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### CRISIS MANAGEMENT

## How to Use Social for a Crisis Before a Crisis

For all the good that social media provides, it also, during times of crisis, can be the venue for horror stories about brands. We mentioned in our Dec. 5 edition the plight of **Delta Air Lines**, whose Thanksgiving turkey was ruined when an unruly passenger's tirade—and the cabin crew's failure to boot him from the aircraft—was captured on video. The result was a serious denting of the brand's reputation, at least on social. While a **Nasdaq PR Services-PRNews Pro** survey indicates only about 50% of brands have a well-developed crisis plan, and even fewer practice crisis scenarios, (*PRNP*,

March 28 and the *PR News Pro Essentials* page: [prnewsonline.com/prnews-pro-essentials/](http://prnewsonline.com/prnews-pro-essentials/)), communicators say there are steps brands can take on social to prepare for a crisis.

### ENGAGE WHEN OTHERS ARE QUIET

One of the worst times to start reaching out and building relationships on social media is in the midst of your brand's crisis, says Eric Wohlschlegel, senior director, media & issue management, **American Petroleum Institute** (API). Adds George Atallah, assistant executive director of external af-

*Continued on page 3*

### MEASUREMENT

BY KATIE PAINE, CEO, PAINE PUBLISHING

## Traditional Media Measurement Will Exit by 2018, and 6 More Predictions

**Editor's Note:** As the year ends, *PR News Pro* again is asking prominent PR and communications figures to play prognosticator. We began in the Oct. 31 edition with predictions from five communicators. Below we hear about what's ahead for measurement and analytics in 2017 from popular *PR News Pro* columnist Katie Paine.]

### 1. *PR News Pro* may have to change its name.

The term PR may be obsolete by the end of 2017. The concept of PR meaning "building relationships with one's publics" remains valid. But the common vernacular meaning of PR as being mostly about media relations is rapidly going the way of the landline and the floppy disk. Look at

titles today. My database used to be filled with titles like "PR manager." Now it includes one or more of the following words in an astonishing variety of combinations: social, digital, content marketing, PESO, public relations, public affairs, communications, advertising, marketing, development, events, etc.

A PR person's daily assignment might include anything from creating content to reaching out to influencers, booking a speech, organizing an event, crafting an employee email or arranging a meeting with a local government official. (Which



*Continued on page 4*



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# Tips to Make a Traditional News Release a Social One



The news release is not dead. Even in the constantly evolving digital age, a news release is one of the best ways to disseminate a message. It's also a great vehicle to reach media contacts.

A news release for social media and one for traditional news media are different, however. To reach an online audience, releases need to be social. By being so, the release can be shared in various communities by people beyond media contacts. Journalists, bloggers or social media users who work mostly online prefer a news release containing embedded video, audio files, images and links. Links to social news releases can be sent via email to a reporter or tweeted to an audience.

The case for social news releases is clear. They generate more coverage. A **RealWire** study from 2011 showed of 1,044 releases analyzed from September 2010 to March 2011, social news releases achieved an average of more than three times the editorial and blog coverage as traditional news releases.

While the social media release is an emerging tactic, it does not replace the traditional release, it's a complement to it. Yet, the advancements of the Internet and social media have made the traditional news release less effective because journalists and readers want small chunks of information that incorporate online elements, such as social media and multimedia content.

In today's world, the consumer owns as much of the message as any traditional dissemination method. Therefore, two-way communication is the desired outcome of a social news release. The traditional news release promotes one-way communication only.

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR RELEASE SOCIAL

The good news is that traditional news releases can be repackaged into social news releases. The focus of a social news release should be presented as a story that has value to readers first. Here are strategies for an effective social news release that focus on the reader:

▶ **The headline is optimized for a multiplicity of readers.** This means keywords should be incorporated early into the headline. A secondary headline can be used, if there is an important nugget of information that users need instantly. In addition, keywords are

crucial.

