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REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Brands Weathering the Political Storm: Staying on Message in a Charged, Angry Cultural Climate

In case you've been studiously avoiding all forms of media surrounding the run-up to this week's election, the atmosphere has become politically charged in the past few months. Brands are advised to raise their shields.

As we noted a few weeks back, **Bisquick** attempted to inject gluten-laden levity into the second presidential debate, asking the Twitterverse innocuously if it would "vote" for a pancake or a waffle. Social media winced, urging Bisquick to

back off on the funny stuff during such an important moment. "Get off my Twitter feed, Bisquick," roared one disgruntled tweeter, representing the consensus.

More recently **Chobani** found itself as strained as the Greek yogurt it produces. The brand and its founder, Hamdi Ulukaya, are taking heat on social media for employing some 300 refugees. A Turkish immigrant of Kurdish descent, Ulukaya has supported efforts to aid refugees, speaking at forums and

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WRITING WELL

BY MORRY SMULEVITZ, HEAD, U.S. PUBLIC AFFAIRS, ABBVIE

Write On: 5 Tips to Help You Write Better and Why Writing Still Matters

Remember about five years ago, when everyone in PR became enamored with analytics and how numbers and math would create a *Moneyball* across the communications landscape? While today no one disputes the fact that analytics has become a standard communications tool, it is clear that a new—and surprising—weakness in our industry has emerged: the written word.

PR used to be critically reliant on writing. From Ivy Lee's very first press release to Richard Branson's latest **LinkedIn** post, prose has been how we have told stories. And while it's impossible to ignore myriad *Data Dive* stories in *PR News Pro* and reports elsewhere about how video is playing an

ever-increasing role in communications, writing is a mainstay of what we do.

But writing is a skill that is fading. My father, a top print journalist for 56 years and counting, would tell you the same (he reminds me regularly). Some of it, no doubt, is a function of a society where prose is ever-present—**Forrester Research** has pegged the number of texts sent each day at north of 6 billion—but informal.

In fact, brevity is so valued by the texting community that actually using punctuation apparently makes messages ap-



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Access
Intelligence

Published weekly by Access Intelligence, LLC
9211 Corporate Blvd, 4th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

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e-mail: clientservices@accessintel.com

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40 Wall Street, 50th floor, New York, NY 10005
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NOVEMBER 17, 2016
NEW YORK CITY, NY

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Brands Should Own Their Political View

founding the **Tent Foundation**, which urges corporations to join programs that help people who have been “forcibly displaced around the globe.”

As a result of its employment practices and Ulukaya’s politics, Chobani now faces boycotts. There also have been efforts to defame Ulukaya. Shawn Barigar, mayor of Twin Falls, Idaho, and his wife have received death threats. Mr. Barigar is a supporter of Chobani, which has a plant in Twin Falls. Correctly or not, some have linked the anti-immigration sentiment to Donald Trump.

A STARBUCKS CUP GETS RUN OVER

More evidence of the heated political atmosphere: the backlash created when **Starbucks** introduced a green cup with a design symbolizing unity Nov. 1. “During a divisive time in our country, Starbucks wanted to create a symbol of unity as a reminder of our shared values, and the need to be good to each other,” Howard Schultz, chairman and CEO, wrote in a blog post the day the cup debuted.

Again, a seemingly innocuous move landed Starbucks in the soup as some detractors reckoned, mistakenly, that the cup was intended to be the brand’s yearly holiday cup. These people were upset the cup’s design lacked religious symbols of Christmas.

(Last year a red Starbucks cup, which actually was designed for the holidays, took a blasting for its lack of religious symbols. Among those who gave the cup a bath was Trump. “If I become president, we’re all going to be saying Merry Christmas again, that I can tell you. That I can tell you,” *CNN* quoted Trump as saying during a Springfield, Illinois, rally in November 2015. He also half jokingly said, “Maybe we should boycott Starbucks?”)

Back to the present, Schultz, in his Nov. 1 blog post, explained, “The green cup and the design represent the connections Starbucks has as a community with its partners (employees) and customers.”

Others critics likely were miffed by the cup’s green color, often thought of as a symbol of the environmental movement. Some took to social media to blast the cup’s message of unity as evidence of “liberal bias,” wrote *PR News*’ Ian Wright Nov. 2. He suggested detractors might have conflated their views of the cup with Schultz’s support of Hillary Clinton.

