PRNews Pro
The How-To Resource for Communicators

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SOCIAL MEDIA

How Big Brands Are Using Facebook Live to Build Their Audiences on a Modest Budget

Take a glance at various data firms and news outlets that track communications and marketing trends. If there's one that failed to mention **Facebook Live** (FBL) as among the top communications trends of 2016 we'd be surprised. We include ourselves in this, with **IBM Global Technology Services**' digital experience manager Brandi Boatner saying in these pages last week that FBL had just gotten started last year and predicting it will be far bigger in 2017.

Far bigger? Begun one year ago, January 2016, some eight months later, in September, FBL was being used by 51% of the top 500 brands, according to **Socialbakers**, the analytics firm. Even **Instagram**, a Facebook sister company, made like FBL last month, initiating a live video feature.

Yes, we know, FBL is limited to mobile phones and that can make life difficult for those not interested in third-party workarounds that allow FBL broadcasting from your desktop.

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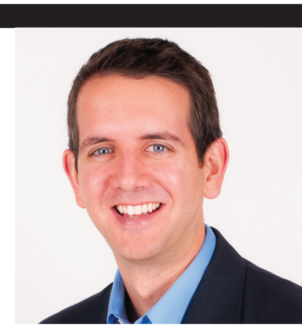
WRITING WELL

BY MICHAEL SMART, PRINCIPAL, MICHAEL SMART PR

The Rush to New Platforms Is Over, Write and Pitch Better in 2017



In recent years, you've likely turned to prediction columns like this one at the start of a new calendar wondering about investing time and attention in specific platforms.

"Is this the year **Snapchat** becomes ubiquitous?" you might be asking today. **IBM**'s digital experience manager Brandi Boatner predicted in these pages last week that 2017 will be the year that **Facebook Live** really takes off. That's a very reasonable prognostication given the additions Facebook has been making to this feautre. So were some of the other predictions, from Boatner and others, such as one attorney Allison Fitzpatrick of **Davis & Gilbert LLP** made here that envisions PR pros being involved increasingly in responding to fake news on various platforms.

THE LAND RUSH IS DONE

My take on the new year is different, though: 2017 will be when we realize that the land rush associated with new channels and platforms is over, and we no longer have excuses for not focusing on the key elements that drove PR for the century before digital media: quality and credibility.

Yes, we're at the tail end of a few years' window when you *could* get ahead simply by posting more frequently to your

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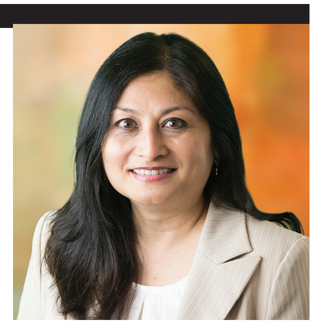
BY MARY C. BUHAY, SVP, MARKETING, G&S BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

What Communicators Should Know About ESG



In deciding whether to buy, sell or hold, prudent investors generally want to know the following about a company's financial performance: What are the material risks? What are the long-term rewards?

As public companies prepare annual reports, corporate communicators and investor relations also need to consider how their business narratives will change in response to the growing demand from institutional investors for disclosure about environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors.

Screening issues for ESG exposure is a new imperative for the professional investment community. A **Chartered Financial Analyst Institute** survey of members (2015) found 73% of portfolio managers and research analysts "take ESG…into account in their investment analysis and decisions." The Institute altered its curriculum for 2017 based on this finding, a Dec. 30, 2016, article in *ValueWalk* says. CFAs are "telling us loud and clear that investors are demanding ESG, and there's increasing academic evidence that sustainable companies are better-managed companies and have higher risk-adjusted returns," Steve Horan, managing director of credentialing for the Institute, says in the article.

Communicators will be asked to add much-needed context, creating usable insights for investors.

FLUENCY

Communicators who engage shareholders must work closely with their financial teams to meet **Securities Exchange Commission** (SEC) requirements. As these worlds intersect, so do language and concepts that serve as guiding principles within each domain.

For example, marketers and PR pros use terms interchangeably such as sustainability, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ESG. Of the three, sustainability and CSR are used more frequently to explain business actions toward aspirational goals. In contrast, ESG is a term rooted in responsible investing, which has propelled it into widespread use for reporting among investors and in capital markets. The SEC noted this overlap last April: "Sustainability disclosure encompasses a range of topics, including climate change, resource scarcity, CSR and good corporate citizenship. These topics often are characterized broadly as environmental, social or governance (ESG) concerns."

