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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

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THERANOS' BUCHANAN TO WHOLE FOODS

Brooke Buchanan, VP of corporate communications for embattled blood diagnostics company Theranos, has moved to Whole Foods Market as global VP of communications and government affairs.

Buchanan is a former communications director for Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and served as national press secretary for his 2008 presidential campaign.

She exits Theranos at the company's nadir as the once-promising and heavily funded start-up faces regulatory probes and a two-year ban of its founder and CEO Elizabeth Holmes. Buchanan left Theranos in July.

At Austin-based Whole Foods, Buchanan heads PR, internal communications and government affairs. She worked in corporate communications with Williams-Sonoma, the San Francisco-based retailer, and Wal-Mart. Global PR head Kate Lowery left in November for Homeway.com.

Whole Foods announced Buchanan's hire along with its new global VP of marketing, Sonya Gafsi Oblisk of Wal-Mart, and global VP of HR, Martin Tracey of Starbucks.



Buchanan

HOFFMAN YORK BOOKS MONTANA TOURISM

Milwaukee-based Hoffman York has won tourism marketing duties for Montana, following a review that consolidated its roster of firms.

The \$7M-a-year account attracted 11 bidders and was last reviewed in 2013. Bozeman-based MercuryCSC was the 10-year incumbent agency of record but did not pitch.

The Montana Office of Tourism released an RFP in April for the work, covering advertising, PR, digital and social media.

Meg O'Leary, director of the state's Dept. of Commerce, noted out-of-state visitors contributed \$3.7B to Montana's economy in 2015. She said the state hopes to take advantage of the "efficiencies" of a consolidated, integrated contract, in addition to relying on "in-state and competitive market expertise."

Hoffman York is partnering with Shortgrass Web Development of Great Falls as its local presence. The one-year contract carries six option years.

Troy Peterson, CEO of Hoffman York, said "We are confident that our seamless integrated services offering and approach can deliver the vision established by Montana Tourism."

2020 CENSUS SHIFTS \$415M AD, PR PACT

The Census Bureau has awarded its \$415M integrated communications account to WPP's Young & Rubicam, following a competitive review that started last December.

Interpublic-owned Draftfcb (now FCB) was the incumbent, handling the 2010 count. IPG's Weber Shandwick was the main PR contractor for 2010.

"To respect the integrity of the award, debrief and protest stages of the federal procurement process and the laws that govern it, we will not comment on the award until the protest period has ended," the Census Bureau said in a statement.

The work runs the gamut of advertising, PR and marketing. Y&R's win could open the door for WPP-owned PR units Burson-Marsteller, Cohn & Wolfe or Y&R PR to lead the PR portion of the census work.

The review stretches back to December 2015, when the Census Bureau first issued a draft RFP. The final, 255-page RFP went out in January and finalists pitched in April and May.

The Bureau pointed O'Dwyer's to its official statement above regarding the award of the contract for 2020. "We are not able to say any more at this time," said a public information officer.

United States Census 2020

W20 GROUP ACQUIRES PURE COMMS.

Marketing and communications network W20 Group has acquired Wilmington, NC-based life sciences PR agency Pure Communications.

Financial terms of the deal were not publicly disclosed.

Pure, which maintains a second office in Cambridge, MA, was founded in 2004 and staffs 30. The agency was launched by CEO Andrea Johnston, a veteran of Ketchum, Bayer Diagnostics, DuPont Merck and DeVries PR.



Weiss, Johnston

The agency has developed PR programs for clients such as bluebird bio, Third Rock Ventures and Loxo Oncology, among others.

(Continued on page 2)

OBAMA PR AIDE RACUSEN TO SNAPCHAT

Obama White House communications hand Rachel Racusen is returning to the private sector as director of communications for Snapchat.

Racusen, former VP of communications for MSNBC in a seven-month stint there, returned to the White House last year after a first-term stint directing public affairs for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

She worked in the agency realm at Dittus Communications and SKD-Knickerbocker.

Racusen signs on to Snapchat in New York on Sept. 19.

Snapchat communications chief Jill Hazelbaker departed in October for Uber. Burson-Marsteller alum Mary Ritti is VP of communications out of the company's base in Venice, Calif.

The social media app has grown widely in the past two or three years from a salacious photo-sharing phenomenon to an established media platform for brands.

The *Washington Post*, which first reported Racusen's move, said she will lead development of communications strategies for global content and crisis communications, among other responsibilities.



