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INFLUENCER CAMPAIGN CASE STUDY

BY NICOLE DYE-ANDERSON, VP, MEDIA RELATIONS,
 BARCLAYCARD US

How Barclaycard Used a Three-Part Plan to Bolster Its Influencer Effort

Last year, **JetBlue** and **Barclaycard** partnered to launch the JetBlue **Mastercard** portfolio, consisting of a suite of credit cards designed with benefits to appeal to the JetBlue traveler. As the card issuer, Barclaycard needed to create awareness for the credit card products to drive applications and build excitement with existing and potential cardmembers around the enhanced card benefits.

Our strategy for the PR campaign utilized influencers as a primary vehicle to reach our target audiences. Prior to JetBlue, Barclaycard had successfully partnered with influencers on several card launches and has made influencers a core part of media relations and outreach across its portfolio. Influencers provide Barclaycard brand intangible benefits, such

as authentic voice, unique point of view, deep storytelling and the reach of an engaged and highly targeted audience.

As a PR pro, avoid limiting the scope of where and how influencers can be brought into your PR campaign. For this launch, Barclaycard used a three-pronged approach that integrated influencers with other media relations efforts. The approach included: a cardmember experience trip; press conference; and satellite media tour (SMT).

OBJECTIVES GUIDE INFLUENCER CHOICES

Understanding your program's objective will inform which influencers you engage. Outlining how you want to collaborate with them and what support you'll need will create parameters to help you home in on who makes the most sense.

During phase one, we treated a select group of influencers to an experiential JetBlue cardmember getaway, highlighting benefits associated with the credit cards. Through conversations with JetBlue, we decided this exclusive trip would be focused on Costa Rica, a popular JetBlue destination.

It's impossible to plan for every circumstance, though it's important to have flexibility when faced with obstacles. For example, the Zika outbreak quickly became a concern just prior to our trip. Several influencers declined participation due to the potential health risks.

While this complication could have hurt our plan, it allowed us to expand the network and secure participation from influ-



Safe Travels: Influencers and reps from Barclaycard and JetBlue arrive at Costa Rica's Liberia Airport last year for the start of their activities. Source: Barclaycard

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Editor, Seth Arenstein, sarenstein@accessintel.com
Editorial Director, Steve Goldstein, sgoldstein@accessintel.com
Graphic Designer, Yelena Shamis, yshamis@accessintel.com
Executive Editor, Jerry Ascierio, jascierio@accessintel.com
Senior Content Manager, Sophie Maerowitz, SMaerowitz@accessintel.com
Managing Editor, Guidebooks, Ian Wright, iwright@accessintel.com
Assistant Content Manager, Samantha Wood, swood@accessintel.com
Director of Marketing, Laura Snitkovskiy, lsnitkovskiy@accessintel.com
Marketing Manager, Jessica Placencia, jplacencia@accessintel.com
VP of Marketing, Amy Jefferies, ajefferies@accessintel.com
SVP/Group Publisher, Diane Schwartz, dschwartz@accessintel.com
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40 Wall Street, 50th floor, New York, NY 10005
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Continued from page 1

Barclaycard Augments Influencer Effort

encers we hadn't worked with previously.

The Zika virus concern provided one parameter of whom to invite on the trip. Another important consideration was the audience of each influencer. For the JetBlue Mastercard program, we knew the product offering would be appealing to a variety of markets. Our aim was to find out whom these audiences trusted and verify that the influencer would be able to speak about Barclaycard authentically.

Audience, tone, expertise and platforms utilized should be considered when choosing an influencer. For the Barclaycard program, we also took into account the influencers' access to an airport with JetBlue service, complementary group dynamics and an interest in planned activities—as determined by the influencers' historic posts and social content.

A GROUP IS CHOSEN

Our group of five influencers for the trip included a representative from credit card-savvy consumer-focused website **NerdWallet**, business travel expert Ramsey Qubein, and travel credit card experts Angelina Aucello of the blog **Angelina Travels**, journalist Jason Steele and Brian Kelly, aka The Points Guy. This group was a well-rounded mix that reached all of our target audiences both on and offline.