- ▶ **The text formatting is attractive, using small chunks of copy (not more than two sentences per paragraph) or bullet points.** In addition, font size is important. Reading information online can be overwhelming. By increasing the size to a 12- or 14-point font, the information is easier for the online user to absorb.
- ▶ **Brevity of the social news release is crucial.** Use words purposefully, and keep content succinct. The social news release has a lede and a body, written in similar fashion to a traditional release. In addition to a keyword-rich headline, other elements of the social news release that must be included are:
- ▶ **Highlights or facts:** Data or information to help support your lede should be displayed in bullet form.
- ▶ **Multimedia links:** In many ways, links make the social news release. These can include videos, images, RSS feeds and more.
- ▶ **Quotations:** Comments from sources involved, as well as independent experts. If the experts have online links, offer those.
- ▶ **Relevant links:** These can include a website link of the company, plus links to the **Twitter** feed and **Facebook** page.
- ▶ **Tags:** These include sharing methods, such as Twitter hashtags or Facebook fan pages.
- ▶ **Contact information:** This should include the individual's name, email address, organization Twitter handle and other relevant information.

To be effective, a social news release must be shared, tweeted, liked and seen on social channels. It simply cannot sit on the organization's website and wait to be seen. Therefore, the social news release does not end when it is posted and shared. The key to a complete social news release is making it a two-way conversation. If someone asks a question, answer it quickly. Should more information be desired, direct the user to the organization's website.

Today's news releases must engage or, in other words, be social. ■

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# Prepare a Dark Site Today for a Crisis Tomorrow

fairs, the **National Football League Players Association**, “having relationships [in place before a crisis] is critical.”



**George Atallah**,  
Assistant  
Executive  
Director,  
NFLPA

One of the keys here is timing. The best time to prepare your communications team and brand on social for a crisis is during lulls in social activity, Wohlschlegel says. At his shop this takes the form of his team reaching out and building relationships while listening to the social discourse, supplying information and commenting. “The key is to engage in the valleys,” he says. The API team plots out pivotal events for the year (its own activities as well as key events of other players in its sector) and makes plans to be active on social during the alternate periods. The expectation is that the social conversation will be vibrant during times when key events are occurring and quieter at other times, he says.

Adds Rachel Racoosin, senior digital strategist, **LEVICK**, “Determine [before a crisis strikes] who your [online] allies and adversaries are.”

To help here, she recommends finding a listening tool that works best for your brand, noting tools such as Crimson Hexagon, Spredfast, Synthesio, Sysomos, Radian6, talkwalker and Brandwatch.

And make sure the tool you choose includes an alert system that will notify you when keywords you’ve loaded into the tool are found online.

## SHORT, SHARP, SHAREABLE



**Eric Wohlschlegel**,  
Director,  
Media Relations,  
API

Of course it’s easy to urge brands to engage in the conversation on social and build allies before a crisis hits, but what are the best ways to do that?

For Wohlschlegel the keys include shaping content to best serve your audience and tailoring it to the specific social platform. To do so, make certain you know the audience you’re aiming to reach, he adds. Provide content that tells your audience who your organization is, how it works and why it matters. API has found “short, sharp and

shareable” content works best for its audiences, Wohlschlegel says.

Another tip: “Don’t forget about SEO” and running advertising around relevant search terms, he says.

## TAKE A WALK ON THE DARK SITE

Racoosin recommends brands prepare “in peacetime” one or a series of so-called dark sites. These are clearinghouses containing messages, facts and FAQs related to potential crisis topics. Such dedicated sites, which are not connected to a brand’s main site, are intended to be “a public place where [the brand] can own the narrative,” she says.

Adds Atallah of the NFLPA, getting facts in front of the public during a crisis is one of the best ways brands can try to control crises as well as gain a reputation for being a thought leader.

## APOLOGIZE IN ADVANCE



**Rachel Racoosin**,  
Senior Digital  
Strategist,  
**LEVICK**

Racoosin also urges brands to have pre-written apologies, whose thrust has been approved in advance. Should a crisis hit, communicators can tailor the apologies, get them approved promptly and post them socially.

To facilitate and coordinate the creation and posting of social messages in a crisis, she recommends brands have a designated “messaging chain of command.” This is a small team consisting of a leader (who’s also the point person), a digital specialist, a lawyer and a C-suite member who can prepare and approve social messages during a crisis.

She also recommends standard best practices for crisis planning, which dovetail with those provided by Ned Barnett in our Nov. 7 edition. Plan in advance for the range of crises that may occur, including those related to weather, operations, regulations, personal scandals etc. Map your strategy and tailor it to each. Create a crisis scoring matrix, which will facilitate triage should crises break simultaneously. ■

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Questions? Contact Rachel Scharmann at [rscharmann@accessintel.com](mailto:rscharmann@accessintel.com).



