

## CONTENTS

Social Media.....	1,3
Video .....	1,4,5
Data Dive .....	2
Events Calendar.....	2
Case Study.....	5,6,7
The Week in PR.....	8



## SOCIAL MEDIA

### The Bell System: How Taco Bell Assesses a Social Situation Before It Responds

Is there a need to repeat the axiom that it's not *if* your brand will experience a PR crisis, but *when*? (OK, we repeated it.) Seriously, take your pick of recent PR crises: **Chipotle**, **Volkswagen**, **United Airlines**, Kathy Griffin/**CNN**, **Uber Technologies** and Steve Harvey (see page 8). We realize there's no magic formula to react to the rise of negative conversations on social about your brand. Each situation is unique.

With thousands of restaurants throughout the country,

**Taco Bell** is mentioned constantly on social. In part II of our interview with Matt Prince, the brand's PR & brand engagement manager, we ask how Taco Bell deals with potential issues and get the brand's take on measurement.

**Listen for the Lifespan:** For Prince and Taco Bell, social listening is a full-time occupation. During a potential crisis, it's even more so. "One of the best things you can do in a potential crisis situation is to understand the lifespan of a

*Continued on page 3*

## VIDEO

BY ELAINE SEWARD, SENIOR VIDEO PRODUCER, SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR, AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

### A Five-Step Plan for Scripting a Video That Will Earn Views for Your Brand

One of the greatest struggles about making a video is writing the script. You nail down a topic you're happy with, but what do you want the video to say?

Maybe you check the internet to see if your idea for a video on this topic has been done before. In most cases, others have produced videos or written about your topic. Don't let this deter you from making a video. The internet is an expansive space; there's enough room for your video.

Once I've chosen a topic for a video and it has been approved, I begin to brainstorm about how to structure the script. This is where I ask myself, "What am I adding to the conversation?" Unfortunately, this is a question many con-

tent creators overlook. Knowing what you're adding to a broader conversation on your topic helps you to focus the video, establish your brand and get your production done quicker. In addition it will be a large factor determining the amount of clicks and engagement a video will generate.

If you don't ask yourself what you're adding to the conversation, your video has the potential to suffer. It can become trite, irrelevant or completely uninteresting. Here are several ways to ensure you add to a conversation.



*Continued on page 4*



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## UPCOMING EVENTS AND WEBINARS

### DIGITAL & VISUAL STORYTELLING BOOT CAMPS

JUNE 22-23, 2017

CHICAGO, IL

### WEBINAR: HOW TO ELEVATE YOUR INFLU- ENCER MARKETING STRATEGY TO FIND AND ENGAGE NEW AUDIENCES

JUNE 29, 2017

1:30-3PM ET

### FACEBOOK BOOT CAMP

JULY 20, 2017

NEW YORK CITY

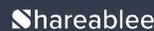
# Consumer Engagement With B2C Video Posts on Twitter Jumps 500% in Q4'16

As we said in these pages last week, **Twitter** has become more than a text-heavy platform for policy wonks and news nerds. In addition, we noted consumer engagement with video on Twitter is rising significantly. We have additional evidence this week, per **Shareable** data provided exclusively to *PR News*. As you can see in this ranking of consumer engagement with B2C brands on Twitter for Q4 2016 (Oct. 1-Dec. 31), nearly all the brands are in the video game space. It's a seasonal occurrence, though, as the data is from the holiday shopping period.

Overall, consumer engagement (likes,

retweets, comments) with B2C brands' Twitter posts in the period rose 11% year over year. For B2C brands' video posts on Twitter, though, consumer engagement jumped a whopping 500%, says Shareable's Nathalie Nuta.

In the list, **Rockstar Games** nipped **Pokemon**. Consumer engagement with Rockstar's tweets was up nearly 400% year over year, Nuta says, with video 12% of engagement. Its top tweet, from October 2016, featured an image of *Red Dead Redemption 2*, a game to be released this fall. It was re-tweeted more than 149K times and captured better than 363K actions. ■



SOCIAL SCORECARD

## TOP B2C BRANDS ON TWITTER – Q4 2016

Based on Total Actions (likes and retweets)  
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareable.