You could argue the political climate bled into business when **Facebook** defended itself against attacks on its policy of allowing advertisers to



Green With Envy: Starbucks was transparent about its Unity cup, though some conflated it with the 2015 holiday cup.

against the law,” Martinez wrote in the post.



Allen Shapard,
senior director,
chair, public
engagement
strategies, APCO
Worldwide

Even personal brands lack immunity in this climate. TV actress/ vocalist Hilary Duff issued an apology Oct. 30 after Facebook and **Twitter** users blasted her and new beau Jason Walsh for wearing pilgrim and Native American costumes, respectively. Part of the issue was that Duff’s costume included a fake gun. Another was anger over the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline, which would cross burial grounds that are sacred to Native Americans. Thousands have protested against the pipeline. Prior to Duff’s apology, @Kisumisuja tweeted: “@HilaryDuff Do you even know anything about Standing Rock? Or the Dakota Access Pipeline? Or the Water Protectors? Or American History?” Both Duff’s and Walsh’s apologies seemed sincere.

In this charged climate, we asked in-house and agency communicators what brands should do if they find themselves targeted.

ASSESS THE SITUATION



Stephen Payne,
VP, corporate
communications,
Feld Entertainment

The traditional answer is for brands to stand clear of politics, of course. As we’ve seen, though, these are untraditional times and this is an untraditional election season. “I’ve lived in Washington, D.C., for a long time and it was never this divisive,” says Stephen Payne, VP, corporate communications, **Feld Entertainment, Inc.**

Adds Allen Shapard, a senior director at **APCO Worldwide** who chairs the firm's public engagement strategies, the climate has had a "chilling effect" on brands' creativity. With some exceptions, such as **Tecate** beer, "They're very hesitant to adopt a lighter tone."

Regardless of the country's climate, the rules for brands have changed. "There's an expectation now that brands stand for something more than just making money," Shapard says.

A Nov. 2 survey of 1,020 workers from companies with 1,000+ employees by **Cone Communications** shows millennials are powering the change [see chart below].

A **Global Strategy Group** report shows strong support from adults of all ages for brands to get involved in politics. The January 2015 study of 803 American adults found 88% support brands engaging in politics. It also found 78% of those surveyed believe companies should address important societal issues.

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

With that in mind, Shapard counsels brands take precautions before wading into politics. "Look at your stakeholders and assess the risks involved," he says.

Adds Payne, "Know your audience." Your stance "needs to be authentic...and who you are as a brand." If those conditions are met, he says, your stakeholders likely will support your position. In the Starbucks example, he says, "I think most Starbucks figured most of its customers would support a call for unity."

Paul Englert, head of marketing for **Ca' Momi**, a wine, spirits and restaurant group in Napa, California, urges brands to be transparent with their decision making and proactively "drive the story" to avoid letting cynics interpret their actions in a manner that suits their agenda.

"Brands...particularly large brands...tend to have valid, often research-driven reasons for their decisions," he says. In addition, though, they should "game out consumer-facing decisions they make and proactively provide rationale if they antici-

pate a negative response." They can do this with press releases and on social media, Englert says. Of course, this didn't prevent the Starbucks green cup flare-up, but it softened the blow.

Englert says he's not "advocating that brands walk on eggshells and feel a constant need to explain themselves; but for brands that serve a wide swath of consumers...they need to dedicate resources to anticipating how their actions may be interpreted."

STICK TO YOUR SCRIPT



Paul Englert, head of marketing, Ca' Momi

But the meat of our question is what should brands and communicators do once they're enmeshed in a political thicket, especially a controversy they hadn't seen coming?

Shapard counsels a brand's stewards to assess the criticism. "They have to decide what the brand stands for. What is normalcy." Should the criticism be "unreasonable...and unjust" the brand should "soldier on...stick to its story, mission and identity, which are things you've probably crafted carefully over many years," he says. When a brand backs down in the face of unjustified attacks it runs the risk of making people wonder, "What does it stand for?" he says. "That's a slippery slope" you want to avoid.

The good news is that when brands are attacked by some for defending the human spirit or minorities, for example, "the public tends to" back the brand, Shapard says.

Payne also counsels responding to criticisms, if not the critics themselves. Responding gives brands a chance "to tell their story, to explain their core values...it's your opportunity to define the narrative...say why you did what you did."

