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O'Dwyer's

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NORWALK, CT NEEDS BRANDING AGENCY

Norwalk, Connecticut is seeking a marketing firm that can develop a new tourism brand for the city.

The Fairfield County town, which sits within the New York metropolitan area, is looking to partner with a firm that can create a tourism branding and marketing initiative and strategy which will be used in the coming years to attract visitors to the City.



Scope of services includes brand creation, developing an overall communication strategy, website development, photography, social media development, media planning and placement, promotion and advertising strategic planning, creating print-ready media and promotional materials and reporting KPIs to the City on a regular basis.

Terms of the contract call for one year with the option of two one-year extensions at the City's discretion.

Proposals must be received by 2:00 p.m. (EST) September 8, 2020 and September 10. Hard copy submissions should be submitted to:

City of Norwalk Purchasing Department
125 East Avenue, Room 202
Norwalk, CT 06856-5125

An identical electronic version of proposals must additionally be submitted through [Norwalk's Bonfire electronic submission portal](#).

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

DNA'S RINALDO HEADS TO INTERDEPENDENCE

Interdependence Public Relations has brought on Michael Rinaldo as president, global health business. Rinaldo comes to Interdependence from dna Communications, part of the IPG and Weber Shandwick network, where he served as executive vice president & general manager.



Michael Rinaldo

He was previously managing director, global healthcare at Fleishman-Hillard.

At Interdependence, Rinaldo will be responsible for driving business strategy, delivering senior counsel, growing healthcare client relationships and strengthening the agency's position and influence in the global healthcare business arena. "What excites me about

Interdependence is its commitment to high-impact client relationships which start with a media engagement approach that leverages predictive analytics and AI to secure results," he said.

FINN ADDS CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS INC.

Finn Partners has signed a deal to acquire Nashville's Corporate Communications Inc., an IR specialist.

CEO Peter Finn told O'Dwyer's the deal strengthens the No. 4 independent firm's IR capabilities and market position in the southeast. He also praised CCI's "deeply skilled and experienced team."

Finn Partners acquired New York IR shop Lazar Partners, which is now part of its global health practice, in 2019.

CCI will move into the Nashville office of Finn's DVL Seigenthaler unit and be led by its core management team of Dru Anderson, Gil Fuqua and Tim Kovick.



Peter Finn

The addition of CCI will bolster Finn Partner's Nashville operation to more than 80 staffers active in the corporate, consumer, healthcare, transportation and government areas, according to Beth Courtney, managing partner, Finn Southeast.

Anderson said the deal would enable CCI to expand from its IR focus and tap into Finn Partners' capabilities in the crisis PR, media relations and environmental/social/governance categories.

Finn Partners expects to close the CCI deal during the second-quarter of 2021.

It registered \$119.3M in 2019 fees, which was up 35 percent from the previous year.

BARCLAYS' SHINEBOURNE JOINS FINSBURY

Justin Shinebourne, who headed Barclays Investment Bank's European equity advisory service, has joined Finsbury's London office to build its advisory practice.

At Barclays, he provided strategic counsel to clients across the EMEA region on matters related to valuation, market impact and communications.

The 25-year investment banking veteran also did stints at Morgan Stanley in equity sales and HSBC, where he was a member of its regional equity management committee.

James Murgatroyd, Finsbury managing partner, predicts Shinebourne will be "an invaluable addition" to the firm's capital markets offering.

WPP is merging Finsbury, Glover Park Group and Hering Schuppener early next year to form Finsbury Glover Hering, which will be based in New York.



Justin Shinebourne

VA COUNTY WANTS ECODEV/TOURISM FIRM

Prince William County, which is part of the DC metro area, is fielding PR proposals for economic development and tourism.



Virginia's second largest and fourth fastest growing county is home to about half a million highly educated, racially and ethnically diverse people with above average median household incomes. With more than half of the population either Black, Hispanic

or Asian-American, *USA Today* called PWC on the "leading edge of a diversity explosion that is currently sweeping the USA."

The number of jobs in PWC grew by nearly 17,400 between 2012 and 2017 and is projected to continue growing by another 15,850 jobs by 2022, according to the RFP. In addition, 76 percent of the county's 185,702 resident workers commute to other regions for work.