MATERIALITY

Amid a low-growth environment and market uncertainty from political upheaval, ESG practices and policies can help businesses shelter in place. Results from the 2016 **MIT Sloan** *Management Review Sustainability & Innovation Global Executive Study* indicate more than 60% of investors agree that adoption of sound ESG practices lowers business risk.

To better engage these stakeholders, IR communicators need to develop compelling ESG narratives. They must rely on their version of a storytelling plot device: materiality.

The concept of materiality forms the bedrock of financial disclosure in the U.S., and prioritizes certain business information over others.

RISKY BUSINESS

Keep in mind that explanations of ESG materiality for investors are useful when they can be served up in measurable units. The goal for communicators is to provide context for metrics that help investors make more informed decisions.

Consider some examples of possible material ESG risks with associated metrics that investors may be reviewing closely:

- **Environmental:** Rising cost of health care premiums for businesses as a result of treatment for climate change-related health threats to employees, such as asthma and other chronic respiratory disorders; increased costs from property insurance and recovery operations for businesses located along coasts or expanded flood zones, where rising water temperatures are causing unprecedented storm surges
- **Social:** Lack of supplier policies that safeguard companies against human rights violations, such as child and slave labor; employee remuneration that falls short of benchmarks for fairness, transparency or adaptability
- **Governance:** Board structure with director tenures of 10 years or more, and composition lacking independent representation;

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Testing, Goal Setting, Promos Key to Using FBL

No longer. Toward the end of 2016 Facebook toyed with allowing some lucky users to shoot FBL video using devices other than mobile phones. In the early days of 2017 this became a reality for all. It's evidence of how, at its best, Facebook does things. Certainly Facebook realized that tethering FBL to the desktop was an issue. It listened and innovated. Big time.

More evidence: listening to feedback from businesses, Facebook recently unveiled a slew of features for FBL including measurement and audience-growth tools. In recent days Facebook also has added a permalink feature, a tool to cross-post previous videos to different pages and an option to allow multiple users to post live video instead of having the page administrator have sole posting access.

Still unconvinced? OK, we realize you might be thinking, "I'm not with one of the top 500 brands." Or maybe you are, but live video (heck, live anything) gives your C-suite the willies, not to mention senior communicators, who get anxious at the faintest whiff that they're ceding control of message creation. As such, digital communicators at big brands might lack budget for FBL or live streaming of any kind.

DOCUMENT, DON'T CREATE

Fortunately, such hurdles can be overcome easily, according to communicators we spoke with at year's end and some rather stark evidence that occurred just a few days ago. On Jan. 10, a family of big brands by the name of **ABC Television Group** and **Disney** conducted its initial FBL stream of one of its gala events, staged at a gorgeous Pasadena, CA, hotel. The event was an evening soiree, loaded with ABC television stars and executives, provided for hungry, thirsty and tired members of the **Television Critics Association**, who'd spent the previous 9 hours listening to and questioning ABC and Disney execs and talent about their fall lineup.

But back to the live stream; with all that firepower, TV stars and all, you'd think the FBL stream would be a lavish affair technology wise and with fancy production values. Au contraire, ABC's Nate Reeves tells us. For the white-carpet portion of the 3-hour stream, when the stars arrived at the party, there would be no announcers or interviews. Instead, Reeves tells us, plans were for "the camera to be placed at an aerial view at the top of the white carpet." In other words, the plan was to be what internet entrepreneur Gary Vaynerchuk refers to as "document, don't create."

EVENTS MAKE GOOD STREAMS

John Yembrick
Social Media Manager
NASA

But ABC and Disney are hardly the only name brands to exploit FBL's ability to humanize a company by providing fans with a behind-the-scenes experience relatively inexpensively. **Steinway & Sons** (see page 7) and space agency **NASA** are examples. John Yembrick, NASA's social media manager, says its first FBL stream of a rocket launch, the "technology" consisted of a mobile phone atop a chair facing a TV that was tuned to **NASA TV**, which was carrying the launch live. In both the Disney and NASA cases the events, a gala party for TV critics and a rocket launch, were occurring with or without a FBL stream. Why not document them, simply, modestly for interested followers?

