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MAINE SEEKS PR TO ATTRACT WORKERS

The state of Maine is seeking proposals from full-service marketing communications and public relations firms.



Maine's Department of Economic and Community Development, which works to enhance and sustain economic prosperity in the Pine Tree State, is looking for an agency that can develop and execute a two-year workforce attraction marketing campaign and plan that brands and promotes Maine as a great place to live and work.

The goal of the campaign is to target groups within the DECD's requested target audience pool—which includes workers and families with existing ties to Maine, as well as young families, recent college graduates, remote workers, new Americans and trained professionals living in other states.

Scope of work includes: creating a brand; developing a campaign to attract workers; using targeted paid advertising; utilizing public relations efforts to reach audiences via print, broadcast and online outlets; creating a tool kit to be used by Maine organizations interested in hiring; web design and web services; media services; account management services; and attending in-person meetings in Maine.

Proposals, due by 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 26, should go to the Division of Procurement Services: Proposals@maine.gov.
[Download the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

MORROW SODALI ACQUIRES POWERSCOURT

Morrow Sodali, a New York-headquartered shareholder engagement and governance advisory company owned by TPG Growth, acquires strategic communications consultancy



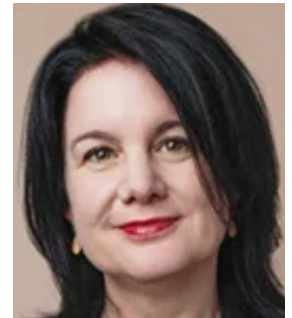
Powerscourt. The acquisition is part of Morrow Sodali's plans to build a full-service advisory and shareholder services practice across Europe, with TPG's backing.

Powerscourt founder and CEO Rory Godson and managing partner Victoria Palmer-Moore will remain with the business to help build out the European platform. Based in London and Dublin, Powerscourt specializes in financial and capital markets communications, corporate campaigning, ESG advisory and political affairs.

"Morrow Sodali is on a journey to become the undisputed best service provider in stakeholder relations and Powerscourt delivers complementary offerings in a key geography. The combination is also an ideal platform for growth," said Morrow Sodali CEO, international, Christian Sealey.

BOYDEN CRUISES TO BCW

Kristine Boyden, who was chief communications officer at Cruise, the self-driving automobile company, will join BCW Oct. 16 as CEO Americas.



Kristine Boyden

Mary Corcoran is leaving her job as BCW North America president by yearend.

During her three-year run at high-profile Cruise, Boyden built its communications department and its media analytics capability.

Earlier, she spent more than 18 years at Edelman and exited as president of the 650-member US western region operation.

At Edelman, Boyden counseled clients such as Genentech, Starbucks, PayPal, Taco Bell and Adobe.

BCW CEO Corey duBrowa, who was SVP-global communications at Starbucks, said he worked closely with Boyden and has "seen up close her rigorous approach and her unwavering commitment to talent development."

BCW is adding another Edelman alum as Michelle Hutton will join the WPP unit by the end of the year. She takes on global chief client & growth officer duties.

Hutton spent 13 years at Edelman, most recently as vice chair client-solutions, Asia-Pacific, and 19 years at Hill & Knowlton in Asia and Australia.

EDELMAN SMITHFIELD TAPS MORGAN ALUM

Edelman Smithfield brings Morgan Stanley managing director Kimberly Greenberger on board as a senior advisor.

At Morgan Stanley for more than 13 years, Greenberger focused on North American specialty apparel, department stores, and branded apparel and footwear. Prior to Morgan Stanley, she was a managing director at Citi, VP at Lehman Brothers, and VP at Credit Suisse.



Kimberly Greenberger

She has been frequently ranked among top analysts for coverage of the retail sector by *Institutional Investor* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

"Her over two decades of experience in the consumer and retail space will add invaluable perspective to our clients," said Edelman Smithfield global CEO Lex Suvanto. "She knows firsthand what it takes for consumer companies to successfully position themselves."