Social media is another element to consider, particularly how to harness an influencer's social power to accomplish your goals.

Our trip to Costa Rica was scheduled to occur immediately before the product launch press conference; as such, everything the influencers experienced and learned while on the trip was under embargo. For the influencers, this meant no social media posts in real time.

Had this event occurred in 2017 it would have been very unfortunate because we would have missed opportunities for live social sharing on platforms such as **Instagram** stories or **Facebook** Live. In our case in 2016, the influencers simply held their images and posts about the trip to share after the embargo lifted.

PHASE TWO: THE PRESS CONFERENCE

As the Costa Rica trip came to a close, the five influencers returned home and our team executed the second phase of our strategy, the press conference.

The press conference was held in New York City, close to JetBlue, **Mastercard** and Barclay-



Survival Kit With a Twist: While influencers enjoy receiving snacks and backpacks, swag also helps keep brands top of mind.



Horsing Around: Influencers visited Rincón de la Vieja National Park prior to zip-lining and soaking in hot springs.

card's headquarters. It also is a main base for JetBlue service and hosts the highest concentration of our target media. The event was held at **Saxon + Parole**, a restaurant that provided food for JetBlue's Mint Class.

EXPANDING MEDIA COVERAGE

We invited and secured attendance from top travel and credit card media, but we didn't want to stop there. There was, we believed, an opportunity to include industry influencers as well, given mainstream media rely heavily on them for their expertise. We made it easy for such influencers across the country to take part by organizing a virtual press conference. This provided another touchpoint that allowed us to broaden our network and strengthen relationships.

Once the embargo lifted, news spread with a flurry of coverage from influencers on the Costa Rica trip, those who joined the press conference and journalists we pitched via traditional outreach.

To keep the travel credit card top of mind and extend the story past launch, we executed an SMT with The Points Guy Brian Kelly, which aired throughout the country over the next month. Brian is one of the most respected voices in the

travel rewards industry and a natural partner to share the benefits of a travel credit card. Since both the media and the public trust him, Brian seemed to be a perfect partner for us. The SMT was also a way for our team to deepen our relationship with him.

All three phases of our influencer approach concluded within six weeks of the launch announcement. During that time period, the JetBlue Mastercard earned nearly 300 million media impressions (excluding press release pickups), thanks in large part to our influencers.

The launch effort earned more than 100 million impressions from stories shared by the five influencers we took to Costa Rica in outlets including **Yahoo Finance**, **The Points Guy**, **Credit.com**, NerdWallet, **AFAR** and **Travel + Leisure**, among others. We earned nearly 10 million impressions from our SMT with Brian Kelly.

Most important to the success of the campaign was finding the right influencers to engage during each phase. This approach allowed Barclaycard to form and strengthen relationships that continue to this day. ■

CONTACT: ndyeanderson@barclaycardus.com

A Checklist for Influencer Trips

When organizing travel for influencers, it's important to provide all necessary information beforehand. Below is a list Barclaycard used on its influencer trip to Costa Rica.

- ▶ **Copies of all travel confirmations** (air travel, ground transportation, hotel reservations, etc.) so attendees can confirm all information is accurate. The influencer should also have this on hand in case he or she gets separated from the group.
- ▶ **Complete itineraries** that are personal and specific to each attendee. If the influencer is bringing a guest, he or she also should receive an itinerary, outlining their travel information and schedule.
- ▶ **Packing list with recommendations.** This is helpful if you're keeping itinerary details quiet until the influencers arrive, so they can feel secure they're bringing all the right supplies. It's also nice to let influencers know whether they should plan to leave extra space for gifts or anticipated takeaways.
- ▶ **Contact information** for everyone on the trip and a "home base" contact that all attendees can use for questions throughout the journey.
- ▶ **Overview of attendees**, including influencers and guests. Influencers within the same space often are friends—or interested in getting to know each other—so it's nice to let them know who will be coming.
- ▶ **Social sharing** details, including attendees' handles and brand tags to use.
- ▶ **Welcome gift** with food and drinks as well as items influencers may want to use on the trip, for example, a portable phone charger or CamelBak. This also is a great way to provide influencers with branded swag.