TEST CONSTANTLY

Karen Vega
Director of Social and Earned Media Activations
Viacom

A variation on this can be seen in examples provided by Karen Vega, director of social and earned media activations at **Viacom**. The brands she works with are events: slick, regularly scheduled TV series. The goal she pursues with her low-tech, almost-no-budget FBL campaigns—and she advocates knowing your goals upfront, as with any PR effort—is raising awareness for those shows between episodes.

That's why her FBL vids run the gamut from informal drop-ins with TV stars to scheduled-in-advance interviews that can be promoted weeks in advance. But not too far, she says. People forget promotions for video except when they're the day of, she says.

"Exhaust all media-outreach vehicles to promote," she says. Still, she advocates always testing promotion times as well as FBL video formats. A good test budget, she says, is about $5,000. ■

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Putting the Earned Back Into Earned Media

brand journalism site than the laggards. **Google** rewarded sheer quantity.

And you *could* get a bunch of free followers by jumping onto Facebook before your competitors, and then **Twitter**, and to some extent **Instagram**. This channel-hopping seemed like the new normal. But in the grand scheme of the history of marketing, it will be viewed as an outlier on the front end of the digital revolution, where fundamental rules got bent for a while.

I bet it was the same when radio, and then again TV, first went mainstream. There was a relatively brief period while the landscape reoriented, and then things reverted such that attention went primarily to those with the biggest budgets or with the most trust.

You're seeing that reordering happen now: You need to pay to reach your own social followers. And there is so much content available that information consumers are cloistering around the relatively few sources they trust, whether that's their like-minded friend's social feed or a niche news site that half your executives have never heard of.

WHAT TO DO? PUT EARNED IN EARNED MEDIA

- Therefore, you need to double down on creating content that's five to 10 times better than what's already competing for your followers' attention.

- To get the attention of *new* followers, you need to borrow the credibility of influencers they already trust.

- Instead of positioning yourself to chase the next new platform, get ahead by realizing that the real gold is being seen on those platforms and outlets your key audiences already trust.

- Competition for trusted platforms is fierce. You can buy your way in, if you've got the funds to compete and you believe that repetition will overcome wariness about paid advertising. Or you can put the earn in earned media, and work for it. This isn't as appealing, because there are no shortcuts. You've got to greatly expand your vision of what constitutes "media," and invest energy in learning what makes these new influencers tick.

- And then you've got to reframe your outreach for each outlet. That requires you to adapt to something that *has* changed permanently, and that's the fragmentation of media. If we didn't know it already, the 2016 presidential election taught us that there is no longer any such thing as "the national media." Every outlet serves only a segment of the population.

For example, your boss still probably wants you to land him in the *New York Times*. That's because he likely cares about the opinions of people who are similar to him. Without passing judgment and for want of a better term, we'll categorize those people as intellectual and economic elites. And for that type of audience, the NYT likely is still a great way to target it.

But if your mandate is also to persuade masses of people in "red states" to buy your product or advocate for your issue, you're going to need to complement those *Times* placements with coverage in some very different outlets.

MULTIPLE ANGLES NEEDED

Let's say you represent a food brand. Instead of having one angle you use for national media, you need to vary that so you have one version you can essentially pitch to the *Fox News* crowd and another that works for the *MSNBC* crowd.

To be clear, I'm not saying that you must pitch to those specific outlets, but you need to accept that the audience for the *Times* is different than that of the *Wall Street Journal*, and both are different than the audience that reads *The Blaze* and *Refinery29*.

And instead of relying on a few formerly preeminent food glossies (insert whatever your venerable trade media are here), you've got to do the hard work and thinking to parse your message into the ways it will be appealing to various online food personalities that different segments of your audience trust.

DON'T WORRY, YOU ARE EQUIPPED TO DO THIS

Exhausted? Don't be. This reversion to the natural order of things—a crowded marketplace of ideas with no silver bullet channels—rewards the skills that set you apart from the rest of your marketing peers. You have the ability, knowledge and background to identify credible gatekeepers who have access to and are trusted by audiences you wish to reach. In addition, you know how to pitch those gatekeepers effectively so that they share your message. These abilities are going to be increasingly rare and valuable in the economy of 2017 and beyond.