RF|BINDER ACQUIRES PEAKS STRATEGIES

[RF|Binder](#) has acquired Peaks Strategies, the New York-based financial services and capital markets firm launched by Tom Walek, who has more than 30 years of PR experience.



The firm will rebrand as RFB|Peaks Strategies and be led by executive managing director Armel Leslie, who began his career at Walek & Assocs. in 1999.

Walek sold Walek & Assocs. in 2013 to Peppercomm and then launched Peaks Strategies, which focuses on traditional/alternative asset management, private markets, technology and digital assets.

He will serve as senior counselor at RFB/Peaks Strategies. Amy Binder, CEO of RF|Binder, said the acquisition will better position her shop to exploit the opportunities for growth brought about by the digital transformation of the financial services sector.

LLOYDS HIRES HSBC VET BALAJI AS CMO

Suresh Balaji, who served as CMO for HSBC's Asia-Pacific region, joins Lloyds Banking Group as chief marketing officer.



Suresh Balaji

Balaji was most recently global head of marketing & communications at Standard Chartered Bank, based in Hong Kong. He previously spent 17 years at HSBC, holding various regional, country and global leadership roles. Before coming to HSBC, Balaji served in marketing and sales roles at WPP, GSK and United Breweries.

At Lloyds, he will oversee the group-wide brand, marketing and experience function, including such functions as creating and maintaining the Group's portfolio of brands, developing marketing strategies, and designing customer experiences.

LIBYAN PARLIAMENT CALLS ON VOGEL GROUP

The Vogel Group has agreed to provide government affairs and media consulting services to Libya's parliament, which is based in the eastern city of Tobruk and backs general Khalifah Haftar



It has a \$1.1M one-year contract that went into effect Oct. 1.

Vogel Group will conduct outreach to the White House, State Dept., Treasury Dept., US Agency for International Development, think tanks, and public policy groups on behalf of the Libyans.

It also will reach out to print, broadcast, and digital media outlets and support press conferences.

Alex Vogel, who was counsel to former Republican Majority Leader Bill Frist; and general counsel to the National Republican Senatorial Committee, oversees the work.

He is assisted by Samir Kapadia, head of Vogel Group's trade practice and former aide to Virginia Democratic Senator Mark Warner and Republican Congressman Frank Wolf.

ON THE MOVE

BCW promotes **Scott Wilson** to CEO of its newly formed EMEA region, and tabs **Guido Gaona** to serve as president, Latin America, responsible for all of the agency's business and talent across Latin America, inclusive of BCW Brazil Group.

Wilson had been BCW president, Europe & Africa, for the past five years. He was previously UK CEO and managing director of EMEA under Cohn & Wolfe. Gaona was most recently executive VP, LatAm,



Scott Wilson, Guido Gaona

leading BCW's Mexico market. In addition to holding several other positions with BCW in Latin America, he has also worked with PPR Worldwide and SAP in Mexico.

Federal Science Partners, which works with national research facilities, higher education institutions, and leading corporations and non-profits to enhance their public policy agendas as well as attract and retain funding, hires John Martens as a partner. Martens was most recently senior advisor for the House Committee on Appropriations. Prior to the full Appropriations Committee, he was staff director for the subcommittees on financial services; commerce, justice and science; and interior appropriations. At FSP, Martens will advise, manage and negotiate bills with chairs, ranking members and staff in both the House and Senate.

Brunswick Group appoints **Akiko Karaki** as a partner in Tokyo. Karaki joins the firm from PwC's Strategy& unit, where she was a partner, advising consumer-facing companies, financial institutions and healthcare and life sciences clients on corporate strategy and sustainability-related matters. She previously held senior roles at McKinsey & Company, J.P. Morgan and Credit Agricole. In her new post, Karaki will advise Japanese companies globally and international clients with operations in Japan on financial, regulatory and political and social issues.



Akiko Karaki

ROKK Solutions brings on BCW managing director **Mike Waterman** as a senior VP. At BCW, Waterman was the leader in corporate and technology issues, building relationships with colleagues and advising clients in Brussels, Beijing, Singapore and Seoul. After starting his career as press secretary to Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Waterman worked at agencies including Ketchum, Hyde Park Communications and Ruder Finn, in addition to serving as a VP at Zenon Group and Levick.

