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CRISIS MANAGEMENT

How Walmart Uses Numbers to Define Social Crises, But Responds With a Human Touch

Last week we wrote about the misconception that brands with large budgets and numerous video assets, such as television networks, are the only ones best positioned to create sparkling social media videos that spur high levels of consumer engagement (*PRN*, Sept. 12, 2017). This week we look at another instance where a brand's size doesn't necessarily equate to smooth sailing when it comes to PR issues.

The past summer's news was strewn with large brands learning difficult lessons about crisis management, from **Uber** to **Bell Pottinger** to **Walmart** to **Equifax** just last week (see our coverage beginning on page 6).

As Walmart experienced social crises a few times this summer (*PRN*, August 15, 2017), we were fortunate when the brand's Dan Kneeshaw, senior director, global communications, digital strategy & brand engagement, discussed

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MEDIA RELATIONS

BY CESSIE CERRATO, SENIOR DIRECTOR, PUBLIC RELATIONS, PALACE RESORTS

How Networking Outside Your Industry Can Benefit a Media Relations Effort

Let's say you've changed sectors in the PR discipline. Besides learning about the new sector, which can be overwhelming, you'll need to become familiar with reporters in the field and begin to build relationships with them.

The great thing about PR is that it is a mathematical equation. It doesn't matter what sector you're in, the formula is the same: Become an expert in your field; build a targeted media list; supply information that is beneficial to your target media (pitches, press releases, quotes, interviews, etc.); build relationships; and be resourceful.

What varies, depending on the sector, are trends, platforms, the personalities and the pace. You also may need

to tailor your approach in targeting media and learn the outlets that work best for your particular business. Once you've done that, you can target media members, get to know and understand them, and build enduring relationships. The best way to do this is by becoming a resource instead of a nuisance who clogs up their inbox.

NETWORKING, WITH A TWIST

It's not news that PR pros need to network within their sector.



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DATA DIVE

Consumer Engagement With Food and Finance Influencers Rose in August

Last week we looked at influencer categories Fashion (-10%) and Automotive (-4%) that were off in August vs. July in terms of consumer engagement or actions, according to data supplied to us by **Shareablee**. This week's categories, Food (3.6%) and Finance (6.7%), were far healthier. Food generated 56 million consumer actions in August and more than 7 million content shares across **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**, says

Shareablee's Ron Lee. Interestingly the 4 million consumer actions of Food leader **Jamie Oliver**, the British chef, were down nearly 5% vs. July, although shares rose 28%. Shareability is defined as the sum of shares and retweets. **Smart School House**, the blog of homemaker Kelly Dixon, gained 1.5 million audience members, an 11% increase, Lee says. Finance's Clark Howard's 145,000 shares are impressive. ■

Shareablee

SOCIAL SCORECARD

TOP 5 FOOD INFLUENCERS BY TOTAL ACTIONS: AUGUST 2017

Based on Total Actions (reactions, likes, comments, shares and retweets on content)

Sources:

RANK	FOOD INFLUENCERS	TOTAL ACTIONS	TOTAL CONTENT	TOTAL AUDIENCE	SHAREABILITY
1	Jamie Oliver	3.9M	356	19.4M	114K
2	Smart School House	3.9M	562	1.5M	1.7M
3	Gordon Ramsay	3.9M	290	16M	207K
4	Buddy Valastro	2.4M	125	8.7M	8K
5	Ree Drummond	1.6M	58	7.4M	18K

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Shareablee

Shareablee

SOCIAL SCORECARD

TOP 5 FINANCE INFLUENCERS BY TOTAL ACTIONS: AUGUST 2017

Based on Total Actions (reactions, likes, comments, shares and retweets on content)

Sources:

RANK	FINANCE INFLUENCERS	TOTAL ACTIONS	TOTAL CONTENT	TOTAL AUDIENCE	SHAREABILITY
1	Robert Kiyosaki	463K	455	5.4M	66K
2	Dave Ramsey	432K	255	5.1M	50K
3	Clark Howard	298K	2K	1.3M	145K
4	Downtown Josh Brown	274K	738	856K	59K
5	Crystal Paine	183K	1K	1.1M	29K

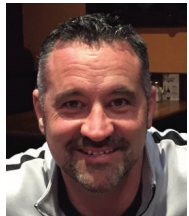
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Walmart: Crisis Response Warrants Humanity

its views of social crises. **[Next Week:** We'll have Dan Kneeshaw's analysis of Walmart's recent social crises.]