# More PR Jobs in '17 Will Go to Data Analysts

means that traditional media measurement is equally obsolete, but more on that later.)

All of which can be considered building relationships with one's public. It's unclear where that lives in an organization, though.

Old-fashioned silos are collapsing and budgets are being allocated according to a new set of buckets, which has been migrating to a PESO (Paid vs Earned vs Shared vs Owned) model.

I would argue that you will be dropping the S and O and just calling it Paid vs Earned. As the **Conclave on Social Media Measurement Standards** (<http://smmstandards.wix-site.com/smmstandards>) concluded a few years ago, one "earns" shares by creating great content, so the acronym really should be POE.

But that still leaves the dangling adjective "owned." Owned made sense when organizations did a little social on the side when they weren't busy with other things. Somehow it seemed free. With social media budgets expected to rise 21% in the next five years, it's clear that we are pretty much paying for everything social these days, whether in labor or in sponsorship, ads or some other form.

So, tell me again why we need four words to describe what people are doing in marketing? In 2017 we won't.

## 2. Media measurement as we knew it is over.

In 2017 we will be sticking a fork into the old days of measuring communications via placements, column inches, impressions and, God forbid, AVEs. New tools like Glean.Info and Proof and the incorporation of digital metrics in traditional media measurement systems have made obsolete the old, single-channel metrics. Today you can easily evaluate all your outreach—be it on the *New York Times*, **Instagram**, **NPR** or **Twitter**. More important, these new tools make it easy to see the influence of your media activities on conversions at your web site, activity in your CRM system or anything else you consider touches your business.

## 3. Impressions are no longer impressive.

If nothing else, this past year's Olympics and **NFL** season have demonstrated that traditional ways of evaluating reach are failing. TV ratings for the Olympics and the NFL, so far, are down dramatically, mostly because people are consuming sports content in so many other ways.

Many of my friends got their Olympic news via their favorite athlete's stories on **Snap**'s Snapchat—one of the few as yet unmeasurable mediums.

**Facebook Live**, **YouTube** and a gazillion other ways to watch have been streaming onto cell phones for years. As bigger mobile phones become ubiquitous, this streaming trend will accelerate.

Advertisers and networks understand this and are valuing digital engagement as highly as they once valued ratings. Sadly, PR folks still obsess about impressions, so their vendors supply them with ever sillier, more inflated impressions counts that no one with any knowledge of business believes.

2017 will change all that. Senior leadership is fed up with inflated vanity metrics. Increasingly leaders will focus on bespoke engagement scores that are closely correlated with revenue, sales, leads and other business results.

## 4. Highly credible media brands and key influencers will return to prominence.

For years, monitoring vendors have bragged about the millions and millions of outlets they can serve up to clients. In the wake of the avalanche of fake news stories and bogus media outlets that drowned out truth during the election cycle, however, readers (and presumably the PR people trying to influence them) will realize that for their messages to be credible, they need to appear in reliable outlets and/or be picked up by credible journalists.

Communicators who want to be accountable will focus their evaluation budgets on those key authors who are most likely to influence their target audiences.

## 5. Consolidation will continue, but with a twist.

In recent years, every prognosticator has seen, mostly accurately, the increased consolidation among social-listening and media-measurement companies. **Cision** was eating everything in sight. Everyone expected that to continue. But more recently **IBM**, **Oracle** and other large tech firms have become the gobblers so they can satisfy their data-analytics operations. God knows social listening and media firms have data. For mega-consulting and tech firms, acquisition is a relative bargain compared to the expense of starting from scratch and gathering data themselves.

## 6. Data analytics and insight will be more valuable on your resume than "good people skills" or "great writer."

With the shrinking of newsrooms, you can pick up an assistant managing editor for not much more than the cost of an intern. The problem with hiring former journalists is that while they can write up a storm, they probably don't know much about your business. On the other hand, a good data analyst can dive in and learn more about your customers in four weeks than you may know after 12 months on the job. Increasingly the open slots in communications departments are going to data analysts. PR graduates, are you listening?

