middle East operation in Dubai, has relocated to Singapore to manage the firm's Southeast Asia efforts.

The firm has also added I Ling Ong, an ING, Prudential and Ogilvy alum, for the Singapore office.

RLM chair Rolan Rudd said Singapore is the "ideal place" to support both global and regional clients in the region.

RAINBOLT DIES AT 32

Alicia Rainbolt, a VP at New York-based Lou Hammond & Associates, died Sept. 24 after a battle with brain cancer. She was 32.

The Houston native previously held account supervisor posts at Hill+Knowlton Strategies and Ruder Finn. Travel and tourism were her specialties.

Services were held in Houston and a New York memorial is set for Oct. 26 at Redeemer Presbyterian Church on 83rd Street in Manhattan.

A memorial fund was also set up in her honor at http://bit.ly/17pnDmS.

BRIEFS: **The Workman Company**, St. Louis, is marking its 20th year with an updated brand and pro bono community service project with Project Cope, a non-profit in the city providing re-entry services and transitional housing to ex-offenders. The firm, led by Craig Workman, will staff entirely through Project Cope a new company using sustainable technology to recycle used tires. About 25 jobs will be created, said Adrienne Denson, executive director of PC. ...**360 PR**, Boston, has moved to a larger space in the city's Greenway and Waterfront at 200 State Street. The new HQ features a "no-door" work environment and outdoor space for meetings. CEO Laura Tomasetti called the expanding neighborhood an "energizing backdrop for our future growth." Fusion Design Consultants were the architects of the new space.

NEW ACCOUNTS

New York Area

Affect, New York/Definiens, image analysis and data mining for life sciences and healthcare; Easy Office Phone, cloud-based phone services; Flightpath, digital agency, and Hauntworld, directory of Halloween attractions, for PR.

The Woods & Co, New York/2XU (Two Times You), sports apparel and compression brand, for PR., marketing and comms. services focused on the athletic, health and fashion sectors.

Hall Company, New York/Juni, boutique eatery by chef Shaun Hergatt; Skál, Icelandic-inspired restaurant; H Bake Shop, bakery by winner of Food Network's "Cupcake Wars," and O Merveilleux, Belgian pastry, all based in New York, for PR.

Child's Play Communications, New York/Romotive, developer of Romo, app-driven robot that teaches kids computer programming and robotics, for PR.

5W PR, New York/SpeedMedia, California-based digital services for the adv. and broadcast sectors, for PR.

Workhouse, New York/Genesis Publications for the launch of "Transformer, a signed, limited edition book and record by recording artist Lou Reed and photographer Mick Rock, for PR.

Southeast

Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta/KidsLink, online family records and documents platform, as AOR for PR.

Fetching Communications, Tampa, Fla./PetSafe; PETSYNC Education Services, and CheapPetDrugs.com, for PR and marketing.

Uproar PR, Orlando/Fuelzee, mobile app for buying fuel, for a media relations campaign.

Mountain West

Wall Street Communications, Salt Lake City/Riedel Communications, communications networks for broadcast, sports, theater and security applications, as AOR for PR, including B2B trade press outreach.

West

Lane, Portland, Ore./Pendleton Woolen Mills, 150-year-old family-owned apparel and manufacturing company, as AOR for PR, digital and creative work.

The Cline Group, Bala Cynwyd, Pa./Adquant, social ad software; Green Swan, consumer product for cellular-radiation; MyPermissions, personal info access control; Pounce, app that lets customers scan static print ads to buy products; RotaryView, product display tools for 360-degree views, and Starfish Technologies, iPhone case with cigarette lighter.

Eastwick, Sunnyvale, Calif./Siemens Enterprise Communications, for PR and social media, content and messaging strategy as the company undergoes a re-branding and re-launch set for Oct. 15. Horizon Media, Wohl Communications, McMillan and frog are involved in the re-brand, as well.

HKA Inc. Marketing Communications, Tustin, Calif./Decision Toolbox, online recruiting firm, for publicity for the company and its CEO Kim Shepherd.

International

Zeno, London/Six Physio, chain of nine private physiotherapy clinics in London, for consumer PR via a six-month program.

NEWS OF SERVICES

KETCHUM IDs MOST INFLUENTIAL IN FOOD

A small but motivated segment of mostly young, female food influencers is shaping opinions about brands, companies and the food and agriculture sector while shrugging off traditional marketing practices, according to a study by Ketchum.

Dubbed “food e-vangelists” by the firm, the segment is dominated by online-savvy, young females with families – 35M in the U.S. -- who are financially secure and fuel around 1.7B conversations centered on food per week around the world.

