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PRWeek



UNDER 40

In this first-ever special, PRWeek's editorial team looks across agencies, corporations, and nonprofits to profile 40 professionals under the age of 40 who demonstrate innovative thinking, strong determination, and results that indicate a long and successful career in the PR industry

The next generation

ADAM ALBERTI

EVP, Singer Associates, 35

A rising star in the public affairs and corporate communications arenas, Adam Alberti is responsible for more than \$5 billion in major real-estate development projects at the San Francisco-based firm. According to agency president Sam Singer, Alberti's innovative thinking and ability to generate strong public support is key to many projects' ultimate success.

Alberti now spearheads a number of accounts, including the Transbay Joint Powers Authority, which is charged with creating one core transit center and mixed-use development in downtown San Francisco. He is also a key member of teams serving Bay Meadows Land Company and Norcal Waste Systems' massive food-scrap recycling program.

A one-time liaison between San Francisco 49ers owner Eddie DeBartolo and the team's players and coaches, he left to join political consulting firm Staton & Hughes. From there he continued on to GCI Group before joining Singer.



CLIVE ARMITAGE

CEO, Bite Communications, 39

Co-founding a technology agency that wins the coveted UK Apple Computer account before even hitting 30 would certainly set the stage for an enduring career in PR. This is where Bite Communications' CEO Clive Armitage found himself more than 10 years ago when he left Text 100 to start Bite.

The now-global agency is known for its edgy culture and consumer-focused tech accounts.

Since the celebrated Apple win, Armitage has overseen staggering growth for Bite, including multimillion dollar revenues. Even so, he still makes it a point to mentor – and perhaps inspire – the agency's staff.

Yet there's no one secret to Armitage's success, but his entrepreneurial initiative, commitment to the industry's growth, and keen sense of humor make it easy to see why he landed on this list.



DAVID ALMACY

VP of digital strategy for North America, Waggener Edstrom Worldwide, 37

In his current position, David Almacny works closely with his regional counterparts in EMEA and APAC to develop digital services designed to enhance clients' communications outreach.

His expertise in emerging channels of influence have attracted new sorts of clients and offered established clients a host of new communications options.

Almacny joined Waggener Edstrom in June, having served as White House Internet and e-communications director from 2005-2007. For those two years, Almacny managed all White House online communications strategies, serving as lead contact for digital influencers.

Before joining the White House staff, he was a senior advisor to the deputy secretary at the US Department of Education, where he provided guidance on policy, media affairs, and Congressional relations.



BRANDEE BARKER

Director of communications, Facebook, 37

Facebook is Silicon Valley's dizzying success story of 2007, but its meteoric climb wouldn't have been possible without an enthusiastic communications team.

Brandee Barker has long been the tireless communications director who has steered Facebook through its eventful ride to the top. Though it recently named OutCast Communications its AOR, Barker is still involved with all PR efforts – from media strategy to sorting through the 50-plus press requests received each day.

Despite the gushing media attention, Barker has been faced with some controversial subjects, like online privacy and advertising issues. Even so, Facebook remains a top company to watch in 2008, and Barker is perfectly poised to lead it to new communications opportunities.

Moreover, as the inevitable backlash stories surface, Barker's savvy and strategic know-how will undoubtedly be a major asset.

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► Talent has always been at the heart of the PR industry. Certain individuals can help attract new clients, grow existing business, and inspire colleagues. Such abilities are crucial as the industry competes with other marketing disciplines. Today's PR pros exhibit their talent in different ways – from traditional media relations to digital prowess to crisis communications. On these pages, *PRWeek* profiles 40 PR pros, nominated by industry peers, who have achieved tremendous feats before they turn 40

FRED BATEMAN

*President and founder,
The Bateman Group, 38*

PR pros who stuck with the industry after Silicon Valley's 2001 plummet should proudly wear their battle scars from the downturn. Fred Bateman not only survived the slump, but gleaned some profound lessons that have helped him build one of Silicon Valley's top-tier tech agencies.

