

The PLATINUM ISSUE

PR News' Platinum PR Awards celebrate the most outstanding communications initiatives, and it never fails to amaze us how insufficient the word "outstanding" can be. The Southwest Porch at Bryant Park, GolinHarris' opening day for the Sands Bethlehem, The Marcus Group's efforts to restore the Gilda's Club in New Jersey—these are just some of the brick-and-mortar initiatives we honor here. And, of course, there is the ingenious use of social media by many of the finalists. We saluted the Platinum PR Award winners and honorable mentions at an Oct. 5 luncheon in New York; also celebrated were this year's PR News Top Places to Work in PR (also in this issue). Congratulations to all, and special thanks to our luncheon sponsors D S Simon Productions and PRWeb. For extended profiles of all the finalists, visit prnewsonline.com/platinumpr2010. ■



WOW AWARD

Southwest Airlines Co.

The Southwest Porch at Bryant Park



Southwest's New York City debut with service out of LaGuardia called for something fresh and exciting. Southwest created a venue for New Yorkers to experience the brand personality in

a friendly public space where they could relax anytime. Southwest partnered with Bryant Park to "own" the southwest corner of the grounds. Architect Nancy Theil designed the deck and pergola and *Top Chef* star Tom Colicchio

FAST FACT:

- The summer launch was so successful, SWA extended the Porch into a multi-year partnership with Bryant Park through 2011.

consulted to create ambiance and atmosphere, and provide food and drink. In the first six months alone, Southwest enjoyed tickets sales 35% higher than recent launches in other markets. The porch also offered visitors the chance to interact with Southwest Airlines employees, and generated brand familiarity in a city with an exceedingly competitive and crowded airspace. —Bill Miltenberg

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

The Coca-Cola Co. - *Coca-Cola Expedition 206: 365 Days, 206 Countries, 1 Mission*
Virginia Tech - *Song Pitch for David Pogue*
Volkswagen of America/MWW Group - *VW GTI Becomes the World's First Car Launched Exclusively on a Mobile Device*
Weber Shandwick - *Liberating Entertainment in a new Dimension: Introducing the Samsung 3D LED TV*

MEDIA RELATIONS

Sealed Air Corp./ Coyne Public Relations

The POP Heard Round the World: Bubble Wrap's 50th Birthday

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of Bubble Wrap, Coyne worked with Sealed Air Corp. to develop a limited run of special gold Bubble Wrap, which was sent to the media along with a list of 50 uses for the product. Adding to the fun was a "Professor of Popology," who participated in interviews via satellite from the Sealed Air factory in Saddle Brook, N.J. The media couldn't help but respond to a campaign that didn't seem to take itself too seriously. The anniversary campaign generated more than 680 million consumer impressions, and more than 1,100 broadcast segments were viewed worldwide. —Steve Goldstein



FAST FACT:

- The Professor of Popology helped extend the campaign to Europe and New Zealand via satellite radio.

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

CNN - *CNN app for the iPhone & iPod Touch*
Fleishman-Hillard - *Skydeck Chicago at Willis Tower Dares Visitors to Stand Out on the Ledge*
GolinHarris - *Wii Sports Resort Launch Campaign*
Hunter Public Relations - *Monopoly U.S. National Championship Event*
IFC - *Monty Python: Almost the Truth (The Lawyer's Cut)*
Intercontinental Hotels Group/Weber Shandwick - *Holiday Inn: Changing the Overnight World*
Lane Bryant - *Inside Curve*
Tucker & Associates - *Irving Gondola Scouting Expeditions*
Widmeyer Communications on behalf of the Brain Injury Research Institute - *Taking the Head Out of the Game: Addressing Concussions in the NFL*

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Johnson Controls wanted to inspire youth worldwide to gain green job skills, develop their leadership potential and improve their world. APCO helped grow the idea into a global initiative.

APCO's expertise helped Johnson Controls build local partnerships with a common purpose: energize environmental initiatives and promote job skills development for youth.

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The result reflects Johnson Controls' vision: to create comfortable, safe and sustainable environments where people live and work.

Next step: building a more comfortable, safe and sustainable world.



CHARLES A. HARVEY, VICE PRESIDENT
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**Hormel Foods/Burson-Marsteller** Hormel Foods Corporate Reputation Program

Hormel Foods, with PR agency Burson-Marsteller, has worked to expand its external reputation and transcend its accustomed role as the maker of Spam. BM and Hormel's 2009 reputation effort was structured around a few short-term strategies: first, creating employee communications that put Hormel's Our Way messaging (composed of people, process, products, performance and principles) into Hormel's annual CSR report and internal communications from the executive team. Then BM promoted the company's growth and acquisitions within the recessionary environment through press briefings and comprehensive media outreach. The efforts paid dividends, with better-informed employees, more positive media mentions (6,307 print and broadcast stories), increased customer loyalty and improved rankings of Hormel by analysts. —*Scott Van Camp*

**Peppercom** Solazyme's Green Diesel Conquers COP15

Peppercom literally "drove" PR for bio-fuels company Solazyme at the 2009 U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (COP15). With the goal of showcasing the company's algae-derived diesel fuel, Soladiesal,

Peppercom secured a diesel-powered Mercedes-Benz that would squire conference delegates, VIPs (including Sir Richard Branson and Nobel Prize recipients) and journalists to major events at the conference. The visibility helped Solazyme, a California-based company, deepen a relationship with the U.S. Department of Energy and explore a possible partnership with Brazilian sugar cane officials. Thanks to extensive media outreach, including reaching journalists via Twitter, Peppercom placed 21 articles that featured or mentioned Solazyme's work in Copenhagen. It's enough to make any PR firm "green" with envy. —*SVC*

BRANDING

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

- Cardinal Health** - Launching the "New" Cardinal Health
- The Fore Good Group** - Duracell South Africa, the Power to Break World Records
- Medco Health Solutions/Coyne Public Relations** - A Prescription for Change: Communicating the Safety Platform
- The National Shooting Sports Foundation**
- Siemens Corp./Weber Shandwick** - Siemens: Answering the World's Toughest Questions
- Weber Shandwick India** - Shave India Movement 2009 (SIM)

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HALL OF FAME

These three initiatives have set high benchmarks for originality and execution, and will likely be referred to for years to come. We honor them as inductees in our Platinum PR Awards Hall of Fame. ■



Southwest Airlines Nuts About Southwest Blog

Southwest began its Nuts About Southwest blog in 2006, when social media was in its infancy. A pioneer in the social media space, Southwest has generated an audience of almost 4 million unique visitors to the blog and continues to engage customers year after year. As the anchor of its social media strategy, the blog is updated daily with new content, and has expanded into a virtual focus group and a crisis management tool. Employees believe the blog's success is due to the personal interaction it provides between the company and its customers. "The blog gives our employees a platform to share their industry knowledge, exchange personal stories and really connect our customers to the Southwest culture we live and experience every day," says Linda Rutherford, Southwest Airlines' vice president of communication and strategic outreach. —Regina D'Alesio

Weber Shandwick/Honeywell Honeywell Hometown Solutions

Honeywell Hometown Solutions (HHS) has focused its global corporate citizenship-building efforts on three vital societal needs: helping family safety and security, improving math and science education and improving living conditions for low-income families. On all fronts, Weber Shandwick has maximized the media impact of HHS initiatives with grand-scale media outreach. In one instance, WS and Honeywell worked together to develop and distribute a multimedia news release following Honeywell's ground-breaking event for a state-of-the-art school in Jacmel, Haiti, on Aug. 10, 2010 (Honeywell's director of communications Tom Buckmaster breaks new ground in the image at right—Buckmaster is on the left). WS invited reporters to the live event, leading to four unique clips. Honeywell's programs and employees have touched the lives of millions through rebuilding projects and educational programs, and WS' efforts have helped elevate this do-gooder brand to an astounding scale—with more than 1,250 unique media placements and 450 global media impressions since its inception in 2005. —RD

FAST FACT:

- HHS has built a powerful array of partnerships to implement programs, including the Nobel Foundation, NASA and Safe Kids China.