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How 'Virginia Is for Lovers' Keeps Its Brand Alive Through Personalization

[Editor's Note: We ask communicators to spot trends and tell us how their brands have reacted to them.]

The Trend: When your time-honored brand has been around since the late '60s, how do you ensure that it resonates with younger audiences seeking unique, new and authentic experiences? For the **Virginia Tourism Corporation**, home of the iconic Virginia Is for Lovers brand, we turned to the trend of personalization in our messaging. The goal was to target travelers interested in specific travel experiences.



More Than History: Virginia lures travelers as the birthplace of 8 U.S. presidents but also of wine in America. Its mix of wine, history, food and nature differentiates itself to tourists. Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation

The Reaction: Certainly we are fortunate to have a brand people recognize. Virginia Is for Lovers dates from 1969, when a copywriter at what is now the **Martin Agency** in Richmond, VA, created it. It predates the I Heart NY campaign from the mid-70s. It's been inducted into the Madison Ave Advertising Walk of Fame and **Forbes.com** tapped it as one of the 10 best tourism-marketing campaigns of all time.

A challenge we face as communicators, however, is that while people recognize brand slogans, their knowledge may be incomplete. People don't always connect Virginia Is for Lovers to travel. More troubling: People often don't know what there is to do in Virginia, besides, of course, visiting Colonial Williamsburg or presidential homes (eight U.S. presidents hail from Virginia).

So, how do you reach consumers to share that Virginia also is a hub for lovers of wine, oysters, craft beer, haute cuisine, outdoor recreation, beaches, mountains and more?

We decided to shake up the perception of Virginia by leaning into personalization in our storytelling. Going back to the roots of the original Virginia Is for Lovers concept, we personalized it to *Virginia Is for Lovers of Mountains, Beaches and Wine*, among other things.

We then took personalization to the next level by integrating it into our brand strategy. For example, with Virginia Is for Lovers as our flagship, we created a sub-brand suite to revamp our marketing, showcasing Virginia's vacation experiences or lures. These sub-brands are communicated across all of our channels in an earned, owned, paid and social media strategy. The aim of the lures is to differentiate Virginia, allowing us to tell

the Virginia Is for Lovers story in a unique, authentic and exciting way.

We now use specific sub-brands, such as *Virginia Is for Craft Beer Lovers* or *Virginia Is for Music Lovers* across all our marketing. This allows us to communicate specific experiences that travelers are most interested in.

Let's take wine, for example. Virginia is the birthplace of American wine. It boasts 300+ vineyards and wineries. It's also the fifth-largest wine-producing state.

Most important for us, there are unexpected travel experiences to offer oenophiles. They can kayak on the Chesapeake Bay en route to a winery. To the west, Thomas Jefferson's vision of winemaking inspires 30 wineries on the Monticello Wine Trail.

Still, for many travelers, Virginia probably isn't top of mind as a destination for a vineyard vacation. To change that, we share the Virginia wine story across all our channels: earned, owned, paid and social. We created a sub-brand landing page for Virginia wine, showcasing wineries, events and festivals. On our blog, we frequently showcase content tailored to wine lovers, such as *Where to Wine and Brine in Virginia's Wine Country*, highlighting places where travelers can pair Virginia oysters with Virginia wine. We feature wine content across all social platforms, from Virginia Wine Month (October) **Instagram Stories** to **Facebook** posts about Virginia wine trails to sweeping views of Virginia wineries in **YouTube** videos.

GETTING PERSONAL WITH MEDIA

On the paid side, we've partnered with **BuzzFeed** and **Huffington Post**, as well as travel and lifestyle bloggers. For the BuzzFeed activation, we personalized things by inviting its writers to Virginia. The result was an article: *Wine Lovers, We've Found Your New Paradise*.

On the earned side, we stayed with personalization. We did this by appealing directly to journalists' taste buds. Sometimes it's a press trip or a media dinner at a Virginia winery or an out-of-state event featuring Virginia wine and food. Resulting coverage has appeared in *SAVEUR*, *Forbes*, *the New York Times*, *the Washington Post*, *Town & Country* and many others. It's worked: 2.2 million visitors now experience Virginia Wine Country every year, resulting in a \$1.37 billion economic impact for the Commonwealth.