## 7. Not-for-profit PR will be the place to be.

The last year, and in particular the election cycle, taught the power of activism. Millions who never took part in the political process got to experience the exhilaration of political participation. Thousands knocked on doors, came out to rallies and took to the streets for the first time. Millions unhappy with the outcome are expressing displeasure with "rage donations." As a result, nonprofits suddenly are swimming in new donors. This unexpected windfall will, in some cases, turn into opportunities for PR pros who really have good people and writing skills and who want to make a difference, not just a paycheck. ■

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# How PwC Organizes Its Snapchat Editorial Calendar for Maximum Efficiency

Among the keys to a successful **Snapchat** effort is an editorial calendar, says Larissa von Lockner, PR & social media manager at **PwC**. A sample of the brand's editorial calendar for Snapchat is shared exclusively with *PR News Pro* readers below. PwC's belief that using Snapchat must track with a brand's larger PR and business goals is seen in columns 2, 3 and 5, as the campaign, stakeholders/requestors and

strategy are listed. Another important column is at the far right, where the PwC social team reminds itself to post footage from snaps on its **YouTube** channel. PwC convenes a Snapchat editorial board weekly, asking those who propose stories about story angles, text and footage needed, why followers will want to watch the story, how it will engage viewers and if there's a call to action in the snaps. ■

## EXAMPLE EDITORIAL CALENDAR

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Campaign date	Campaign name	Requestor(s) and/or Stakeholders	Snapchat producer(s)	Strategy	Status	Footage uploaded to youtube?
2	11/11/16	Veteran's Day	CR Team	Larissa	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit</a>	Complete	Yes
3	11/18/16	Holiday Outlook	Retail Marketing	Leslie	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit</a>	Complete	Yes
4	11/29/16	Black Friday	Retail Marketing	Katrina	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit</a>	Complete	No
5	12/9/2016	Flexibility Fridays	Recruiting	Larissa	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit</a>	Pending	No
6	12/14/16	Recognition	Recruiting	Larissa	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit</a>	Pending	No
7	12/23/16	Holiday Break	CR Team	Katrina	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mqQi-CnYwyVPb1p2peFj0rtYD01e05737-VMUn_a_bkg/edit</a>	Pending	No

Source: PwC



**May 22-24, 2017 | Atlanta, GA**

On May 22-24, 2017, hundreds of digital, social media, marketing and PR professionals will gather for the annual Social Shake-Up conference in downtown Atlanta. PR News is hosting this event in partnership with Social Media Today.

[www.socialshakeupshow.com](http://www.socialshakeupshow.com)

Questions? Contact Jessica Placencia at [jessica@accessintel.com](mailto:jessica@accessintel.com); 301-354-1641

# Let Young Hires Teach You About Social, You'll Learn and They'll Grow



There will be few moments as exciting as the one a young, new hire experiences when beginning a job for the first time.

With any new job comes the chance to learn from more senior team members, but also comes the chance to teach a senior team member. Understand that when I use the word “teach,” it doesn’t mean that the new hire is coming into the position with more knowledge than you. What it means is that the new hire is arriving with potentially different knowledge than you already have.

Having most likely completed several internships, new hires are ready to continue growing under your leadership and supervision. While ensuring that the boss and employee relationship remains intact, the more important relationship to focus on is the teacher and student paradigm.

Impart your wisdom and years of communications experience, but also tell your new hires that you don’t know everything and are ready for them to teach you.

## SENIOR EXECS HAVE KNOWLEDGE TO IMPART

As a senior executive, no one knows email pitches, press releases and crisis communications strategy the way you do. But even with all of that knowledge, do you know how **Snap Inc.**’s Snapchat can help get out your message? Do you know that with the platform **Medium** you can publish any article on any topic you want? Do you know **Instagram** is increasingly becoming a business tool and that the platform unveiled sponsored ads as a feature this summer?

I’m generalizing here, but I guarantee that your new hires not only know the ins and outs of these platforms, but also would jump at the opportunity to show you, or your clients, anything you’d care to know. By allowing them the chance to showcase their skills, you are increasing your new hires’ confidence, as well as the confidence you have in them.

## NEW HIRES CAN PROVE THEY’RE CONNECTED

91% of millennials own a smartphone, while an additional 71% use the internet as their primary news source, according to a 2016 **Gallup** poll. While these numbers may not come as a surprise, they should certainly reassure you that new hires know what they’re talking about when it comes to digital platforms.