These demographic and labor growth patterns, along with the county's proximity to surrounding labor markets, provides significant advantages for businesses and industries in need of a robust high-, middle- and lower-skilled labor pipeline.

On the tourism front, The US Travel Travel Assn. says PWC's top attractions are the Manassas National Battle Field Park, Leesylvania State Park, the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Jiffy Lube Live, Potomac Mills and Prince William Forest Park.

PWC wants a firm with destination marketing expertise to handle duties that include market research, brand management, campaign and program development, messaging and design services for a wide variety of marketing and communication vehicles.

A virtual proposal conference is slated for Sept. 10 at 10 am. at <https://pwc-doit.webex.com/pwc-doit/j.php?MTID=m-d93a789f750c6c419617b2d89411d026>

Lorna Moone at LMoone@pwcgov.org is accepting questions until Sept. 16 and will answer them on Sept. 18.

Responses to PWC's RFP are due Sept. 28. They go to: Prince William County; Attn: Lorna Moone; 4360 Ridgewood Center Drive (RW 562); Woodbridge, VA 22192

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

FDA EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CHIEF WAGNER IS OUT

John "Wolf" Wagner, who headed external affairs at the Food and Drug Administration, is out as aftershocks continue from commissioner's Stephen Hahn misstatements about the benefits of the blood plasma to treat COVID-19, which undermined the reputation of the agency.



John Wagner

President Trump in June appointed Wagner, who was principal deputy assistant at the Dept. of Veterans Affairs, to the post.

Wagner had served as a consultant at 2016 Republican National Convention, developing messaging talking points and media engagements.

Heidi Rebello, a 14-year FDA veteran and the agency's acting deputy chief of staff, has stepped into the position on an acting basis, responsible all FDA public communications.

Wagner's departure follows the Aug. 28 exit of FDA chief spokesperson Emily Miller, who lasted 11 days on the job.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Hemsworth Communications has added Newport, CA-based commercial real estate development firm **SCGWest** to the roster of clients in its franchise and business services division. With work already underway, Hemsworth is developing a comprehensive B2B PR strategy for SCGWest that includes managing national media relations, thought leadership and more. SCGWest specializes in the turnkey delivery and management process of new, existing, and expanding restaurant and retail businesses nationwide, offering services that range from site selection, commercial lease auditing, lease negotiations and renewals to architecture design and construction, portfolio management and financing.



Maroon PR has been selected by the **Western Golf Association** to be its local public relations agency of record for the 2021 BMW Championship at Caves Valley Golf Club in Owings Mills, MD. Maroon PR will work with the WGA to facilitate media coverage in the Baltimore-D.C. region related to the tournament and its beneficiary, the Evans Scholars Foundation. The agency's duties will also include strategizing with the WGA social media team, assisting with on-site media relations and overseeing all advertising buys to promote ticket sales and general awareness of the event.

Group Gordon is working with the **California State University** on its Graduation Initiative 2025, which is aimed at increasing graduation rates and closing equity and opportunity gaps. The agency has also become agency of record for **University of Southern California Marshall School of Business** and **New Jersey Institute of Technology**, for which it will work to elevate faculty as thought leaders in their fields, demonstrate their leadership on issues of equity and access in education, and provide support as they navigate the challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Consultancy PR has been named agency of record for **Leyden Lewis Design Studio**, a full-service interior design firm based in Brooklyn, NY. The agency is overseeing overall media relations efforts for the firm, as well as providing assistance with executive positioning, partnership opportunities, interior design project outreach and more.

Mower's Syracuse office has donated its creative talents to spread the message that the region's shops, museums and restaurants are open and ready to safely welcome customers. The eight-week campaign, "Put the 'U' back in Syrac_use" was announced at a press conference led by the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, with Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh, Onondaga County Executive Ryan McMahon, Visit Syracuse and a coalition of more than 50 local businesses lending support. Mower contributed the campaign's concept, creative and PR.