Ketchum partner and global food practice director Linda Eatherton called the demographic "the most important group in the food industry today," adding that they don't fit into typical marketing segments. “They are hiding in plain sight – yet food companies are allocating budgets on marketing programs that don't reach them," she said. “This group will change the food industry forever, but at the moment they represent a hugely missed opportunity.”

The e-vangelists are important because of their influence. Forty-four percent of them said they recommend or critique a food product at least four times per week, while 40% said they share opinions on food purchasing with friends and family just as often. Thirty-eight percent of the group said they recommend or critique a food brand at least four times a week.

Health, transparency, and making food more accessible to families in need are three key issues e-vangelists look for in supporting a company or brand.

“[They] believe it is their right and their responsibility to influence the beliefs of others and change behaviors,” said Eatherton. Ketchum said members of the segment take it on themselves to learn about food and food marketers, and that other companies can engage such influential people by making information easily accessible and being transparent.

Other trends identified by Ketchum are increases in the purchase of fresh foods at the expense of fewer packaged and prepared foods.

BRIEFS: John Philpin, senior VP of engineering for digital marketing company **Lyris**, has been elected president and CEO. He replaces Roy Camblin, who resigned the post after six months. Philpin is the former founder/principal of sales strategy firm Beyond Bridges and held top marketing and management posts at Group Partners and Vitria. …**Alloy Digital** and **Break Media** have merged to create a single content creation and delivery company, Defy Media, focused on the key 12-34 demographic. The merger includes a proprietary media and ad network targeting consumers across categories including entertainment, women and men's lifestyle, comedy and gaming, as well as the Break.com YouTube channel, Clevver Media, The Gloss and other brands.

PEOPLE

Joined

Nabil Ashour, A/D for Ogilvy PR in New York and Dubai, to Cognito, New York, as VP focused on financial services clients. He handled Barclays, State Street, the French Ministry of Finance, The Carlyle Group and BlackRock.

Beth Cleveland, founder of six-year-old Elm PR, to Praytell Strategy, Brooklyn, N.Y., as a managing partner to head media relations. Clients include Logitech, Food Bank of NY City and Oloo. Cleveland and Praytell chief Andy Pray were formerly colleagues at Antenna Group.

Ben Atkins, corporate comms. director of digital and social media, Amgen, to Chandler Chicco Companies to co-lead its digital practice. **Emma D’Arcy**, biochemist researching the impact of social media on medicine, to CCC parent inVentiv Health Communications’ Digital+Innovation unit in London as head of participatory medicine.


Atkins, D’Arcy

Stevie-Nicole Belchak, relationship manager, Luvocracy, to Atlantic Media, Washington, D.C., as strategy and communications manager.

Derek DeVries, marketing associate, 834 Marketing & Design, and **John VanderHaagen**, social media sales and marketing manager, Grand Rapids Griffins, to Lambert, Edwards & Associates, Grand Rapids, Mich., as senior associates in Ripple+Affect digital unit. Also, **Abby Hartig**, a social media specialist at Bevelwise, joins as an associate.

Jim Storey, director of IR and corporate comms., Horizon Lines, to Premier Inc., a publicly traded Charlotte, N.C., healthcare performance improvement company, as VP of IR.

Promoted

David Armano to global strategy director, Edelman, Chicago, reporting to Cricket Wardein, head of U.S. digital. **Brad Mays** was upped to GM, Edelman Digital, under Chicago GM Rick Murray. Edelman said its digital unit now has more than 1,000 employees.

Chris Hannan to executive VP, communications and integration, FOX Sports, New York. He was SVP, FOX Sports Media Group, and continues to report to co-presidents/COOs Randy Freer and Eric Shanks with oversight of PR and corporate comms.

Paul Cohen, partner and group manager for corporate and int’l affairs at Ketchum, New York, has relocated to Brussels as director, international corporate & institutional affairs.

Nicholas Laplaca to assistant A/E, R&J PR, Bridgewater, N.J.


Laplaca

Jaclyn Reardon to A/E, Bianchi PR, Troy, Mich., handling Brooks Kushman P.C., Johnson Controls, and the Steel Market Development Institute.

Jamie Solus, intern for O'Reilly DePalma, Frankfort, Ill., to A/C.

UN GIVES AFGHAN FIRM YEMEN PR PACT

Lapis, the PR unit of Afghanistan media conglomerate Moby Group, has picked up a six-figure pact with the United Nations to tout biometric voting in the critical 2014 Yemen elections.

Kabul-based Lapis is producing a public information campaign in Yemen as the country will use U.N. Development Program-funded biometric fingerprint scanners in its 2014 presidential and parliamentary elections, the first since a one-candidate 2012 vote that followed the Arab Spring-induced resignation of president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The massive electoral undertaking involves training 45,000 temporary employees for the voter registration process.