Nintex, a platform that manages, automates and optimizes business processes for public and private sector organizations, appoints **Mini Peiris** as CMO. Peiris was most recently CMO at Doma, which uses machine intelligence to conduct real estate transactions. She has also served as CMO at Elementum VP, worldwide marketing at NetSuite. In her new role, Peiris will be responsible for shaping and executing Nintex's global go-to-market strategy.

JOHN KIRBY: THE REAL WH PRESS SECRETARY

The nominal White House Press Secretary is a perfectly likable woman named Karine Jean-Pierre, who talks passionately about her justifiable pride in being the first Black and gay woman to hold this important position.



Fraser Seitel

A year and a half into her tenure as President Biden's Press Secretary, Ms. Jean-Pierre has demonstrated the danger of planting an under-qualified candidate into the highest-stress public relations position on the planet. In the face of withering and often unfair badgering by a rabid White House press corps, Ms. Jean-Pierre is unsteady

at best and unnerved at worst.

A week after Ms. Jean-Pierre's historic appointment as White House Press Secretary, a former Navy admiral named John Kirby, who had previously served as Chief Spokesman at both the State and Defense Departments, was quietly recruited to slide in as the National Security Council Coordinator for Strategic Communications.

Today, with wars in Ukraine and Israel dominating the Biden agenda, Kirby is the one whom the media and the public turn to for answers on Biden policy, principles and practice.

Public relations professionals who deal with the media can learn much from Mr. Kirby. Typical are the media interview lessons embedded in this excerpt from Kirby's Fox News interview in the days after Hamas' vicious attack on Israel.

First, deliver your "key messages."

The primary responsibility for any media interviewee is to make sure you quickly and clearly lay out the "key messages" your employer needs you to deliver. In the case of the Biden Administration relative to Hamas, one burning early question was the U.S. response to Iran's alleged involvement.

Initially, the U.S. disagreed with media reports that Iran masterminded the Hamas attacks, and Biden spokesmen tiptoed on blaming Iran. Here's how Mr. Kirby dealt with Fox interviewer Martha MacCallum on this delicate issue.

MM: "One of the big questions is why there seems to be a hesitance or curious deference to calling out Iran's involvement in all this. What would you say to people like former Defense Department Secretary Mark Esper who find this puzzling?"

JK: "I would tell the former Secretary of Defense that we're looking hard at the intel stream and just haven't seen any specific, tangible intelligence that the regime in Tehran was a witting resource participant in these specific attacks. But I also want to make it clear that we absolutely believe in the broad complicity of Iran here."

Second, back up key messages with factual evidence.

Most people are dubious about politicians and public relations mouthpieces for good reason. Much of the time, they speak well but say little, preferring to deal in generalities rather than backstopping their arguments with hard facts.

Here's how Mr. Kirby scuttled Ms. MacCallum's skepticism with evidence.

MM: "What's the difference, John? What's the difference?"

JK: "What I'm saying is we're looking at it, but we haven't yet seen the direct evidence. And if people are looking at us and saying 'you've gotta hold Iran accountable,' my good-

ness, Martha, take a look at what we've done in just two-and-a-half years. More than 400 entities in Iran sanctioned just by this Administration, 300 of them in the last year. We've bolstered our military presence, not just in the Eastern Med but in the Gulf region as well."

Third, don't get defensive, but don't give away the store.

Often, the reason someone's hired as a spokesperson is because there are some questions your employer simply wants no part of. They expose sensitive conundrums in which the organization finds itself with no clear answers.

The trick is to answer without getting defensive while avoiding saying too much, which would cause more problems.

MM: "We have this issue of the \$6 billion and why the White House won't come forward and say that money is absolutely not available, not that it hasn't been touched but that if it were requested, it would be denied."

JK: "Yeah, we're watching that money like a hawk, as you might imagine Martha. And you're right, not a dime of it has been spent. And we're watching it very, very closely."