Racusen

BOEING ENLISTS MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER

Florent Groberg, a retired US Army captain who was awarded the Medal of Honor, has been hired as director of veterans outreach for Boeing in Washington.

Groberg, a motivational speaker, spent the past seven months as spokesman for LinkedIn based in the capital to promote the company's free veterans job search program.

Boeing said Groberg will develop and implement a company-wide giving and engagement strategy for Boeing work on behalf of veterans and their families. He will also head community engagement in the eastern US.

Groberg received the Medal of Honor, the country's highest military honor, for heroism in combat in Afghanistan in 2012.

Boeing government relations senior VP Tim Keating said Groberg's lessons from the battlefield "including the importance of teamwork, trust, discipline and selflessness will be invaluable" to the company.

Boeing is one of the US military's top contractors.



Groberg

KEANE TAKES PA ROLE FOR US BISHOPS

Judy Keane, who directed media relations and strategic communications for Arizona State University, is moving to the US Conference of Catholic Bishops as director its office of public affairs.

The Washington-based Conference, which operates on a \$180M-a-year budget, is the face and voice of the Catholic church hierarchy in the US. Louisville Archbishop Joseph Kurtz is the current president.

Keane was spokeswoman, communications advisor and day-to-day crisis lead for ASU, in addition to social media and content duties.

At the UCCB, she reports to chief communications officer James Rogers, who joined last year.

Like Rogers, Keane has a health-care PR background as she was public information officer and communications manager of Maricopa Integrated Health System and manager for the Mayo Clinic Arizona.

She started out in TV news in Phoenix.

Keane takes up the Conference post on Sept. 12. She is the author of "Single and Catholic: Finding Meaning in Your State of Life" (Sophia Institute Press 2016).

"Judy brings an impressive wealth of professional experience in communications, I'm confident that she will bring valuable service to the Conference," said Rogers.



Keane

W20 ACQUIRES PURE (Continued from pg. 1)

Pure will now be combined with W20's analytics-focused marketing and communications agency Brewlife. The name of the newly merged entity, which effectively becomes part of W20 Group and will have access to the network's dozen offices in the U.S. and Europe, is forthcoming. Both agencies will work cooperatively but independently for the time being, with the launch of a new brand name and presence slated to rollout in early 2017.

Johnston will lead this new unit in the role of president. Former Brewlife president Carolyn Wang departed the agency for Google health start-up, Verily Life Sciences. Verily is a Pure client.

Pure's two offices remain intact in light of the merger. San Francisco-based Brewlife, which was founded in 2013, maintains an additional presence in New York, Los Angeles, Boston, San Diego and Austin.

W20 Group chairman and CEO Jim Weiss said the newly combined entity adds Pure's investor relations and media training expertise to Brewlife's research analytics capabilities. W20, which focuses on tech and global brands and also owns agencies Twist Mktg and WCG, was founded in 2001.

"At the end of the day, what pushes us is what our clients need, and what they'd like is more in the start-up world from one firm, as opposed to getting their services from a number of firms, and this partnership will enable us to offer our clients a synergistic reach and a set of capabilities that neither of us had before," Weiss told O'Dwyer's.

"From my perspective, it's all about the clients and our people, and the opportunity to be part of this great platform," Johnston told O'Dwyer's. "Combining with an amazing team at Brewlife allows us to create opportunities for clients as well as our employees, so this is going to be beneficial across the board."

Pure Communications enlisted Petsky Prunier to serve as M&A advisors in the transaction.

NEWSPAPER ASSN. DROPS 'NEWSPAPER'

Trade group the Newspaper Association of America has dropped "newspaper" from its name and re-branded as the News Media Alliance in a bid to highlight the industry's "evolution" to digital content.

The Arlington, Va.-based group of 2,000 member organizations is unveiling the change today, including a full-page ad in the *New York Times* depicting a millennial girl reading a digital tablet. "All industries periodically face disruptive market and technology changes, and like many others before us, I believe we will come out of it stronger," said NMA president and CEO David Chavern.

While the Internet and digital content have hammered newspaper circulations, the industry says it is optimistic that there is a larger consumer audience for news.

The trade group is also opening up to members primarily based in digital media and will overhaul its annual trade show, slated for New Orleans in 2017 to focus on the future of news media. Membership has slipped by about 700 organizations over the past eight years.