Playbook Public Relations has been awarded the marketing and communications contract for the **Tampa Hillsborough Expressway Authority**. Playbook will work to bring public awareness to THEA's \$1 billion six-year work plan. The agency has also served as part of the team that spearheaded THEA's grassroots communications and outreach strategy. The term of the contract is three years with an option for THEA to renew with one-year extensions for each of the next two years.

POLLING THROUGH A PANDEMIC

From managing canine “coworkers” to selecting the right virtual Zoom background, many of us have been navigating new waters in order to do our jobs amid COVID-19.

To gauge these changes, Sachs Media Group has been surveying large, random samples of Florida voters weekly since the pandemic exploded in mid-March. Our goal was, and still is, to glean what people are thinking and feeling through these crazy times, and to see what trends may take shape.



Karen Cyphers

As far as data trends, the results are largely as expected: feelings divide most along political lines; everyone is frustrated and worried, albeit sometimes about different things; and negative emotions increase when cases are spiking.

But it's become clear that the practice of survey research itself may be shifting. A few things stand out:

Response rates are way up. It could be boredom, being home, perhaps more tied to devices, perhaps more interested to share feelings and thoughts on a topic that's actually of interest. While we would normally need to spend 2-3 days in the field in order to gather a minimum of 1,000 responses, we're now able to open and close surveys in a much shorter period of time, or leave them in the field a little longer if we want to gather data from a larger sample.

Representativeness is up, too. Where typically it's more challenging to attain a sample that is equally representative of young and non-white voters, in the last few months our samples have been increasingly diverse. Voters ages 18-34 previously made up about 20 percent of our survey samples even though they make up about 30 percent of Florida's population—yet in the past weeks, the balance of young voters in our samples is close to their portion of the population at large and nearly matched to their portion of likely voters.

But political representativeness is down. Typically our breakdowns of Republicans, Democrats and those with no party affiliation fall close to their share of the general population, with Republicans responding to surveys just slightly less than Democrats. But not lately. During the pandemic, the sample has been skewing heavily Democratic, to the point that we have to use one of two scientifically valid methods to balance the proportions of our final responses. We know this method works, and as recently as the Aug. 18 Florida primary we accurately predicted the outcomes of the three races on which we polled—each within less than one percent of the actual vote totals.

So what does this mean? Specifically, at least as it relates to polling methodology, the following questions feel relevant: Why are Republicans more reluctant to participate now than they were before? Or could it be that Republicans have remained about as reluctant as ever to participate, but Democrats are unusually eager to share their feelings on COVID-19 specifically?

In 2016, our polling accurately forecast Donald Trump's Florida victory despite other polls showing him well behind Hillary Clinton. In part, this was because we adjusted for the assumption that right-leaning voters may be less likely to disclose their feelings to pollsters (or friends, even), thus leading us to oversample this population to find a balance that we expected would resemble the actual electorate. Based on

what we're seeing today, this gap in survey participation has widened—and may further complicate the already challenging task of estimating margins.

While Republicans may be less responsive to surveys about COVID-19 than others we have fielded, a different group has been piping up a whole lot more than before: conspiracy theorists.

Prior to COVID-19, we'd get an occasional email commenting about how we worded a question, offering a correction, or asking if we were polling for a specific client. We welcome these messages, and gladly respond to them. But recently, we've started to receive a new variety of responses to survey invitations. These tend to be profanity-laden or just plain wrong, accusing us of working for someone we do not (i.e., the Trump administration, or Democrats) or espousing any variety of conspiracy theories—such as the two most recent, one of which read, “It's a fake pandemic to initiate a Psychological Operation to cover up Antify Jewish Child Molesters,” followed by one proclaiming “Another scumbag Trump Lie... As a hacker, just don't try me lol.”

To discourage such theories, I plan to adjust our survey invitation language to make it even more clear that our firm isn't partisan, isn't being paid to conduct these, and isn't pushing an agenda.

In the meantime, we'll continue to track how Floridians are navigating through the rest of this madness, while learning our own lessons accordingly.

Karen Cyphers is partner and vice president of research with Sachs Media.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Public Relations Society of America-New York Chapter has announced the Shortlist for its [2020 Big Apple Awards](#). The nominees represent more than 50 PR agencies and in-house communications teams.