Fourth, speak conversationally not robotically; say it like you mean it.

Media training teaches novice interviewees to engrain in their minds those key messages they need to repeat over and over again. A believable spokesman must be able to mix it up with a savvy interviewer and elaborate, risking all the what-ifs, hypotheticals and possibilities that real conversations entail.

MM: "Why not just say they will not be permitted to tap into any of the \$6 billion, rather than you're watching it. That sounds like you could watch them come access some of it."

JK: "Let's say they tried to access it last week with an approved transaction. What would happen is, Martha, we would validate if it was an approved request for food, medicine, crops, that kind of thing, and then we would select the vendors who would go buy that stuff and then ship it into Iran directly through humanitarian organizations to get to the Iranian people. The regime in Tehran would never see a dime of it."

Fifth, finish with "the vivid air signed with your honor."

That's how the Greeks put it. It means, "end strong." Don't let the interviewer browbeat you into giving an inch. And finish up memorably, reprising your key messages.

Here's how Mr. Kirby concluded his contentious interview with Ms. MacCallum.

MM: "It feels like there's a reluctance to step on the toes of Iran, John."

JK: "No ma'am. I'm sorry Martha, I just don't agree with that. Not at all. I've gone through a lot of it. We've issued 400 sanctions against Iran. We're not in discussions about the Iran deal anymore since they weren't negotiating in good faith. We are not losing sight of the threat that Iran poses."

Historically, the best Presidential press secretaries—Ari Fleischer and Tony Snow to George H.W. Bush, Robert Gibbs and Josh Earnest to Barack Obama, Ms. Psaki to Mr. Biden—weren't only trusted advisors but also supremely confident and competent media spokespeople.

John Kirby is rapidly earning his place on this short list of history's greatest White House Press Secretaries. Even if, technically, he isn't one.

Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 40 years. He is the author of the Pearson text "The Practice of Public Relations," now in its 14th edition, and co-author of "Rethinking Reputation" and "Idea Wise." He may be reached directly at yusake@aol.com.

MA WANTS TO HIGHLIGHT ABUSE OF DISABLED

The Disabled Persons Protection Commission of Massachusetts wants bids to handle its \$200K budget for a public awareness campaign about how it protects adults with disabilities from abusive acts or omissions conducted by caregivers.



The effort will hike awareness of the different types of abuse experienced by people with disabilities and how to report abuse through the Adult Protective Services program.

The selected partner will determine the appropriate communications channels required to spread DPPC's messaging.

It will create three short videos to serve as educational resources for law enforcement personnel, medical professionals and other relevant stakeholders.

The videos will cover intellectual and developmental (IDD) disabilities, augmented communication, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and age-related disorders.

DPPC, which may hire multiple firms for the campaign, will issue 11-month contracts.

Responses are due Oct. 27. Interested parties must register at the [Bay State's electronic portal](#).

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

EDELMAN ALUM TAKES JPA HEALTH POST

Tish Van Dyke, a 20-year [Edelman](#) vet, is joining [JPA Health](#) as an EVP to lead its Public Health and One Health offerings, based in the agency's Washington, DC office.



Tish Van Dyke

Most recently, Van Dyke was a founder of fluid-collective, a global network of senior advisors working with organizations tackling communications-intensive business issues.

At Edelman, she oversaw the agency's efforts to build offerings in health and technology and health and food.

In her new role, Van Dyke will work with clients to expand their visibility and impact to create lasting, positive change that will improve people's health and wellbeing.

JOELE FRANK HANDLES STARTEK'S DEAL

Joele Frank handles Denver-based Startek as the business processing outsourcing firm agrees to be acquired by Capital Square Partners. The \$4.30 per share offer represents a 32 percent premium over Startek's closing stock price on Oct. 9.



Startek, which has 32K employees in 11 countries, recorded a \$6.5M Q2 loss on \$91M revenues, which were down five percent.

CEO Bharat Rao said volatility in the broader economic environment impacted client decision-making and elongated sales cycles. He called US market a bright spot that is targeted for expansion.