That's why I welcome the overwhelming amount of content and the proliferation of channels facing our audiences. This is because traditional media relations pros who can build on those skills to become "influencer relations" professionals will always win, no matter what the shiny new platform *du jour* is. ■

CONTACT: *Michael Smart is the media pitching coach PR pros seek when they want to boost media relations success. He advises everyone from Fortune 10 brands to nonprofits and sole proprietors. Learn more at: michaelsmartpr.com*

Note to Subscribers: *For valuable tips on media relations, effective writing and media training, please visit the PR News Pro Essentials page at: prenewsonline.com/pr-news-pr-essentials/*

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CEO and executive compensation policies that encourage the sort of risk taking likely to have a material adverse effect

While a discussion of material risk within an SEC filing follows strict rules for structure and format under Regulation S-K, IR communicators have more flexibility within an annual report to provide details on ESG targets. Many annual reports are integrated with updates on corporate responsibility/sustainability programs, and guidance on quantifiable and non-financial data.

Shareholder calls and analyst meetings are other opportunities for CEOs and IR officers to describe specific ESG measures that are material to the company's financial future. Such steps may include the launch of a global ethics and compliance initiative, the response plan to a supply chain crisis or the long-term cost savings associated with adoption of renewable energy technologies.

> **"ESG is a term rooted in responsible investing, which has propelled it into widespread use for reporting among investors and in capital markets...more than 60% of investors agree that adoption of sound ESG practices lowers business risk."**

OPPORTUNITIES

Embracing ESG also has its rewards, and IR communicators certainly can play a strategic role in illustrating how ESG can be an engine for value creation.

Academic and professional research has established a direct link between global companies that embrace ESG practices and positive financial performance. Companies with rigorous sustainability programs "significantly outperform their counterparts over the long term, both in terms of stock market as well as accounting performance," a **Harvard Business School** study of 180 U.S. companies found. Positive outcomes include key measures such as higher average sales increases, return on assets, profit before taxation and lower cost of capital.

In addition, ESG has caught the attention of institutional investors looking for opportunities to create long-term value. The theme of impact investing, which targets assets that deliver financial returns and positive societal and environmental impact, is no longer a niche approach. Early in 2016, a *Wall Street Journal* article declared, "sustainable investing has gone mainstream," as **BlackRock** and **Goldman Sachs** became part of a movement among big financial firms to introduce ESG-focused investment products. Investment managers at the **California Public Employees' Retirement System** (CalPERS) now are required to consider ESG in their investment processes.

ESG AND REPUTATIONAL VALUE

The final consideration in ESG value creation takes communicators back to a fundamental expertise: Reputation management. More than two-thirds of Americans say businesses can contribute to their positive reputations with sustainable practices such as conserving natural resources (72%) or supporting environmental or social causes (66%), according to the 2015 **G&S** Sense & Sustainability Study.

Reputation management falls into a particular asset category, intangibles, which marketers and PR pros deal with regularly. Reputation, brand equity and customer and employee relationships are non-physical properties that qualify as intangible assets.

In the high stakes game of investing, ESG now positions IR to play dealer's choice in developing corporate narratives around materiality, risk and reward. It will be a position of strength from which communicators can help guide CEOs and CFOs through the 2017 earnings season and beyond. ■

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Note to Subscribers: *Making ESG matters a bit more complex is that SEC updates about ESG disclosure have been scarce recently. A concept release to modernize disclosure requirements under Regulation 8-K as well as a speech from SEC chair Mary Jo White discussing sustainability disclosure can be found at the PR News Pro Essentials page: prenewsonline.com/pr-news-pr-essentials/*

Sneak Peek at IPR Study: 83% of Millennials, 48% of Managers Passionate About Work in PR

Sometimes it seems hopeless: Millennials on your team have different attitudes about work and rewards than you, the slightly older professional who manages them. What are these differences? Do gender and years on the job influence these attitudes? And likely you're thinking about the bottom line: Can answering these questions help your communications team and the company you work for modify culture and processes to better nurture and retain millennial talent? Can you adopt best practices to appeal to millennials who'll be entering the workforce in the future? The issues are far from academic: Millennials comprise 35% of today's workforce, and are its largest generation. In addition, they'll be leaders in PR and communications for the next three to four decades.