Englert agrees with Payne regarding addressing the criticism and avoiding critics. "Explain your side of the story in an inclusive, positive, brand-appropriate manner," he says. "Don't address specific critics directly. Tell your side of the story without giving further life to allegations. Change the narrative to one of inclusion and positivity..."

Payne acknowledges, though, being a big-name brand means becoming a lightning rod of sorts. "If you're a high-profile brand and someone's not mad at you for something, you're not as influential as you think you are," he says, only partially in jest. ■

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Be Responsible or Else...
76: Percent of millennials who consider a company's social/environmental commitments when deciding where to work; U.S. average: 58%
64: Percent of millennials who won't take a job if a potential employer doesn't have a strong CSR effort; U.S. average: 51%
75: Percent of millennials who'd take a pay cut to work for a responsible company; U.S. average: 55%
<i>Source: Cone Communications Millennial Employee Engagement Study (2016)</i>

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Questions? Contact Rachel Scharmann at rscharmann@accessintel.com.

Why Writing Is More Important in PR, Not Less

pear less sincere, according to a 2015 study from **Binghamton University's Harpur College**.

I admit that both my father and I utilize smiley-face emojis and the thumbs-up icon, but we refuse to give up the fight for the greater good.

ASK FOR A WRITING SAMPLE, THE NAKED RULE

I suspect the decline of writing chops in PR and communications may be related to the fact that our industry today is comprised of many practitioners with a more diverse set of backgrounds than previously: The analytics folks are lumped in with the video crew, who work alongside community relations managers, paid-integration specialists and a host of other functions that would have been unimaginable even a decade ago.

For a great many of those professionals, in a world of endless competition for content, writing isn't seen as central to their core responsibilities. What used to be considered a price of entry is no longer. Want to stump a youthful job candidate during the interview process? Ask for a writing sample.

The ability to describe something concisely and clearly, in writing, is among the most critical skills in the modern communications world. It was not that long ago when we used the telephone to communicate complex ideas, but the lure of electronic communication is so great that the online magazine *Slate* has proposed the "naked rule" for phone calls: You should pick up the phone only for those who have seen you in the nude (parents, spouses, old roommates, older flames and virtually no one else). Now, email is king for that kind of conversation.

But, ironically, as our industry has become more complex, with talk of algorithms, **Facebook** targeting and bounce rates, it has become more important, not less, to be able to write clearly about what we're doing. A 2015 survey of Canadian media consumption by **Microsoft** concluded that in our cluttered world, the average attention span fell to eight seconds, down from 12 in 2000, according to *The New York Times*. We now have a shorter attention span than goldfish.

WRITING HAS BECOME CRITICAL

We are in an age where writing is increasingly critical for companies. Blog posts are a standard part of the way **Apple** or **Google** talk directly to their audiences. The text-first world of LinkedIn is a platform for Bill Gates, and the leader of the free world takes to social media to talk tech, poverty and basketball.

Writing should not be seen as a magic trick reserved for copywriters. It's a skill that can and should be cultivated. The good news is that there have been millions of pages and trillions of pixels devoted to the technical elements of good writing, so an informal education is always available. But for a few less-technical ways to improve prose, there are five pieces of advice I like to give to help everyone unlock their inner Hemingway.

- **Read the Classics:** No, not *Moby Dick*, but the foundational books on good writing: *Strunk and White* and the *AP Stylebook*. No, not all rules are applicable.

- **...And the Paper:** Yes, they still make those. The best way to be a good writer is to soak in good writing. The scribes who do the best job of communicating complex information in a straightforward manner work at newspapers. They deserve your dime and your attention. (I hope you are proud of me, dad.)

- **Use an Editor:** It would be great if everyone had an in-house copy expert, but the reality is that you don't need a specialist, just someone with a keen eye who can read the latest plan or proposal and provide feedback. Adding that step into workflow boosts the clarity of the final product immeasurably. Many companies employ that approach. This also comes into play from the perspective of litigation or document-hold, which helps to ensure nothing that you communicate can be misconstrued or taken out of context.

- **Put Away the PowerPoint:** Sometimes a slide deck is required, but it shouldn't be the default format for explaining the complex. If you can nail thinking in a Word document, re-formatting it for PowerPoint should be easy. Trying to go the other way encourages sloppy thinking and compromises opportunities to improve writing skills. I hate watching colleagues craft a key message document they believe has to fit into a slide.