Perhaps you have a client seeking to expand its social media reach or that wants to be edgy in connecting with its target audience. Platforms like **Instagram** and Snapchat are becoming increasingly popular with the world’s largest brands, which makes sense considering combined they have more than 1 billion users. In a recent blog post, **Hootsuite** estimates that before 2017 more than 70% of business will utilize Instagram to reach their customers, outpacing current **Twitter** user rates. There has never been a better time to embrace platforms you may know little to nothing about, but your new hire knows almost everything about. Give your new

hires the opportunity to teach and give yourself, the senior executive, the chance to be impressed by their knowledge.

## GIVING YOUNG HIRES FREEDOM IS A WIN-WIN

Regardless of a worker’s rank and file, what employees desire the most is a stimulating and challenging workplace. This is not different for the generation of young, new hires that enter the work force at any given time. Young hires view a job as a chance to grow and, ultimately, get on a solid career path, according to the article, “What Millennials Want from a New Job,” published by the *Harvard Business Review*. By allowing your new hires the chance to display their knowledge, you, the senior executive, are validating them as a meaningful employee.

## GROWING THE NEW HIRE’S CONFIDENCE

Having just stepped into the role, young hires want nothing more than for a seasoned communications professional to appreciate them and find them helpful. As a senior executive you have the ability to use young staffers’ skills, while molding them into the employees you need and want them to become. When they rise to the occasion and you acknowledge them, you are instilling confidence in their abilities not only as your employee, but also as someone ready to learn the art of communications. The statistics mentioned above verify *why* young hires can teach a few things to senior executives. An even more significant reason to learn from your young staffers is to grow their confidence.

There’s no argument that as a senior executive you have far greater knowledge and skill than a new hire just stepping into a position; however, few of your employees will be hungrier to show you what they can bring to the table and thirstier to learn the ins and outs of communications. Communications is an ever-evolving subject, and with different platforms and social media tools on the rise, it’s important to stay up on trends. There is rarely anyone more qualified or able to tell senior executives the latest technology trends and social media buzz than young hires. If their knowledge isn’t proof enough that they are up to the challenge of proving themselves to you, imagine the feeling you, the senior executive, got when your boss gave you an opportunity you wanted.

Few employees are perfect. And that blank stare you may encounter may not be evidence of your millennial employees’ laziness or independence. Many of us feel lost in an unfamiliar work environment. But, when given the chance to step up and showcase our skills, not only does the senior executive learn, but the young hire is learning right alongside you. ■

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# B2B Brands Roar Back on Instagram, Engagement Jumps 80% in Q3, IMG Tops List

In previous editions, we've noted engagement with brands' social posts on **Facebook** in Q3 has been modest or even down (see *PRNP*, Nov. 7 & 21, for example). The thinking then was brands were investing more effort in other social channels, such as **Instagram**. Data for U.S. B2B brands in Q3 (July 1 – Sept. 30) on Instagram, provided exclusively to *PR News Pro* by **Shareablee**, proves the point. Total consumer actions, or engagement, with B2B brands posts on Instagram increased a whopping 80% compared to Q2 2015. Engagement with photos grew a modest 4%, yet video engagement grew a healthy 74%. Actions are defined here as the sum of reactions and comments.

This time (but not always) the brand with the largest Instagram following, **IMG Models Worldwide**, also was tops in engagement. IMG boasted 6 million+ actions, up 70% compared with the same period last year, says Nathalie Nuta of Shareablee. Video posts received 322% of total actions taken. Its top post, as in Q2, featured one of the Hadid sisters, this time it was Bella, walking the runway at London Fashion Week. The post has received 17,000+ actions.

It has become our custom to ask brands in our top 30 list what they're doing to generate engagement. This week we checked in with #19, the **U.S. Postal Service**. "Our strategy for Instagram is to provide creative, fun and engaging content to strengthen our brand," says Kevin O'Brien, social media specialist, PR, corporate communications, at the Post Office. "One success that we're very proud of is posting user-generated content (UGC). We have many followers" in small towns and large cities "who post photos of post offices and USPS blue boxes...it's Americana and nostalgia at its very best."