Some hope will break through the horizon courtesy of a study from **The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations** and the **Institute for Public Relations**, provided here first, exclusively to *PR News Pro* readers. While it confirms and defines differences in attitudes and expectations between millennial communicators and their managers, it offers ways to bridge the gaps, even suggesting that some differences, e.g. millennials' digital prowess, passion for leadership and strong interest in diversity, transparency and social responsibility, can enrich the PR profession.

Specifically the study of 420 millennial communicators, aged 21-36 (called MCPs in the survey) and 420 supervisors (abbreviated as MGRs) with at least one millennial under them provides a five-part ecosystem "to attract, engage, develop, retain and gain from top millennial communication professionals," the study says. The key, it adds, "is to contextualize and personalize steps taken in each phase of the ecosystem" (more on this below). First, the differences in workplace values and attributes.

STARK DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTION

The divide was stark in workplace values and attitudes, with more than 80% of millennials saying they're ambitious and passionate about work, but only half their managers sharing this opinion (see Workplace Values and Attributes chart). Differences in perception of leadership capabilities also were apparent. Again, 71% of millennials rated themselves ready for leadership, but only 50% of managers agreed (see Leadership Capabilities chart). Engagement was interesting. There was a significant difference in the percentage of managers and millennials who said they were engaged at work. Yet millennials with fewer than 12 months on the job were as highly engaged as managers; the level drops sharply for millennials with one to three years of experience before ebbing slowly to the year one level after the seventh year.

SOME AGREEMENT

Where millennials and managers reduced the divide, though not totally, was in recruitment and retention drivers (see charts above). A question about retention being linked to a positive and open culture was one where both camps were very close in their responses. And both responded to the open question: "What one thing could my organization do or stop doing, to increase [millennials'] commitments to our organization?" similarly. One-third in each group mentioned "improved internal communications, more recognition, more training and development, greater shared power and diversity and more mentoring."

Gender matters, though. Women rated their ethics and the importance of culture, reputation, diversity and social responsibility much higher than did men. They also said they were greater risk-takers and more engaged. Fortunately, as in the annual *PR News Pro Salary Survey*, both genders were generally positive about their communications careers.

Workplace values and attributes	MCPs	MGRs
Ambitious about making progress and gaining new opportunities	83.3%	51.7%
Passionate about work	82.7%	47.6%
Willing to take risks at work	50.1%	41.6%
Value diversity of people at work	73.9%	62.9%
Supportive of social causes and socially responsible companies	63.9%	58.3%

Note: MCPS are millennials; MGRS are managers of millennials
Sources: The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, the Institute for Public Relations, Millennial Communication Professionals—*Different Bright Promises for our Future*

Leadership Capabilities	MCPs	MGRs
Demonstrate a strong ethical orientation and professional values	76.9%	47.6%
Ready to be an excellent leader in communication	70.9%	49.0%

Recruitment: I was attracted to the organization because it...	MCPs	MGRs
Had a fine reputation	68.1%	57.1%
Is a very socially-responsible organization	57.9%	50.9%
Offered opportunities for growth and development	62.4%	55.2%
Has a very open and positive culture	67.1%	60.9%
Is a great location (geographically)	67.4%	58.3%

HOW TO HELP

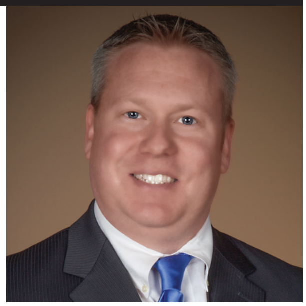
A key to the five-part talent ecosystem (mentioned above) is that each process, or part, must be contextualized and personalized. "Contextualize" refers to how things fit or are embedded in company strategy and culture. To "personalize" refers to how various steps in the ecosystem tie into a millennial's personal role and career. The study says companies often go heavy for contextualizing, which helps them meet their goals. A combination of contextualizing and personalizing is the preferred route, the study says.