Founded in 2014 in Singapore, Capital Square Partners has \$1.4B in assets under management.

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher's Matt Sherman, Viveca Tress and Kaitlin Kikal work the deal.

SAUDI DAIRY GIANT TAPS MARSON MEDIA

Phoenix-based Marson Media has signed on to develop a strategic communications plan for Saudi Arabia's Fondomonte, owner of an alfalfa farm in Arizona that is a big drain on the state's dwindling water supply.

Fondomonte is part of Almarai, which bills itself as the world's largest vertically integrated dairy company. The Saudi Investment Fund owns a 16 percent stake in Almarai.

The Butler Valley farm pumps an unlimited amount of groundwater, free of charge, to irrigate its water-thirsty alfalfa crop, which is then shipped to Saudi Arabia to feed dairy cows. Saudi Arabia banned alfalfa farms in 2018 in a bid to preserve its water resources.

Marson Media's six-month contract, which went into effect Aug. 4, is worth \$11,500 a month.

Prior to launching his firm in 2012, Barrett Marson worked as a journalist and handled communications for the Arizona House of Representatives and Dept. of Corrections.



MOTION ACQUIRES RICK MILLER COMMS

[Motion](#), a Chicago-based, woman-owned agency that works with clients across the consumer, healthcare, non-profit, manufacturing and B2B industries, is acquiring Cincinnati-based Rick Miller Communications, effective January 1, 2024.

RMC founder and principal Rick Miller will continue in his current role until the end of the year, after which he will support clients as a consultant. Mike Gehrig, previously a partner at FINN Partners, will assume the role of managing director of Motion's Cincinnati office. Founded in 2009, RMC has provided public relations and content services, issues management, executive counseling and digital analytics to health care and consumer clients such as Myriad Genetics, Bethesda Inc./bi3, Lindner Center of HOPE and the Golden Lamb.

"Cincinnati is where I was born and raised," said Motion CEO and founder Kimberly Eberl. "I know how abundant the business opportunities are in the region, so when the chance to bring RMC onboard was presented it was an obvious move."



FGS GLOBAL ADDS KIRKMAN

[FGS Global](#) hires Michelle Kirkman as a director. Kirkman was most recently communications director for Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA), ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee, leading the Congresswoman's communications engagement in Washington, DC and Silicon Valley.

Before that, she was VP, public affairs at Monument Advocacy, where she worked with Fortune 500 companies to advance their advocacy efforts in Washington, DC. She has also worked at the U.S. Navy Office of Information, and a Democratic political polling and consulting firm.

At FGS, she will be working on the agency's health team.



Michelle Kirkman

UC-IRVINE SEEKS TO BOLSTER REPUTATION

University of California, Irvine is looking for a firm to support its campus communications efforts, national and local media relations outreach, public affairs and community relations needs.



Founded in 1965, UCI has more than 36K students, 224 degree programs and an anteater mascot. It is Orange County's largest employer, contributing \$7B annually to the local economy and \$8B statewide.

The selected PR partner will supplement UCI's Office of Strategic & Public Affairs efforts and address any unmet needs.

The work product must help integrate disparate enterprise needs under a single UCI brand and advance the reputation of the teaching, research, and service mission of UCI.

The University plans to issue a two-year contact with options to renew for four two-year periods.

Responses are due Oct. 27. Interested firms must register at the [University of California e-procurement site](#).

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

KARV COMMUNICATIONS REBRANDS

KARV Communications has branded to KARV to reflect the expanded services capabilities that the New York firm offers its clients.



CEO Andrew Frank said the firm has evolved beyond its crisis management, litigation communications, and strategic PR base to include public affairs, advisory services and CEO counseling.

The revamped KARV will provide counsel "on a broader strategic level that can help clients navigate challenges, overcome obstacles to success, and devise pathways to growth and expansion," said Frank.

KARV also bolstered its executive ranks with the addition of Alana Abramson, who was a White House and congressional reporter for Time, and veteran of ABC News and CNN.