NOT IF BUT WHEN



Dan Kneeshaw,
Senior Director,
Global
Communications,
Digital Strategy
& Brand
Engagement,
Walmart

When a brand has 2.3 million employees serving 260 million customers weekly at 12,000 outlets and online properties in 28 countries, the “sheer scale” and “brand visibility” of Walmart pose “challenges” to reputation on social “that we face on a regular basis.” **Facebook** and **Twitter** posts provide most of the issues, he adds. The common element often is “visual,” since “nearly everyone has a phone” with a camera. As social grows, so does the possibility for social crisis.

With so many possibilities for social incidents—the brand monitors social “constantly,” he says—Walmart’s social response unit is precise in its definitions. A social crisis for Walmart is “any issue or event that has escalated to a broad point of public attention and poses a direct threat” to “Walmart’s brand reputation,” Kneeshaw says. The brand also classifies the types of issues it’s confronting, including: state of emergency (a hurricane, for example); offensive items (such as illegal drugs); and flash point issues (hot topics where you “drop everything and act,” including racist, sexist or LGBTQ discrimination, videos of negative customer service or any incident involving a celebrity).

BY THE NUMBERS AND THE TOOLS

In terms of the social conversation, Walmart considers itself in a **viral crisis** when it monitors 4,000+ mentions per hour; an **emerging trend** is defined as 2,000-3,999 mentions per hour. The brand signals the **all clear** when no more than 2,000 mentions per hour are tracked.

A tip: To calculate benchmarks for your brand, monitor mentions over time when social conversation is normal and when it’s abnormal; set thresholds based on these figures.

Walmart uses three tools to monitor: **Brandwatch** (for real-time mention alerts); **Crimson Hexagon** (Walmart uses it largely on owned platforms to assess sentiment); and **News-**

Whip (shows which articles are being shared “on the more private platforms like Facebook,” allowing Walmart to “prepare for what’s coming”).

RESPONDING AND BEING HUMAN

For incidents that rise to the level of social crisis, Walmart often deploys a cross-functional command center, which consists of members of the social media response team and other teams as needed, such as legal, marketing, press relations and corporate affairs and HR.

The brand takes action based on a protocol included in its social crisis response playbook. If you lack a written plan for responding to social crises, Kneeshaw says, “Today is the day to create one.” Trying to cobble together a protocol in the middle of a crisis when “all hands are on deck...will not help you.”

In addition to having the correct team members involved in social crisis response, he says, Walmart emphasizes that the written response be posted on the platform where the crisis originated.

Beyond that the brand emphasizes responses be human. “Forget corporate-speak...be as real as you possibly can” when composing a response or apology statement, Kneeshaw says. “When we sit down with legal and other departments we sometimes forget that people are at the other end of a statement and they want to be spoken to as people.” Generally Walmart sends an acknowledgement quickly that an incident is occurring; after investigating and gathering information, it will issue a “sincere apology...if Walmart is at fault.” The apology statement should be “honest, transparent and use language that addresses emotionally affected individuals.”

A tip: Think how you’d communicate with your family and use similar language. ■

CONTACT: @DKneeshaw

Takeaways

1. The possibility of social crisis is rising as more people access social platforms. Be prepared.
2. Don’t wait for a crisis to occur to create a social response playbook.
3. Abandon corporate-speak in your social responses.

PRNews
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How to Really Become a Resource to Journalists

Particularly good for PR pros new to a sector or locality are organizations like **PRSA** and **Women in Communications**, which host networking events. Often they organize meet-the-media events, or offer panels and networking mixers that provide valuable face time with quality media. This is a great way to meet reporters in an informal setting and has led me to some of my best contacts.