Yemen's stability is seen as crucial to the U.S. and its European allies for its oil reserves, location on oil shipping routs, and struggles with Al Qaeda-linked militant groups. The country also faces a regional divide that has some groups urging a split into self-governing federations.

Lapis won a $200K contract for the voter education campaign, following an RFP process.

Moby Group's holdings include Afghanistan TV and radio properties, production facilities, an English-language magazine, *Afghan Scene*, and the online news site Quqnoos. Founder Saad Mohseni was dubbed by the *New Yorker* in 2010 as Afghanistan's "first media mogul."

South Korea's Suprema and Gemalto of The Netherlands won contracts with the Yemeni government to supply scanners and voting units for the election.

Yemen's 2012 presidential election include only one candidate, Vice President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, who took over after Saleh's resignation in 2011.

DKC FRONTS RATNER ATLANTIC YARDS DEAL

DKC PR is repping Forest City Ratner Cos. $4B deal with Shanghai-based Greenland Group Co. to unload a majority stake in its 22-acre Atlantic Yards residential/commercial development in Brooklyn.

The deal for the 15-tower project (6,400 apartment units) ranks as the largest commercial real estate transaction in the U.S. for a Chinese company.

Greenland CEO Zhang Yuliang said in a statement:

"Brooklyn has become an international brand because it symbolizes how the old and the new can exist together, creating a dynamic environment for people to live and work."

As 70 percent owner of Atlantic Yards, Yuliang is excited about the prospect of working with FCRC to develop the complex.

He's eager to "build sustainable, well-designed housing to meet the needs of diverse groups of people."

The transaction does not include Barclay's Center, home of the NBA Brooklyn Nets and soon-to-be arena for the NHL's Islanders.

FCRC and Russian billionaire/Nets owner Mikhail Prokhorov own that facility.

DKC's Joe DePlasco handles PR for FCRC.

Greenland, in July, invested $1B in a downtown Los Angeles hotel/residential complex.

F/W/V GUIDES BASSETT'S EXPANSION

Bassett Furniture has selected French/West/Vaughan to guide its expansion into new retail markets. The account had been handled in-house.

The Bassett, Va., company reported a sharp decline in third-quarter net to $556K from $2.3M as the retail unit suffered a $1.5M operating loss for the period.

CEO Robert Spilman blamed the "normal tepid sales environment" that Bassett experiences each summer and expects a boost in performance with the completion of a new retail operating system designed to hike efficiency.

Thirty-six of Bassett's corporate stores had the system at end of the quarter on Aug. 31. The remaining 19 existing units will go on-line by the end of the fiscal year.

The roll-out process proved to be "disruptive to the sales, administration, warehousing and delivery areas of our retail business," according to Spilman.

Rick French, CEO of F/W/V, calls Bassett "an iconic American brand that has been trusted by consumers for more than a century."

The Bassett family in the late 1880s ran a sawmill in the foothills of Blue Ridge Mountains northwest of Martinsville, Va., that supplied rail ties to the new Norfolk and Western railroad.

When the rail line was completed, the family diversified into the coffin business before moving into the furniture sector.

F/W/V will handle the Nov. 1 opening of Bassett's revamped store line in Birmingham. The company will then unveil stores in Fort Worth, Annapolis, Westport (Conn.) and Boston.

GHANA SKI TEAM SEEKS OLYMPICS PR PRO

The Ghana Ski team, which debuted at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, is looking for a PR pro to handle media relations for the Sochi Russia games slated for February.

Tim Allardyce, secretary general of GST, said the pro bono campaign presents an "opportunity of a lifetime to represent a ski team who pans to compete at the Winter Olympic Games."

In an email to odwyerpr.com, Allardyce noted that in Vancouver "we were inundated with media requests and found it difficult to handle."

Nkrumah-Acheampong, who was born in Scotland and raised in Ghana's capital in Accra, finished 47th in the slalom event during the last Olympics.

Nkrumah-Acheampong, the so-called "Snow Leopard," is looking for corporate sponsors to help fund his trip to Sochi.

Oliberte, which is based in Oakville, Canada, is a sponsor of the GST. It markets fair trade/sustainable athletic shoes and boots that are made in sub-Sahara, Africa.

The *New York Observer,* which has a weekly circulation of 51,000 to a well-heeled audience, has a front page story plus four inside pages on New York PR firms in its Oct. 14 issue.

"The Power 50 List" sketches 50 PR firms topped by Edelman, which had $707 million in net fees for the year ended June 30. This is a jump from the $655M in fees for the year to Dec. 31, 2012.