American Heart Association/Edelman

Go Red for Women 2009: Our Hearts. Our Choice.

Research by the American Heart Association's (AHA) Go Red for Women (GRFW) showed that although many women may be aware that heart disease is their No. 1 killer, they weren't personalizing the risk. To help motivate women to move beyond awareness to action, Edelman and GRFW launched the "Our Hearts. Our Choice." messaging platform, intended to expand media coverage and drive women to register at GoRedForWomen.org. The campaign leveraged national media partnerships, and was powered by a nationally syndicated documentary featuring health tips that was also spread online. The results, so far: 65% of women are now aware of heart disease risks, according to the AHA, up from 57% in 2006; online registration at GRFW has risen 12% since the campaign's launch; and a full 89% of GRFW members plan to take at least one action to improve their heart health. —RD



FAST FACT:

- The GRFW program raised \$183 million in donations in 2009.



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ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

Sesame Workshop Sesame Street's 40th Anniversary

To commemorate *Sesame Street*'s 40th anniversary, Sesame Workshop crafted a campaign celebrating the show's iconic legacy and promoting Season 40's contemporary format and CGI animation style. With segments and congratulatory messages from the Obamas, anniversary events in New York and Washington, D.C., a satellite media tour with

19 domestic morning shows, eight major national print features and major daily coverage in the top 35 markets, *Sesame Street*'s 40th anniversary became a national event. Sesame Workshop also capitalized on social media outlets, launching a Sesame Facebook fan page, YouTube clips with celebrity segments from Season 40, a character-run Twitter account, in-studio Mommy blogger events and a weeklong Sesame Street Google Doodle. The campaign successfully garnered top-tier media coverage and reaffirmed *Sesame Street*'s position as an influential part of pop culture, with viewer ratings increasing nearly 60% from 2008. —BM

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Andrea Clark & Associates - *Academy of the Sacred Heart: A Golden Celebration*

Cone Inc. - *Jockey International Inc. Celebrates 75th Anniversary of the Brief*

Flowers Communications Group - *MillerCoors Urban Entrepreneurs Series 10th Anniversary*

Hasbro/Coyne Public Relations - *Candy Land's Sweet 60th Birthday Celebration*

IFC - *Monty Python: Almost the Truth (The Lawyer's Cut)*

Sealed Air Corp./Coyne Public Relations - *The Pop Heard Round the World: Bubblewrap's 50th Birthday*

ANNUAL REPORT

Aetna Aetna Annual Report 'Creating Value, Shaping the Future'

Challenged to provide a friendly and engaging context for its annual report, Aetna released its first-ever online summary, furthering its commitment to environmental sustainability by eliminating 120,000 printed copies. To support the theme of "Creating Value, Shaping the Future,"

Aetna embedded 16 videos within the report, including

seven testimonials from external constituents and videos highlighting sustainability practices and community efforts. The innovative inclusion of video throughout the annual report enabled Aetna to personalize the brand and make meaningful connections, highlighted by the doubling of the unique visitor count for 2010 compared to 2009 for the same 23-day post-launch period. —BM

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Mount Sinai Department of Medicine/Think So Creative - *The People Behind the Medicine*

PepsiCo - *Performance with Purpose: The Promise of PepsiCo*

Temasek Holdings (Private) Limited - *Temasek Review 2009 - "Shaping our Journey"*

FAST FACT:

- The digital report was released via an e-card to all employees, who were then encouraged to share it with business associates and friends.

CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING

Paine PR Iams Home 4 the Holidays Continues Its Mission to Save the Lives of Homeless Pets

Building on a successful 2008 campaign that featured celebrity spokesperson Felicity Huffman, in 2009 Paine PR tapped another well-known actress, Oscar winner Hilary Swank (pictured), to trumpet the plight of homeless animals and the importance of their adoption, and help lift the Iams pet food brand in the process. Swank's participation

was promoted across platforms, including online, in-store, media outreach and PSAs. Coinciding with the release of her new movie, *Amelia*, Swank garnered top-tier appearances on shows like *Today*, *Rachael Ray* and *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Paine also pitched 350 pet bloggers and distributed how-to guides to help 3,500 shelter partners promote Home 4 the Holidays locally. As a result, nearly 1.4 million pets were adopted during the three-month campaign; nearly 430 million media impressions were generated; and during the campaign, the Iams brand had its highest sales quarter in three years. Now that's something to bark about. —SVC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

American Urological Association Foundation/Zeno Group - *Know Your Stats About Prostate Cancer*

Dialogue - *Buchanan Forever*

Hill & Knowlton - *Text4baby Launch*

Macy's/Make a Wish Foundation - 2009 "Believe" Campaign

Pollo Tropical - *Pollo Tropical Helping Handhelds Campaign*

FAST FACT:

- Hilary Swank has been a pet adoption advocate for much of her life, and has two adopted dogs—Rumi and Karoo.



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BLOG

US Army with Weber Shandwick Army Strong Stories Soldier Blog

In May 2009, Weber Shandwick and the U.S. Army relaunched the Army Strong Stories Soldier Blog with a new content management system to provide soldiers easy content entry and access from any Army network. To increase exposure, Weber Shandwick capitalized on the U.S. Army's strong social media following, enabling Twitter integration for blog entries, RSS integration with the GoArmy Facebook page's 35,000 fans and distribution of two bulletins to 90,000 MySpace friends. Army Strong Stories has increased from 18 to 81 bloggers across medical, legal, musical and human resources Army career paths and has enjoyed a 540% traffic increase from 2008, with more than 445,000 site visits. —BM

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Berman and Company - *Humanewatch.org*

The Coca-Cola Company - *Coca-Cola Conversations Blog*

Lion Brand Yarn - *Lion Brand Notebook*

Scholastic Corp. - *On Our Minds @ Scholastic*

Turkey Hill Dairy/Pavone - *Ice Cream*

USANA Health Sciences - *What's Up USANA*

FAST FACT:

- The campaign featured a memo on behalf of Lt. Gen. Benjamin Freakley to Gen. Raymond Odierno encouraging Army Strong Stories from bloggers in Iraq.



COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Cone Inc. with Time Warner Cable Time Warner Cable's Connect a Million Minds

Enlisting agency partner Cone, Time Warner Cable sought to align its philanthropy with its technologically forward-thinking image. The resulting Connect a Million Minds educational effort connects youth with after-school programs teaching STEM skills (science, technology, engineering and math). Cone developed partnerships with FIRST

(For Inspiration and Recognition in Science and Technology) and the Coalition for Science Afterschool and provided training for TWC divisions to support nonprofits on a local level. This smart outreach even earned attention from the president—Time Warner Cable announced its STEM commitment at a November 2009 White House event hosted by President Obama and attended by corporate and nonprofit leaders. —Jessica Clegg

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

American Airlines/Weber Shandwick - *Answering the Call: American Airlines Provides Relief in Haiti*

Bayer CropScience - *BackPack Program*

Davies - *How the Santa Barbara Garden Grows*

Entergy Corp. - *We've Got the Power*

Granite Construction Company/Missouri Department of Transportation - *The New I-64 Reconstruction*

Be The Match® with Padilla Speer Beardsley - *Capturing Public Attention for a Critical Cause*