I have found, though, that networking *outside* your sector also can be profitable. I frequently attend networking events that my college alumni group hosts. I recently met a successful U of FL alumnus in finance; however, her brother is a journalist and she introduced me to him for future story opportunities. In addition, I've met brand representatives who have been a good fit for cross-promotion. Last, networking outside your industry can also lead to referrals or new clients later.

KNOW YOUR TARGET MEDIA

As PR pros, we are expected to read stories where our brand is mentioned, of course. Fine, but don't forget stories about the competition. Read them in industry newsletters and blogs. **Google** your competitors daily. Reach out to writers of those stories and make sure you are supplying them with targeted pitches.

A tip: Reporters hate receiving pitches about topics that have nothing to do with what they're writing about. Brian Major, executive editor, Caribbean and Latin America, for **TravelAlliance** can't stress this enough. "PR people should *read* the publication/editor they are pitching. I receive several releases from PR pros daily who unintentionally make it clear that they don't or haven't read our publications. Some don't know what beats I cover, although that's in my title, and pitch me on parts of the world I don't write about. A little research goes a long way."

I realize this sounds obvious, but based on interviews with the reporters in this article and others, it doesn't seem that many PR pros understand the following: Know what a reporter writes about before you pitch.

Aly Walansky, who contributes to **BravoTV.com** and **BRIDES.com**, urges PR pros to "take 30 seconds before emailing a reporter and Google them...when PR people take the time to get to know me, I'm so much more eager to want to get to know them."

Says Bryce Gruber, editor of **TheLuxurySpot.com**, "I've managed to build and keep the best relationships with publicists who take an interest in my writing and pitch reasonably around who I am as a person...I find myself emailing the same 20 or 30 PR people over and over...because they've been easy to work with and know what I need."

Social media is a great way to keep up with reporters who cover your brand [see "Six Steps to Build Trust With Journalists on Social Media During the Fake News Era," *PRN*, Aug. 29, 2017].

BECOME A RESOURCE

Reporters are brutally busy; it helps to be a resource to them. I've received numerous requests from reporters unrelated to my brand. I always try to pass them to fellow publicists who may be the right fit. My sole purpose is to help the journalist. I promise reporters will remember when you help them even if it had absolutely nothing to do with your brand. Once reporters see you as a resource, they will be more willing to help you achieve your goals.

I admit, getting to know media is harder today since it's so difficult to get a journalist to agree to meet you for coffee, lunch or drinks. Their time is limited. It might take months to secure an appointment. I firmly believe, however, that relationships are formed faster when you spend one-on-one time with media members. These less-formal catch-up sessions where you spend time talking about what they're working on and seeing where you can help them are much more useful than a formal meeting to discuss your brand.

In sum, building relationships with reporters takes time. It has taken me years to build relationships with reporters. Sometimes it just means going out of your way to thank them and make them feel appreciated.

GET PERSONAL

Maybe the last time you spoke to a journalist, they mentioned moving and declined your coffee invitation. Perhaps they could not take your call because their son was sick and they were home attending to him. Something as simple as sending a note asking how the move went or how their child is doing can go a long way. It humanizes your relationship with them.

Yes, media members love receiving gifts, but you don't have to blow your budget. Sometimes all it takes is a simple, handwritten note to let them know you appreciate them. Try **Postable.com**, which makes it much easier for you to be thoughtful, because we are busy too.

More important: Reporters love when you recognize their work, appreciate what they do, thank them for including your brand or executives in their work and, of course, more than anything they appreciate when you are a resource. ■

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Takeaways

1. It's difficult for PR pros to learn a new sector, yet applying concepts you've used previously will help tremendously.
2. Networking in and out of your sector is critical to building contacts.
3. Being a resource to reporters and knowing what they cover can go a long way toward building relationships that result in coverage.
4. It's great to send gifts to media, but a handwritten thank-you note can be as effective.

How a Resort Builds Influencer Relationships Without Using Email

Editor's Note: We ask PR leaders to tell us about trends, people who've influenced their career, the best advice they've received and what advice they give students. This week we talk with Amanda Harris, senior director of PR & marketing at the Diplomat Beach Resort.