No. 2 in the 2012 O'Dwyer ranking was APCO Worldwide, based in Washington, D.C., which had fees of $121M.

Michael Kaminer, who had his own PR firm for many years, is author of the sweeping article which is a welcome addition to coverage of the PR industry. It puts to shame the *New York Times,* which confines its coverage of PR to occasional columns by Stuart Elliott.

Kaminer's "Power 50 List" includes 17 firms that are ranked by O'Dwyer's. Such firms provide top pages of corporate income tax returns; W-3s showing payroll totals; CPA attestation to full time employees, and account and staff lists.

The other 33 firms include eight PR operations whose conglomerate owners won't let them publish payroll totals and staff counts although no legal, SEC rules or accounting standards prevent that.

The article is not only a send-up of New York, but of traditional media.

"The major media companies, who are reinventing themselves to be on digital platforms, are not going anywhere, in fact they are only going to get bigger," said Sean Cassidy, president of DKC, which is given second position below Edelman on Kaminer's "Top 50."

DKC, with $32.8M in 2012 fees, +22%, is No. 9 in the O'Dwyer rankings and in third position in the New York rankings. Among the others are 42West, entertainment specialist that grew from the Dart Group in 2006, claiming $20M in New York fees and 50 employees; Shift Communications, $15M in New York fees and 13 employees; Paul Wilmot Communications, $10M and 42 employees; LaForce + Stevens $14M and 90 employees; Alison Brod PR, 60 employees; M Booth, $14.6M and 90 employees, and Bullfrog & Baum, $5M and 22 employees.

Kaminer notes he has other factors in mind in ranking PR firms beside size such as "the intangible mojo that an agency generates through its mix of people, clients, access, attitude, status and, of course, results. We looked for the New York City DNA, which nixed heavy hitters like PMK*BMC and ID —both L.A.-born."

"Mojo" is Fine But Facts Are Needed

There is a lot of hype in this article which has the headline, "The Golden Age of PR," a phrase Kaminer got from counselor Ken Makovsky of Makovsky in a 2011 interview.

"There has never been a better time to practice PR in New York," adds Kaminer. He says the recession is over, clients are spending again and "digital has opened colossal business opportunities that play to the industry's strengths." "Traditional media" are struggling to keep up and PR firms are "stepping in by creating stories rather than just pitching them, he writes. "They are, in some ways, the new newsrooms. And their influence is ascending."

Scant attention is paid to corporate PR which is understandable because almost all PR--in terms of creativity and press contact--has been offloaded to agencies.

PR Is a Difficult Purchase

PR is "difficult to define and difficult to purchase," writes O'Dwyer columnist Fraser Seitel in an essay in *O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms*.

The 25 firms in the "Power 50" list that are independent but do not yet provide documentation should learn from the example of Edelman which has never missed an O'Dwyer ranking since 1970 and now is more than five times the size of the next independent, APCO.

Edelman has been in the 12 O'Dwyer specialty rankings since they were started in 1992 and leads in eight of them. It is No. 2 in two others and No. 3 in one other. It has the largest PR offices in New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle.

Clients want to know exactly how many full time staffers are available and what are the net fees of the firm. Is the firm growing or shrinking?

Seitel advises clients to seek competitive bids, get references and interview them, negotiate down large retainer fees, avoid the "management audit," beware of hidden "extras," and only sign brief cancellation clauses.

NYT Ducks PR; Observer to Rescue

The Observer does not mind mentioning the O'Dwyer Co, including using a drawing of us and a number of our opinions. A business audience of 51,000 now knows about our existence which is something they would not learn via NYT. NYT in 1994 ignored a landmark U.S. District Court legal case won by the O'Dwyer Co. which was sued for $21 million by TJFR Publishing on charges of copyright violation, unfair competition, libel and slander. The decision allows reporters to write about other reporters without being accused of trying to damage the business of the other reporter.

The Observer article, loaded with enthusiasm and pizzazz, makes it sound like the New York PR community is a hotbed of intellectual intercourse where great minds meet and sharpen each other.

It used to be. More than 24 PR groups met regularly for lunch or dinner in the 1960s and 70s. The PR Society of America's monthly lunch at the Waldorf-Astoria drew nearly 300. Associations, companies and PR firms threw holiday parties to which reporters were invited and in some years several New York PR groups threw joint parties. All of this disappeared in the 1980s. Firms withdrew into their own silos. A/Es who once had substantial expense accounts were reduced to having brown bag lunches at their desks.

Let us hope the Observer will explore the reasons for this sea change which is so un-New York.

– Jack O'Dwyer

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