RF |Binder - *Banking on the Arts: Bank of America's Museums on Us*

Sears Holdings Corp. - *Sears Blue Appliance Crew: Cash for Appliances*

FAST FACT:

- Time Warner Cable developed a curriculum using cable technology to teach STEM subjects.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Royal Caribbean/Weber Shandwick Royal Caribbean's Return to Haiti

Royal Caribbean had long, close ties to Haiti as one of the country's largest investors. However, a crucial decision to return ships to port in Labadee soon after the devastating earthquake garnered widespread criticism. Weber Shandwick's immediate media response campaign

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Davies - *Neverland On-Sight Media Blitz and Branding Control*

Neiman Group - *The Deli Wars: Dietz & Watson Takes a Stand for Consumer Choice*

Fleishman-Hillard - *Protecting a Trusted Brand During Labor Negotiations with Real-Time Conversation*

General Motors and Weber Shandwick - *GM Reinvention*

Levick Strategic Communications - *Heartland Payment Systems Inc.*

Weber Shandwick/Powell Tate & The National Pork Board - *Protecting Pork Sales During H1N1*

steered RC's messaging via press releases, brand social media and a comprehensive "Question and Answers" document, focusing on the company's contributions to the local economy and relief efforts. Soon, polls on MSNBC and CNN showed that more than half of readers approved of the decision to return. A post regarding the issue on the company president's blog was picked up by 50 outlets, ensuring that RC's message stayed on course. —JC



Royal Caribbean unloads supplies in Labadee.



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Kaiser Permanente Northern California Talking Health Care and the Bottom Line With Business Decision Makers

In response to dire unemployment levels in California, which had a negative impact on Kaiser Permanente's health care membership, the corporate communications team pitched op-eds to targeted businesses and chamber-of-commerce publications to support the need for health care and reinforce KP's reputation as credible authority in the business community. The first op-ed was targeted at business owners and was distributed during the open enrollment season, providing tips for controlling health care costs. Another editorial targeted consumers, providing health care advice for the employee side. The employer-targeted op-ed found placement in the *Sacramento Business Journal* and *North Bay Business Journal*, among others. The employee-focused piece ran in

seven chamber-of-commerce publications. All told, these articles reached a potential audience of 100,000 readers and 7,500 business employers that represent more than 600,000 jobs throughout Northern California. —JC

HONORABLE MENTION:

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island - Aquidneck PCMH Op-Ed 2010



ITT Corp. ITT's Employee-Based Approach to Lean Six Sigma

Three years after launching its Lean Six Sigma program, ITT's Texas Turbine Operations facility found that the performance

improvements were not as dramatic as anticipated. To revitalize the program, ITT partnered with consultant Jim Shaffer, who worked with employees to gauge key concerns—for instance, employees were unclear about ITT's business direction and what Lean was and how it would help them meet their goals. As a result, Lean was streamlined to just a few company-wide performance indicators that all employees influence. A new site-wide communication system and scoreboards throughout the offices enabled quick sharing of ideas (see image). These ideas were then distilled into two or three key takeaways discussed during daily 10-minute huddle meetings. Employees began to participate actively in the Lean transformation, as indicated by increased engagement scores in a company-wide survey. The facility has been invited to help other ITT branch businesses enact the same transformation. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

American Express - *Communication Is the New Community for American Express Human Resources*
Booz Allen Hamilton Inc. - *2010-2015 IM/IT Strategic Plan and Campaign*
IHG Friends and Family Americas video launch
Latham & Watkins - *"Employee Engagement: Audio/Visual Blast!"*
Lockheed Martin - *Cheers to Peers: The Power of Recognition*
Portugal Telecom S.A. - *eConsigno*

FAST FACT:

- Since the Lean revision, manufacturing quality has increased through a 40% reduction in scrap/rework.

INTERNAL PUBLICATION

ITT Defense & Information Solutions SystemsNews: Internal Communications for the Home Front and the Battlefield

The bimonthly SystemsNews was developed to be an easy-to-read touchstone for ITT employees across the globe, giving employees information to share with their friends and business associates. Its secondary purpose: to serve as a recruitment tool. With more than half of the 10,000-plus employee base operating without

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Amerigroup Corporation - *Amerigroup's Real Solutions Report Companywide Newsletter*
Booz Allen Hamilton Inc. - *Monthly OCIO Report - Electronic (MORE)*
Diageo - *Our Passion*
Oriental Trading - *"The Flock Squawk" Employee Newsletter*
Smithsonian Institution - *e-Torch Conversion*
Smurfit-Stone Container Corp. - *Connections Employee Newsletter*

email addresses, distribution has become a community-building collaboration. Managers abroad print and provide copies to employees in the field. The content interweaves local and global content, and each issue has a message from the president outlining company goals and photos highlighting the diversity of the environment. Feedback for the SystemsNews shows it's being read, and enjoyed, by a broad slice of employees. —JC





General Electric Co. Resetting Responsibilities

GE sought to increase visibility of its citizenship efforts internally and externally with its fifth annual Citizenship report, which integrated more Web interactivity than ever before. Called *Resetting Responsibilities*, it educated employees and the general public via two formats—an abridged print report and an interactive Web site. The internal corporate Web site was revamped to present a wealth of accessible support materials, including a “CSR Communications Toolkit,” which included FAQs, fact sheets, videos and talking points. Externally, a comprehensive

CSR Web site was built with interactive information and frequent content updates to encourage media pickup. Since the report's launch in July 2009, the media attention has been nearly universally on message, with publications such as the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* holding up the report as a best practice in transparency and CSR. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

American Institute of CPAs - *CPA Letter Daily*
Central Piedmont Community College - *Viewbook*
Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corp. - *Official Philadelphia Brag Book*
Mount Sinai Department of Medicine/Think So Creative - *The People Behind the Medicine*
NYU Langone Medical Center - *NYU Physician*
Office of the Comptroller of the Currency - *OCC and OTS Mortgage Metrics*
Thomson Reuters - *2009 Annual Report – Knowledge to Act*

FAST FACT:

- To bring in a vital external perspective, the report included more than 20 essays from global thought leaders on critical CSR issues such as human rights, climate change and fair labor practices.

FINANCIAL/INVESTOR RELATIONS



Novartis AG/Ruder Finn Restoring Confidence and Driving Reputation in an Economic Crisis

Big Pharma's resiliency has been tested during the global downturn. In response, Novartis wanted to break from the struggling pack and reassure investors of the soundness of the brand. Novartis enlisted Ruder Finn to help it gain control over media coverage, securing not just media touch points, but a major story. RF developed a highly refined matrix of upcoming milestones, syncing this with the schedules of Novartis executives who would serve as spokespeople. After briefing the Novartis C-suite on key platforms, Ruder Finn proactively approached the target business and

financial reporters with strong material news—all with an eye toward sending positive messages to investors. In addition to milestone outreach, RF remained in constant contact with core journalists at major business outlets to explore potential opportunities for a substantial feature story. The result: a June 22, 2009, cover story in *BusinessWeek* profiling then-CEO Daniel Vasella. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

American Airlines/Weber Shandwick - *Clearing the Skies*
CCG Investor Relations Strategic Communications - *Yongye International - A Formula for Growth*
The Coca-Cola Company/Methodologie Inc. - *The Coca-Cola Company Annual Report*
Emerisque/MWW Group - *The War of Whisper Campaign*
FD - *No Brakes for Monro Muffler!*
Temasek Holdings (Private) Limited - *Temasek engages with its diverse global stakeholders during the global financial crisis*



Congratulations Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport!

PR News Platinum PR Awards Finalist

Fergie and Feller Field dedication March 9, 2010

allegiant
Travel is our deal.