Source: Twitter

RANK	BRAND	TOTAL ACTIONS	TOTAL CONTENT	ACTIONS PER CONTENT	TOTAL AUDIENCE
1	Rockstar Games	1,554,106	185	8,401	7,868,469
2	Pokémon	1,553,342	211	7,362	2,524,395
3	PlayStation	1,069,096	670	1,596	12,809,278
4	Xbox	905,133	421	2,150	10,950,914
5	Nintendo	894,805	206	4,344	5,548,452
6	VICTORIA'S SECRET Victoria's Secret	793,997	274	2,898	10,389,609
7	NETFLIX Netflix	574,454	245	2,345	2,522,725
8	Starbucks	450,364	93	4,843	11,809,486
9	WHATABURGER Whataburger	431,873	120	3,599	869,939
10	NAUGHTY DOG Naughty Dog, Inc.	404,466	87	4,649	1,326,653

# How Taco Bell Listens Socially to Assess Crisis

conversation,” he says. “Many times the knee-jerk reaction of a brand is to react when it hears or sees something and put out a statement. And sometimes that’s the proper thing to do. Other times it’s best to sit back and do due diligence and say to yourself: ‘Is this conversation rising? If so, we need to be prepared with a statement and action to follow. Is the conversation declining or remaining steady? If so, probably the worst thing we can do is come out with a statement. That will just exacerbate the issue.’”



**Matt Prince**  
Manager, PR  
and Brand  
Engagement  
Taco Bell

**An Isolated Situation?** “We have 7,000 restaurants across the country, so things happen on the local level all the time,” Prince says. “The critical question: Is it an isolated event in one market? If we rush out a statement it likely could elevate it to a national level and make the issue broader, without giving us time to solve the issue and gather background information. So sometimes it’s best to wait, not to the point where you seem incompetent, not [making journalists] wait on their inquiries.”

**How Long to Wait:** Waiting, Prince says, means conducting social listening “before journalist inquiries arrive. Waiting until you have solid information...on something before you put out a statement.” He notes, “With social especially, it can be one person saying something or someone with many followers...we follow [the social conversation] very, very closely, by the minute.”

Taco Bell works primarily with **NetBase** for social listening, he says, adding, “a lot of what we’ve created [with NetBase] is proprietary to our team to really leverage the tool the way that we use it.” The brand also uses “the native analytics tools on the social platforms. They always will be one of the best places to see what’s going on.”

## HOW TACO BELL MEASURES

With the amount of social activity surrounding Taco Bell, we asked Prince about how the brand measures, which KPIs are valued and how his team reports metrics to the C-suite. “We email out numbers to folks in a campaign and that will typically ladder all the way up to the CEO of the company,” he



Listen Here: A look inside Taco Bell’s listening hub, known as the Fish Bowl. The brand keeps up-to-the-minute tabs on social conversations, says Matt Prince, manager, PR and Brand Engagement. Source: Taco Bell

says. “We also do quarterly business reviews where we go deeper into...what did well, why, what didn’t do well and why. Then we go into deeper trends of social, communications or marketing.” Those reviews are done in person.

**What Metrics Are Important?** “We are really careful about what numbers we share and why they are important. We don’t say, ‘Hey, this campaign has 1 billion impressions and that’s why it’s successful.’ That’s not the case. We use measurement for benchmarks...to gauge our campaigns against previous or future efforts.”

Prince says Taco Bell “never goes into a campaign or strategy saying, ‘We need X amount of engagement to be successful.’” Instead, impressions and engagement “are a byproduct of...the larger goal...our leadership is very clear that just getting a certain number of retweets isn’t going to drive the business. It’s going to help assist the campaign.” ■

**Note:** More from Prince at *PR News’ Big 4 Social Media Conference*, Aug. 9-10, San Francisco. Info: <http://bit.ly/2pZcFct>