Michael MaLoon, VP for innovation for the NMA, said the name change is "designed to show the positive trajectory of the industry and to share the innovation and growth taking place, especially in the digital space."

Chavern told the *Times*: "'Newspaper' is not a big enough word to describe the industry anymore. The future of this industry is much broader."

FOX APOLOGIZES, SETTLES HARASS. SUIT

Fox News parent 21st Century Fox has settled a high-profile harassment suit by former host Gretchen Carlson for \$20M and apologized for the company's treatment of Carlson, who has hired a high-powered Hollywood PR firm.

Carlson's suit, alleging sexual harassment against Fox News chairman Roger Ailes, rocked the media giant and led to the ouster of Ailes, one of the industry's most influential and powerful figures.

"We sincerely regret and apologize for the fact that Gretchen was not treated with the respect and dignity that she and all of our colleagues deserve," the company said in a stunning apology issued jointly with a statement from Carlson.

Carlson filed the suit in early July and the settlement comes just two months later, but after a barrage of nega-



NAA ad in the New York Times announces re-brand as News Media Alliance.

tive press and accusations by other women who worked for the network.

Carlson said she is "gratified that 21st Century Fox took decisive action after I filed my complaint," adding she is "ready to move on to the next chapter of my life." She said she will "redouble my efforts to empower women in the workplace."

The *Hollywood Reporter* said today that Carlson has hired PMK*BNC CEO Cindi Berger as her new PR rep.

Fox praised Carlson for "exhibit[ing] the highest standards of journalism and professionalism" and building a loyal audience. "We are proud that she was part of the Fox News team," the company's statement said.

Longtime Fox News host Greta Van Susteren left the network after the settlement was announced. "Fox has not felt like home to me for a few years and I took advantage of the clause in my contract which allows me to leave now," she said via Facebook.



Ailes

AIRBNB COMBATS DISCRIMINATION STIGMA

Popular online lodging marketplace AirBnB has introduced a sweeping series of policy changes aimed at curtailing discrimination against travelers who use the site.

In a 32-page report issued today, titled "Airbnb's Work to Fight Discrimination and Build Inclusion," the San Francisco-based company outlined its new nondiscrimination policy. That policy mandates all users after November 1 to sign a "community commitment," wherein they agree to "treat all fellow members of this community, regardless of race, religion, national origin, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or age, with respect, and without judgment or bias."

Those policy changes come after the property rental resource took a PR hit earlier this year, when the media reported on numerous instances of discrimination from travelers using the site. Airbnb, which requires prospective renters to provide photographs of themselves, drew criticism from many minority travelers who said they experienced difficulty booking reservations or were turned away from making reservations on certain dates only to see those listings later booked by others.

A study from the Harvard Business School later found that renters with African American sounding names were about 16 percent less likely to be accepted for reservations than renters whose names sounded Caucasian. A hashtag, #AirbnbWhileBlack, became popular on Twitter. One user even filed a civil-rights lawsuit against the site.



Carlson

PR & SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS & VIEWS

THE DECLINE OF THE EDITORIAL CALENDAR

By Jon Schubin

My first job in public relations was only a decade ago, but it was a different world.

As an assistant account executive, I was required to keep a three-inch binder full of materials regarding a client, including a full media list, copies of important emails, printouts of the client's website and a list of editorial calendars.

These calendars would be compiled during a three-week rush in the late fall, when every employee below a certain level would be required to call publications and request access to documents.

Editorial calendars fill three roles. First, they direct reporting staff on topics to cover throughout the year, helping ease the weekly or monthly burden of empty pages.

They also let advertisers know about special sections, allowing them to reach niche sponsors and place specific ads. And for public relations professionals, the editorial calendar also allowed the chance to know in advance about a feature that might be relevant to the client.

The editorial calendar was comforting to all parties. Every month there would be an opportunity or two in an industry trade publication.

It wasn't the entirety of a program, of course, but it was a reliable element. Call an editor a few weeks in advance of an issue hitting the newsstands, tell them why a client would be a worthwhile inclusion, and arrange an interview.

Those days are over.

Like so many relics of the print-dominated age of communication, it was a slow death. Much like the list of stocks in the business section or the faxed press release, every year the editorial calendar hunt slowly brought in fewer results.

There would be times in the year — usually slow moments in the middle of the summer — when a boss would suggest to account executives to get a needed client hit through editorial calendars.