The Coca-Cola Co. Expedition 206: 365 Days, 206 Countries, 1 Mission

Building upon the digital activity already buzzing about the brand, Coca-Cola launched Expedition 206 to connect more closely with a young audience—and give them something to tweet about. The program sent a group of young “happiness ambassadors,” selected by consumer vote, to 206 countries where the company

does business, within a 365-day period—armed with an array of mobile tools so they could record and update their experiences in real time. The project identified bloggers and influencers who would support and spread excitement surrounding the adventure. Expedition's reach has been truly across the map. During the voting period, a full 75% came from outside the U.S., and 78% of traffic to Expedition206.com also came from beyond our shores. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

APRA Porter Novelli - *100 Years Independence of Bulgaria*
Intercontinental Hotels Group/Weber Shandwick - *Holiday Inn: Changing the Overnight World*
Weber Shandwick /Honeywell Aerospace - *The Innovative Catalyst: Honeywell Globally Advances the Next Generation of Aerospace*
Norton from Symantec/Edelman - *Black Market: Cybercrime Exposed*
Rotary International - *End Polio Now*
Saab Automobile AB - *Securing an Independent Future for Saab Automobile*

FAST FACT:

- In China, a partnership with QQ.com, the country's largest social-networking site, led to the creation of an Expedition 206-themed “virtual stamp,” which to date nearly 200 million users have collected.

GREEN PR

Sprint with Stanton Communications Inc. and Samsung Telecommunications America with MWW Group

Sprint and Samsung Make It Easy to Be Green



While Spring Nextel and Samsung had long desired to launch a green mobile product, research showed that customers were wary of greenwashing claims. So the team treaded carefully when releasing the 80% recycled

Samsung Reclaim. Rather than announce the innovation at the Consumer Electronics Show, the team opted to introduce the product as part of a broader company-wide plan at an event with partner The Nature Conservancy. Handouts like 100% recycled totes and USBs, and access to cellular recycling, reinforced the initiative. The phone topped major green lists and Sprint donated \$2 to the conservancy for every Reclaim purchased, reaching its maximum commitment of \$500,000. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

GolinHarris - *The Launch of UL Environment Inc.*
Kaiser Permanente Eating Well in Season - *Elevating Kaiser Permanente's Leadership in Sustainable Food*
Loyola University Chicago - *Loyola Creates Sustainability, Campus and Community*
MWW Group Green: Making It Easy to Be Green
Office Depot - *Grow Greener PR Campaign*
Pulse Communications - *Taking a Sip Towards a More Sustainable Tea Industry - Launching Lipton Tea from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms*
Qorvis Communications - *Sustainability in Communications*
U.S. Postal Service Blue to Green PR
World Wildlife Fund/Creaxion - *WWF's Earth Hour 2010: Uniting the Country Around a Symbol*

EVENT MARKETING

First Degree, on behalf of WomenHeart Cheerios Circle of Helping Hearts Tour

Leveraging its status as cholesterol-reducing breakfast champion, Cheerios partnered with First Degree and heart health-focused charity WomenHeart to provide cholesterol screenings to minority women in California. First Degree's campaign started in the box—specially designed Cheerios boxes with cholesterol awareness messaging and a code to allow consumers to easily

donate for the cause. Cheerios used the resulting funds to host screening stations in low-income communities. The effort raised \$400,000—enough to screen 875 underprivileged women. Post-visit surveys revealed 79% planned to be Cheerios consumers. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Consumer Electronics Association - *2010 CES PR Campaign*
Communications Strategies Inc. - *Plan B(R) One-Step Spring Break Guerrilla Marketing Campaign*
Phoenix - *Mesa Gateway Airport Authority - Fergie and Feller Field Dedication*
SPT Networks Central Europe - *Lost: The Exhibition*
US Army/Weber Shandwick - *US Army All American Bowl*



MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Roll International From FDA Recall to Unprecedented Sales in Eight Months

In March 2009, Roll International and Paramount Farms launched a dual campaign to mitigate the crisis following a pistachio nut FDA recall and to transform the threat into an opportunity for company growth. PistachioRecall.org launched within 72 hours, offering a list of safe pistachio brands while a sales force was deployed to meet with retailers and provide pertinent information. The “Get-Crackin” campaign launched in October, encouraging Americans to resume eating pistachios, with Olympic swimmer Dara Torres and others appearing in humorous pistachio commercials, while The GetCrackin.com site featured behind-the-scenes videos, an

**HONORABLE MENTIONS:**

Brushfire Inc. - *The Jersey Shore Store*
Hilton Hotels and Resorts with Covalent Logic
 - *Hilton Brand Takes Off With “Up in the Air” Film Partnership*

iPhone app and a YouTube video contest. Consumers showed their instilled confidence with a 223% increase in Wonderful Pistachios sales.
 —BM

FAST FACT:

- In November 2009, Wonderful Pistachios was the fourth fastest-selling SKU in the “salty snack” category, the only snack nut to break into the higher tiers.

MEDIA EVENT

GolinHarris Bringing New Life to an Old Steel Town: Launching Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem

In preparation for its campaign to promote the opening of the Sands Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, GolinHarris delved into the history around Bethlehem and Bethlehem Steel Works. Through research and interviews with Bethlehem/Lehigh Valley historians, GolinHarris made the economic and emotional

impact of Bethlehem Steel’s closing part of its media relations approach. The economic impact the casino would have on the region was built into the media story to help Sands Casino reach its goal of breaking Pennsylvania’s record for opening-day wagers. On opening day, GolinHarris staged a first-look media opportunity. As consumers began arriving before dawn, Sands opened the doors ahead of schedule to accommodate the crowd. More than 60 members of the media were on hand. The result: On the casino’s first day of operation, more than 60,000 consumers had visited the casino and wagered \$18.4 million, enough to almost double the state’s previous record for a slots site opening. —SG

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

CNN - *The Unveiling: A press introduction to the new CNN.com*
GolinHarris - *Wii Sports Resort Takes Over Times Square*
Horn Group Inc. - *RightNow Challenges an Industry*
O’Malley Hansen Communications - *Sara Lee Captures the Hearts and Minds of America’s Moms*
Shell Lubricants/Coyne Public Relations - *Hitting the Jackpot with New Pennzoil Ultra Launch*
Tucker & Associates - *The Implosion of Texas Stadium*
UPS - *Decision Green Tech Forum*

MULTICULTURAL CAMPAIGN

Weber Shandwick/Honeywell International Honeywell-Nobel Laureate Lecture Series - Inspiring the Next Generation of Scientists Today

Weber Shandwick’s challenge was to inspire students, raise awareness of the Honeywell brand and potentially recruit new talent in three countries—China, India and the Czech Republic. The plan was to leverage on-campus Nobel Laureate lectures to drive Honeywell recruiting and to use online marketing tools and user-generated content to stimulate ongoing engagement with students.

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Bristol-Myers Squibb/Ruder Finn Inc. - *Raising Awareness of Chronic Hepatitis B Among Asian-Americans*
Pacific Gas And Electric Co. - *2009 PG&E Care Program*
Sears Holdings Corp./Flowers Communications Group - *Kmart National Layaway Week*
Time Warner Cable, Univision, Edelman and Castells & Asociados - *Lo Mejor On Demand*
Transitions Optical Inc./Euro RSCG Worldwide PR - *Maintaining Leadership in Meeting the Eye Health Needs of Culturally Diverse Groups*
Western Union/Bromley Communications - *iSi! Western Union Helps Make Dreams Come True*

Weber Shandwick, along with Nobel Web and Honeywell, organized planning calls across 12 time zones, developed marketing materials for the three cultures and developed a toolkit for event management to keep the tone and goals consistent, even if the cultures were varied. According to survey cards, 85% of participants surveyed said they would consider employment with Honeywell because of their involvement in the lecture program. —SG



Dr. Eric A. Cornell (center), the 2001 Nobel Laureate in Physics, was the featured speaker for the Honeywell-Nobel Laureate Lecture Series at the Thiagarajar College of Engineering in India.