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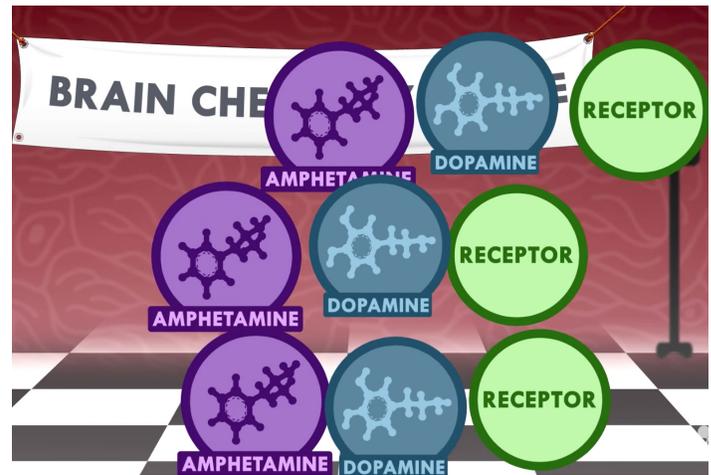
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# Ask Questions to Bring Your Voice to Videos

- ▶ **Pick a unique angle.** Fidget toys seem to be the new gadgets of the moment. It would make sense to want to make a video about them to catch the news wave. But there are articles and videos about them everywhere: What they are, how to get them, which schools are banning them and, of course, their popularity. These topics are covered heavily. I know so much about fidget toys just by scrolling through my **Facebook** feed that I've stopped caring. What is it about your fidget toys video that's going to make it stand out?
- ▶ **Ask questions no one else is.** Continuing with our fidget toys example, begin to think deeper. What is the physics behind how fidget toys work? What is the psychology behind the seeming addiction to them? Do they help create a chemical balance in the brains of people with ADHD so they can concentrate better? These questions are adding to the conversation by going underneath the surface of the fidget toy frenzy and getting to the root of it. In addition, they start fresh discussions. Pick the angle that fits your brand and work on your script. Avoid forcing a connection, though. As a communicator you know authenticity is critical. Creating a video about fidget toys when their connection to your brand is tenuous would be a mistake.
- ▶ **Get personal in a way people can relate to by creating a narrative.** Now make your video relatable. Talk to someone who uses fidget toys. Interview a bunch of people who use fidget toys. Use one yourself. Discuss experiences as they relate to others and create a narrative that will be engaging. For example, in the U.S., high school is a universal experience. Get up close with a few people who have ADHD. Do the same for people without ADHD yet still use fidget toys. Talk to high schoolers, college students and working professionals. Ask them about their experience in high school and challenges they faced. Ask high schoolers if fidget toys help them concentrate or deter them. Ask the same of college students. Then ask working professionals if they think the toy would have helped them in high school or deterred them. This could make for an interesting video that people may be more prone to engage with. Personal stories that are universally relatable add to conversations because they make people insert themselves into the topic. Is there anything people like to do more than think about themselves?
- ▶ **Do it your way:** Last, add your voice to the video. This might seem like a cop-out, but **YouTube** celebrities rarely become rich by having bad personalities. Whereas everyone has the idea to make a video about fidget toys, you are the only one who's going to make your video with your voice in it. One of the things people love about videos is that they can be a different experience than reading a **Wikipedia** page. You, the video maker, get to insert vocal inflection and personality into your creation. A caveat: If



Video Example: How Does Adderall Work?

ACS released a video about how Adderall works in mid-May, timed to coincide with college finals and students are eager to learn how to enhance their focus. The angle was how Adderall works, instead of limiting content to what Adderall does. A personal touch in this video was input from a subject diagnosed with ADHD who was prescribed Adderall. The video has been widely successful and two years later still gains thousands of views per week.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MeJRBsgHt8>

you're relying on your voice to add to the conversation, be sure it's a good voice and a unique one. There are millions of hilarious people. What makes you funnier, or what fresh sense of humor are you bringing to the video? It's the same with cynicism. What's your critical take on fidget spinners that no one else is talking about? Adding to the conversation works best when you pair asking new questions or getting personal with your voice. Adding your personality to a new angle will create a good video and increase clicks and engagement.