We'd consult the binder and meekishly shrug our shoulders. The cupboard was empty.

Technology helped facilitate this decline. Many trade publications reduced publication schedules. Online journals were seldom bound by content devised months in advance.

Major newspapers pulled back as well, usually to just a few reliable features and pullout sections.

Today the editorial calendar landscape is much like the Byzantine Empire in the thirteenth century: a rapidly declining state merely pretending to carry out tradition. Calendars are now available to nearly everyone with a click, through services like Gorkana and Cision.

But the information contained inside them is usually simply a suggestion of what might be happening that particular week.

I remember one conversation with a *Financial Times* editor who described their publication's — still quite robust — calendar as a mere "guess" at what they might



Schubin

want to do.

This makes sense, as it's really quite rare that a supplement matches its original time and description.

Replacing editorial calendars underscores something even more old-fashioned: relationships.

In order to understand what may interest a particular reporter, it's important to get a feel for them. Follow their writing. See the types of experts they quote. Speak to them on the phone. Use individual or more transactional email exchanges to push for a larger conversation. Follow them on Twitter to see their thoughts in near-real time.

We're in an era where figuring out how to participate in the news cycle requires actually reading some news. And that's a good thing.

Jon Schubin is vice president at Cognito.

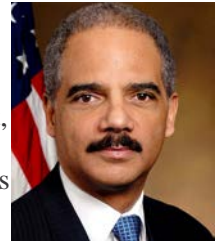
AIRBNB FIGHTS STIGMA (Cont'd from pg 3)

In response, Airbnb in June outlined an initial nondiscrimination policy, stating that hosts may not turn away guests based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

The same month, the company hired Laura Murphy, former director of the ACLU's Washington legislative office, as an advisor to review how Airbnb handles discrimination.

Former Attorney General Eric Holder was also brought aboard to help update the company's anti-discrimination policy. Murphy authored the report that was released today.

Airbnb's updated nondiscrimination policy reduces the role guest photos play in the booking process and introduces an instant booking feature, as well as the addition of a "permanent, full-time product team" of engineers, researchers and designers whose goal is to combat hosting discrimination and root out bias on the site.



Holder

The site has also initiated a new "open doors" policy, wherein guests that have been the victims of discrimination will be found alternative lodgings, and the site will employ a new feature that automatically blocks reservation calendars for additional bookings once a host claims their residence is not available during those dates.

The *New York Times* reported Airbnb's new rules supersede many states' anti-discrimination laws. Current Fair Housing Act rules do not apply to all Airbnb hosting environments, as exemptions exist for rooming houses, bed-and-breakfasts, and living situations in which owners co-occupy living quarters with guests, all provisions that may apply to some Airbnb listings.

AirBnB, which now maintains 19 offices worldwide, is currently home to more than two million listings. The company recently threatened to file a lawsuit in the State of New York if Governor Andrew Cuomo signs into law an "unlawful" bill that would prohibit advertisements for short-term rentals. Renting units for fewer than 30 days is illegal in New York City if the lease holder isn't present.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS

NYC MEDIA SUES MAYOR'S OFFICE OVER PR

The New York Post and local cable news channel NY1 News have filed a lawsuit against New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and his administration over its alleged refusal to produce e-mail exchanges between the Mayor and several of his key advisors.

According to a September 7 verified petition and complaint filed in New York County Supreme Court, the suit involves 2015 Freedom of Information Law requests into communications made between de Blasio, senior members of his administration and PR advisor Jonathan Rosen, who heads progressive PR and political shop BerlinRosen Public Affairs.

BerlinRosen advises real estate companies, politicians, labor unions such as The United Auto Workers and advocacy groups such as Coalition for the Homeless. The agency was also hired by Detroit in 2013 to handle that city's bankruptcy process. The New York-based shop, which is comprised of several former Obama administration officials, played a vital role in aiding de Blasio's 2013 mayoral election. Rosen co-founded BerlinRosen in 2005 with principal Valerie Berlin.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, mayoral communications are presumed available for public inspection.

SARD WORKS \$760M IRONPLANET DEAL

Publicly traded industrial auctioneer Ritchie Bros. relied on Sard Verbinnen & Co. for PR support in its \$760M acquisition of online heavy equipment marketplace IronPlanet.

Ravi Saligram, CEO of Vancouver-based Ritchie, called the deal a "transformative transaction" and the "next logical step" for his company's growth.