ON A SHOESTRING CAMPAIGN

**Marketing 24/7 Inc.** 'Business Makeover Birmingham'

Ruvena Healy, president of Marketing 24/7, joined with Dent, Baker & Co. and Corsini Consulting Group to launch a business makeover contest in 2009 that would provide \$30,000 worth of professional services over a six-month period to the winning company. Most of the PR and marketing efforts were pro bono, but the payback was considerable, and not just for the winner of the contest. The project partners were associated with all media coverage of the contest, resulting in higher profiles in the business community and new inquiries from potential clients. Business Makeover Birmingham's site attracted 1,730 unique visitors over seven months, and 15 articles were placed in various news outlets. And a final live event was attended by 120 businesspeople—which was maximum capacity. The ultimate measure of success: A 2010 contest was launched as well. —SG

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Adfero Group - SNM Annual Meeting Press Conference
American Airlines - "Black History in Aviation"
GolinHarris - McDonald's Richmond Commuter Program - McCafé Frappé Launch
Jumpstart - "Jumpstart's Read for the Record 2009"
Molina Healthcare Inc. - Yo-Yo Break the Record. Break the Cycle
Southwest Airlines - WOW! Sale

ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

1-800-Flowers.com/MWW Group Turning 1-800-Flowers.com's 'Spot a Mom' Into a Social Media Movement

MWW and 1-800-Flowers.com's Spot a Mom campaign was based on a simple, caring Mother's Day concept—people were encouraged to spot an online mom and celebrate her, helping to make sure that no mom was left behind on this special day. MWW tapped into the online mommy

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Covalent Logic - Hilton Global Media Center
Forth Worth Opera Online
Maxwell PR - Yogi Well-Wishes
National Geographic Channel - Expedition Week
PepsiCo/Weber Shandwick - PepsiCo SXSW Site
Royal Caribbean/Weber Shandwick - Online Oasis

FAST FACT:

- Total ad equivalency for the Spot a Mom campaign was \$1.6-plus million.

community and spotted mommy bloggers who best represented certain mom archetypes. And what did these "spotted" moms receive in recognition? A floral bouquet, of course. This online exposure helped 1-800-Flowers.com reach its Mother's Day sales goal, despite the down economy; nearly 50% of the brand's online conversations took place on Twitter. —SG



1-800-Flowers' mommy blogger event in NYC.

PODCAST/VIDEOCAST

**Allrecipes.com** 2009 Thanksgiving Webcast

To position itself as the online go-to Thanksgiving resource, Allrecipes.com invited home cooks into its kitchen the day before Thanksgiving for a live webcast to view staff preparing its budget menu. In advance, Allrecipes.com issued a media alert announcing the live step-by-step demonstrations and social media Q&A, and the alert also invited local broadcast media and bloggers to be on site during the webcast. Between segments, viewers received stats related to regional top recipes and were able to ask questions in real time.

More than 40,000

home cooks from 24 countries tuned in. Allrecipes.com's holiday webcast and trend data received wide media coverage, including placements in *The New York Times* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*. —Melissa Tinklepaugh

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Areva/RF|Binder Partners - Recycle It: A Discussion on Nuclear Fuel Recycling
Lion Brand Yarn - YarnCraft
Smithsonian Institution - Smithsonian Behind the Scenes: First Ladies Collection
Wines of Chile USA/RF|Binder Partners - Chilean Wine Goes Virtual: Connecting Bloggers Through Innovative Online Tasting

Berman & Company MADD about the Beer Summit

In response to a debate over a racially charged incident in Massachusetts between a Harvard University professor and a Cambridge police officer, President Obama invited both men to the White House to enjoy a beer while resolving the tension—an event dubbed “The Beer Summit.” Days later, Mothers Against Drunk Driving’s (MADD) Delaware chapter president expressed concern that the president drinking a beer on TV could negatively influence children. Berman & Co., on behalf of the American Beverage Institute (ABI), saw a perfect opportunity to illustrate the adoption of neo-prohibitionist policies by MADD leaders. Capitalizing on the meeting’s intense media coverage, Berman and ABI developed a national press release identifying MADD’s

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Graham & Associates - Centor Architectural: SIE Eco-Screen

Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corp.

- *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia Itinerary*

Rasky Baerlein Strategic Communications

- *Citizens' Greensense Earth Day Release*

UPS - *Circle of Honor*

previous anti-alcohol activities and encouraged the group to return to an anti-drunk-driving stance rather than complete alcohol abstinence. ABI pushed the release to federal government contacts, national cable network producers and national journalists who've previously covered MADD stories. Top-tier coverage included three national dailies, all four D.C.-specific newspapers and national cable news coverage on MSNBC. —BM



PRO BONO CAMPAIGN

The Marcus Group Inc. Restoring Gilda's Club NNJ Campaign

Created in memory of the late comedian Gilda Radner, cancer support organization Gilda's Club of NNJ was on the verge closing its doors permanently. In stepped The Marcus Group, which first recruited a new leader, Ruth Dugan, with a proven track record of financial turnarounds. Then came a green reconstruction of the clubhouse, which Dugan helped mobilize by tapping into \$500,000 in federal funds. TMG orchestrated

a dedication ceremony for the renovated clubhouse that drew local media. TMG also got elected officials involved for a “Face Cancer Together Day” and staged a Bachelor Auction and “Ladies of Laughter” show. In all, TMG's pro bono work helped raised more than \$375,000 for Gilda's Club. This financial stability has enabled the club to continue to provide support to anyone touched by cancer. —SG

**FAST FACT:**

- Through the efforts of TMG, Gilda's Club NNJ now maintains a database of more than 2,000 Northern New Jersey residents.

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Arizona State University/ KAAJE

Communications - *Phoenix Zoo's Komodo Dragon Exhibit*

Blaze Public Relations - *Walk with Sally Rocks Annual Fundraiser*

Cramer-Krasselt - *Running Digital Race with ACS*

Peppercom - *Bringing Awareness to Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America*



an amphibious vehicle to showcase its exclusive design while also hosting press conferences, media calls and presenting to national travel agencies. They then delivered press releases to Mexico's Tourism Board, Cancun's Conventions and Visitors Bureau, and Riviera Maya's Tourism Board with an invitation to the press day, christening the park with a live broadcast. To make the destination equally compelling for the immediate area, they hosted a pre-opening visit for opinion leaders and their families, encouraging feedback and the formation of new relationships.

FAST FACT:

- Xplor's amphibious vehicles are self-driving and can transfer from land to water.