Process 1 involves the first touch with millennials; personalizing it means having brands provide honest job descriptions and diversity initiatives to the millennial. Contextualizing this process means positioning the company in the community, for example. Process 2 calls for engaging the millennial quickly, tapping the excitement and energy they initially bring to the brand. Personalizing would include providing trained mentors, delivering regular feedback and giving the millennial leadership of a small project. Contextualizing here calls for aligning the job with company goals and strategy. "Our study shows that a contextualized and personalized talent management system enriches development of this generation's bright promises, benefiting individuals, organizations and the profession," says Tina McCorkindale, Ph.D., president/CEO, at IPR. ■

WHAT'S TRENDING IN PR

BY ANTHONY GILROY, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS, STEINWAY & SONS, AMERICAS

How Steinway & Sons Tuned Into Its Audience With Facebook Live



[Editor's Note: This feature asks communicators to spot trends and discuss their reactions to them. In this edition we hear from Anthony Gilroy, director of marketing & communications, Steinway & Sons, Americas.]

The Trend: In the first half of 2016, **Facebook** introduced live streaming, aka Facebook Live, allowing brands and individuals to reach out to their followers in an instant and very visual way. While this wasn't the first time live streaming was available on social media, the huge audience and demographic reach of Facebook made its foray into this space instantly relevant. Facebook took steps to ensure the adoption of this new feature by letting every follower of every page/individual know when one of the people/brands they follow was live streaming. This makes your potential reach enormous.

> **"We are planning to be much more active and are factoring the possibility of a live stream into almost every notable public event we have."**

The Response: At **Steinway & Sons**, we have used live streaming a number of times for events such as our *Live From the Factory Floor* concerts, where famous musicians play a short concert surrounded by Steinway workers in our factories. In the past, we've professionally recorded these, spent time and money editing them, and posted them online from there. While there is something to be said for the production quality you get in doing it that way, there are also benefits to live streaming, some intangible, others measureable. We've seen an increased reach, more total views and much more interaction via our live streams.

There is an excitement level to anything that is live that I believe in many cases outweighs the benefits of multiple cameras and slick production values. Certainly the idea of people stopping their work in our factories and standing around a piano as a great artist makes music lends itself to the informality of Facebook Live streaming. These informal events also can help humanize brands by providing behind-the-scenes experiences to followers.

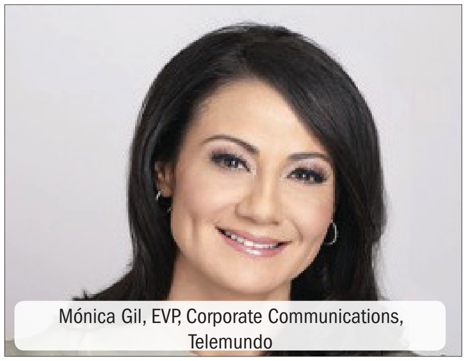
Of course, there always will be a need for very well-produced and polished videos to help promote a brand, but particularly when it comes to things like PR events, the immediacy and authenticity of a live stream is very valuable.

Another key factor is the fact that, as mentioned, Facebook currently alerts all of your followers when a live stream is taking place. This is, in essence, free publicity.

As **IBM**'s Brandi Boatner said in *PR News Pro* last week, a lot of brands in 2016 got on board with Facebook Live. She believes this will increase in 2017. I agree. In fact, I expect that we will see exponential growth. I know that we are planning to be much more active and are factoring the possibility of a live stream into almost every notable public event we have, with our Steinway Artists and others.

We've continually seen situations where social media companies, such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc., will try to build audiences for brands and get them into the habit of using their services to communicate with their customers, only to later change algorithms and build in ways to monetize those services. I have no doubt that Facebook will begin to do the same with live streaming. So the time to maximize your cost/benefit proposition is now; I'd recommend that if you haven't already, you consider how this can help you to get your brand or brands in front of more people this year. ■