IronPlanet, based in Pleasanton, Calif. and backed by Accel Partners, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, Caterpillar and Volvo, hosts an online portal for sales and auctions of used heavy equipment. The company was founded in 1999.

Sard San Francisco principal David Isaacs advised Ritchie Bros. on the PR front.

Susan Stillings leads corporate communications for Ironplanet.

PUBLICIS RETURNS MIDEAST PR UNIT TO MSL

Publicis has returned its LeoComm PR network in the Middle East under the MSLGroup banner.

The Dubai-based group, now MSLGroup in the Middle East, includes outposts in Cairo, Beirut, Doha, Riyadh and Jeddah. Publicis in 2012 dropped the MS&L named in favor of LeoComm to reflect parent Leo Burnett.

MSLGroup's existing Dubai and Abu Dhabi operations will remain separate as they serve corporate and public affairs clients, the agency said.

The Mideast group counts more than 50 staffers and clients including Diageo, htc, Samsung, the Boston Consulting Group, and General Motors.

MSLGroup is housed in Publicis Groupe's Public Communications operation, one of four main units at the marketing conglomerate.

NEW ACCOUNTS

MARGARITAVILLE HIRES HEMSWORTH

Travel, hospitality and lifestyle agency Hemsworth Communications has been named global agency of record for Margaritaville Holdings, LLC.

Named after the hit Jimmy Buffett song, Margaritaville is a global brand that includes consumer products, restaurants, retail shops, hotels and resorts. The Margaritaville casual dining franchise was founded in 1985 and currently boasts about 30 locations throughout North America, the Caribbean and Australia. Two forthcoming resorts,

Margaritaville Beach

Resort Grand Cayman and Margaritaville Resort Orlando, are currently in development.

Leading worldwide media initiatives for Margaritaville Holdings, Hemsworth will help implement a PR plan for the brand and will develop communications programs that promote its hospitality division and support its licensing partnerships.

Fort Lauderdale, FL-based Hemsworth took in about \$670,000 in net fees in 2015, accounting for 138 percent year-over-year growth, according to O'Dwyer's rankings of PR firms.



East

Steinreich Communications Group, New York/Israel Healthcare Foundation, American fundraising subsidiary of Clalit Health Services, founded in Israel in 1911 and serving 4.3M people annually, for PR.

Hollywood PR, Plymouth, Mass./Fusion Worldwide, electronic components and finished goods, as AOR focused on the electronic components industry and beyond, and DigitalX, global digital payments software and fintech products, for roll-out of its AirPocket instant cash transfer app.

Midwest

Gray Loon Marketing Group, Evansville, Ind./Duck Commander, the West Monroe, La.-based hunting call maker at the center of the popular reality show "Duck Dynasty," as AOR for PR, adding to its web and marketing duties. The work includes launch of two new brands, Strut Commander and Fin Commander. Duck Commander CEO Willie Robertson said his company has "built a great partnership" with the agency through the years "and are excited to expand our relationship based on the agency's committed leadership, understanding of our brand and their creative work."

KemperLesnik, Chicago/Silvies Valley Ranch, Eastern Oregon, for PR, marketing and resort launch. The firm's KemperSports unit will provide management consulting on the brand position, pre-opening marketing and agronomic planning.

Current PR, Chicago/Strongbow Apple Hard Ciders, a brand of Heineken USA, as AOR for PR focused on 2017. The business was awarded after a competitive pitch.

FRAUD SCANDAL PUTS WELLS IN CRISIS

Wells Fargo Bank Sept. 8 was hit with a massive enforcement action by federal and local regulators over “widespread unlawful sales practices” at the banking and finance giant, allegations that many of the company’s employees had for years established fake deposit and credit card accounts in customers’ names without their consent.

The civil charges, filed jointly by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the City Attorney of Los Angeles and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, stems from a Los Angeles City Attorney suit filed in May 2015, which charged the banking and financial services holding company of pressuring employees to commit acts of fraud.

According to the CFPB, more than two million deposit and credit card accounts may have been created by thousands of Wells Fargo employees nationwide, allegedly signing up customers for financial services they never authorized in a bid to boost employees’ sales figures. This includes up to 1.5 million phony deposit accounts — where employees allegedly transferred customers’ funds without their consent, and in many cases, created fake customer PIN numbers and email addresses — as well as applications for more than 560,000 unauthorized credit cards, more than 10,000 of which allegedly incurred a number of fees.