Xplor Riviera Maya PR Launch Campaign for New Park Xplor

How do you promote the launch of an eco-theme park in the middle of a worldwide financial crisis and immediately after a local sanitation crisis in Mexico? Xplor Riviera Maya, a unique nature park with limestone caves, grottoes and underground rivers, developed a two-tiered campaign, focusing first on reaching a national audience, and then homing in on their local region. To create national buzz, Xplor representatives traveled to three major markets with

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

APRA Porter Novelli - *Nescafé Dolce Gusto Launch in Bulgaria*

Howorth, an Ogilvy PR Company - *Microsoft Australia - Windows 7 Launch: "Windows 7 Was My Idea"*

Intel Corp. Global Communications Group and Ogilvy Public Relations - *Intel Unveils Faster, Smarter Processors*

Red PR - *CND Shellac Attack*

Royal Caribbean/ Weber Shandwick - *Launching a Product, Validating a Category*

Time Warner Cable, Univision, Edelman and Castells & Asociados - *Lo Mejor On Demand Launch*

Unilever/Breyers/GolinHarris - *Breyers Smooth & Dreamy Webisodes*

PRODUCT LAUNCH

PSA

Legacy/Ad Council/YouCast Become an EX: National Quit Smoking Campaign

As part of its effort to extend the reach of EX, Legacy created PSA elements to drive smokers to EX's comprehensive quit plan. The campaign includes TV, radio, outdoor and Web banner PSAs, with all elements driving viewers/listeners to BecomeAnEX.org—the convening point for smokers who want

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention/Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide - *Screen for Life: Harnessing the Power of Storytelling*

One - *"Coming Together as ONE"*

Paine PR - *Iams Home 4 the Holidays Continues Its Mission to Save the Lives of Homeless Pets*

Strauss Radio Strategies Inc. - *Purdue Pharma & USCM "Prescription Drug Abuse" Radio PSA*

Susan Davis International - *Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve*

to quit. Working with the Ad Council and YouCast, Legacy identified appropriate social media targets

and tailored pitch approaches to online influencers as part of an effort to provide maximum exposure for EX PSAs. Other

social media tactics included a Facebook application called "Match Heads," which

matched smokers with other smokers who share the same triggers and then sent them to the BecomeAnEx.org quit plan. Since the launch of the quit plan site, more than 220,000 people have officially signed up to Become an EX. —SG

FAST FACT:

- After the PSA campaign began in February 2010, the weekly conversion rate for online signups increased by 5%.



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DePaul University DePaul University's Campaign to Restore Funding for the State of Illinois' Monetary Award Program

Facing a financial deficit, the Illinois General Assembly planned to cut funding to the state's Monetary Award Program (MAP), a decision that would affect 25% of DePaul's undergraduates. Working with a coalition representing public, private and community college students, Depaul's PR office launched an integrated campaign to engage audiences to in an effort to reverse the decision. In-person meetings and student rallies were focal points of a campaign based on personal engagement. Easy tools for letter writing, including links to an online email tool encouraged massive participation. More than 3,000 community members responded by writing their legislators to urge MAP restoration. Ultimately the outreach reached 5.5 million and culminated in Gov. Pat Quinn signing the crucial bill. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Adfero Group - *Too Big to Fail/Single Bank Regulator*

AFSCME - *Make America Happen Campaign for Health Care Reform*

Berman and Company - *Defeat the Debt*

Partner of Promotion - *"E-business? Poland Can Do It!"*

TSG Consulting - *"Mental Health Crisis Campaign"*

REBRANDING/REPOSITIONING

Kimberly Clark/Marina Maher Communications Inc. Poise and Whoopi Goldberg Destigmatize Taboo Health Condition

Marina Maher was charged to engage the public in a highly private issue—to improve general awareness of Poise, a product specifically designed for light bladder leakage (LBL). To create a safe and even fun environment for women to connect around LBL and reduce the stigma surrounding it,

MM brought in barrier-free comic Whoopi Goldberg as spokesperson. She starred in a series of webisodes discussing that "below the belt condition," and appeared in the guise of famous women—all in need of a little extra protection. A version played as an ad during the Oscars, and the brand achieved its highest-ever U.S. share and nearly 600,000 unique Web site visits in the first month of launch. —JC

**HONORABLE MENTIONS:**

American Society of Nephrology - *Rebranding ASN*

Bhava Communications - *Extreme Makeover: Overland Storage Edition*

Henson Consulting Inc. - *The Green Nut: Rebranding of Pistachios, The Only Green Nut*

Makovksy + Co. - *New Life for an Aging Brand: Relaunch of W. P. Stewart & Company*

Palisades Insurance/MWW - *"Drive with a Smile" Palisades Highway Art Gallery*

Shell Lubricants/Coyne Public Relations - *The Revitalization of Quaker State*

WXXI Public Broadcasting - *Go Public*

RESEARCH AND MEASUREMENT

**Association of American Railroads/Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide**
Freight Rail Works

Dirty. Inefficient. Old. These were some of the words congressional influencers were using to describe freight rail before Ogilvy PR and AAR launched an advocacy advertising campaign that would educate beltway consumers about freight rail's benefits and turn the tides against reregulation. The campaign started with thorough in-person and online focus groups to gauge public perception. To address misconceptions, Ogilvy hosted an "AAR Media Day," and targeted TV and radio ads helped support AAR's political platform, centered around a new tagline:

"Freight Rail Works." Among the featured stats: Each freight train is equivalent to 280 trucks in terms of fuel used. The campaign helped prevent the Senate Judiciary Committee from fast-tracking antitrust legislation targeting freight rail in June 2009. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

American Lung Association and Porter Novelli - *Quitter in You Campaign*

America's Natural Gas Alliance/Hill & Knowlton - *Growing Demand for Natural Gas Through Strategic Research*

The Coca-Cola Company/FD - *A Growing Curve of Refreshment: The Coca-Cola Company's Roadmap for Winning*

General Electric - *PR Insight for Marketing Innovation Through Research, Data Visualization and Impact Analysis*

Kaiser Permanente - *Message Pull-Through*

Northwestern Mutual/Gagen MacDonald - *Making the Case: Measuring the Value of Employee Engagement at Northwestern Mutual*

SATELLITE MEDIA TOURS

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company/Coyne Public Relations

Goodyear 'Get There' Awards



Goodyear had long provided the aerial footage of the Olympics for North American viewers. For the 2010 Vancouver games Goodyear looked to generate even more brand awareness and reinforce its connection to the Olympics. To that end, Goodyear and Coyne developed the Get There Awards, honoring the behind-the-scenes people who helped Olympic athletes "get there"—much the same way that Goodyear was working behind the scenes at the games. With Olympian Bonnie Blair (pictured left) as spokesperson,

the awards were announced on national broadcast, and 43 interviews with the honorees were made available to the media. The efforts delivered more than 1,140 broadcast stories, translating to \$460,000 in comparative advertising value. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Burson-Marsteller - *The New \$100 Note: Global Public Education Program*

Synaptic Digital & the FDA - *Peanut Butter Recall*

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

- *AICPA: April 2010 Financial Literacy Month*

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Miller Meiers H&R Block Get It Right Social Community

H&R's strategic goals for a social media platform included becoming a live conduit for sharing ideas and advice and establishing itself as a friendly, reassuring source of answers. To make things truly personal, Miller Meiers and H&R Block launched GetItRight.HRBlock.com, which allowed customers to ask questions and receive specific and direct responses from a tax professional within three days. Every facet of the site was optimized to increase engagement and be simple to follow,

and served to simplify an often intimidating customer experience. The site drew over 1.5 million unique visitors, and the total number of questions asked numbered 1.million. —JC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

BSM Media - *Zhu Zhu Pets/BSM Media Launch Campaign*

Chamberlain Healthcare Public Relations - *Making Sense of Diabetes*

GolinHarris - *Butterfinger FUNterns: Ultimate Summer Gig!*

O'Malley Hansen Communications - *Sharing the Mama Sagas*

Volkswagen of America/MWW Group - *VW GTI Becomes the World's First Car Launched Exclusively on a Mobile Device*

Weight Watchers/MS&L Worldwide - *Lose-A-Palooza Social Media Action Day for Weight Watchers*



SPEECHES

General Electric Jeff Immelt's Renewing American Leadership Speech at West Point

Jeff Immelt (center) after his West Point speech

motivating with vision but winning through execution; and having respect for others. A speech to a primarily military audience made sense, as 11,000 veterans work at GE, 238 are West Point graduates and nearly 600 are from all the service academies. Immelt's speech graced the cover of the *Financial Times*, was reprinted in the *Washington Post* and mentioned in numerous other publications. —BM