► **Several years ago I received what I consider to be some of the best advice I could have gotten as a communicator and marketer; it is to learn to appreciate and work with the sales team.** I think we, as creatives, sometimes tend to stray from the business goals and understanding why we are here. A few years ago I received advice about really bunking up with the director of sales and all the salespeople, understanding their markets and making sure we are bringing the PR and marketing story to life. It's not only for the brand, but ultimately for the business goals.

► **I've had what I'd call fantastic mentors at many points in my life.** I recommend that you find someone at all points in your life that you can learn from. My biggest mentor is my dad. He started out in the Army and then developed his own company and is doing very well in life. It's the great American dream story. And then my aunt was deputy director of national intelligence. Seeing a female leader in that role really helped me as a young woman to realize that I could be something. I always went to female mentors in my professional life. I went to women in every company that I worked for and asked, "Can we meet once a month and have lunch? Would you be interested in mentoring me? I admire you and I'd really like to learn from you." I've also managed to keep relationships with all of them.

► **We can talk about digital trends or print trends, but what we've been having a lot of conversations about is bringing authenticity back into our PR and marketing.** If you are focusing on digital or influencers, for example, is it real? Or are you just paying for an influencer

to come in and take photos?

But you're really not creating lines to your property. How

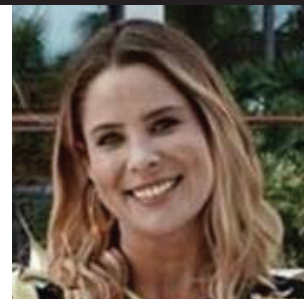
do you bring realness, long-

term trust and return relationships into PR? I think authenticity in content marketing and experiential marketing is the hottest trend now in my world.

► **To boost authenticity we build personalized relationships with influencers.** We have our PR agencies, local and national, and they help us with the initial relationships with influencers. But then I take time to go and meet people, do the tours and pick up a phone and call people. I try to avoid email communications as much as possible because things can get so lost in the digital world these days. So I try to spend a lot of personal time with influencers and help them get to know not only me, but the team here, so they feel like it is a family and they can come back anytime and will be taken care of by any member of our team just as they would be with me. The influencers we use are micro-influencers and we're very, very lucky not to pay them a monetary value for their services. We offer complimentary rooms and cover restaurant experiences, however. The micro-influencers we pick are extensions of our brand and they want to be on our property and tell its story. We believe they are more relatable for our brand than celebrity influencers.

► **With social media, the most effective marketing platform depends on your target demographic.** You really need to understand your target customer. So if you're looking to talk to baby boomers, maybe you spend more time on **Facebook** advertising and posts. And I don't mean using traditional advertising. Maybe you create an article that's beneficial and enhancing to someone's life and that can also sell your brand story by being authentic and talking to the right audience on Facebook. If you're looking to speak to a younger audience maybe you put

Continued on page 6



THE BOOK OF PR MEASUREMENT

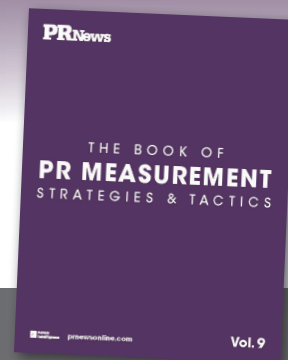
Now more than ever, the pressure is mounting to assess and quantify the returns on investments in public relations. This book provides more than 40 articles exploring PR measurement and includes contributions from authors that bring insight from their roles as agency advisors, corporate practitioners, academics and communications executives. Learn how to proactively listen and influence, track and measure, aligning your data with your organization's objectives.

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up a lot of beautiful photography on **Instagram** and use fewer words to engage with a younger crowd. You just can't create marketing ideas that aren't relevant to the target audience.

- ▶ **If I had an unlimited budget I'd do a lot more ambassador campaigns.** We could give influencers a certain amount of credit to enjoy on our property, so they could get even more of a feel for what we do. I'd also try pop-up marketing. Maybe traveling to **Coachella** and participating in a music conference or going to Carnival and doing something there, where you can bring your brand to life in different cities. Like *Star Wars* did recently, where if you're in certain parts of a city and click on an app you can play with virtual reality with *Star Wars'* planes flying by; I think that is such a cool concept. I'd like to do that with our brand, some kind of experiential marketing and virtual reality type of thing.