This vigor is perhaps what landed him the opportunity to open the San Francisco office of Fitzgerald Communications at only 27. And it was his keen eye that noticed clients demanding more senior-level attention from the newly downsized agencies following the downturn.

Jumping on this trend, Bateman launched the Bateman Group in 2004 with a basic belief: keep the client list low, but personal attention and employee retention high. These days, even as the agency is quickly outgrowing its office space, Bateman's vision remains a reliable formula for Silicon Valley success.



MICHAEL BECKERICH

EVP, Dorland Global Public Relations, 34

In a relatively short period of time, Michael Beckerich has led corporate and agency teams to promote disease and product awareness, built relationships with key stakeholders and opinion leaders, and managed critical business issues.

Now, he's charged with simultaneously launching Dorland's New York office and managing the San Francisco office.

Much of Beckerich's career has been spent at the largest healthcare companies – Warner-Lambert, Amgen, Johnson & Johnson – where he has worked on everything from traditional pharmaceutical products to complex biologics and lifestyle products.

Back on the agency side, Beckerich is working to expand the biotech portfolio for the agency while further developing its media relations services. Dorland's executives now look to him to help mentor young staff, helping to encourage them to explore different possibilities to realize their full potential.

CRAIG BUCHHOLZ

*Executive director of public affairs,
Merck & Co, 36*

There's no doubt that Buchholz's ascent in the world of healthcare public affairs has been a rapid one. Beginning in the agency world, where he served as a VP for Dorland Global Public Relations (then Dorland Sweeney Jones) before the age of 25, Buchholz went on to roles at Pharmacia, Johnson & Johnson, and finally Merck.

His current role as executive director of public affairs at Merck Research Laboratories has Buchholz coordinating the division's overall communications strategy. His primary focus in that role has been to build external corporate awareness of Merck's scientific pipeline and transformation efforts.

Prior to joining Merck, Buchholz was worldwide VP for Ethicon, a subsidiary of J&J, where he was responsible for internal and external communications, including PR, direct-to-consumer advertising, and employee communications.



SHONALI BURKE

*VP of media and communications,
ASPCA, 37*

Since joining the ASPCA in May 2006, initially as a senior director, Shonali Burke has been key in helping to recreate its communications department, building up its media relations and PR function.

At the ASPCA, she has overseen many high-profile communications efforts, including the launch of "ASPCA Mission: Orange," a project to organize "humane communities" around the US; ASPCA's outreach during the recent pet-food recalls; and communications connected with NFL quarterback Michael Vick's arrest and guilty plea for animal cruelty.

Prior to joining the ASPCA, Burke was a senior account supervisor at Ruder Finn, where she led that firm's representation of Jamestown, VA's 400th anniversary.

An active member of the DC PR community, Burke has led IABC/Washington's professional development efforts for three years and is also a member of Washington Women in Public Relations.

SEAN CASSIDY

MD/ president,
Dan Klores Communications, 39

As heir apparent to DKC founder Dan Klores, Sean Cassidy is one of New York's most influential young agency leaders. He has helped raise the firm's revenue by a third, to more than \$20 million, since taking over, moving DKC from a primarily New York-centric agency to one whose accounts are now mostly national.

He is still involved in hands-on account management, and has worked with clients like Rheingold Beer, Song Airlines, and *Us Weekly*, among many others.

Cassidy rose through the ranks of DKC through a combination of smarts and people skills. While Klores himself built a firm that was a powerhouse in entertainment, politics, sports, and all things that constituted New York's power axis, Cassidy has worked to expand its reach considerably.

Today, DKC works the city as well as anyone, while offering the capabilities of any large PR firm.



JEFF CHERTACK

VP, health policy group,
Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, 28

One of the founding members of Ogilvy's health policy group, Chertack has helped shape the focus and direction of the group over the past five years.

While his work with clients has drawn praise, his big-picture thinking eventually resulted in the compilation of a report detailing his group's function within the state of healthcare today in the US.

In addition to his work with clients – from device manufacturers to industry organizations – Chertack has all the while expanded the reach of the group and sought to market it outside of the Ogilvy network in order to attract business opportunities and top talent.