This year, the awards will be presented as a virtual event, running from Sept. 26 to Oct. 1. The event will recognize such PR awards as the “15 Under 35” and “Leadership in Diversity & Inclusion,” and will close with an evening focused on the PR industry's resilience in “Crisis Communications: Responding to the Pandemic.” For more information about ticket prices and schedules, [click here](#).

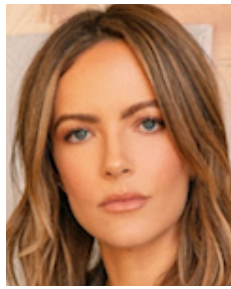


The Museum of Public Relations will present its annual Celebrating LatinoPRHistory virtual event on Sept. 24 from 6 to 8 p.m. The event's first panel will cover societal issues, including DACA, COVID-19 and the upcoming election, with a second panel addressing such workplace issues as inclusion, stereotyping and opportunities for advancement. For more information about the event, or to register, [click here](#).

Republican political strategists Steve Schmidt and Rick Wilson, co-founders of The Lincoln Project, will look at the state of the 2020 presidential race and The Lincoln Project's strategy to defeat Donald Trump at a **National Press Club** virtual National Headliners Newsmaker event on Sept. 24 at 2 p.m. This one-hour, free-of-charge program will stream live on [the Club's website](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and is accessible to both the media and members of the general public. Viewers can send their questions for Wilson and Schmidt before or during the live program by sending an email to Headliners@Press.org.

DOLPHIN ACQUIRES BE SOCIAL

Dolphin Entertainment, owner of top Hollywood PR firms 42West, Shore Fire Media and The Door, has acquired Be Social, which handles influencer marketing campaigns for beauty, fashion, and lifestyle brands.



Ali Grant

The Los Angeles-based firm, which was launched in 2012 by Ali Grant, has represented clients such as Nordstrom, Disney and H&M and has more than 20 staffers.

“The ability to execute best-in-class influencer marketing campaigns is the single most important skill set we wanted to bring into the Dolphin family this year,” Bill O’Dowd, Dolphin CEO. “Be Social allows us to immediately cross-

sell services and launch influencer campaigns to support our entire spectrum of entertainment content, as well as for our rapidly expanding roster of consumer product clients.”

Grant said the Dolphin connection provides “growth opportunities into new entertainment verticals, alongside the very best PR firms in the business.”

BLUE STATE ADDS EX- WARREN STAFFERS

Blue State, which works with purpose-driven organizations, has hired Christopher Huntley and Rachel Kopilow, veterans of Sen. Elizabeth Warren’s 2020 presidential bid.



Christopher Huntley

Huntley, who served as senior speechwriter for Warren, joins the firm as VP of strategic communications. He was previously communications director for Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) and also served as millennial media director for Hillary Clinton during the 2016 campaign.

Kopilow, who ran the video team for the Warren campaign, comes to Blue State as VP of strategic communications & creative director. Before working for

Warren, Kopilow was deputy director of video in the White House Office of Digital Strategy under President Obama.

In addition, Lauren Tsuboyama, who most recently served as VP of communications at urban planning, research and advocacy non-profit the Regional Plan Association, has come on as senior director of strategic communications.

JOELE FRANK WORKS DENBURY’S RECOVERY

Joele Frank handles Denbury Resources as a Texas court approves its pre-packaged bankruptcy plan to restructure its balance sheet to eliminate \$2.1B in debt.

The Plano, TX oil and gas company filed for Chapter 11 due to soft energy prices/demand, negative impact of COVID-19 and heavy debt.

The company focuses on the Gulf Coast and Rocky Mountain regions and specializes in retrieving reserves from mature fields with its carbon dioxide enhanced oil recovery operations.

CEO Chris Kendall expects Denbury to emerge from Chapter 11 in mid-September as a stronger business with significant financial flexibility.

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher’s Andrew Siegel, Michael Freitag and Andrew Squire represent Denbury.

SAN ANTONIO HOUSING AUTHORITY SEEKS PR

The San Antonio Housing Authority wants to hire a firm skilled in public affairs/community relations/media relations to increase public awareness of its mission, programs, activities and initiatives.