On Dec. 9, 2009, GE CEO Jeff Immelt delivered a stirring speech to graduating cadets at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, focusing on two major messages: the need for leaders who have the courage to change themselves and others if the country is to realize a better economic future; and the fact that the cadets are learning the types of skills and values that will serve them well as business and government leaders. Immelt outlined five key traits of good leaders: being a good listener; being comfortable with ambiguity; stressing competency;

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

National Association for Multi-Ethnicity in Communications ELDP - *Graduation Speech*

Hormel Foods/Burson-Marsteller - *Hormel Foods Speech: "Driving Innovation That Deliver Today and Tomorrow"*

VIDEO PROGRAM

**O'Malley Hansen Communications**
Sharing the Mama Sagas

As a way to build awareness and drive sales of Sara Lee Fresh Ideas pre-sliced deli meat, O'Malley Hansen Communications created the Mama Sagas video and social media campaign. OHC worked with Second City Communications

to develop satirical Web videos that were hosted on a branded channel on Metacafe. The Mama Saga campaign received more than 2.2 million video views on Metacafe and 200,000 video views on Facebook. The Sara Lee Deli Facebook page attracted more than 23,000 fans, had 65,000 coupons downloaded and experienced a 6,800% increase in unique visitors in just two weeks. The client and OHC had expected 200,000 video views and 500 Facebook fans—they exceeded expectations by more than 1,200%. —MT

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Continuum Health Partners - *"In My Back Yard: Dispelling Myths About Methadone Treatment"*

Conva Tec Inc. - *Great Comebacks Celebrating 25 Years*

Discovery Channel - *LIFE Video Press Kit*

Intel Corp. Global Communications Group and Burson-Marsteller Public Relations - *Get Smarter with Intel*

The National Shooting Sports Foundation - *State of the Industry*

WEBSITE MARKETING

Blue Cross Blue Shield What'sTheRealCost.org

What'sTheRealCost.org explains health care costs in everyday terms like grocery shopping.

To engage consumers in the health care debate and give them a better understanding of health care cost drivers, Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield began a campaign with a Web site, What'sTheRealCost.org, as the centerpiece. With the goal of showing visitors the real cost of medical treatments, the Web site featured five different microsites that would appeal to different demographics. Among them, FiveQuestions.org guides users through a series of questions that could change the health care world; in CostGenerator.org, players learn the true costs of medical procedures; HealthyHeights.org acts as a community health planner; and SpreadTheMovement.org features blogs connecting personal stories to questions about costs. These interactive features hit a nerve with consumers, who flocked to the site. Since January 2009, there have been more than 110,000 visits, with the average time spent on the site at four-plus minutes. —SVC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Cargill and Carmichael Lynch Spong - *"Salt 101" Spices Up Diamond Crystal Salt*

Cognito - *Raising Awareness on Derivatives Regulation - Microsite*

Miller Meiers - *H&R Block Get It Right Social Community*

Porter Novelli New York - *Time to Talk CARDIO*

Virilion - *Every Mother Counts*

Weber Shandwick - *CKE: Kim Kardashian Behind the Scenes Video*

FIRM OF THE YEAR (LARGE)

**Ketchum**

Bolstered by one of the biggest PR agency mergers in history, Ketchum achieved unprecedented, double-digit top-line growth in 2009, as well as record revenue growth in terms of percentage and actual dollars. Ketchum's merger with Germany-based communications agency Pleon significantly expanded its global

footprint. The combination resulted in a new division, Ketchum Pleon Change, which offers change management strategies and services across the globe. Recognizing the importance of digital communications, Ketchum expanded its digital services to clients and offered its employees 30-plus courses around digital topics. Indeed, employee programs and perks play a big part in Ketchum's success. Its London outpost ranked No. 13 on the 2009 Best Workplaces in the U.K. (it made our own Top Workplaces list—see page 21), and workplace offerings worldwide include softball and kickball teams, and employee-developed green programs. No wonder Ketchum's employee retention rate climbed to 83% last year. —SVC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Edelman
GolinHarris
Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide
Ruder Finn

FIRM OF THE YEAR (MIDSIZE)

Carmichael Lynch Spong

Doug Spong, founder of Carmichael Lynch Spong, often reminds his staff of 200-plus that the sun never sets on "Spong Nation." Even in a tough economy, the Minneapolis-based PR firm (with offices in New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco and Denver) reached a number of milestones in 2009, including adding \$1.5 million worth of new business.

On the eve of its 20th anniversary, CLS has achieved impressive consistency over the years, with an 18% compounded annual growth rate, regular inclusion on best places to work lists and an impressive list of blue-chip clients. The agency focuses on three practice areas: brand marketing, corporate reputation and B2B initiatives. Last year CLS distinguished itself as an environmental leader among agencies nationwide. A CLS Green Team has helped establish recycling programs and environmentally friendly work spaces. Its Midwest agency was the first to move to 100% wind-sourced power. —SVC

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Makovsky + Company
MWW Group
Peppercom
Qorvis Communications, LLC



FIRMS OF THE YEAR (SMALL)

Lambert, Edwards & Associates

Founded 12 years ago as a PR and investor relations agency, Lambert, Edwards & Associates has morphed into a full-service PR firm that knows the technical aspects of investor relations inside and out. LE&A's acquisition last year of the communications firm John Bailey & Associates added 50% to 2009 revenue, on top of the agency's 6% organic growth. In 2009 LE&A implemented effective campaigns for a number of clients, including a cross-country RV tour for Zondervan, the world's largest bible publisher, and the launch of a "Movers for Moms" charitable campaign on behalf of moving company Two Men and a Truck, among other efforts. Team building initiatives abound, including a four-day *Survivor*-themed trip to Cancun. —SVC

**Warschawski**

Bolstering a client lineup that includes W.L. Gore, maker of Gore-Tex, Warschawski added 14 new clients in 2009, including sports apparel maker New Balance and Verizon Wireless. That kind of external success helped continue a mandate of providing Warschawski employees with a nurturing and rewarding work environment. In 2009, all team members received raises between 8% and 15%, most were promoted and none were laid off due to the economy. Professional development is also a key component of the agency's

offerings. Warschawski University is held on a quarterly basis and covers topics identified by team members, while design and digital media experts send out tips on the latest trends and hot topics. —SVC

**HONORABLE MENTIONS:**

Adfero Group
Alpaytac Inc.
The Conroy Martinez Group
Henson Consulting Inc.
Linhart Public Relations
Merritt Group
Schnake Turnbo Frank | PR

We present our **2010 Top Places to Work in PR**—the agencies and organizations that match their superb in-house and client PR work with equally outstanding internal efforts to support employees' personal growth and success. ■



Adfero Group

Adfero Group's leadership fosters a culture of learning. The company's intern mentorship program matches interns with staff members to provide guidance and career advice. This mentorship program has proven to be a win-win for the company as all three interns in the program were hired into full-time positions in 2009. The openness and drive ingrained in the corporate culture also leads to a strong sense of community. Adfero Group develops activities designed to strengthen employee relationships, including get-togethers for social events like March Madness. This sense of community expands externally, too, through volunteer opportunities. Last year Adfero Group partnered with D.C. Central Kitchen to prepare and distribute meals to the homeless. —RD