BRANDSTRUP PILOTS PR AT SAS

Scandinavian Airlines has recruited Mads Brandstrup for the SVP-communications and PA position, effective Jan. 1.

He replaces Karin Nyman and will report to EVP & chief of staff Carina Malmgren Heander.



Mads Brandstrup

Brandstrup has political experience, earned as special advisor to Denmark's Minister of Finance and head of press & communications for the Danish Social Democratic Party.

Since 2021, he has served as CEO of the Danish Media Assn.

The airline on Oct. 11 announced that it would defer interest payments on debts due Oct. 23 and Oct. 26 as part of its SAS Forward voluntary Chapter 11 process in the US.

The carrier, which is a member of the 26-strong Star Alliance, reported that it served 2.3M passengers in September, up 17 percent from a year ago.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Strategic Objectives is partnering with **Cuisinart** on the launch of the company's new Indoor Pizza Oven. The launch campaign for the product begins this month and will include social media programming and consumer contesting. The company says that with the Cuisinart® Indoor Pizza Oven, enthusiasts can achieve authentic Neapolitan pizzas in under five minutes thanks to radiant heat that can reach 700°F. "Strategic Objectives is the right agency to help share this message with Canadians," said Cuisinart digital marketing manager Saverio D'Angelo. "They'll spotlight our unwavering commitment to culinary artistry by showcasing our new pizza oven's distinctive features."



Jamison Golf Group is selected as public relations agency of record for **American Fit**, a company that designs and manufactures golf apparel. Jamison Golf Group will work to elevate American Fit's brand presence in the golf industry through a public relations program for its exclusive lines of men's, women's and juniors clothing. Long established as a private label manufacturer for major golf brands, American Fit, owned by Valgroup International, is now entering the golf apparel sector.

5WPR is selected as the public relations agency of record for **Arbol**, a global climate-risk coverage platform and fintech company. 5W will work to position the company as an industry-leading parametric insurance provider and insurtech platform that provides solutions for companies impacted by climate risk or extreme weather. The agency is also tasked with establishing Arbol's offering as an essential product for farmers and those in the alternative/renewable energy space.

360PR+ scoops up PR duties for **Vermont Creamery, B Corp**-Certified makers of artisanal cheese and cultured butter.

The agency will work to introduce new products and share Vermont Creamery's differentiating points of taste, craftsmanship and sustainability. Vermont Creamery's products include fresh goat cheese, soft-ripened aged cheeses, culinary creams including mascarpone and crème fraîche, as well as cultured butter.



"360's expertise in amplifying mission-driven brands resonated with our vision to connect with and captivate consumers," said Vermont Creamery general manager Harrison Kahn.

V2 Communications signs on with **Exo, Health Gorilla** and **Neura Health**, deepening its foothold in the healthcare technology market. For Exo, a medical imaging company that combines AI, hardware, and workflow software create efficiencies, accelerate diagnosis, and dramatically improve patient outcomes, V2 was brought on to amplify the importance of modern point-of-care ultrasound technology. Privacy-focused health information network Health Gorilla tapped V2 to raise the profile of the healthcare interoperability category and underscore why Health Gorilla's platform is critical to delivering better healthcare. For Neura Health, a virtual neurology clinic on a mission to improve the access and quality of neurological care, V2 is working to raise awareness of the problem it is solving by developing and promoting thought leadership.

COMMENTARY



Bob Menendez

Embattled New Jersey Senator Bob “Gold Bar” Menendez is a big fan of the Foreign Agents Registration Act. FARA, though, is going to bite him.

In May 2020, Menendez wrote a letter to the Justice Dept. urging an investigation of a former Congressman for failing to register under FARA. “The Act is clear that acting directly or indirectly in any capacity on behalf of a foreign principal trig-

gers the requirement to register under FARA,” he wrote. Correct.

In a 2022 follow-up to attorney general Merrick Garland, Menendez wrote that if a former member of Congress “carried out work that requires him to register under FARA, it is imperative that the Justice Dept. ensure he is held to account.” Well done.

The Justice Dept. now has a golden opportunity to hold Menendez to account.