Founded in 1937, SAHA provides shelter to more than 65,000 children, adults and seniors through its public housing, housing choice voucher and mixed-income housing programs.

SAHA also provides economic, training and educational opportunities to low-income individuals in the communities that it serves.

The desired firm will have at least five years of experience in working with a public agency and an understanding of the San Antonio market. It will provide guidance and insight on navigating political and business environments, develop strategies for emerging social media outreach, counsel and train staff and develop stakeholder partnerships.

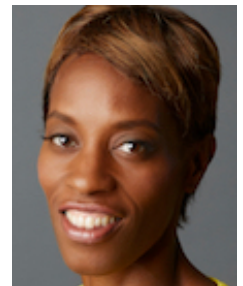
Proposals are due Sept. 21. Send the original, three copies and an electronic version on a thumb drive to: The San Antonio Housing Authority; Procurement Department; 818 S. Flores; San Antonio, Texas 78204

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



MEDIA MANEUVERS

Condé Nast has named **Dawn Davis** editor in chief of *Bon Appetit*. Davis was previously a vice president at Simon & Schuster, as well as the founder and publisher of its 37 INK imprint, which focuses on a diverse list that includes Black authors. She replaces Adam Rapoport, who had led the magazine since 2010. Rapoport stepped down from the position in June, after a 2013 Instagram post of him in “brown face” at a Halloween party was unearthed. The publication has also faced charges that it underpaid people of color who worked in its video department, and showed a lack of diversity in its food pages.



Dawn Davis

The Federal Communications Commission has denied AMC’s request for a standstill order that would preserve the network’s current program carriage agreement with AT&T, according to *The Hollywood Reporter*. AMC has charged AT&T is using its bargaining power as a vertically integrated multichannel video programming distributor to put unaffiliated, independent programming networks at a disadvantage by demanding anticompetitive program carriage terms. While the merits of AMC’s complaint have not been ruled on, the network wanted a freeze to preserve the existing relationship.

Facebook says that it will “reluctantly stop allowing publishers and people in Australia from sharing local and international news on Facebook and Instagram” if a new regulation being drafted by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission takes effect. The regulation, which has yet to be passed by Australia’s Parliament, would require digital platforms to negotiate with media companies over payment for content that appears on the platform. The proposed rules are supported by Australian media companies including News Corp and Nine Entertainment Co., the owner of such papers as the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

AD SPENDS TO FALL 8% IN 2020

Advertising spending in the U.S. is expected to fall eight percent this year, according to a recent survey conducted by ad industry trade group the Interactive Advertising Bureau.

IAB's findings, which surveyed buy-side decision-makers on their projections for advertising spending and revenue in 2020, found that total traditional media advertising will decline about 30 percent this year from 2019.

The biggest hits are anticipated to affect the out-of-home ad market, or advertising that reaches consumers in public places, which is expected to suffer declines of 45 percent.



Media buyers estimate that print advertising will be down by 33 percent, followed by radio (-31 percent), TV advertising (-24 percent) and direct mail (-17 percent).

On the other hand, digital media is expected to see overall gains of six percent this year. Paid search advertising is anticipated to grow by 26 percent, followed by social media (25 percent) and digital connected TV advertising (19 percent).

Digital video is estimated to grow by 18 percent in 2020, and display ads could see a similar uptick of 15 percent.

IAB's "2020/21 COVID Impact on Advertising" report surveyed 242 planners, strategists and media buyers at companies and agencies in early August.

SCC ACQUIRES TIMEZONEONE

Independent creative and technology marketing agency Schafer Condon Carter has acquired Chicago-based shop TimeZoneOne.

Financial terms of the acquisition weren't publicly disclosed.

Founded in 1993, TimeZoneOne specializes in destination marketing, media relations, social media strategy, issues management, events and influencer marketing. The Chicago-headquartered agency, which maintains additional offices in Christchurch, New Zealand and Toronto, counts the State of Illinois, the Navy Pier, the Magnificent Mile Association and the Illinois Office of Tourism as clients.

TZO president and CEO Daniel Thomas will remain in his current role. The agency will continue operating independently and will not change its name or branding in light of the acquisition. No changes to staff or TZO's physical offices were reported.