To obtain UGC, the USPS reaches out to fans "by conducting routine searches for hashtags and keywords pertaining to all things postal," he says. "We then apply a user-friendly method of attaining posters' consent...posters can comment #yesUSPS after reading our terms...to acknowledge their consent. We love sharing these photos; they are a very important part of our social media strategy." ■



**Kevin O'Brien**  
Social Media Specialist,  
PR, Corporate Communications,  
**U.S. Postal Service**

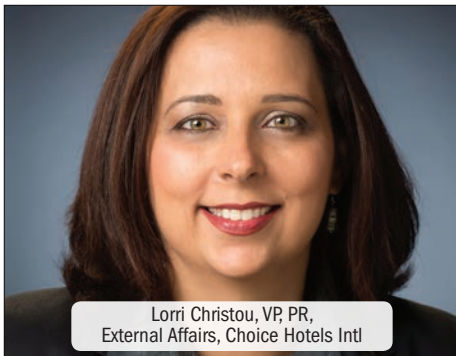
Shareablee		SOCIAL SCORECARD				
TOP B2B BRANDS ON INSTAGRAM – Q3 2016						
Based on Total Actions (likes and comments)						
Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee. Source:						
Rank	Brand		Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience

1	<b>IMG</b>	IMG Models Worldwide	6,009,957	1,173	5,124	880,976
2	<b>Pantone</b>	Pantone	862,314	102	8,454	647,025
3	<b>Sotheby's</b>	Sotheby's	742,009	239	3,105	354,844
4	<b>Lockheed Martin</b>	Lockheed Martin	143,370	36	3,983	117,397
5	<b>Zillow</b>	Zillow	112,999	105	1,076	141,945
6	<b>Cat</b>	Cat Products	95,985	38	2,526	135,461
7	<b>Kickstarter</b>	Kickstarter	42,953	101	425	129,259
8	<b>Oracle</b>	Oracle	39,741	75	530	64,343
9	<b>FedEx</b>	FedEx	38,962	23	1,694	51,718
10	<b>IBM</b>	IBM	33,643	26	1,294	97,058
11	<b>Corcoran Group</b>	The Corcoran Group	31,219	75	416	30,122
12	<b>UPS</b>	UPS	29,693	50	594	29,192
13	<b>Siemens</b>	Siemens	21,636	28	773	30,608
14	<b>Lennar</b>	Lennar	19,886	47	423	34,393
15	<b>Pulte Homes</b>	Pulte Homes	18,457	52	355	16,995

Shareablee		SOCIAL SCORECARD				
TOP B2B BRANDS ON INSTAGRAM – Q3 2016						
Based on Total Actions (likes and comments)						
Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareablee. Source:						
Rank	Brand		Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience

16	<b>Northrop Grumman Corporation</b>	Northrop Grumman Corporation	16,159	30	539	24,644
17	<b>SAP</b>	SAP	15,077	49	308	13,723
18	<b>Hootsuite</b>	Hootsuite	12,055	43	280	32,604
19	<b>US Postal Service</b>	US Postal Service	10,727	30	358	12,693
20	<b>Wix.com</b>	wix	10,560	50	211	31,128
21	<b>Huge</b>	Huge	10,320	18	573	50,154
22	<b>RE/MAX</b>	REMAX	10,197	41	249	19,701
23	<b>Thomson Reuters</b>	Thomson Reuters	9,442	59	160	9,117
24	<b>HubSpot</b>	HubSpot	8,818	32	276	49,616
25	<b>KPMG</b>	KPMG	8,725	59	148	19,768
26	<b>Monsanto Company</b>	Monsanto Company	8,228	26	316	13,218
27	<b>Stantec</b>	Stantec	7,983	185	43	2,584
28	<b>Speedglas</b>	Speedglas Welding Helmets	7,261	19	382	28,587
29	<b>GBK Productions</b>	GBK Productions	6,644	137	48	2,811
30	<b>3M Commercial Graphics</b>	3M Commercial Graphics	6,044	38	159	27,492





Lorri Christou, VP, PR,  
External Affairs, Choice Hotels Intl

**1. M&A: W2O Group** continues its buying spree. The SF-based agency acquired **Sentient Interactive**, a firm specializing in digital paid and owned media analytics, strategy and marketing. Sentient president/co-founder **Adam Cossman** will serve as chief digital officer of W2O Group. Earlier this year, W2O said **Mountaingate Capital** secured an investment position in the firm to accelerate growth. W2O's acquisition of Sentient, **Pure** and **Marketing** during the past 6 months has added 100 employees and \$25 million in revenue. – **Ruder Finn** acquired **Daylight Partnership**, a digital marketing and analytics consultancy. Daylight will merge with Ruder Finn's digital arm and be known as RFI Daylight. Daylight founder **David Ko** will become SVP, RFI Studios Asia.