What's more, in the spring of 2007, Chertack used a three-month stint in Ogilvy's Brussels office as a career and business-development opportunity, becoming a core member of the public affairs team there.



ROBERT CHRISTIE

Director of PR,
Dow Jones & Company, 38

Dow Jones has been in the news more than any other media company in the past year. The bulk of that coverage, and the most recent, came from Rupert Murdoch's audacious and ultimately successful bid to buy the company for \$5 billion in an unsolicited offer. Earlier, *The Wall Street Journal* made news in media circles for its radical redesign, meant to be the blueprint for moving the once-stodgy paper into the digital age and beyond.

Active behind the scenes in both of those instances was Robert Christie. As Dow Jones' PR director for the last year and a half, he has been in the thick of the company's issues, counseling senior management, leading the PR effort for the paper's redesign, and constantly working to garner worldwide coverage of the journalism of Dow Jones' brands. Christie also helped develop content-sharing deals with ABC News and *Good Morning America*.



JOHN DOLAK

VP of corporate communications,
Sony Electronics, 38

The past few years haven't been particularly easy for Sony, as the company has faced criticism in the press – whether about layoffs, overpriced video-game consoles, or faulty batteries.

However, in the year that John Dolak has served as VP of corporate communications at Sony Electronics, the group has increased the amount of favorable and/or balanced media coverage reflecting positively on the Sony brand by 40%.

Dolak began his career at Sony in 1999 as a communications specialist. He now oversees a team of 11 people who support a variety of corporate issues, management communications, brand promotion, environmental issues, crisis communications, and major external PR events.

Dolak has also played a key role in helping Sony manage a number of crisis communications efforts, including 2006's lithium-ion battery crisis.

MIKE DOYLE

MD, Emanate, 35

With responsibilities ranging from employee development to new business, Mike Doyle has played a fundamental role in building this Ketchum spin-off into an \$8 million, 30-plus-employee agency since its January 2006 launch.

Doyle – known among colleagues for his consistently sharp counsel and creative solutions to client challenges – has cultivated an agencywide culture focused on providing above-and-beyond service. His professional attitude sets an example for staff and clients alike, and fosters an environment in which everyone feels comfortable contributing. Doyle is also a fervent believer in PR, experiential marketing, and online measurement, and works to ensure that all of Emanate's programming delivers clear ROI.

He originally joined Ketchum in 1995, as part of the firm's DC-based public affairs group. Four years later, he relocated to New York, where he became a key member of the agency's global FedEx team.



NICKI DUGAN

Senior director of corporate comms,
Yahoo, 39

Nicki Dugan knows that even Silicon Valley giants need to be irreverent and clever with their online identity. Dugan put this vision into action when she launched Yahoo's official company blog, *Yodel Anecdotal*, in August 2006. As the blog's editor-in-chief, Dugan kicked off the venture with the self-deprecating post, "Yet Another Self-Serving Corporate Blog!" – solidifying her knack for understanding the unruly world of new media.

Though Dugan admits managing *Yodel Anecdotal* hasn't always been easy, the authenticity she has brought to the effort has made it one of the top 1,000 rated blogs on Technorati. If that isn't enough, with more than seven years' experience with Yahoo, she now leads communications for the company's philanthropic and green arm, Yahoo for Good.

She may be a busy professional, but Dugan's enterprising spirit is a perfect fit for an industry amid a digital revolution.



MICHAEL GALLANT

Senior director of PR,
EMC Corporation, 37

Turning a data-storage company into a household name could be a challenging PR endeavor. Yet EMC's Michael Gallant led the media relations team for one of the most successful and compelling PR campaigns doing just that.

Gallant was one of the driving forces behind the company's initiative that garnered more than 1,400 independent blog posts within a week by highlighting research that illustrated – in easily digestible segments – just how much information the human race generated in 2006.

Not only does Gallant have the creativity to devise popular campaigns, he also knows how to integrate PR efforts in this acquisition-hungry business environment. He led EMC's PR team through 30-plus acquisitions in the past three years, with almost no increase in headcount. With these feats behind him, Gallant may just take b-to-b communications to unprecedented levels of – dare we say – fun.