- **Treat Everything Like an Excuse to Practice:** I'm not saying you should treat an email like a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed, but applying the rules of good writing to basic business correspondence provides an opportunity to flex your writing muscles. Did you do a sweep to check for grammar, emphasize specifics and avoid clichés? If you can do that daily, not only will the writing improve, but your readers—even colleagues two offices over—will appreciate it.

IT'S ACADEMIC. NOT.

This isn't an academic exercise. As a communicator, you likely have more information about audiences than ever, often packed into dense spreadsheets. We also have more channels and outlets than ever for external communications, everything from documentaries to Facebook Live. Increasingly, though, what makes the difference in the data or the strategies I choose is not a brilliantly complex spreadsheet or the novelty of the platform, but the way that information is presented.

In writing. ■

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How to Plan For Every Crisis You Can Anticipate, and Why You Should Now



Hurricane Matthew recently taught millions of Americans a lesson they should have long-since learned: that it is dangerous to live or work on the coast. Of course, telling coastal dwellers this is like telling Kansans that it's dangerous to live in Tornado Alley – or a Los Angelino that it can be unhealthy to live on a fault line.

The latest environmental victims don't want to hear it – they have long-since decided that it's worth it to be in an at-risk geographic location. This is why Matthew destroyed billions of dollars of real estate and thousands of companies were damaged, crippled or even put out of business.

The point is simple: While anything can happen at any time, planning for crises you can anticipate can save you heartache and millions of dollars. Some of the more unpredictable weather-related disasters waiting to happen involve blizzards, heat waves, tornadoes or hurricanes.

PLAN FOR EVERYTHING YOU CAN

Weather crises prove that you can't plan for everything, but to avoid disaster, you must plan for everything you can anticipate. In addition to weather disasters:

- ▶ If you're unionized, plan for a strike at the worst possible moment
- ▶ If you deal with volatile chemicals, expect an explosion or an environment-wrecking leak.
- ▶ If you deal with confidential information, plan for a very different kind of leak.
- ▶ If your spokesman is a celebrity, plan for a bout of very public moral turpitude.
- ▶ If you have a high-profile CEO or board member, plan for a reputation-shattering scandal.
- ▶ If your business requires electricity – or the internet – plan for a long-term grid-collapse.

You get the picture.

In PR, it's essential that you plan for crisis and make preparations. Sometimes these efforts push up against the wishes of executives outside the communications space, who are sure that everything is OK. Things can get ugly, especially when

you're fighting for tight budget dollars. The larger the organization, the more likely that mid- or upper-level executives will fall into the “go-along-to-get-along” mind-set, which creates a potential barrier for organization-wide crisis planning.

WAITING TO PLAN IS A MISTAKE

Recall the **Nasdaq PR Services-PR News Pro** survey in March, which showed only about half of the firms polled had crisis plans; even fewer practiced crisis scenarios regularly. While I'd like to say those results were the exception, I can't. Other groups have conducted surveys that provide similar results.

On a positive note, there are several ways of overcoming built-in entropy to crisis planning. The first involves working around the planning-resistant executive:

- 1.** Create a detailed risk-assessment of crises that could have a PR impact – and all of them do. Then from that create detailed PR plans to address the top potential crises.
- 2.** In these PR plans, the actions of other departments might be involved – in those cases, deal directly with cooperative execs with responsibilities for these areas, and include them in your “strictly PR crisis response plan.”
- 3.** One-on-one, share the benefits of this kind of planning with other department directors, and encourage them to get on board.

The other approach is to conduct the risk assessment and PR planning, then go to the resistant exec and demonstrate the benefits of your crisis response plan, and try to win him or her over to your way of thinking.

Fortunately, creating risk assessments and crisis response plans are not expensive. Should a crisis actually arise, most organizations ignore budget limitations in exchange for protecting the brand.

When planning for a crisis, it helps to set up a Risk Assess-

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The Social Shake-Up

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

Questions? Contact Jessica Placencia at jessica@accessintel.com; 301-354-1641

ment Threat Chart, which is nothing more than an Excel grid that identifies risks and allows you to calculate probabilities.

[Note to Subscribers: You can find a sample threat chart at the *PR News Pro Essentials* page: pnewsonline.com/pr-news-pro-essentials/]

Based on these assessments, your crisis and disaster-response PR plans can proceed accordingly. This same matrix approach can be used for any potential disaster. These should include all the categories above and those unique to your industry.