- ▶ **Stay humble.** I think young people expect to get a great job as soon as they get out of school. I began as an actress. During times when I couldn't find enough work I got a spa job in a resort. That's what got me interested in resorts. I kept taking jobs that were going to introduce me to the right people. Every job takes you to another opportunity.

- ▶ **I wish I understood more about the basics of business when I got out of school.** When I went to school the PR and communications education didn't give you enough of the basic business classes, so understanding a budget or forecasting was lacking. My suggestion to young people is to take online courses. The internet is excellent, you can educate yourself. You can make yourself a 360 degree candidate by taking courses and going to conferences.■

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CYBERSECURITY

BY ANNA KEEVE, PR MANAGER, ESET N. AMERICA

Perfection Is the Enemy of the Good: Early Lessons From the Equifax Breach

Even for communicators outside of the cybersecurity sector, the week when **Equifax** announced it suffered a major data breach that exposed millions of people's data was painful to experience.

As a PR pro in the cybersecurity sector, it was doubly frustrating and fascinating.

We all know one of the best ways to learn what not to do during a crisis situation is to observe when brands—hopefully not your own—stumble and commit errors. Unfortunately for Equifax and the millions whose data was exposed, the crisis makes for an interesting case study.

WHAT HAPPENED?

In short, here is a crude timeline:

- Cybercriminals infiltrated Equifax's system in May 2017.
- Equifax discovered bad guys in the network in July 2017.
- Equifax announced September 7 that cybercriminals who breached its network took 143 million Social Security numbers and other information, including data from 400,000 Britons and some Canadians.

And then...basically everyone started to panic. The media had a field day. Not even one week after the breach announcement, 20 class-action lawsuits had been filed across

multiple states. The company faces congressional hearings, and the **FTC** even commented publicly—it typically is silent in these matters—that it is investigating the breach and Equifax's handling of it.

Equifax had a lot of time to get a number of things right. It had almost six weeks to prepare all its communications. In the world of data breach public communication timelines, that is long. Remember when **Anthem** was breached? It came out within one week with a hotline, statements, a landing page, etc.

SPEED, ACCURACY AND DETAIL

In handling situations like this, you have to weigh three factors: speed vs. accuracy vs. detail.

First and foremost is accuracy. Accuracy should not be compromised for speed; however, detail may need to be sacrificed at the expense of speed, especially if there is an imminent and present threat to the customer. Meaning, sometimes it is better to come out with what you know (and don't know) sooner, rather than come out with everything you know later.

But, Equifax decided to wait, and attempted to prep a seemingly helpful microsite that contained a number of different resources, including a page to enter the last six digits of one's social security number to see if you were impacted, and to see a video message from the CEO.



WHERE DID THINGS GO WRONG?

1. The website that Equifax was directing consumers to visit contained security holes: Yes, this happened. There's little communicators can do to help in this situation, of course. It is important, however, for communicators to poke holes in the plan while communication methods are being considered and developed, and anticipate the worst that could happen.

Soon after the site launched, consumers on social media, security experts (and thus traditional media) were quick to point out the shortcomings and security flaws in the website.

If your brand is creating a website where you are asking victims to go to obtain information and enter information to see if your breach has touched them, make sure it is secure.

2. Initially Equifax's position of requiring affected customers to submit to arbitration also drew a backlash: People were so enraged, the House and Senate called on the company to pull back its requirement that anyone who signs up for credit monitoring give up their right to sue Equifax in a class-action lawsuit.

As it turns out, in an attempt to help, the brand's boilerplate legal arbitration clause ultimately wouldn't even likely apply. This completely backfired under poor legal advice to insert some shoddy insulation, and it stumbled into a mess by trying work it in.

Again, there's little a communicator can do to assist in a situation such as this. Still, in advance, it is important to think about public perception and reaction to things like asking someone to give up or forego rights, or other asks your company might be making.

SHARE DUMPING

3. Shortly after the public announcement, it was revealed that days after the company initially discovered the breach in late July, three senior executives, including the company's chief financial officer, sold Equifax shares.