BARRETT GOLDEN

Partner, Joelle Frank, Wilkinson
Brimmer Katcher, 33

Barrett Golden, a founding member of the Joelle Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher team and among the first group of new equity partners the agency named in 2005, has become a firm leader across a number of disciplines.

Golden has played a key role in deals such as Novartis' acquisition of Chiron and Adidas' acquisition of Reebok. She has been out front in crises like product recalls and earnings surprises, and has helped with high-profile shareholder activism situations such as MedImmune's response to Matrix Asset Advisors and Gateway's response to an investor group led by Firebrand Partners and Harbinger Capital. She has also developed and implemented strategic financial communications for clients like Energy East, St. Jude Medical, and Eastman Chemical.

Golden also takes time out to train junior staffers, extending her value beyond today and into the future of the agency.

JOSH GOTTHEIMER

Worldwide EVP and global chair of corporate and public affairs practices, Burson-Marsteller, 31

In his role at Burson-Marsteller, Josh Gottheimer oversees the global corporate and public affairs practices, runs the firm's issues and crisis practice, and plays a key role in its global strategy.

Experienced in both political and corporate communications, DC-based Gottheimer spent three years as special assistant and speechwriter to President Clinton, for whom he helped draft Op-Eds, articles, and the 1999 and 2000 State of the Union addresses. He also held speechwriting and advisory roles during former Gen. Wesley Clark's presidential campaign and the Kerry-Edwards campaign.

His previous positions include senior advisor to the chairperson of the US Commission on Civil Rights and director of strategic communications for Ford Motor Company. Gottheimer is a founding partner of the Cambridge Writers Group.

**AARON KWITTKEN**

CEO and managing partner, Kwittken & Co., 37

Few PR professionals have achieved Aaron Kwittken's rapid rate of ascension through the agency world ranks.

An SVP at Fleishman-Hillard by 26, he was an EVP at GCI Group and then CEO of Euro RSCG Magnet before branching out on his own two years ago.

His firm, Kwittken and Co., finished its first year with \$2.7 million in revenue, 18 staff members, and clients such as Thomson and Foster's Wine Estates.

This year has already seen a 20% revenue increase to \$3.4 million and the addition of such clients as Thomson Scientific, Hoovers, and *US News & World Report*.

The agency also helped launch the business-class airline Silverjet and provided M&A communications support for the sale of Thomson Learning (now Cengage Learning) to a consortium of private equity firms.

**BRIAN HOYT**

Senior director of PR, Orbitz Worldwide, 32

Since 2005, Brian Hoyt has led PR for Orbitz Worldwide, overseeing a global portfolio that includes Orbitz.com and CheapTickets.com in the US, and ebookers.com in Europe.

A core team member who took the company public in July, Hoyt helped launch OrbitzGames, the OrbitzTLC campaign, and its eco-tourism microsite. In addition, he coordinates C-suite outreach and financial media relations for the entire organization.

Hoyt works to ensure that brand marketing, merchandising, e-marketing, research, and PR work together to drive Orbitz's growth and success.

While Orbitz relies heavily on the Internet, Hoyt recognizes that the travel space is still heavily reliant on traditional media.

Previously, Hoyt was senior manager of communications for AOL Travel and AOL's MapQuest brand.

**ROXANA LISSA**

CEO and founder, RL Public Relations + Marketing, 37

Recognizing the need for more relevant communications to the growing and diverse Hispanic community, Roxana Lissa founded RL Public Relations + Marketing in 1996 when she was just 25.

Even then, the Argentinean native had established herself within the emerging Hispanic communications industry.

She previously worked as an account supervisor at Moya Villanueva, handling events across Latin America for the Pharmacia Corporation, and supervising campaigns for clients including Anheuser-Busch and MoneyGram.

Since its inception, RLPR has grown at an annual rate of about 25%, opened a New York office and forged strategic alliances with agencies in Miami, Dallas, Mexico City, and Buenos Aires. A pioneer in Hispanic PR – and the PR business at large – today Lissa is a mentor to Hispanic PR pros throughout the US.