Not all crises can be planned for, of course. Long before 4-wheel drive vehicles were common, a freak snowstorm dumped 24 inches of powder on a South Carolina hospital. This shut down the roads providing access for doctors, nurses and other key staff. Responding quickly – and from a home isolated from the hospital and without power, but with

phone service – the PR director put out a call on local radio and TV for people with 4-wheel drive vehicles.

The public responded in large numbers, ensuring that doctors and nurses could safely travel between home and hospital during this nearly week-long crisis. Not only did this prove operationally effective, but it strengthened ties between the hospital, the community and the media.

This wasn't planned, because it was a "500-year snow." The larger point: even "500-year" weather events happen (every 500 years), so planning is not as pointless as it might seem. The bottom line: it makes sense to create PR plans to respond to any crisis you can anticipate. When disaster strikes, you'll be prepared to manage effectively. ■

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HOW TO PLAN FOR A DISASTER

Planning for a disaster is critical – and each disaster needs a separate disaster planning team. For example, the **Secret Service** designated a South Carolina hospital as a "receiving hospital" should the president have a medical emergency while flying between Charlotte and Augusta. Upon receiving this notice, the PR director pulled together a crisis planning team that included:

- ▶ The county sheriff and civil defense director (for security and traffic control)
- ▶ The hospital safety engineer to set up an easily-isolated press room – complete with word processors, phone lines and coffee
- ▶ Executives from the local newspaper and TV stations – their participation was to ensure that their reporters had equal access to the same press opportunities as the traveling presidential press corps

Because this last item relates directly to media relations, an explanation might be in order. The traveling

presidential press corps tends to have better access to breaking news than the local media. They are known to the Secret Service, have photo-ID badges that identify them as members of the press and – because they represent major news media, they are used to getting their way. Often local reporters are brushed aside – or, in the vernacular of the presidential press corps, "big-footed."

While the hospital's PR director made plans to accommodate the press corps with a press room, the longer-term interests of the hospital involved ensuring that the local press was treated with respect, and provided access. By involving the newspaper publishers and TV station general managers in the planning process, those relations were strengthened even before there ever was a presidential health emergency which, fortunately, never happened.

This has wider implications for any organization that gets caught up in national news. While it's important to accommodate the national media, it's at least as critical to ensure the local

news media is looked after since it will provide ongoing bread-and-butter press coverage for your organization.

The hospital's crisis planning team began the process with a face-to-face meeting – but only after each participant had signed an NDA – and together they worked out the procedures necessary to ensure security for the president and access for the local media – as well as internal systems in the hospital to provide for the press room needs of the media. This included creating an on-the-run press room, posting police in all stairwells to keep enterprising reporters from trying to breach internal security, and providing local media with photo IDs that the sheriff's security team would honor, allowing locals equal access to the press room.

Due to the confidential nature of this potential crisis, rehearsals were not possible – however, all of the parties involved (separately) rehearsed their roles – the sheriff deployed his forces during a hospital practice (non-specific) emergency drill, the hospital engineer

had his staff set up the press room in the auditorium several times until he had the timing right, the civil defense director worked with the sheriff to practice traffic control, and the media briefed its teams on ways of responding to a generic high-profile individual being admitted to a local hospital.

THE TAKE-AWAYS:

1. Involve all key decision-makers right from the start
2. If confidentiality is important, ask each to sign a non-disclosure form before participating in the planning
3. Provide an in-depth briefing so all planners have access to relevant information
4. Take notes, and from that, evolve a plan that all planners sign off on
5. Where necessary, create the tools (such as reporter IDs) needed to carry out the plan
6. Do whatever it takes to practice the emergency response plan in advance

Red Bull, Lenovo Top B2C Brands on Facebook as Engagement Totals Fall Unexpectedly

The **Chicago Cubs** taught the world last week that nothing lasts forever, especially when you define forever as 108 years. And **Sir Isaac Newton**, well before **Blood Sweat & Tears'** *Spinning Wheel*, said, not sang, "What goes up, must come down."

Those two bits of knowledge explain this week's *Data Dive*, where, for the first time in quite awhile, consumer engagement with U.S. B2C brands' posts are down, according to **Shareable** data provided exclusively to *PR News Pro*. Defined here as the sum of likes and comments, consumer engagement with B2C brands' videos also was down year over year for Q3 for the first time in recent memory.