Virginia Is for Wine Lovers is just one example of a Virginia Is for Lovers sub-brand. By executing our sub-brand strategy across all channels, we've achieved integrated marketing success, enhancing our share of voice while breathing new life into the Virginia Is for Lovers brand.

Today's travel market is oversaturated and extremely competitive, but we're finding new ways to attract travelers by showing them just what Virginia Is for Lovers means: personalized, historic life experiences that are unexpected, authentic and new. ■

CONTACT: clogan@virginia.org



PR Firms Are Sick Over Healthcare Costs



Rick Gould
Managing Partner
Gould+Partners

Ask PR execs about headaches and they're likely to cite healthcare, says Rick Gould, managing partner, **Gould + Partners**. "Healthcare costs are killing them," he says, referring to firms and employees, who are contributing to health plans. After labor and rent, healthcare usually is a firm's largest cost, he says. Of the 76 firms Gould polled in this unpublished survey (chart, right), 97% offer health plans. The chart below shows plans are "all over the place," Gould says, with HMOs dominating. Good news: Several firms are "working very hard" with healthcare consultants to create "customized plans that will save" costs. Other nuggets: Despite the move to get women into the C-suite, just four of the firms offer daycare. Providing it as a perk "could have a huge return on investment," he says. In addition, 60% of firms offer flex time. "That's low," Gould says. ■

CONTACT: rick@gould-partners.com

Profile of Firms in Healthcare Survey	
	# Respondents
Size	#
Less than \$3 Mill	20
\$3 Million to \$10 Million	34
>\$10 Million to \$25 Million	14
> \$25 Million	8
Average All Firms	76
Regions	
1. NY & NJ	22
2. D.C.& Suburbs	2
3. NE	6
4. SE	6
5. Midwest	15
6. SW	7
7. Southern CA	5
8. Northern CA	5
9. NW	2
10. Canada	6
Average All Firms	76

Plans PR Firms Offer to Employees			
Type of Health Insurance		#	%
HMOs	Health Maintenance Organizations- You have access to providers and hospitals within a network	24	31.6%
PMOs	Project Management Office- Solves healthcare business challenges using project management solutions	19	25%
PPO Plan	Preferred Provider Organizations- a network of medical providers	16	21.1%
EPO Plan	Exclusive provider organizations- Similar to HMO, but may require referral to specialists	4	5.2%
Group Health Plan	Employee welfare benefit plan established or maintained by an employer or by an employee	2	2.6%
Employee Selects	The employer selects and purchases health insurance	1	1.3%
PEO Plan	Professional Employer Organization- Companies outsource the admin tasks associated with the health plans	1	1.3%
Self-Insured Plan	Employer assumes the financial risk for providing health care benefits to its employees.	1	1.3%
POS	Point of Service- hybrid of HMO and PPO	1	1.3%
HDHP- NPOs	High-deductible health plans	1	1.3%
Blank		6	8%
Total		76	100%

Source: Gould + Partners (2017), unpublished survey, material shared exclusively with PR News

Develop a robust crisis plan and put together an agile team that can respond to any eventuality with the 9th edition of Crisis Management Strategies and Tactics. The book includes case studies and contributions from Wells Fargo, Chipotle, United, Uber, United States Marine Corps and The Late Show with Stephen Colbert.

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How Orlando Health Prepared for a Live Shooter

If you and your team were summoned at 3 a.m. on a Sunday, would you be in place one hour later? That was the case for Kena Lewis, director, public affairs & media relations, **Orlando Health**, and other members of the Incident Command Team. The photo, taken at 4 a.m., Sunday, June 12, 2016, shows **Orlando Regional Medical Center** president Mark Jones (extreme right; Lewis is to his right, standing, arms folded) briefing the Team. Just hours earlier, a gunman entered Pulse nightclub, killing 49 people and wounding 58. Earlier this month, Lewis discussed crisis preparation during *PR News' Digital & Video Summit* in Miami.