Now perhaps it is unfair to blame on Equifax since it is possible it had no idea these executives were selling shares... but, note to self, check to see about this type of activity during the time of a breach and breach announcement. At the least it looks awful in the court of public opinion. At worst, it could be illegal [see below].

I am not an expert on insider trading, but perhaps have a hold on executives dumping shares before going public with a breach announcement. Communicators should at least be briefed so they can respond to media.

Equifax's initial response was to insist the three had no knowledge of the breach when they executed the sales. Equifax also said the shares sold were a small amount of what the executives owned. When your brand potentially has exposed millions of consumers' data, it's probably unwise to argue that nearly \$2 million in executive shares is a small amount.

As you may know, media reports September 18 have the **Justice Department** investigating insider trading at Equifax. Federal prosecutors are examining the nearly \$1.8 million in sales of Equifax stock by CFO John Gamble; Joseph Loughran, president of the credit-reporting brand's U.S. Information Solutions division; and Rodolfo Ploder, who runs the firm's workforce solutions nit, *Bloomberg News* reported,

citing anonymous sources. Shares were trading in the 140s in August; they're hovering in the 90s now.

4. Equifax withheld information about the root cause of the breach—perhaps hoping to avoid looking negligent—until public pressure and speculation mounted. So finally on Sept. 13, Equifax came out and offered details on how its breach occurred. Up until then it had made vague statements, saying the breach was due to the compromise of a “U.S. web application.”

It is clear that the company wanted to avoid providing much detail beyond that, and made a conscious decision to avoid publicly disclosing the name of the web application. Then, on the heels of an independent security report that named the web application, a potential slip-up from an Equifax spokesperson and lots of speculation, Equifax came to reveal the details...and it did not look good for the brand.

While the breach was due to a vulnerability (a term covered in a previous article on these pages—see *PRN*, June 5, 2017) in a third-party vendor's application, it was apparent Equifax failed to issue a patch to fix that security hole several months prior. If Equifax had done its due diligence and issued the patch, the breach would not have occurred, security experts say.

CUSTOMERS VS. COMPANY

In general, some basic but critically important principles during a crisis hold true:

“Instead of worrying about will happen to the company, worry about what will happen to the customers,” says Bryan Scanlon, a PR pro who specializes in cybersecurity breaches and is the founder of **Look Left Marketing** of San Francisco. This is critical, “especially in all your public-facing comments during the early days of a crisis. In the case of Equifax, the press and industry experts did an excellent job calling out the early website failure and protecting individuals from possibly giving up their rights.”

Normally a company will execute a playbook that checks the boxes, first and foremost on data breach notification laws. The brand then typically moves to winning back customers with clever programs that don't revisit the breach.

But, Scanlon cautions, “Due to the flood of breaches, one of the greatest concerns is that individuals have grown tone-deaf to very serious warnings. There's now a moral and ethical imperative for companies to continuously reach out to customers and aggressively help them navigate a serious security situation that may impact more than half of the country's adult population.” ■

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Takeaways

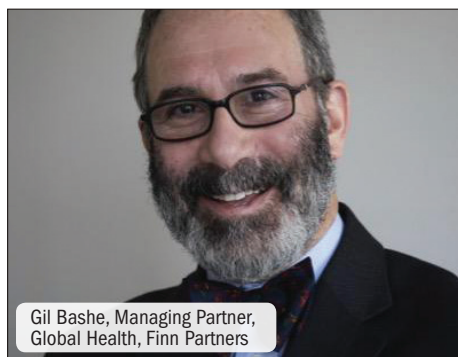
1. Sometimes it's important to make a breach announcement based on what you know and don't, rather than delay.
2. Should you delay a breach announcement, make certain the corrective measures you've taken will work perfectly.
3. Instead of worrying only about the company, worry about the customers, too.