Richard McDonald

"SCC is on a journey to become a growth engine for our clients," Schafer Condon Carter CEO Richard McDonald told *O'Dwyer's*. "We will take the great big idea creativity from SCC and combine that with the data-driven digital approach of TZO to help our clients sell their products and services."

Chicago-based SCC, which was founded in 1989, specializes in brand consulting, traditional media creative and production, integrated advertising, digital media planning, website design/development, SEO, social media, PR, events and package design. Clients include Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, The Chicago Cubs, Portillo's Restaurants and The National Pork Board.

ON THE MOVE

GCI Health has hired **Kristin Mengel Ryan** as senior vice president, North America digital lead; **Jennifer Semetulskis** as senior vice president, wellness & nutrition; and **Bailey Roy** as vice president, head of analytics. Ryan joins GCI Health in New York from IPG-PR, where she was a senior vice president. She will lead the U.S. team of digital strategists. Semetulskis comes on board from Edelman, where as a senior vp she led integrated campaigns across a range of therapeutic areas. She will report to executive vp Kirsten Whipple. Roy was previously director of analytics at Ketchum's Boston office. She specializes in digital analytics research and measurement.

Cracker Barrel has hired **Jennifer Tate** as chief marketing officer. Tate joins Cracker Barrel from Olive Garden, where she had been since 2010, most recently serving as executive vice president and chief marketer. She previously was a senior brand manager at Pizza Hut and a brand manager for Frito Lay. Cracker Barrel operates more than 660 restaurants and retail stores in 45 states.



Jennifer Tate

French fashion house **Maison Marigela** has named **Tanja Ruhnke** chief marketing officer, a new position at the company. Ruhnke comes to Maison Marigela from Valentino, where she served as vice president of communications. Her previous positions include vice president of global branding and communications at Alexander Wang, vice president of public relations at KCD Worldwide and director of communications at Helmut Lang.

Oetker Collection, a German hotel management company, has added **Simon Neggers** to its executive leadership team as senior vice president of sales, marketing and communications, effective Sept. 7. Neggers comes to Oetker from Marriott International's Luxury Brand Group, where he served as global vice president of communications and portfolio marketing. In his new post, Neggers will oversee the global strategy for Oetker Collection's portfolio of Masterpiece Hotels and Estates.

Amerant Bancorp has brought on **Adrian Collard** as senior vice president and chief marketing officer. Collard joins Amerant from Mastercard, where he served as vice president and interim CMO for Latin America and the Caribbean. He was previously head of global brand strategy & marketing at PayPal, and worked at Young & Rubicam as associate partner and account managing director. In his new post, Collard will be responsible for all facets of Amerant's marketing strategy.



Adrian Collard

OpSec Security, which provides physical and digital anti-counterfeiting and brand protection solutions, has named **Bill Taylor** chief marketing officer. Taylor founded Downing Goliath, a marketing and sales strategy consulting practice. He also served as co-founder and chief marketing officer at Gordian Knot Analytics Group, and has held executive positions at Panasonic, Motorola, Philips Consumer Electronics and Eastman Kodak.

COMMENTARY

The Food and Drug Administration is blaming the messaging rather than the messenger in the aftermath of its blood plasma treatment for COVID-19 PR crisis.

The PR bloodletting at the FDA continued on Sept. 2 as external affairs chief John “Wolf” Wagner is out in the aftermath of Commissioner Stephen Hahn’s misstatements about the benefits of blood plasma treatment for COVID-19.

Emily Miller, chief spokesperson for the FDA during an 11-day run, was the first to be shown the door, exiting on Aug. 28.

Both Wagner and Miller were political appointees by Trump and may not have been qualified for the posts. Wagner was a former spokesperson for the Pentagon, Dept of Veterans Affairs and consultant for the 2016 Republican National Convention. Miller was a PR staffer on Ted Cruz’s re-election campaign and a journalist at the conservative One America News.

But it was Hahn who oversold the wonders of blood plasma, which Trump touted as “a very historic breakthrough” when the announcement was made Aug. 23, just ahead of the beginning of the Republican convention.