DAVID LORD

Senior manager of global product group communications, Dell, 36

It's been a landmark year for Dell, as the Austin, TX-based company is restructuring its marketing strategy and stepping up its image.

David Lord, one of the faces behind the company's many PR efforts, has led or participated in hundreds of the firm's product launches.

Lord, Dell's senior manager of communications in its global product group, was recently promoted to lead the company's entire enterprise and business client communications team. This may be a new venture for Lord, but it will likely build on his recent successes surrounding the company's popular Web 2.0 programs – including as a subject matter expert on Dell's corporate blog.

No doubt his digital media savvy will bode well for this PR pro, especially as Dell continues to surprise the marketing community with innovative new steps.

**ROB LORFINK**

Senior partner and CFO, Ketchum, 37

As CFO and a member of Ketchum's executive committee, Rob Lorfink oversees the agency's worldwide finance organization. He has also worked to standardize the metrics and reporting processes within Ketchum to guarantee accuracy in planning and consistency in measuring performance.

However, Lorfink's influence with Ketchum extends far beyond number crunching – he has played key roles in the strategic direction and agency decisions. Along with CEO Ray Kotcher, he helped the agency create two companies: word-of-mouth marketing firm Zocalo and Emanate, a boutique agency that combines PR and emotion-based research methodologies.

He has also played a key role in the launch of such specialties as Ketchum Interactive Communications and Ketchum Influence Relationship Management.

SREEJIT MOHAN

Director of public policy and comms, Bayer Healthcare Pharmaceuticals, Hematology/Cardiology, 30

Promoted to director before the age of 30, and with less than a year of corporate experience under his belt, it's safe to say Sreejit Mohan is one to watch.

Formerly of Fleishman-Hillard, Mohan focused on healthcare and eventually managed three accounts for Bayer before accepting an in-house position with the company.

Recently, Mohan was honored by Bayer with the Premiere Circle award, which recognizes individuals who demonstrate Bayer values and show excellent leadership skills in their day-to-day work.

Currently leading a team of five, Mohan reports directly to the CEO of Hematology/Cardiology and manages a large team of internal stakeholders.

**JOHN PETERSON III**

Director of client services, Capstrat, 38

Leading a team of 35, Peterson oversees Capstrat's various client accounts and mentors company employees.

During his time at Capstrat, Peterson has restructured its client services team and overseen 25% growth.

He also serves as a key member of the agency's management team, where he helps with various quality initiatives and recruitment efforts.

In addition, he is responsible for the company's economic development work, and leads key client engagements such as the North Carolina Economic Developer's Association and Progress Energy.

Peterson previously worked as the director of community affairs for the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, where he created the Chamber Sports Council and helped Raleigh attract its first professional NHL franchise, the Carolina Hurricanes.

JENNIFER PROSEK

Owner/managing partner,
Cubitt Jacobs & Prosek
Communications, 38

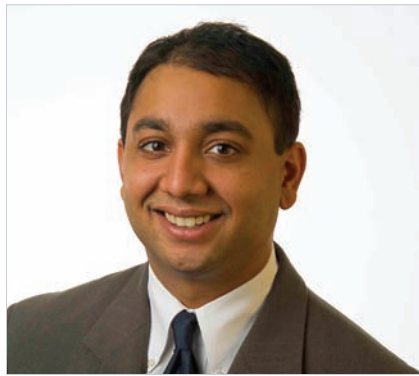
When Jennifer Prosek first joined what is now Cubitt Jacobs & Prosek Communications (CJP) in 1991, it was a Connecticut-based regional agency with a media relations focus.

Shortly thereafter, she moved up to partner, opened a New York office, and brought in national clients.

In 1999, she bought the firm from its founder and eventually partnered with London-based Cubitt Consulting, taking the firm international.

Due to Prosek's efforts, CJP is a full-service agency with clients including GE Commercial Finance, BMW of North America, The Hartford, Edward Jones, and Pitney Bowes.