1. Another Slice of Pie: Another brand takes a political stand. The story is courtesy of influencer superstar **PewDiePie**. Following PewDiePie's recent racial epithets (*PRN*, Sept. 12, 2017), game developer **Campo Santo** invoked the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, which forces the **YouTube** star to remove livestreams of Campo Santo games from the channel. "I am sick of this child getting more and more chances to make money off of what we make," Campo Santo cofounder **Sean Vanaman** said on **Twitter**. "Our game on his channel=endorsement," he tweeted. PewDiePie was playing **Bluehole Studio's** *PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds* when he spewed the racial epithet. While it's unclear that Campo Santo is within its legal rights, it's impressive when a brand risks hits to its bottom line to speak out.

2. We'll Leave the ICE on for Ya: For radio listeners, there are few ads as well-known as budget chain **Motel 6's** folksy spot featuring **Tom Bodett** signing off with, "We'll leave the light on for ya." In its 30th year, the ad arguably is one of the most effective tone setters ever. That folksy image took a whack Sept. 13 when media reports said Motel 6 employees in the Phoenix, AZ, area were regularly supplying guest lists to **Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)**. That information was leading to a high number of arrests at several Motel 6 properties in the area, the *Phoenix New Times* wrote. Motel 6 responded that day with a terse, unapologetic statement (doubtless Tom Bodett lacked a seat at the table for this one) noting the provision of information to ICE was a local matter, done without knowledge of the company's headquar-

ters: "When we became aware of it last week, it was discontinued." A 2015 Supreme Court ruling prohibits law enforcement from forcing hotels to supply them with guest information. The next day, when the story prompted boycott calls on social media, Motel 6 said "to help ensure that this does not occur again, we will be issuing a directive to every one of our more than 1,400 locations nationwide, making clear that they are prohibited from voluntarily providing daily guest lists to ICE." It added, "We will be undertaking a comprehensive review of our current practice and then issue updated, company-wide guidelines. Protecting the privacy and security of our guests are core values of our company. Motel 6 apologizes for this incident and will continue to work to earn the trust and patronage of our millions of loyal guests."



3. Growth: In a story broken on *prnewsonline.com*, **Finn Partners** launched its Health and Social Impact specialty group Sept. 13 "to develop regional, national and global corporate social responsibility campaigns for the health sector." Senior partner, CSR & social impact, **Amy Terpeluk** will lead the group; health practice managing partner **Gil Bashe** will provide guidance. The new specialty group is the result of collaboration between two Finn units: CSR/Social Impact and Health Practices. "Together the groups have sought to find issues that require a call to action," Bashe tells us in an interview. One of its clients, **Let's Win for Pancreatic Cancer**, supported by the **Lustgarten Foundation**, was inducted into *PR News'* Platinum Hall of Fame last week during the Platinum PR Awards. – **Finn Partners** also acquired **ABI Marketing**

Public Relations, a marketing and PR firm focused on industrial and trade markets, in B2B. Founder/CEO of **ABI Alan Isacson** will become managing partner, **ABI**. Founded in 1980, **ABI** has five global offices. **Gould + Partners** facilitated the deal. – **Relevance New York** opened a London office and re-branded as **Relevance International**.

4. Doing Good: In an unfortunately timely announcement, **Facebook** said Sept. 14 it's created a central hub for its safety tools. Called Crisis Response, it also will contain articles and emergency information. The main tool, of course, is Safety Check, which Facebook activates during disasters and crises. It allows users in the area of a disaster to alert friends and family that they're safe. Facebook unveiled Safety Check in 2014, activating it only during natural disasters, such as earthquakes. It activated Safety Check for the first time in response to a man-made incident when it was flipped on during the Paris bombings in late 2015.

5. People: The Consumer Specialty Products Association named **Beth Ludwick** VP, communications and marketing. Previously she led communications at the **American Association for Homecare**. – **Adam Wilson** was named EVP, marketing, at the advertising and marketing firm **Duffey Petrosky**. He comes from **Search Optics**. – **Rubenstein Public Relations** named **Michael Isaacson** chief financial officer. – **D S Simon Media** promoted 18-year veteran **Eric Wright** to EVP and 10-year vet **Sarah Katz** [p. 1, picture 3] to SVP – Former *American Banker* editor-in-chief **Marc Hochstein** joined **CoinDesk Inc.**, as managing editor. ■