Specifically, consumer engagement, or actions, with B2C brands on **Facebook** was down 20% in Q3. Engagement was down 11% for video in the July 1-September 30 timeframe. Total posts slid 12%, too. "Brands concentrated on other platforms," says Shareable's Nathalie Nuta.

The downward tilt, which had to come eventually and is not believed to be significant, doesn't diminish the brands

that grew and/or made the list of top 30 most-engaged B2C brands on Facebook for Q3. **Red Bull** took the top spot, with more than 11 million actions, 2 million more than **Lenovo**, at number two. A prominent social media player, the energy drink's total is a 109% jump vs its Q3 2015 number. The brand's performance was powered by video, says Nuta, who notes vids were 99% of all consumer actions with Red Bull's posts during the quarter. Computer hardware maker **Lenovo's** top post called for fans to send in their renditions of emojis.



Chris Fuller, SVP, communications, Arby's

Of the top 5 brands on this list, only **Starbucks** also appears on the most-engaged lists for **Instagram** and **Twitter** in Q3, Nuta says.

We asked **Arby's** what propelled it onto the list. Arby's has begun "tapping into passionate audiences...through entertainment and pop culture references," says Christopher Fuller, SVP, communications. It's also connected with gamers and hunters. "We've found being authentic...is increasing engagement," Fuller adds. ■

Shareable SOCIAL SCORECARD
 TOP B2C BRANDS ON FACEBOOK – Q3 2016
 Based on Total Actions (likes, comments and shares)
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareable. Source: f

Rank	Brand	Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
1	Red Bull	10,694,425	711	15,041	46,314,753
2	Lenovo	8,365,276	203	41,208	5,771,880
3	BarkBox	7,716,877	1,525	5,060	2,245,368
4	Starbucks	5,629,193	36	156,366	36,446,125
5	Monster Energy	5,601,796	221	25,347	24,600,360
6	Starbucks Frappuccino	3,110,619	24	129,609	12,002,191
7	NORDSTROM	2,709,728	69	39,271	4,133,660
8	VICTORIA BECKHAM	2,152,940	115	18,721	3,012,930
9	RED LOBSTER	1,815,173	43	42,213	4,322,141
10	NETFLIX	1,766,231	204	8,658	8,013,982
11	Steak 'n Shake	1,674,222	61	27,446	3,735,391
12	CHANEL	1,616,141	37	43,679	17,299,100
13	Pizza Hut	1,513,765	136	11,131	6,070,401
14	Arby's	1,463,412	27	54,200	2,787,693
15	Spirit Halloween	1,424,523	237	6,011	2,847,241

Shareable SOCIAL SCORECARD
 TOP B2C BRANDS ON FACEBOOK – Q3 2016
 Based on Total Actions (likes, comments and shares)
 Data provided exclusively to PR News by Shareable. Source: f

Rank	Brand	Total Actions	Total Content	Actions per Content	Total Audience
16	Pokémon	1,417,001	143	9,909	7,314,058
17	Krispy Kreme Doughnuts	1,368,549	185	7,398	5,303,006
18	Pillsbury	1,352,532	92	14,701	3,779,661
19	HOT TOPIC	1,256,437	318	3,951	5,618,220
20	SAMSUNG mobile	1,251,821	70	17,883	25,624,072
21	Dior	1,184,506	71	16,683	15,425,577
22	Jordan	1,147,009	97	11,825	8,612,425
23	Spencer's	1,100,675	174	6,326	4,393,692
24	CHOBANI	1,073,751	96	11,185	1,302,293
25	GIVENCHY	1,049,665	59	17,791	1,549,209
26	The Cheesecake Factory	1,037,177	59	17,579	5,064,763
27	Applebee's	1,026,760	57	18,013	6,095,364
28	Perrier	1,026,210	38	27,006	1,508,326
29	Louis Vuitton	1,010,386	53	19,064	18,749,051
30	PUMA Motorsport	967,917	41	23,608	486,284



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Michael Heinley, partner, deputy NY health practice, Finn Partners



Kevin Johnson, founder, Marketeching Solutions

1. M&A: W2O Group early today acquired **Marketeching Solutions, LLC**, a research and social listening consultancy specializing in healthcare and life sciences. Founded in 2008 by **Kevin Johnson**, Marketeching has offices in New Hope, PA, and Philadelphia. Johnson will remain, operating Marketeching as a subsidiary of W2O. Earlier this year, **Mountaingate Capital** secured an investment position in W2O to propel growth through acquisitions. – **Kaplow Communications** made the first acquisition in its 25-year history acquiring digital/tech firm **Mayday** Oct. 26. – The **Association of Cable Communicators** said Nov. 3 it will merge with the **Cable & Telecommunications Association for Marketing**. ACC chief and cable *PRN Pro* friend **Steve Jones** will depart; CTAM head **Vicki Lins** will lead the merged group. – **Gould+Partners** said it advised travel specialist **MMGY Global** in its Oct. acquisition of **NJFPR**.