The agency has a global staff of 67 and, in the eight years that she's led the firm, revenue has grown more than \$5 million to \$7.2 million.

**VIJAY RAGHAVAN**

Senior associate,
Qorvis Communications, 25

As cofounder and CEO of the now-defunct e-commerce company Load N Go Video, Vijay Raghavan gained first-hand knowledge of the contentious issues related to digital technologies.

That company, which provided mobile video services, was forced to shut down following an MPAA lawsuit for violation of a new digital copyright law.

Putting that experience to good use, Raghavan oversaw Qorvis' SaveNetRadio campaign, a four-month project supporting the Internet Radio Equality Act. The campaign generated hundreds of thousands of e-mails to Congress and was profiled in major publications.

He is making Qorvis a leader in new media grassroots campaigning by managing the Consumer Electronics Association's Digital Freedom Campaign, which aims to build a coalition to "protect consumer access to digital technologies."

NICK RAGONE

SVP and director of New York
communications and media strategy group,
Ketchum, 34

In addition to leading 12 members of Ketchum's national media group, Nick Ragone also provides strategic media relations counsel and placement for the agency's corporate clients, including IBM, JP Morgan Chase, FedEx, and Macy's.

He employs a philosophy of collaboration among his team members, brainstorming potential media angles and then designating the most appropriate person to make the story happen.

Ragone has demonstrated flexibility and innovation in his own interaction with the media, keeping more than 300 journalists on instant message so he can assess their needs and match them with clients. His approach helps achieve dozens of prominent broadcast, business broadcast, and print placements for the agency's blue-chip clients each week. Ragone has also written two books on US government.

**AUDREY REED-GRANGER**

Director of PR and marketing,
mass brand portfolio, Whirlpool, 34

When Audrey Reed-Granger joined Whirlpool in 2004, her first task was to reposition the company's approach to PR.

She educated the organization about how PR extends beyond media relations, providing an expanded view including word-of-mouth marketing, brand building, and customer loyalty programs.

She puts this philosophy to work as she oversees the PR and marketing programs for four major brands—Whirlpool, Maytag, Amana, and Gladiator GarageWorks.

One of her first initiatives was the American Family Podcast series, which focuses on family topics relevant to the customer—parenting and careers—not appliances.

To further connect with its main consumer—moms—she created the Whirlpool Mother of Invention program, which awards five moms grant money, appliances, and a trip to Whirlpool headquarters for "business boot camp."

MARIA REPOLE

Director of corporate communications,
Toshiba America Consumer Products, 34

The consumer electronics industry is a constantly evolving one and Maria Repole has been right in the middle of that change.

Repole has been a key player in the rollout of many new products and technologies at Toshiba, including HDTV and HDDVD.

As director of corporate communications at Toshiba America Consumer Products, she supervises advertising, PR, promotions, literature, events, and trade shows, including the mother of all industry events—Consumer Electronics Show.

In addition to managing TACP's communications team, she also interacts with different product groups in the US and Tokyo headquarters. Her involvement in communications in the consumer electronics industry extends beyond Toshiba; she serves as chair on the Consumer Electronics Association's communications committee.

**JULIANNA RICHTER**

EVP and global client relationship
manager, health, Edelman, 38

A 16-year PR veteran, Julianna Richter has spent the last six years at Edelman becoming a defining voice by contributing to intellectual property development and mentoring dozens of PR professionals.

As the global client relationship manager for AstraZeneca, over the past five years she has helped to grow the relationship from a single brand domestic account to an eight-figure global account spanning 26 cities over the world and using a collective team of more than 100 Edelman staff.

Richter also provides senior-level client service and strategic counsel to AstraZeneca executive leadership on three continents. In addition, she developed an issues management and preparedness protocol currently implemented by many clients. Richter also created a best-in-class communications skills training program that Edelman is implementing on behalf of several clients.

ROMINA ROSADO

MD, The NewsMarket, 31

Working with The NewsMarket since its beginnings as a startup in an unforgiving post-9/11 economy, Romina Rosado was heading the client services team within a year of arriving in New York (via London, Washington, and Madrid). With her help, business grew 500% in two years with a retention rate of more than 90%.