BAE Systems

BAE Systems' new "Total Performance" strategy is both the catalyst and benchmark for the defense and aerospace company's success. It offers employees—including communications staff—career advancement through several training and educational programs, and travel opportunities to domestic and international conferences ranging anywhere from Cincinnati to South Africa. Other perks include childcare assistance, 401k contribution matching, flexible "9/80" scheduling, strong local community involvement and mentorships around the world and tax-free college tuition coverage up to \$5,250 per year. With the only female CEO among the top 25 defense contractors, BAE systems has a diverse workforce and energized environment. —BM



Dixon Schwabl

"Fun" is a line item at Dixon Schwabl, and that's an understatement. Walk into the offices and you are greeted by the "Director of First Impressions" (there is no receptionist). Employees can take part in ice cream Thursdays, listen to live acoustic music, enjoy cookouts in the summer or take a spin down the company's slide. Yes, there is a slide from the second floor to the main lobby. All of these perks contribute to the company's larger goals of creating a flexible, fun, creative environment. And it has paid off. In a tough economic climate in 2009, the company experienced no layoffs, and employees received 24% of the profits as part of an annual bonus plan. In 2010 the company expanded, opening an office in South Carolina. —RD

Erwin-Penland Public Relations

Erwin-Penland's workplace is defined by creative activity, both in worktime and in play. Employees can be found in the eclectically furnished Yellow Submarine conference room or playing ping-pong in a break room before a meeting. To make daily life more enjoyable, the company offers an "EPerks" benefits package that includes on-site massage therapy, car washing services, a personal trainer and discounts on concert tickets or pet care. In addition to all of the perks, the company is committed to professional development with a mentor program for all new employees. —RD



Georgia Tech Research Institute

As a nonprofit applied research unit, Georgia Tech Research Institute seeks to maintain a culture in which collaboration and creativity are valued. A new Career Management Department helps communications staffers and others map out careers and offers training for current and future roles in new career paths. GTRI hired more than 120 new employees in the last year and predicts it'll hire an additional 100 employees this coming year. With work that is challenging and set in a rewarding environment, many people choose to stay with the company for their entire careers. "We are not slaves to the bottom line," an employee says. —RD

Hunter Public Relations

Hunter PR fosters a dynamic environment that emphasizes open communication and opportunities for growth. Workshops are held each month on a variety of topics including social media, media relations and writing. Each year, employees attend a three-day intensive training session at what is affectionately referred to as “Hunter Community College.” This off-site seminar centers around one designated skill, but also allows for social activities and entertainment. The company also holds a “Bring Your Parents to Work Day” to provide parents and family members a better understanding of public relations. —RD



Kaiser Permanente

Looking at the work environment at Kaiser Permanente, one word comes to mind—wellness. It's no surprise that Kaiser Permanente offers a full range of benefits to its employees—health care, life insurance and retirement benefits, just to name a few. With a telecommuting policy and the technology to support work off-site, employees have all the resources to maintain work-life balance (and practice their balance during the weekly hula hoop day—see image). Kaiser Permanente also has an open-door policy between its employees and senior management. Weekly meetings are held to discuss department-wide activities, while smaller monthly coffee dates help to generate ideas and feedback on department initiatives. —RD

Ketchum

The economic climate has forced many organizations to cut back budgets and reduce staff. Ketchum, however, recognized that engaging its employees has never been more important. The agency encourages employees to explore other opportunities outside their practice groups. Through a career-tracking program, employees set up a plan for their own career path and growth. In 2010, Ketchum relaunched “Ketchum University” and Ketchum Pleon University, its Europe counterpart. The professional training programs share a tagline: “Making the Best Better.” With a mission like that it is clear how dedicated Ketchum is to supporting long-term learning and development for its employees. —RD



The Morris+King Company

Since its inception in 2001, Morris+King Company has created an environment that is creative and fun, yet professional. Staff and team members are matched with clients based on their interests and expertise. During a challenging economy, Morris+King has provided raises and year-end bonuses to every employee. The agency invests in the professional development of its employees by offering tuition reimbursement and in-house training on topics such as social media and writing. —RD

MWW Group

MWW Group has taken strides to create a collaborative, growth-oriented environment in an effort to retain good talent while increasing productivity and job satisfaction. The agency offers a mentoring program, and employees are given a stipend for education and career-related courses. Additionally, MWW encourages work-life balance for its employees by offering summer Fridays, a day off on their birthdays and paid time to participate in community service activities. —RD



MWW Group Green supports local environmental causes.



Ogilvy PR Worldwide

Ogilvy PR is committed to keeping all employee communications channels wide open. To this end it has created O-village, the agency's intranet system; a monthly newsletter to share information; and an employee survey to gauge where improvements can be made. The physical space also supports communication with open workstations, open doors, an internal staircase connecting floors and break-out rooms with whiteboards to inspire and capture creative ideas. The hard work is rewarded with summer Fridays, yoga and language classes, impromptu parties for Mardi Gras or Flag Day and bonuses in the form of iPods or Flip cameras. —RD



All the hands pictured are from employees who contribute to PCI's public affairs efforts.

Property Casualty Insurers Association of America (PCI)

The team at PCI has pulled together in light of political and regulatory changes in the insurance industry. The economic climate has forced the group to work harder to advance their mission to protect insurers and policyholders. In addition to an open-communication environment and standard benefits, PCI offers its employees nontraditional benefits like on-site yoga, free massages once a month, free lunch on your anniversary date and telecommuting. —RD



R&J employees competed in a charity marathon.

R&J Public Relations

With a sophisticated intern program, mentoring program and open lines of communication, R&J invests in its employees' success. Interns are offered the opportunity to contribute to all aspects of the organization. The hands-on experience benefits the interns and the agency: 40% of its full-time staff consists of former interns. In 2008, R&J instituted a formal mentoring program to make sure that career development is ongoing. R&J also provides reimbursement for industry seminars, webinars and professional association membership dues. —RD

Southwest Airlines

Known for its unique corporate culture, Southwest Airlines offers an inclusive and lively workplace, propelled by a "work hard, play hard" maxim. Employees enjoy a coveted free travel program and quarterly events around Dallas that include golf, luncheons at House of Blues and Cowboy Stadium tours. The "Share the Spirit" program comprises 80 community events and 20,490 volunteer hours yearly by employees, demonstrating corporate social responsibility within the company and in the marketplace. —BM



Vail Resorts Inc.

If you think vacationing in Vail is fun, try working there. In addition to the more traditional health care and 401k offerings, benefits include discounts on any type of lesson you can imagine —skiing, snowboarding, snow tubing and snowshoeing. Outdoor activities aside, Vail Resorts encourages growth and development opportunities for its employees. The company offers internal training courses, mentoring programs for interns and continuing education assistance. The communications team has an all-important seat at the table to drive results for the company's bottom line. —RD



Employees get perks like free theme park tickets for any Disney attraction.

The Walt Disney Company

The Walt Disney Company does not restrict the fun, creativity and imagination to the promotion of its end products and the end products themselves. Employees (and their inner child) and their families enjoy complimentary theme park tickets and discounted rates at company resorts. Benefits for all include bountiful insurance coverage (even for pets), college savings plans, on-site childcare, flex scheduling, telecommuting and developmental courses and tuition reimbursement options for continuing education. The Disney VoluntEARS program enables employees to make a positive impact in their own community or around the globe, with more than 5 million hours of service recorded in 42 countries over the past 26 years. —BM

Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo maintains an overall collegial environment that is focused on keeping employees happy and committed. Growth opportunities are available through external classes, seminars and conferences, with tuition reimbursement totaling \$5,000 yearly. Low employee turnover is also achieved through excellent insurance and financial benefits and team-building volunteer work. In 2009, employees volunteered 1.23 million hours through community outreach programs, while the company donated \$202 million dollars to 18,000 nonprofits. Senior level employees may take three months paid leave to volunteer with a nonprofit anywhere in the world. —RD

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