2. News: Related to our lead story about brands being pulled into political issues, sometimes unwillingly, is this item about the **National Rifle Association (NRA)** urging members in a blog post to take **Hasbro** board games *Candy Land* and *Battleship* to the shooting range. For those without the games or wanting to avoid putting holes in them, the NRA offers PDF versions suitable for downloading, printing and target practice. As of Nov. 3 we'd yet to see a response from Hasbro. On a somewhat related note, Oct. 27 Hasbro launched *Be Fearless Be Kind*, a program "designed to empower kids to have the empathy, compassion and courage to stand up for others and be inclusive throughout their lives." The core elements of what looks to be an excellent campaign "are dedicated to teaching empathy, putting empathy into action, and

celebrating kind kids who serve as positive role models and change makers," Hasbro said. Except when they're playing *Battleship*, of course. – Putting the dreary news of Nov. 2 about print from *The Wall Street Journal* (possible layoffs and a smaller, reformatted print edition starting Nov. 14 with less coverage of arts, culture and New York news), **Tronc**, owner of the *L.A. Times*, *Chicago Tribune* and others (13% drop in print ad revenue) and the *NY Times* (Q3 earnings fell badly as print advertising dropped 19%) into context are the results of a new survey from **Bospar**. The survey asked more than 500 B2B CMOs, VPs of marketing, marketing directors and marketing managers how they get their news. As the chart below shows, only print magazines did worse than newspapers.

Don't Hit Print: How Marketers Get News

1. Newspaper websites: 71%
2. Facebook: 56%
3. News aggregators: 55%
4. LinkedIn: 45%
5. Twitter: 41%
6. Magazine websites: 37%
7. TV (not online): 28%
8. TV websites: 22%
9. Word of mouth: 21%
10. Newspapers (not online): 13%
11. Magazines (not online): 6%

Source: Bospar B2B PR Effectiveness Study 2016

3. People: Finn Partners Nov. 1 named **Michael Heinley** partner and deputy of the agency's New York health practice. Prior to Finn, Heinley was VP of corporate communication at **WebMD** and held communications posts at **Johnson & Johnson** and **Merck**. – **Ketchum** Oct. 31 named partner **Michael**

O'Brien chief client officer for the global agency, succeeding **Jerry Olszewski**. Olszewski has been chief client officer and managing director of Ketchum's D.C. office since Sept. 2015. He'll now focus on that office and continue on Ketchum's global leadership council. – **Mike Nelson** was promoted to SVP communications, **CBS Television Stations**. He's been with CBS since 2006. Prior to that he held communications posts at **NBC** and several **NBA** teams. – **Baretz+Brunelle** said Nov. 1 former VP/group publisher of **American Lawyer Media's** national legal publications **Kenneth Gary** has joined as chief business development officer. – **Ca' Momi** restaurant group named *PR News Pro* friend and contributor **Paul Englert** head of marketing. Englert was VP marketing at **C. Mondavi & Family**. – Good wishes to our friend **Denise Vitola**, managing director, **Makovsky**, who's leaving this week to start **Vitola Strategies**. Prior to Makovsky, Vitola was at **MSLGROUP**. – Congrats are due to **Donna Murphy**, global CEO, **Havas Health**, named to *MM&M* magazine's health influencer 50 list. – Kudos to **Raschanda Hall**, director of global media relations, **Business Wire**, on being named PR executive of the year by *Target Market News*. Hall also is president of the Chicago chapter of the **Black Public Relations Society**. – **CommCore** expanded its Spanish-language capabilities adding senior consultants **Pablo Gato**, based in D.C., and **Janeth Hernandez** in L.A. – Should be fun and insightful Nov. 16 as *PR News* hosts the Digital PR Awards luncheon at the Yale Club in NY. **Chris Lewis**, CEO & founder, **LEWIS**, will keynote. He's set to discuss his just-published book *Too Fast To Think*, providing ways communicators can find time and space for creativity. ■