By age 29, she was leading a multimillion dollar group; by 30, she was promoted to MD and was responsible for 50% of the company's revenues. Currently, she has input into product development and devising new services.

During her eight years in PR, Rosado has worked all over the world (she speaks four languages and is in the process of learning Arabic and Italian), including CIA Medinet network in Spain, where she provided media planning and international business development services; and at a broadcast consultancy in the UK, Bulletin International, now a part of Ogilvy PR.

**LORI RUSSO**

VP, Stanton Communications, 30

Moving from an entry-level account coordinator in 1999 to a VP managing major national and international clients today, Russo is a "key reason for our success and progress over recent years," according to DC-based Stanton Communications president Peter Stanton.

In the past year alone, Russo helped WL Gore & Associates, the maker of Gore-Tex fabrics, win international coverage for its launch of a mountaintop white-water course—the first in the world.

Russo also oversaw the National Press Club's first-ever combination luncheon and book signing with legendary short-stop Cal Ripken Jr.

Russo is a former assignment editor and sports producer for WMAR-TV in Baltimore and an active member of the National Press Club, where she is on the speakers committee and is leading the planning for the club's 2008 Centennial Celebration.

KASH SHAIKH

External relations manager, North America, Procter & Gamble, 28

Described by a colleague as the “brightest young star within P&G’s external relations (ER) organization,” Kash Shaikh was promoted to manager faster than anyone in the ER group’s history – a feat that required two promotions in four years.

Managing a PR budget of nearly \$10 million, Shaikh has worked on a number of P&G’s biggest brands including Old Spice, Tide, Downy, and Gain. He has lead the development of PR programs for some of P&G’s largest product launches including Ivory Body Wash and Old Spice Red Zone. Shaikh is also the PR lead on the company’s largest initiative of 2007-08 – the consolidation of the entire lineup of liquid laundry detergents.

Shaikh is also directing the development of P&G’s local market broadcast strategies, which includes designing an online system to interact with TV producers around the nation.



MATTHEW SHERMAN

Partner, Joelle Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher, 33

At a time when shareholder activism is of concern to companies across the world, Matthew Sherman’s understanding of the issue is an asset to his firm.

His communications approach combines knowledge of a client’s issues with those of activist investors: what activists want, how they operate, and how companies can meet the challenge they pose.

Among his list of shareholder activist assignments, Sherman has worked with Motorola, Steve Madden, and Openwave Systems. In addition, Sherman implements investor and media relations strategies for unsolicited takeovers, proxy contests, and other special situations.

He has also advised on a number of transactions over the past 12 years, including the Conoco/Phillips Petroleum merger, General Mills’ acquisition of Pillsbury, and Warburg Pincus’ acquisition of Bausch & Lomb.

SARA SINEK

Senior director of corporate communications and media relations, Scholastic, 32

Sara Sinek joined Scholastic in 1999 after starting her career with Dan Klores Communications. After climbing the corporate ladder, she now leads all of Scholastic’s consumer-targeted PR efforts. The most prominent, of course, is the work surrounding Scholastic’s best-known property: a young wizard named Harry Potter.

Sinek has helped promote the franchise since the fifth book, and for the most recent volume, she created a “Knight Bus Tour” that saw a replica of a bus from the book touring America – and drawing fans and media attention all along the way.

Additionally, she created the “Scholastic Summer Reading BUZZ!” program to promote child reading during the summertime, which has become an annual campaign for the company that has garnered significant media attention since its 2005 launch.