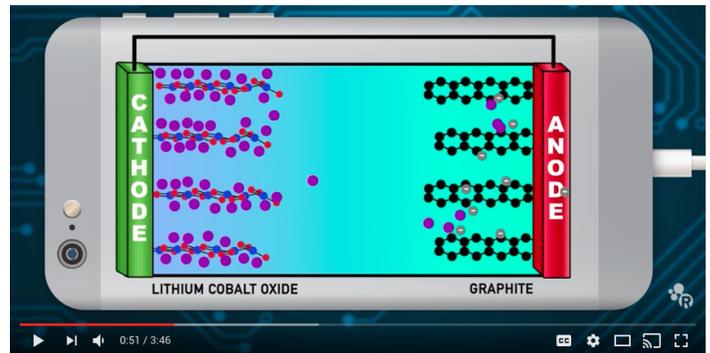
- ▶ **Think about visuals before scripting:** The old joke is that there are two schools of thought: those who think everything can be a video, and those of us who disagree. Some topics by nature are less visual than others. Other times a topic may have boring visuals or the available visuals make for unpleasant viewing. Should you think about visuals during scripting? Definitely, although the time to think about visuals is even earlier than that. When deciding on possible videos, I ask, "Does this topic lend itself to being expressed visually?" Perhaps a better question to ask is, "Can this topic be expressed visually given the manpower, bandwidth, schedule, equipment and budget I have?" For example, some topics might be too complicated to make into a video. Animation and motion graphics are time consuming. The more visually complex and involved your topic, the longer it's going to take to create a video. Designing and animating shots can take months to produce, and that's with teams of people working on them. Even assuming infinite budgets, schedules and technology, some topics will pose

problems. As a science communicator I have come up against technical topics that are so new the reference materials that could guide us in developing visuals to represent these technologies don't yet exist. In those cases I've decided to forego a video, lest my less-than-accurate graphics warrant a charge of fake news.

**Before Shooting:** After your script is done, take a step back and look at it. Does the information you're offering add significantly to the conversation? Think about what a viewer will gain from your video. If it's little more than a Wikipedia article, you probably need to do more work.

**For the Tight Budget:** One of the best things about figuring out what you're adding to the conversation with your video is that it can be done on a tight budget. Having conversations about ideas or talking to people is very cheap when it comes to making a video. In addition, once you have a direction for your video, you can nail down a schedule to make sure your video can get done quickly, which will save on costs. ■

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**Video Example: How to Make Your Smartphone Battery Last Longer**

There is a plethora of content about Apple's iPhones. Still, buzz heats up just before the brand debuts another model. A video about how to make your phone battery last longer was timed to hit just before a new iPhone was released. This angle is relatable to everyone with a smartphone. The video added to the conversation about a hot topic (a new iPhone), yet battery life was a niche not talked about much. In addition the video includes a Pokemon Go reference, since at the time the game was blazing hot on phones and reportedly was a drain on batteries. A unique voice was added by explaining the chemistry behind the battery hacks, instead of just simply listing them. This video continues to pick up views regularly.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUIbHMDCosI>

## CASE STUDY

BY CHRIS ALBERT, EVP, GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS/TALENT RELATIONS,  
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC NETWORKS

# How a 17-Year-Old Brand Changed Public Perception in 12 Packed Days

It is said that you don't get a second chance to make a first impression. That may be true for people, but as communicators we know brands are making impressions constantly with their messaging and services. Even iconic brands make course corrections aiming to gain a second first impression.

After launching in 2001, **National Geographic Channel** had become a revered brand in the crowded (and growing) entertainment landscape. Yet about 18 months ago the network decided it wanted to move from reverence to increased relevance. If you studied our slate of programming as re-

cently as three years ago, you'd see we largely were chasing the audiences of our competitors. We hadn't forged our own path.

When you're chasing someone you'll never be the best. And if your programming is mediocre, you'll never break through.

Instead it was the vision of our then-new CEO Courtney Monroe to have the Channel provide what people had come to expect from the **National Geographic** brand: Quality, distinctiveness and smart content that's also entertaining.



*Continued on page 6*

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Harkening back to the opening lines of this case study, it would be incorrect to say that the Channel had not made a first impression on viewers, media and advertisers. As communicators our job now was to replace that impression.

We knew communicating our commitment to premium programming was going to be difficult. Our plan, which will we'll detail below, consisted of launching the idea with several speeches and interviews by our CEO during high-profile events. Interspersed with those speeches we planned to raise awareness with the media and our advertising partners. Last, after laying the groundwork, we'd shout the message during a whirlwind where we would execute some 30 events, premieres and screenings during just 12 days in April 2017.