Fortunately, crisis procedures are ingrained in Orlando Health's staff due to extensive preparation. Each of its hospitals drills at least quarterly, Lewis tells us in an interview. There's also a yearly community drill, involving third parties, such as fire, police and ambulance companies. The drills' goal is "to learn where your gaps are," she says. Held just weeks prior to the Pulse incident, the scenario for the 2016 community drill ironically was a live shooter.

The bottom slide shows a page from Orlando Health's crisis plan. It contains a bevy of pre-fabricated compassion and safety phrases communicators can access during a crisis. Having phrases ready makes crafting statements easier, which can be helpful during a crisis, Lewis says. ■

CONTACT: Kena.Lewis@orlandohealth.com



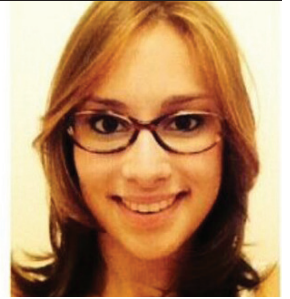
Compassion Statement "puzzle"

Since a statement of compassion typically includes several elements, this guide has been designed to make it easier to draft an appropriate statement for any given incident. Those drafting a statement may choose an appropriate phrase from each category in preparing the response.

Introductory Statement	Sentiment	To	Adjective	Event	Action statement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On behalf of Orlando Health and our more than 15,000 team members... The thoughts of all our team members are with the family and friends of _____. All of us at Orlando Health are deeply saddened today. Today is a sad / tragic day at our organization. In the wake of _____'s passing. During this difficult time, As we grieve together, Team members are grieving the loss of one of our own. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We express / extend / offer our <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deepest sympathy sincerest / heartfelt condolences assistance thoughts overwhelming grief Our hearts go out Our thoughts and concerns are with the _____ family (today) We are saddened by _____ We grieve / mourn _____ We sympathize with _____ We are shocked and saddened by today's _____ Patients, team members and friends were all touched by _____'s professionalism, compassion and kindness. He /she was an exceptional team member/nurse/physician and will be missed and remembered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the family the loved ones those involved the family, friends and loved ones the family, friends and co-workers those who lost loved ones all who knew and loved him / her our respected colleague, team member and friend 	<p>This is a / an.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> unusual rare isolated unexpected terrible tragic senseless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> event emergency disaster tragedy loss incident incident that took _____'s life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First and foremost, our concern is for the patients (s)/visitors (s)/team members (s) family. We have reached out to the family..... We have reached out to them to offer our support and assistance. We have let them know that our thoughts are with them as they cope with this _____ We are taking additional measures to further ensure everyone's safety. We are providing the necessary resources and care, such as grief counseling, to help them / the family, cope with this tragedy. We are providing assistance during this difficult time. We are committed to providing support and assistance to the family. An Orlando Health representative is with the family, providing assistance ... We are assisting the family... Provide whatever assistance they need We are working closely with authorities to determine the cause of this event. We are gathering information about this event. We want to assure our patients, visitors, team members that nothing is more important to us than their safety. We are committed to learn all we can from this tragedy / event We wish those involved a quick / full recovery. He / She was part of our family and we too are grieving the loss of one of our own.

Source: Orlando Health

How to Prevent Influencers From Damaging Your SEO Strategy



It is not a secret that influencer marketing has made great strides as brands seek to build credibility, relevance and awareness among their key target audiences.

While these performance indicators are highly coveted, the bottom line for any brand will always be return on investment (ROI) and converting sales—we're in the business of selling, after all. As a result, influencer-marketing professionals would be remiss if they did not require partners to link back to the products/brands in sponsored content.

Many agencies have teamed with clients' e-commerce departments or leveraged influencer-marketing software to develop trackable links and assess the impact of partnerships. This is a worthwhile way to measure the value of influencer programming based on site traffic as well as revenue; not to mention, it helps the brand's Search Engine Optimization (SEO), right?

While the natural answer to the question above seems to be “of course,” a dive into SEO basics, the **Federal Trade Commission's** sponsored content disclosure requirements and **Google's** sponsored content policy proves otherwise.