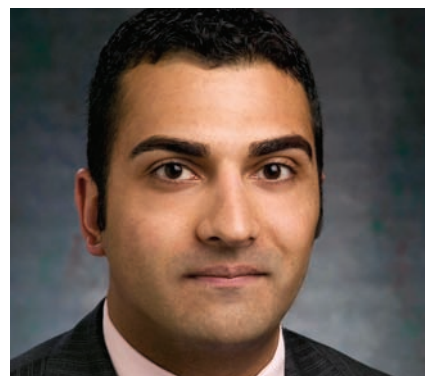
RICHARD STRAUSS

Founder and president, Strauss Radio Strategies, 38

Marking its 11th year in 2007, Richard Strauss’ DC-based firm has become one of the top PR firms focused on radio. Though observers initially scoffed at its radio-only business model, Strauss has maintained its focus and boasts a number of long-term clients such as Nike (nine years) and General Motors (five years).

Strauss began his involvement in political campaigns and radio PR early. While still attending UCLA, he joined Bill Clinton’s presidential campaign, eventually working for the administration as the White House’s first-ever radio director.

Aggressive in seeking out new clients, he holds weekly meetings with his team of 12 where he instructs them to present new-business opportunities based on current events, professional networking, or cold-calling. A specialty of the firm is multicultural outreach, something which is aided by a staff that is one-third bilingual.



RONN TOROSSIAN

Founder/president/CEO, 5WPR, 33

Ronn Torossian was known as a talented media hound in his early jobs at various New York City-area agencies. When he founded 5W in 2003 with one assistant, he put that nose for media to use.

Today, his firm boasts 85 employees and 2006 billings of more than \$9 million. Its client list is often described as “eclectic,” ranging from government groups to corporations to music industry figures.

Torossian’s real notoriety comes from his relentless quest to promote himself and his firm along with his own clients. He makes more media appearances as a “PR expert” – and draws more attention from reporters – than many PR executives twice his age.

That very quality has drawn widespread grumbling within the industry about his tactics, but 5W still appears to be growing. Torossian will undoubtedly be a fixture in the industry for years to come.



JIM TSOKANOS

EVP and MD of Manning Selvage & Lee’s New York office, 38

In 2005, not only was Jim Tsokanos promoted to EVP and MD of Manning Selvage & Lee’s New York office, but he was also named to the agency’s global leadership team. The team, made up of seven senior executives, maps out the strategic direction of the firm.

With Tsokanos at the helm, MS&L’s New York office has added a number of major clients, such as Heineken USA and P&G FemCare. Recently, he has spearheaded the development of some of the agency’s memorable campaigns, including the Charmin restroom in Times Square and Heineken Premium Light’s launch.

Tsokanos, who currently works with clients including Procter & Gamble, GM, and Pfizer, started his career at Cohn & Wolfe, where he worked on another memorable launch – the debut of the BMW Z3 Roadster in Central Park in conjunction with the release of *GoldenEye*, a film in the James Bond series.

DAVID WARSCHAWSKI

Founder and CEO, Warschawski, 36

Warschawski founded his Baltimore-based firm in 1996 after beginning his career in New York at the Dilenschneider Group and then Edelman.

Today, he and his 17-person staff work with a variety of significant clients, which over the years have included Black & Decker, Ripken Baseball, Sylvan Learning, SunTrust, and Credit Suisse.

Mentoring at his firm includes weekly team meetings where current events relevant to the PR profession are discussed, plus quarterly “Warschawski University” meetings where staffers discuss priorities for their own professional development.

To build good fellowship outside the office, he also sponsors half-day outings once a month for employees.

Warschawski also supports a number of causes, including serving on AIPAC’s leadership council, President Bush’s Presidential Business Commission, and the Baltimore Collegetown Network’s leadership advisory council.



SARA WHITMAN

Director, Peppercom Strategic Communications, 30

Sara Whitman was promoted to Peppercom’s senior management team last year, and has since played a significant role in attracting large clients, handling client work, and helping to motivate employees.

She helped the agency land Valspar, one of its ten biggest clients last year, and herself oversees more than \$1.5 million in billings. She also leads staffing efforts in the New York office, has created a new internal reporting structure, and helped to come up with a set of criteria for evaluating business leads.

On the motivational front, Whitman helped to launch Peppercom’s “Dream Day” event, which allows employees to “explore future possibilities and growth strategies for the agency.”

Additionally, she leads the agency’s “Peppercom State University” program, which trains employees on how to be effective PR pros. ■