### HURDLES: HURRY UP AND WAIT

Some of the issues we faced were unique to television; others will be relatable to communicators in many industries. First, television, like an ocean liner, is unable to execute a quick turn. The reason is that it takes time to produce content. One of our series—*One Strange Rock*, from Darren Aronofsky—will be in production for more than 100 weeks. So while we communicators could talk immediately about the brand's premium programming, we didn't always have examples of it to provide to reporters. The dilemma also could be seen on TV. At the outset, viewers could find only a small sampling of our premium content on the TVs.

Another hurdle was alluded to above: The market for people's time is crowded with not only myriad TV networks, but film, theater, music, sports, books, etc. And then there's social media. How would we break through the crowded cultural landscape to clearly communicate our intention of being the premium network for science, adventure and exploration?

Last, changing your strategy is never easy. As our CEO told *Variety* in late April, "There's no question that this is a bold, audacious strategy, and it's not without risk...but the risk of not pursuing that for our business, in my estimation, was far greater than the risk of pursuing it."

### TACTICS

**Consistency:** As noted above, our initial communications had our CEO explaining our new strategy to press, advertisers and other stakeholders. In every speech, interview and appearance, her messaging was similar: Premium programming with A-list talent from around the world.

Last fall 2016 marked the turning point for the network. We announced our largest rebrand in history at the top of One World Observatory in NY with more than two-dozen key media attending. The location was intentional – we wanted to find the highest point in the media capitol of the world to announce the idea of our new mantra: Further. The idea of Further, which was more than a tagline, aligned with our new premium programming strategy, embodying the pursuit of creative excellence.

Timed to the announcement of the rebrand was the premiere of our new series *MARS*, the first manifestation of the new programming strategy. And we pulled out all the PR punches. We hosted a MARS Big Thinkers champagne



The Ages of Man: Geoffrey Rush (left) and Johnny Flynn, who play old and young Albert Einstein, respectively, in *Genius*, meet the press at a junket. Source: National Geographic

brunch with 40+ press in attendance on the day of our premiere. That evening, Ron Howard, Brian Grazer, the full cast and big thinkers attended the premiere screening and party. Howard and Grazer completed a global press junket in NYC (following a large-scale premiere a few weeks earlier in London). National Geographic took it even further, hosting a Field Trip to Mars for **The Cinema School**, the nation's first film high school, where students screened the first episode and later visited the experiential dome for private tours.

**Visual Stimuli:** As mentioned above, we sometimes lacked examples of premium programming to provide to journalists and reviewers. We decided we could raise awareness in other ways. Early in our journey to premium programming we distributed brainy-themed gifts to reporters. For example, to raise awareness for *Genius*, the 10-part, scripted series (our first) about Albert Einstein that premiered in April, we sent reviewers copies of Walter Isaacson's award-winning book about the physicist. Along with that came personalized *Genius*-emblazoned items. There were also a bevy of items, with the word Further and the yellow frame, which is part of the National Geographic brand logo.

**Further Front:** Each spring most TV networks participate in what is called the Upfronts, where they tout upcoming programming to sell advertising in advance. We used several tactics to make certain our Upfront was not just another event, but one that would shout our premium programming message. More than that, we attempted to make sure the 300 attendees, including media, knew the full extent of the National Geographic brand at the Upfront. For this reason, we approached it not as a Channel event, but as a brand event.

Every element relating to the April upfront was planned and detailed, from the invitation featuring the names of talent that would attend to the virtual reality exhibit and the beer-tasting booth, manned by the author of a forthcoming National Geographic book about beers of the world.

To further distinguish it, we called it our Further Front, not our Upfront. We held it in prestigious Jazz at Lincoln Center in NY and the head of our company, James Murdoch, was on

hand to deliver opening remarks. We felt Mr. Murdoch's presence signaled this was not your usual Upfront event.

Featured during the festivities were Howard and Grazer, who executive produced *Genius*. Also on hand were actors Geoffrey Rush, Emily Watson and Johnny Flynn (all from *Genius*), Morgan Freeman and journalist Katie Couric, both are featured in our shows. But what set apart the event was that we did more than spotlight celebrities. Also on hand was Paul Nicklen, an explorer just back from Antarctica, three emerging explorers who shared their most recent adventures, four astronauts, and icons of exploration, including Sylvia Earle and Bob Ballard, known for discovering underwater treasures such as the Titanic. There was even a live conversation via **Skype** with a National Geographic photographer/climber on Mount Everest. We felt this was a cross-section of talent from acting, exploration and science that was hard to match.