Fines totaling \$185 million were levied at the bank yesterday. This includes a \$100 million penalty issued by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau — the heaviest in that U.S. government agency’s history — as well as \$50 million in fines from the City and County of Los Angeles and \$35 million from the Office of Comptroller of the Currency. Wells Fargo must also pay full remediation to all consumers who incurred fees associated with financial products that were sold to them without their knowledge. These refunds are expected to total “at least \$2.5 million,” according to the CFPB.

A consulting firm hired by Wells Fargo in light of the Los Angeles City Attorney’s initial suit last year conducted an internal review that analyzed consumer and small business retail banking deposit accounts and credit cards going back to 2011. That internal review, which was completed prior to yesterday’s settlement announcement, resulted in Wells Fargo refunding \$2.6 million to customers for fees associated with products “they may not have requested,” according to Wells Fargo in a statement. Accounts refunded represented “a fraction of one percent of the accounts reviewed,” according to Wells Fargo, with refunds averaging \$25.

CNNMoney reported today that 5,300 Wells Fargo employees have been terminated over the last several years as a result of its findings. Wells Fargo would not confirm with the New York Times regarding whether any senior management had been fired as a result of the findings. In a statement on the regulatory action, the CFPB cited a lack of internal oversight at Wells Fargo, coupled with a high-pressure sales culture, where employees were pushed or incentivized to cross-sell financial products to consumers — credit cards, loans, or

(Continued on page 7)

Joined

Michelle Vaeth, assistant director, Procter & Gamble health care communications, to Aspen Dental Management, Syracuse, N.Y., as VP of PR and corporate communications. She spent nearly 20 years with P&G, from purchasing manager to her most recent role. At ADMI, she serves as chief communications officer for the dental support organization for more than 560 practices in 34 states.



Brown

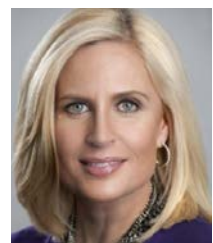
Ryan Brown, executive creative director, Manifest, to FleishmanHillard, as senior VP of brand and content marketing. He was creative director at agencies Bradley and Montgomery, Deep Focus and RDA Integrated. At FH, Brown will lead the creative direction of its ContentWorks team and will help clients develop content strategies based in the Omnicom firm’s St. Louis headquarters.



Lannon

Carrie Lannon to chief brand officer, Zapwater Communications, Chicago, a new role at the agency. Lannon was previously national director of PR for beauty retailer ULTA Beauty, where she directed strategy for publicity, social media and special events, and developed the beauty store chain’s first public relations department. She also founded her own consultancy, Lannon Consulting, and was founder and president of luxury, lifestyle, fashion and real estate agency Lannon Communications, which she led from 1996 to 2008. She was also previously director of promotions and PR for InterContinental Hotels & Resorts.

Deborah Marquardt, VP and GM of Time Inc.’s Style Network, to the Diamond Producers Association, as chief marketing officer to lead all US activities with a focus on integrated marketing and media efforts. She reports to CEO Jean-Marc Lieberherr. DPA noted Marquardt is an expert in marketing to millennials. She spent 10 years at L’Oreal USA leading media and integrated marketing-communications teams for brands such as Maybelline New York and Garnier.



Marquardt

Promoted

Chris DeBlasio to senior VP of sports communications, Showtime Networks. The 11-year Showtime alum guided PR for last year’s Mayweather-Pacquiao boxing match presented by the network and HBO, a production that became the highest-grossing pay-per-view event in history with \$410M in US revenue. DeBlasio joined Showtime in 2005 after five years with sports PR agency Brener Zwickel & Associates. He has also worked on the network’s mixed martial arts programming, in addition to boxing and sports documentaries. He reports to executive VP of corporate comms. Trisha Cardoso.

TESLA COMMUNICATIONS EXEC OUT

Khobi Brooklyn, the top exec in Tesla's communications department, is out.

Brooklyn was a top lieutenant to VP of global communications Ricardo Reyes, who left the high-profile electric car maker in March.

Brooklyn started out in the agency realm with Lewis PR and Atomic PR before moving to Tesla in 2009. She joined Reyes when he left Tesla for digital payments company Square in 2012 and returned to Tesla with Reyes in 2015.