We discovered the impact of this issue after launching an influencer campaign in 2016. Engagement, impressions, content, etc. were fine, but in early 2017, the brand's SEO team flagged an unanticipated impact on its SEO efforts.

Why did this happen?

SEO

- Search engines assign a ranking to websites based on two criteria: 1) keywords embedded as part of the metadata on a brand's website; and 2) reputable sites that link back to the website, known as backlinks.
- Bots crawl the internet searching for keywords and backlinks and use what they find to assign a value to the site.
- Google then uses this data to determine a PageRank within internet searches (whether the website appears as No. 1 in search results or No. 101).

FTC DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

- To protect consumers, the FTC requires influencers and brands disclose partnerships where money or goods have been exchanged for online endorsements.
- To be compliant, influencers are required to mention that their post was “sponsored by X brand” or use #sponsored in their social content.

GOOGLE'S SPONSORED CONTENT POLICY

- Not all backlinks will help a site's search ranking.
- After noticing an uptick in purchased backlinks, Google began de-prioritizing websites with backlinks where the word “sponsored” also appears.

So, on the one hand, influencers must disclose their paid

endorsements to be FTC compliant. On the other hand, brands will not be willing to partner with influencers if doing so will lower their PageRank. What's a brand supposed to do?

Here's the good news: Social platforms have evolved to prevent this issue from hurting brands. **Facebook** and **Twitter** automatically shorten links or convert them into rich media before posting. Beyond simply condensing the link or converting it into something more visually compelling, this process helps prevent Google bots from counting sponsored content against your brand. It does this by giving the links a “nofollow” HTML tag. The only area where you'll need to address this issue with influencers is for blog content.

USING SPECIAL TAGS FOR INFLUENCERS

How can you ensure blog content doesn't cause an issue? Google recommends giving influencers URLs with a “nofollow” attribute. This HTML attribute signals search engine bots that a hyperlink should not influence the link target's ranking. Essentially, it tells bots to bypass the link. A no-follow link is created by adding the nofollow HTML tag to an existing URL, which looks like this: `Link Text`

The following steps can make the process easier:

- Work closely with SEO/e-commerce teams to develop URLs with “nofollow” attributes. Develop an Excel grid with functions that automatically generate a “nofollow” URL when the original URLs are input.
- Carefully negotiate influencer contracts and be forthcoming about obligations: Flag the requirement to use brand-produced links early on for influencers and include it in the contract; enforce FTC compliance, but encourage influencers to use language in blog posts that shows their excitement for the relationship, e.g., “I'm thrilled to partner with X brand to...” or “I've teamed up with X brand to...”
- Ask influencers for all links they would like to include in their blog post *before* they launch the content.
- Develop a “nofollow” link for each of these URLs.
- Share the updated links with influencers for inclusion in their blog post.

While the backend of the URL will very obviously contain the “nofollow” attribute, the consumer won't be the wiser.

LESSONS

Digital ecosystems are complex. Movement in one area almost always has an influence on another. This is a cautionary tale for communicators to always consider the larger picture and the delicate connections between one digital arena and another. ■