**2. Good From Fake News:** We've been concerned lately about what seems to be the acceptance of fake news. Apparently the advisory board at **The Arthur W. Page Center at Penn State** feels the same way. So we were pleased when the board decided "that now, more than ever, it is important to recognize professionals in public communication who exemplify ethics and integrity." It will do so Feb. 22 at a gala in NY. The advisory board had been discussing how to honor the legacy of Center co-founder **Lawrence Foster** (PRN, Aug. 22), board chairman **Bill Nielsen** tells us. Ethics and integrity were hallmarks of Foster's career. This mixed with the rise in fake news led the board to create the icons of integrity awards, Nielsen says. The initial winners will be announced this week. Those from PR, journalism and other fields of communications will be considered.



Adam Cossman, CDO, W2O Group

**3. News Bits: FleishmanHillard** (FH) will debut a media relations practice that promotes data-driven storytelling and touches all 80 FH locations. Newly appointed global managing director, media relations **Laura Russo** will lead the practice, which will include some 400 FH employees, many of them former journalists. The group will work as "a global newsroom, identifying trends and putting together packages of content to help clients share their stories, FH says. A 9-year FH veteran, Russo also will lead a firm-wide standard for media training. – **PRSA** and the **Ethisphere Institute** released a free ebook detailing best practices from the world's most ethical companies: *A Guide to Increasing Collaboration Between the Communications and Ethics Offices*. – **Business Wire** and **Agility PR Solutions** entered a strategic partnership that they say offers clients a cost-effective way to target relevant journalists and influencers. – **Ketchum** leadership and change management unit **Ketchum Change** will merge with management consultancy **Daggerwing Group**. Both are part of **Omnicom Group**. Effective Jan. 1, the integrated entity will be known as Daggerwing Group; Daggerwing CEO **Ewan Main** will lead it. – **Public Relations Global Network** added 5 firms: **Ad verum** (Lithuania), **Ardency Consulting** (Bulgaria), **Media Profile** (Canada), **Scandinavian Communications** (Denmark) and **Two cents** (Brussels). – **LEVICK** joined the **Crisis & Litigation Communicators' Alliance**, a global group of indie PR firms that specialize in crisis.

**4. Millennials and Diversity:** Employed millennials (47%) are more likely to choose their next employer based



Shannon Forde, former NY Mets media exec

on diversity and inclusion practices than are employed Gen X-ers (33%) or employed Boomers (37%), a new survey from **The Institute for PR** and **Weber Shandwick** says. Communicators note: just 46% of millennials, 40% of Gen X-ers and 44% of Boomers feel their companies communicate diversity efforts well. "Given the obsession of organizations to better understand the millennial workforce, this finding surprised me most," says **Dr. Sarab Kochhar**, IPR's director of research.

**5. People:** Former **Walmart.com** marketing chief **Brian Monahan** has landed at **Pinterest** as head of vertical strategy, Pinterest said Dec. 7. Monahan had left Walmart recently. While at Walmart.com monthly unique visits grew from 55 million to 85 million, Pinterest said. – Veteran corporate communications chief **Chris Day** is leaving talent agency **UTA** next month. He'd been with UTA since 1999. – **Choice Hotels International** named **Lorri Christou** as VP, PR and external affairs. Prior to Choice, she served as SVP, strategic marketing and communications, for **Cruise Lines International Association**. – **Syracuse University** professor **Anthony D'Angelo** was elected chair of the **PRSA's** leadership assembly for 2018. – What a lovely memorial to former **N.Y. Mets** media relations exec **Shannon Forde**, who passed in March from breast cancer. **Major League Baseball** raised funds to renovate a youth field in Forde's hometown of Little Ferry, N.J., which will be renamed Shannon Forde Field. – Sad news that beloved former **Minnesota Twins** media relations chief **Tom Mee** passed, aged 88. Mee was the Twins' first employee and ran media relations for the team for 30 years. ■