The after-party also emphasized the unique aspects of our brand. We had a slew of National Geographic explorers mingling with guests. We also had National Geographic photographers taking portraits of attendees.

**Premieres:** We held a series of premieres for four of our documentary films as well as scripted TV series *Genius* at the prestigious Tribeca Film Festival in NY, from April 21-26. In addition to the announced panelists after the films, one was a surprise: Hillary Clinton.

**Genius:** This fully scripted series, our first, about Einstein's life was, at the time, the largest foray into premium programming for us. As such, for the Hollywood premiere in late April we again wanted to make a big impression, particularly on the filmmaking community. The messages: We had arrived with this series, we are here for the long haul and we are hiring A-list talent for our premium programming. As a result, we staged the *Genius* premiere in a venue normally used for large, movie premieres. As soon as VIPs emerged from their cars and limousines instead of seeing a red carpet there was our signature, 60-foot yellow carpet. We also did a full day of interviews with TV, print and digital reporters, offering cast members, including Rush, who plays the elder Einstein. Again, we were trying to shout our message.



The Framers: With the yellow National Geographic frame behind them, Katie Couric and Morgan Freeman pose during the Channel's Further Front in NYC in April. Source: Nat Geo

## RESULTS

Owing to extensive marketing and PR campaigns behind *Genius*, *Biz Bash* named National Geographic one of its Top 10 Innovative Brands (2017). Globally, *Genius* is averaging nearly 3.5 MM viewers per episode, hitting record numbers in most key markets. *National Geographic* magazine's *Genius* cover story is projected to sell 100K issues; that's above average and the third best-selling cover for FY2017 to date.

## LESSONS LEARNED

I believe you learn something, no matter the event or campaign. Below is what I took away from our experience.

**Handling Live Elements:** These lessons might not be ones I didn't already know, but they bear repeating. Lesson 1.0 is that it's extremely risky doing something involving a live element, such as the Skype from Mount Everest during our Further Front in April. The problem is you can't check it ahead of time, really, so it can be incredibly nerve-wracking.

Lesson 1.1 follows from the above: When you're doing a live element, have a backup. Ours was a taped message from Everest. That's not as good as going live, obviously. Nobody knows this, but we lost audio on the Skype about 60 seconds before we were supposed to go live. We got it back about 15 seconds beforehand.

Lesson 1.2 is the importance of remaining calm. Everyone did, thank goodness, and fixed the Skype audio. That's something I took away from this event: Remain calm, work hard as a team to solve problems and you'll always achieve success in the end. I'm incredibly fortunate to have a large, dedicated team that put its heart and soul into this effort in April to make it as successful as it was.

**It's Not Easy Changing Perception:** Again, this is a lesson I'm sure we knew. We heard countless times: "National Geographic has five premieres at Tribeca?" Normally a film producer such as **The Weinstein Company** has five premieres there. We had to shake off the skepticism of comments like that and stick to our plan. On the other hand, just the presence we had at events like Tribeca got people to notice our efforts. It was part of everything we did in April to change perception of our brand.

**Be Relatable:** Our strategy to showcase exploration and innovation, along with adventure, science, photography and all of the areas we care deeply about, is simple – it is about the PEOPLE. Behind every innovation, exploration, photograph is a storyteller. They are our inspiration in everything we do. By showcasing the people behind the stories, we are forging a bond with consumers and clients that is key to all the PR campaigns and events we produce.

**Size vs Quality:** Not all events or PR campaigns need to be large. For example, in April, we completed a nationwide tour of our documentary *LA92*, timed to the 25th anniversary of the L.A. riots. Several were screenings of fewer than 200 people. But they were the *right* 200 people. They garnered social media support and led into our broadcast premiere. ■