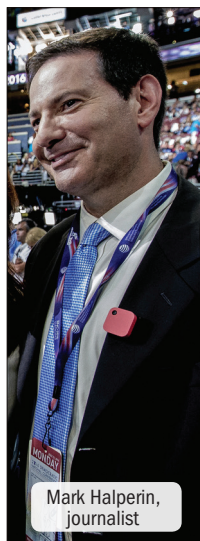
CONTACT: @alayna_tweets



Kevin Spacey, actor and director

1. Trump Card? There are times when you wonder whether a communicator was in the room when the crafting of a message was discussed—or if a PR person was present, whether or not the legal team overpowered her/him. The most recent time before this past weekend was during early April 2017, when a **Pepsi** commercial that featured **Kendall Jenner** was denounced for its tone-deafness. Just days later, **Dr. David Dao** was shown in several videos being dragged from a **United Airlines Express** aircraft. You likely remember how inept the initial response the next day from United CEO **Oscar Munoz** was; he almost seemed to justify the forced removal of Dr. Dao. Again, you wondered, was there a PR person in the room when Munoz's initial message was written? Ditto this past weekend with acclaimed actor/director **Kevin Spacey**. On Oct. 29 **BuzzFeed** reported Spacey sexually harassed actor **Anthony Rapp** in 1986, when Rapp was a minor. Spacey's response, later that day on **Twitter**, was seen as ineffective. The two-paragraph statement begins well enough. Spacey notes he was "beyond horrified" to hear the story. It continues, "I honestly do not remember the encounter, it would have been over 30 years ago. But if I did behave then as he describes, I owe him the sincerest apology for what would have been deeply inappropriate drunken behavior..." The actor's memory lapse was one issue. The larger issue, though, is the feeling that Spacey, who plays nefarious President Francis Underwood on **Netflix's** hit series *House of Cards*, tried to pivot, à la real-life **President Donald Trump**. In what was seen as an at-

tempt to deflect from the harassment allegation, Spacey offers a competing story, revealing publicly for the first time that he's been bisexual and now he chooses "to live as a gay man. I want to deal with this honestly and openly and that starts with examining my own behavior." You'd like to say Spacey missed a PR lesson that brands know: The internet can be an unforgiving critic to less-than-effective apologies, especially in this **Harvey Weinstein**-charged moment. But Pepsi and United didn't seem to have absorbed that lesson back in April, did they? Meanwhile Netflix, which expressed dismay over the alleged Spacey incident, said late Oct. 30 that five-time Emmy nominee *House of Cards* will end its run this season, its sixth. It denied the Spacey scandal was related to the series ending.



Mark Halperin, journalist

2. A Better Apology: Spacey might have benefited from reading the clear, apologetic mea culpa journalist **Mark Halperin** issued Oct. 27. With some dozen harassment claims against him, Halperin begins directly: "I am profoundly sorry for the pain and anguish I have caused by my past actions. I apologize sincerely to the women I mistreated." While he contends some of the allegations against him "are not true...I realize that is a small point in the scheme of things...I know I can never do enough to make up for the harm I caused." Halperin was axed from a book deal with **Penguin Press**, an **HBO** project based on the book, his **Showtime** series *The Circus* and regular analyst gigs at **NBC** and **MSNBC**. It's said that communicators, who work throughout an enterprise, are well placed to sniff out where a crisis may be brewing. The lesson seems clear: Act or your brand might pay later. Also, if something seems amiss, it might be wise to huddle with HR.

3. Popped: Seems we could write about nothing but apologies this week. **Kellogg's** took an expeditious route Oct. 25, apologizing for art that offended on boxes of **Corn Pops** cereal. The art portrayed pops as people in a shopping mall. The sole pop with a brown face was the mall's janitor. Responding within 5 hours to complaints on **Twitter**, the brand tweeted, "Kellogg is committed to diversity & inclusion. We did not intend to offend—we apologize. The artwork is updated & will be in stores soon."

4. Platform Prater: Ad sales at **Snapchat** and **Instagram** rose 73% and 55%, respectively, in Q3 due to offline features and video, a **4C** study says. – Ahead of hearings on Capitol Hill this week, **Facebook** said it would take steps to make its role in political advertising more transparent.

5. Growth: **C-leveled's** **Jeff Lizik** acquired **Z Brand Group**, the digital marketing services firm. – Former **Business Wire** president **Gregg Castano** formed **Castano Communications Consulting, LLC**, based in Norwalk, CT.

6. People: **Edelman** named **APCO's** D.C. managing director **Lisa Osborne Ross** president of its D.C. office. She succeeds **Rob Rehg**, who becomes chair of Edelman's U.S. public affairs practice. Prior to APCO, Osborne Ross served in the **Clinton** administration and had a 15-year career at **Ogilvy**. – **Brandware PR** named **Nichole Mrasek** VP and automotive practice leader. – **Rubenstein** scored **Kristian Nairn** (Hodor from **HBO's** *Game of Thrones*) to appear on its float during NY's Village Halloween Parade tonight. ■



Nichole Mrasek, VP and automotive practice leader, Brandware PR