Scientists blame Hahn—not the PR team—for the mess, which undermined trust in the FDA at a critical juncture in the battle against COVID-19, which has killed 184K Americans.

A reputationally-challenged FDA will be hard pressed to convince Americans that the COVID-19 vaccines currently under development will be safe and effective treatments.

Hahn needs to heed the advice Dr. Eric Topol, editor-in-chief of of Medscape, a site for doctors and health professionals, and either tell the truth or resign.

In his Aug. 31 letter to Hahn posted on WebMD-owned Medscape, Topol expressed concern about Hahn’s leadership and statements that triggered the crisis in confidence.

The professor of genomics at the Scripps Research Center faulted Hahn for caving in to the fantasies of Trump. He wrote:

“Immediately after President Trump widely and aggressively promoted hydroxychloroquine as a ‘miracle drug,’ on March 30, 2020, you granted an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for this drug without any sufficient or meaningful supportive evidence. Proof of that was borne out on June 15, 2020, when you revoked that EUA, acknowledging lack of efficacy and ‘ongoing serious cardiac adverse events and other potential serious side effects.’”

Topol reminded Hahn that the mission of the FDA is “helping the public get the accurate, science-based information they need to use medical products and foods to maintain and improve their health.”

He criticized the Commissioner for serially demonstrating “a willingness to deviate from this bedrock premise.”

It’s your move, Stephen.

Can Facebook gain redemption for the 2016 sin of being Russia’s go-to site in its effort to manipulate the US presidential election?

CEO Mark Zuckerberg is giving it a shot. He’s worried about the potential for civil unrest in US if it takes days or weeks for mailed-in ballots to be counted and certified.

Democrats fear a Domsday scenario in which Donald Trump declares victory on Election Night before the mailed ballots are counted.

At that point, it could appear that the president won re-election in a landslide based on the in-person vote. That’s because 66 percent of Republicans plan to vote at their polling place, while 47 percent of Democrats plan to mail it in, according to an NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll.

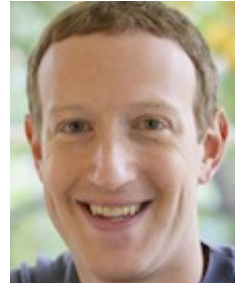
Zuckerberg outlined Facebook’s plan to counter the chaos via a Sept. 3 blog.

“It’s important that we prepare for this possibility in advance and understand that there could be a period of intense claims and counter-claims as the final results are counted. This could be a very heated period, so we’re preparing the following policies to help in the days and weeks after voting ends.”

He said Facebook will assure users there is nothing illegitimate about not having a result on election night.

The site will attach a label to educate people that official results do not just come from any campaign that tries to declare victory. He also warns Team Trump that Facebook will label any content that seeks to delegitimize the outcome of the election or make claims that mail-in votes are fraudulent.

Good luck, Mark. America’s democracy is counting on you.



Mark Zuckerberg

The Council for Biotechnology Information, a PR front group formed by agrichemical companies to allay people’s concerns about genetically modified crops, has quietly disbanded, according to the US Right to Know, non-profit investigative site.

Backed by DuPont, Bayer, BASF, Syngenta and Dow AgroSciences, the group dissolved at the end of 2019 and transferred its assets to CropLife International in Belgium.

CBI spent \$28M in PR from 2014-2019 with half of it going to Ketchum for running GMO Answers, according to US-RTK. GMO Answers presented content from “independent experts,” many of which had ties to the pesticide industry.

WPP CEO Mark Read has updated the “Never trust anyone over 30” hippie slogan of the 1960s for today’s digital age.

During an Aug. 27 call with analysts, he said: “We have a very broad range of skills and if you look at our people—the average age of someone who works at WPP is less than 30—they don’t hark back to the 1980s, luckily.”

Actually, Read was unlucky. His unfortunate remark triggered outrage and charges of ageism at WPP.

He apologized on Aug. 30 via Twitter:

“I was recently asked if our teams have the right balance of skills between TV and digital. I believe they do but was wrong to use age to try to make a point. People over 40 can do great digital marketing just as people under 30 can make great TV ads.”

What about people over 50? Read is 53. —Kevin McCauley