Federal prosecutors released a superseding indictment on Oct. 12, alleging that Menendez and his wife, Nadine, conspired to have him serve as an agent of Egypt.

Bob and Nadine are alleged to have received hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes in exchange for his influence as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

It would be sweet justice if the new FARA charge is added to the pile of the Senator’s legal headaches.

No terrorists, here. The BBC has defended its policy of not using the word “terrorists” in reporting on the slaughter of more than 1,000 civilians in southern Israel on Oct. 7. The Beeb described the Hamas killers as “militants.”

The BBC believes the word “terrorist” can be a barrier rather than an aid to understanding.

Its role is to provide a full narrative of what has happened so the audience can make its own decision about the consequences of the event.

While the BBC shuns the word “terrorist,” the use of “attacker,” “insurgent,” “kidnapper” and “gunman” is okay.

The BBC is splitting hairs.

Words of wisdom. Mark Thompson, former director-general of the BBC and *New York Times* CEO, told his new charges at CNN not to become distracted by the drama swirling around the future of the network.

He told them to follow their news instincts and avoid being sucked into the never-ending media navel-gazing, and chatter about who is up and down.

“Let’s not second guess ourselves or get distracted by complicated arguments about balance or whataboutism or false equivalency. Let’s cover political news proportionately and fairly, but not be afraid of our own shadows.”

With its global reach, CNN is more vital than ever with breaking news from the Middle East and the struggle in Ukraine.

Thompson is the right person to revive the fortunes of CNN.

Fox News and *New York Post* go hunting... Fox News has given Hunter Biden just about the same coverage as Donald Trump, according to a report by the Stanford Cable TV News Analyzer. The president’s son received an average 27 minutes of coverage per month over the past year, compared to 33 minutes for the ex-president.

Joe Biden earned 56 minutes of coverage.

The *New York Post*, which is also owned by Rupert Murdoch, also went all-in for Hunter.

The paper ran a whopping 784 stories which either featured or mentioned Biden, compared to 821 for his dad, according to LexisNexis.

Florida’s governor Ron DeSantis is a big loser in the Murdoch properties’ fixation on Hunter, which is also a great way to divert attention from the four-time indicted ex-president.

DeSantis received 12 minutes of coverage from Fox and earned 562 mentions from the Post.

That is part of the reason why his presidential run fizzled.

The Boomtown Rats don’t like Mondays but Publicis CEO Arthur Sadoun sure does.

That’s why he wants the Publicis gang to be at their desks bright and early on Mondays, beginning in January.

The Frenchman believes the extended work from home weekends stifle creativity and collaboration.

“We have to admit that a disproportionate part of remote working is actually leading to siloed work, less collaboration, sometimes stunted creativity, fewer innovations and decreasing productivity,” he said in a video announcing a new policy that requires all hands in on Monday.

Sadoun believes the beauty of working in the office on Monday is that “everyone starts the week together.”

Will Arthur be doing Monday morning head counts?

The Israeli government was invisible in the days following the Oct. 7 terror attack by Hamas, said reporters at *The Economist* on a webinar conducted Oct. 12..

That’s because members of prime minister’s Benjamin Netanyahu’s right-wing government didn’t want to experience close-up the rage of Israel’s citizens over the military and intelligence failure that allowed the assault.

Anton LaGuardia, diplomatic correspondent, said there will soon be a large day of reckoning for Netanyahu.

Gregg Carlstrom, Middle East correspondent, said Netanyahu is a master of the “divide and rule” form of government. He creates “schisms” between Israel’s right and left wing, and between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. And then he plays each side against the other.

Netanyahu refuses to negotiate with the more moderate Palestinian Authority over the future of West Bank. But prior to Oct. 7, Netanyahu treated Hamas as the legitimate government of Gaza and cut deals with it, said Carlstrom.

LaGuardia and Carlstrom agree that Netanyahu is a survivor as Israel’s longest-serving prime minister.

Though Bibi suffered a big blow on Oct. 7, “You can never count him out,” said Carlstrom. —Kevin McCauley