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Steve Harvey, Entertainer

**1. Harvey's Wallbanger:** Committing a PR blunder is becoming a monthly occurrence for comedian/radio and TV personality **Steve Harvey**. The popular entertainer was caught in the thicket last week when he told a caller to his radio show from Flint, MI, June 14 that the caller should “enjoy your nice, brown glass of water.” Prior to Harvey’s comment the caller was blasting Cleveland after its **NBA** team, the **Cavaliers**, had lost in the finals of the NBA championship. Harvey is a fan of the Cavaliers. Sad irony: Michigan’s attorney general announced involuntary manslaughter charges for five officials in connection with the Flint water fiasco hours after Harvey’s morning radio show. You might recall Harvey’s PR peccadillo last month, when an internal memo he wrote to staffers of his eponymous TV show leaked. (Obvious PR lesson: There ain’t no such animal as an internal memo.) In the memo Harvey ordered staff to stay clear of him in the hallways and his dressing room: “No stopping by or popping in... IF YOU OPEN MY DOOR EXPECT TO BE REMOVED,” the tone-deaf missive said in all caps. “I promise you I will not entertain you in the hallway, and do not attempt to walk with me,” he wrote. Harvey defended the memo, but later told *Entertainment Tonight*, “I probably should’ve handled it a little bit differently.” When the story hit, PR pros urged two sets of eyes check memos before they’re issued. Good point, although during this latest miscue Harvey’s radio cohosts could sense the Flint caller was irking him. They urged Harvey to back off. He refused.

**2. Ubermensch:** There’s little need to go into great detail regarding the chain of events surrounding **Uber**’s week, since nearly all of it went according to a plan that was clear weeks ago. To quickly recap: CEO **Travis Kalanick** likely was going to exit temporarily; his right-hand/SVP business **Emil Michael** was to be fired; Asia business chief **Eric Alexander** probably already was ousted in connection with a 2014 incident in India, where an Uber driver was accused (and later convicted) of raping a female passenger; and the results of **Eric Holder**’s report into sexual discrimination at the company were going to be released last week (*PRN*, June 12). All that happened. Last week, Uber’s board adopted Holder’s recommendations unanimously, including: prohibiting activities involving alcohol consumption during “core work hours”; a reduction in company spending on alcohol for after-hours activities; a ban on taking non-prescription controlled substances at work; and an end to romantic liaisons between



Travis Kalanick, CEO, Uber Technologies

employees in a reporting relationship. Those recommendations seem to say a lot about Uber’s former culture and raise questions about its board’s effectiveness. They also received plenty of media ink. More sobering (pun intended) recommendations, such as mandatory leadership training for execs, increases in diversity and board oversight, were relegated to sidebars as news of Kalanick’s leave and another unfortunate item dominated. During an all-hands briefing June 13 about the 13-page report, Uber director **Ariana Huffington** announced the addition of a second female board member, **Wan Ling Martello**, a **Nestle** EVP. That’s when the forward momentum crashed momentarily as board member **David Bonderman** joked that adding a second woman would increase the amount of “talking” at meetings. Bonderman later apologized and resigned, a good move. The lesson for communicators: Something always goes wrong. When it does, a quick response can be a good move.



Brett Hart, EVP/COO/General Counsel, United Airlines

**3. News Bits:** In a June 15 post, **Facebook** says it wants to be “a hostile place for terrorism.” The post details how it’s using AI, human intelligence and partnerships to detect and remove terrorist posts, aiming its most “cutting-edge” techniques at “ISIS, Al Qaeda and their affiliates.” Sad irony that early media reports about **James Hodgkinson**, the alleged shooter of **Rep. Steve Scalise** (R-LA) and others at a VA softball field June 1.4, focused on his Facebook page that was filled with invective aimed at Republicans and **President Donald Trump**. – **Fox News Channel** dropped its *Fair and Balanced* tagline in favor of *Most Watched, Most Trusted*. FAB was too closely associated with the late **Roger Ailes**, Fox says, insisting the change was a marketing decision as opposed to an editorial one. – **Instagram** said June 14 it’s offering a tool for influencers to indicate their posts are sponsored. The tool adds a line under the influencer’s name indicating the post is sponsored.

**4. People:** The lawyer who was interim CEO at **United Airlines** when **Oscar Munoz** suffered a heart attack in Oct. ’15, **Brett Hart**, now will oversee communications. He’ll report to Munoz. SVP communications **Jim Olson** now will report to Hart. He’d been reporting to HR. Hart’s new title: EVP/chief administrative officer/general counsel. – Props to influencer **Jamie Oliver**, who’s offering free meals via **Instagram** at his restaurants to victims of the Grenfell Tower fire in London. ■