Phil Carpenter, EVP/MD, PAN Communications



Mónica Gil, EVP, Corporate Communications, Telemundo

Travis Small, SVP, Solomon McCown

1. M&A and Expansion: LEVICK acquired **Chase Communications**, a PR and marketing communications firm co-headquartered in San Francisco and D.C. In addition to its pedigree in crisis and public affairs, Chase has a strong portfolio in areas such as healthcare. Chase founder/CEO **Julie Chase** will chair the merged company's real estate practice and advise on large accounts. In a statement Jan. 12, LEVICK said it welcomes Chase's "entire consulting team." – **PAN Communications** named **Phil Carpenter** EVP/MD of its West Coast and Southeast operations, reporting to president/CEO **Phil Nardone**. Most recently at **Allison + Partners** as senior partner/chair, western region, Carpenter is the linchpin of PAN's nationwide branding effort. We asked Nardone why his independent, midsize agency is making this move now. "PAN has been growing steadily nationwide for a while…and with our…acquisition we were able to have an even stronger presence in Silicon Valley and the southeast region…with this expanded footprint, we find ourselves [ready]…to take on the demand for integrated marketing and PR, specifically across the technology and healthcare sectors…" – **French/West/Vaughan** acquired **Fetching Communications**, the pet and veterinary PR and marketing firm based in Tampa, Florida. It will be rebranded **FWV Fetching**. Fetching founder **Kristen Levine** will lead the new pet & veterinary practice as SVP. Fetching CEO **Liz Lindley** will serve as VP. – **GCI Health** expanded its presence in the Northeast by opening a Philadelphia office. EVP **Sherry Goldberg** will oversee it and GCI's New York headquarters.

2. The Long Tail of Scandal: As the noted PR pro **Yogi Berra** said, "It ain't over 'til it's over." Despite **Volkswagen** formally pleading guilty Jan. 11, admitting to criminal wrongdoing and agreeing to pay a $3 billion criminal fine and $1.5 billion in civil penalties, the conga line continues: Also last week a U.S. grand jury indicted six former and current VW AG execs for their part in the emissions fraud mess, which hit headlines Sept. 2015. As you recall, VW made the bad move of denying guilt initially until its hand was forced when evidence mounted against it here and globally. So, yes, a chunk of the U.S. portion of prosecution against the automaker might be over, but as we told you last year, federal agencies smelled blood in the water and each wants to wet its beak. Oh, and then there are prosecutions overseas, too (*PRNP*, Jan. 9). Want more conga? Reports Jan. 12 had **Fiat Chrysler** facing its own emissions scandal in the U.S., where the **Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA) says it installed software on some 104,000 diesel-powered **Jeep** Grand Cherokees and 1,500 **Dodge** Ram trucks between 2014 and 2016 that let them emit 10 times the amount of nitrogen oxides (NOx) allowed under federal limits without detection. Fiat Chrysler initially denies the charges. Hopefully, the VW miscue has taught automakers who are guilty to, er, come clean quickly.

3. Fake News: Last month we mentioned early steps **Facebook** outlined with journalism associations to help spot fake news (*PRNP*, Dec. 19, 2016). Glad to see Facebook continuing its push as it unveiled the early stages of the Facebook Journalism Project, which will focus on improving storytelling formats such as Facebook Live, 360 and Instant Articles by collaborating with media publishers on tools and features for those products early in the development cycle. Facebook also says it will devise training for journalists and help raise the public's news literacy.

4. People: Burson-Marsteller named **Mike Fernandez** U.S. CEO, replacing **Michael Law**, who becomes worldwide EVP. Burson also named **Joel Benenson** worldwide vice chair. – **Cohn & Wolfe** named **Jim Joseph** worldwide president. He'd been Americas president since 2015. – **Telemundo** named **Mónica Gil** EVP, corporate affairs, a newly created position. She'll report to to **César Conde**, chairman, **NBCUniversal International Group** and **NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises**. Previously Gil was SVP/GM of multicultural growth and strategy at **Nielsen**, the brand's highest-ranking Latina. – Former SVP of **MSLGroup**'s corporate practice **Julie Jack** rejoined **APCO Worldwide** as SVP. Prior to MSLGroup, Jack spent 10 years at APCO. – **Mastercard** named **Christine Elliott** EVP, global communicaitons. She'll report to **Raja Rajamannar**, Mastercard's CMO and CCO. Elliott comes from **S&P Global**, where she was CCO. The former ABC News producer spent 13 years at American Express, ending as CCO for its global business travel. – **Solomon McCown** named **Travis Small** SVP. He'll lead its healthcare, nonprofit and education practice. Small's resume includes stops at **Lois Paul and Partners** and **Rasky Baerlein**. – Sad news as we learned of the passing of **Marilyn Lee Castaldi** from ovarian cancer earlier this month. A healthcare PR pioneer, her resume included **Burson-Marsteller**, **Hill & Knowlton Strategies**, among many others. ■

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- Marketing to Women
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