Brooklyn

Her exit was first reported by electrek.

Tesla has been managing fallout from the June death of a Florida Tesla driver using the vehicle's autopilot. Founder Elon Musk said in recent days that improvements in the autopilot technology likely would have avoided the Florida accident.

But the company is facing a federal investigation of the crash.

LEWIS HEADS COMMS FOR EXPA

Brendan Lewis, who held corporate communications posts at Shazam, Foursquare and LivingSocial, has landed at startup lab Expa as VP of communications.

Lewis exits the tech-savvy PR group Pramana Collective for the post, which is mainly based in New York with monthly stops in Expa's San Francisco base.

Expa started up in 2014 as a "studio" to work with tech entrepreneurs and the company itself was funded with about \$50M in seed money from former eBay chief Meg Whitman and Virgin companies' founder Richard Branson.

In a blog post, Lewis said he will help shape overall company strategy, handling corporate, consumer and B2B communications, and assist in product launches, among other tasks.

He previously held corporate posts at Juniper Networks, VeriSign, and American Management Systems, and worked on the agency side with 463 Communications and Edelman.



Lewis

KOMBUCHA MAKERS LOBBY DC

Kombucha Brewers International, the non-profit trade association that represents makers of the fermented tea-based drink kombucha, has hired international law firm McDermott Will & Emery LLP to work Capitol Hill on taxation issues as they apply to the beverage industry.

The Beverly Hills-based trade group, which is comprised of more than 130 member companies — representing more than 90 percent of all kombucha products found in the U.S. today — has hired MW&E for the purpose of pitching legislative changes to the current Internal Revenue Code for the sake of enhancing the marketability of kombucha.

The alcohol content of kombucha varies greatly (anywhere from 0.5 percent or more), and currently,

doesn't belong to any recognized beverage classification as determined by the U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau.

However, if kombucha's alcohol content is greater than 0.5 percent by volume, its fermentation process and method of production determines its classification (either beer, wine or even distilled spirits, depending on its formulation), making taxation issues, marketing and compliance with federal law difficult for industry brewers.

The account will be managed by David Ransom, former senior communications and policy advisor to former House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and communications director of the House Administration Committee; and Erica Stocker, who was previously deputy chief of staff to former Rep. Jim Saxton (R-NJ).



WELLS FARGO CRISIS (Continued from pg. 6)

additional accounts — as a means of meeting sales goals.

The CFPB statement read: "In recent years, the bank has sought to distinguish itself in the marketplace as a leader in 'cross selling' these products and services to existing customers who did not already have them. When cross selling is based on efforts to generate more business from existing customers based on strong customer satisfaction and excellent customer service, it is a common and accepted business practice. But here the bank had compensation incentive programs for its employees that encouraged them to sign up existing clients for deposit accounts, credit cards, debit cards, and online banking, and the bank failed to monitor the implementation of these programs with adequate care."

The CFPB was established as a result of the 2010 passage of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which was signed into federal law in response to the 2008 financial crisis.

In a press statement, Wells Fargo confirmed its settlement agreement with regulators and asserted that it had refunded customers who incurred unnecessary fees. In a separate statement posted to its website, the bank said "we truly regret and take full responsibility for any such instances." Both statements detailed new enforcement measures the bank is now taking to ensure such fraudulent incidents don't happen again. Those steps include an enhanced retraining of employees and the implementation of new monitoring protocols. The bank will also now begin sending automated emails to Wells Fargo customers after a checking or savings account is opened, as well as application acknowledgements and decision status letters when customers apply for a credit card.

Wells Fargo's communications department did not respond to repeated requests by O'Dwyer's for a comment on this story.

San Francisco-headquartered Wells Fargo, which had 8,700 retail branches as of December and about 40 million retail customers, is currently the largest U.S. bank by market value, with nearly two trillion in assets.

Too much “screen time” at computers, cell-phones, games and TV is making it hard for children to concentrate on their studies, says psychologist Nicholas Kardaras, Ph.D.

Kardaras has won a carload of screen time in recent days in publicizing his book, *Glow Kids: How Screen Addiction Is Hijacking Our Kids—and How to Break the Trance*.

He has appeared on Fox & Friends, ABC-TV, CNN sister channel HLN, Katie Couric’s Yahoo! show and more than 30 radio programs with his pleas to curb the almost insatiable appetite children have for what falls under the general heading of “screen time.”

Time mag Aug. 31 carried an essay by him headlined, “Screens in Schools Are a \$60 billion Hoax.” The Aug. 28 *New York Post* had a two-page feature on him headlined “Digital Heroin.”

The basic message of Kardaras, who we covered during an 1:45 hour presentation at the John Jermain Sag Harbor Library Sept. 8, is that electronics spur the “pleasure circuits” in brains, doubling the amount of dopamine while shrinking the amount of gray matter in the frontal cortex, the decision-making center of the brain. Neurological development and verbal intelligence are delayed.

Screen Addiction Like Food, Sex

Food and sex have the same effect, he notes. Children who are under constant stimulation from screens can lose their innate sense of curiosity, he says.

About 20 local residents attended, peppering him with questions such as what constitutes “screen addiction?” He had no firm answer, saying it could be a few hours for some children and but many more for others. A boy of about 10 told at length of his love of screen games but complained that he can’t free himself from some of them because the “pause button” does not work.

“There is not one credible research study that shows that a child exposed to more technology earlier in life has better educational outcomes than a tech-free kid,” Kardaras writes. “Screens are dulling rather than sharpening young developing brains...Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) rates have exploded by 50% over the past ten years with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicating rates will continue to rise by 5% per year.”

Tech execs put their own children in “no-tech Waldorf Schools,” he notes.

Kardaras: Reduce Screen Time

Radiation health advocates, who have been warning about cancer and other diseases caused by cellphones, Wi-Fi routers, computers, celltowers, etc., will not like the thrust of what Kardaras is saying—that cutting down on screen time should be at the top of the “to do” list at this time.

“Cancer development, particularly brain cancer, takes a long time to develop,” is a quote he supplies from Dr. Henry Lai, bioengineering professor, University of Washington, who has studied radiation for more than 30

years.

Dr. Samuel Ryu, chair of the Dept. of Radiation Oncology, Stony Brook Medicine, told the Aug. 11, 2016 Southampton Press that the strength of radiation emitted by Wi-Fi routers in the Westhampton Library is far too weak to alter human DNA. Wi-Fi uses radio waves and it takes light rays like those from an X-ray machine to alter DNA, he said.

The American Cancer Society says the chance that a person will develop a malignant tumor of the brain or spinal cord in his or her lifetime is less than 1% (about 1 in 140 for a man and 1 in 180 for a woman). Survival rates for brain and spinal cord tumors vary widely, depending on the type of tumor, it says.

Radiation health advocates, by focusing on physiological changes possibly caused by radiation, including the threat of cancer, in an attempt to arouse concern among the public and school authorities, are getting almost no traction. The public and institutions are also listening to authorities like Drs. Lai, Black and Ryu and sees cries of “wolf” when there are no wolves on the horizon. They note the Federal Communications Commission is saying that Wi-Fi and other sources of electromagnetic radiation are too weak to cause harm since they don’t heat bodily tissues.

A small percentage of individuals have become hypersensitive to radiation emitted by routers, computers, cell towers, wireless utility meters and other sources. Health advocates say 3% is an accepted figure for the minimum number of those acutely affected and who know it. Another 10% may be affected but don’t know it.

“National Unplugging Day,” a project of Reboot, Brooklyn-based “social impact” firm, will be Friday, March 3, 2017. Aimed at lessening dependence on web/cellphones/computers, it is a step in the right direction but it should be changed to “Unplugging Days.” Citizens themselves can participate in such a movement. Tech companies are raking in large sums and school authorities have been co-opted by them, Kardaras notes.

While media are paying increasing attention to the dangers of excessive “screen time,” local governments, schools and libraries are still showing resistance to exploring the topic. The Westhampton Library has scheduled him for March 2017.

The American Academy of Pediatrics says 8-10 year-olds are spending eight hours a day with digital media while teenagers spend 11 hours. *Internet Addiction* by Dr. Kimberly Young says 18% of college-age internet users suffer from “tech addiction.” Subjects she covers include cybersex and gambling addiction.

An attempt by this writer to tell the five WHB trustees about the message of Kardaras at their meeting Sept. 1 won no traction. They listened politely and watched as I held up the two-page Kardaras feature in the NY Post, and ordered me from the mike after five minutes. A videotape of the meeting is on WHB’s website. This writer was allowed to speak from the 19-minute mark to 24 minutes.

– Jack O’Dwyer