PR WEEK

May 2016

GLOBAL AGENCY BUSINESS REPORT 2016

ASIA EDITION

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Editor's letter

2015 was a year of steady, solid but not spectacular growth for most agencies in Asia, with most scraping double-digit growth figures.

Many pointed to the far east and far west of the region – India and China – as providing the best numbers, with a mixed bag in between.

Singapore and Hong Kong appeared sluggish for many agencies, while Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam remained buoyant.

But just like 2014, and frankly every year before that, the three issues keeping most agency heads awake at night remain skills, talent and staff retention.

It's a story we journalists are tiring of hearing.

Yes, we know, millennials are notoriously hard to please - they jump ship for a few extra dollars or a jazzy new title on their business card. It's also not a problem that is unique to PR, although the industry does seem to be at the extreme end of the scale, especially around retention.

There are many impressive agency bosses in the region and they are all trying to devise innovative ways to attract and retain the best staff.

There is a lot of talk around career planning, training, secondments, incentives and benefits such as free meals, travel cards and remote working.

But is it really working? At this precise moment in time, it doesn't appear to be.

Some agencies in China have turnover figures of 60-70 per cent. In the wider region many agencies would be delighted with 20-30 per cent.

But there has to be something fundamentally wrong when one in three employees wants to leave each year.

When we speak to account executives or managers, we hear the same gripes; the hours are too long, they believe no-one cares about their career development and they think their role is boring.

Yes, boring. For all the talk – much of it valid – about Asia's PR agencies being at the forefront of the digital revolution and expanding into a wide range of marketing services, many junior employees I speak to bemoan the lack of variation in their work.

They want to be a part of this bright future they keep hearing about, but they experience a huge disconnect. They are told about the great opportunities afforded by social media, video and story-telling, but too many tell us that traditional media relations takes up 90 per cent of their time.

Everyone knows how hard it is to recruit good people in many Asia markets. Let's be blunt, PR is not at the top of many ambitious parents' lists. This means that once they are through the door, the industry has to do more to keep hold of them.

Some firms, and more often than not they are smaller offices, network agencies or otherwise, do have an impressive track record in this respect. It is no coincidence that these are the environments in which, due to small teams, the workload is more varied and the atmosphere more collaborative.

I've spent the last year visiting many agencies and it is immediately apparent which are the ones where people would like to work.

If Asia's PR firms are really serious about dominating the region's marketing and communications battleground, these need to be the norm, not the exception.

Running the gamut in Asia

Expanding from traditional media relations to encompass integrated PR services will continue, but questions about hiring and retaining talent persist. **Gary Scattergood reports**

Was 2015 the year clients finally began to cotton on to the full range of integrated communications services that Asia's PR agencies can provide?

Jonathan Hughes, Golin's president, international, certainly thinks so.

As has been the case globally, the industry in the region has been debating for the past few years how it needs to expand from traditional media relations to a full gamut of marketing communications services.

And Hughes believes 2015 may have been the watershed year that it really started to become apparent for brands.

"More often than not, clients are now looking for a channel- agnostic approach," he says. "Therefore they are willing to look at fresh ideas from a range of firms, and this translates into a trend around the new competitive set. Now it's anyone's guess who your likely competitors are and it's changing all the time."

This view echoes across Asia. Text100 points out that in 2015, 50% of its revenue came from non–media relations work, while market leader BlueFocus' PR arm, BlueDigital, saw digital offerings account for 80% of revenue.

Edelman, MSLGroup, and Ogilvy tell similar success stories, a point reinforced by Ogilvy's Asia CEO, Scott Kronick, who states that employees with a PR background were increasingly taking senior roles across the wider network.

There is no doubt that the move toward more integrated services will continue at pace, especially around digital and creative, but one interesting conclusion from this year's report is that there appears to be little consensus on the best way to do so.

Means of adaptation

Some agencies chose to rebrand — Lewis dropped "PR" from its title — while others acquired businesses or formed joint ventures just as some focused on hiring non-traditional PR talent.

Edelman's APACMEA CEO David Brain says the firm had invested heavily in hiring creative directors, planners, and researchers. The next stage of the plan, he adds, would be to focus on paid media, especially in the social sphere.

"To get to a brand's audience, you now have to pay for that. If you are a PR company that produces great content, but you can't buy behind that, you will be disintermediated and it will go to media companies or people who can," he explains.

As such, Brain is looking to hire a head of paid media in APAC, as well as a team of four or so within the next six months. He believes this will add a significant string to Edelman's bow.

"We've gone from producing content for social and optimizing it to promoting it and the scale at which that's happening means you've got to have people who can plan and buy on all of the key social platforms in the region — at scale," he says.

Even more traditional agencies have gotten in on the act, such as Burson-Marsteller hiring ex-McCann and Saatchi & Saatchi creative leader Barry Wong in Hong Kong as its regional executive creative director.

As Burson's APAC CEO Margaret Key states: "This is a new and quite aggressive move for us. We will be looking to appoint a creative head for other offices in the region."

Others have firmly taken the decision that acquisition provides the best opportunity to get the skills they most need. Case in point: Golin's recent purchase of creative agency The Brooklyn Brothers.

Hughes says plans are in place for the new firm's staff to be on the ground in Asia within 12 months, based initially at Golin in China.

"World-class branded content generation is going to be in demand," he explains. "It gives a good indication of our travel direction. We're determined to be at the forefront of social and digital content and at the apex of paid and earned media."

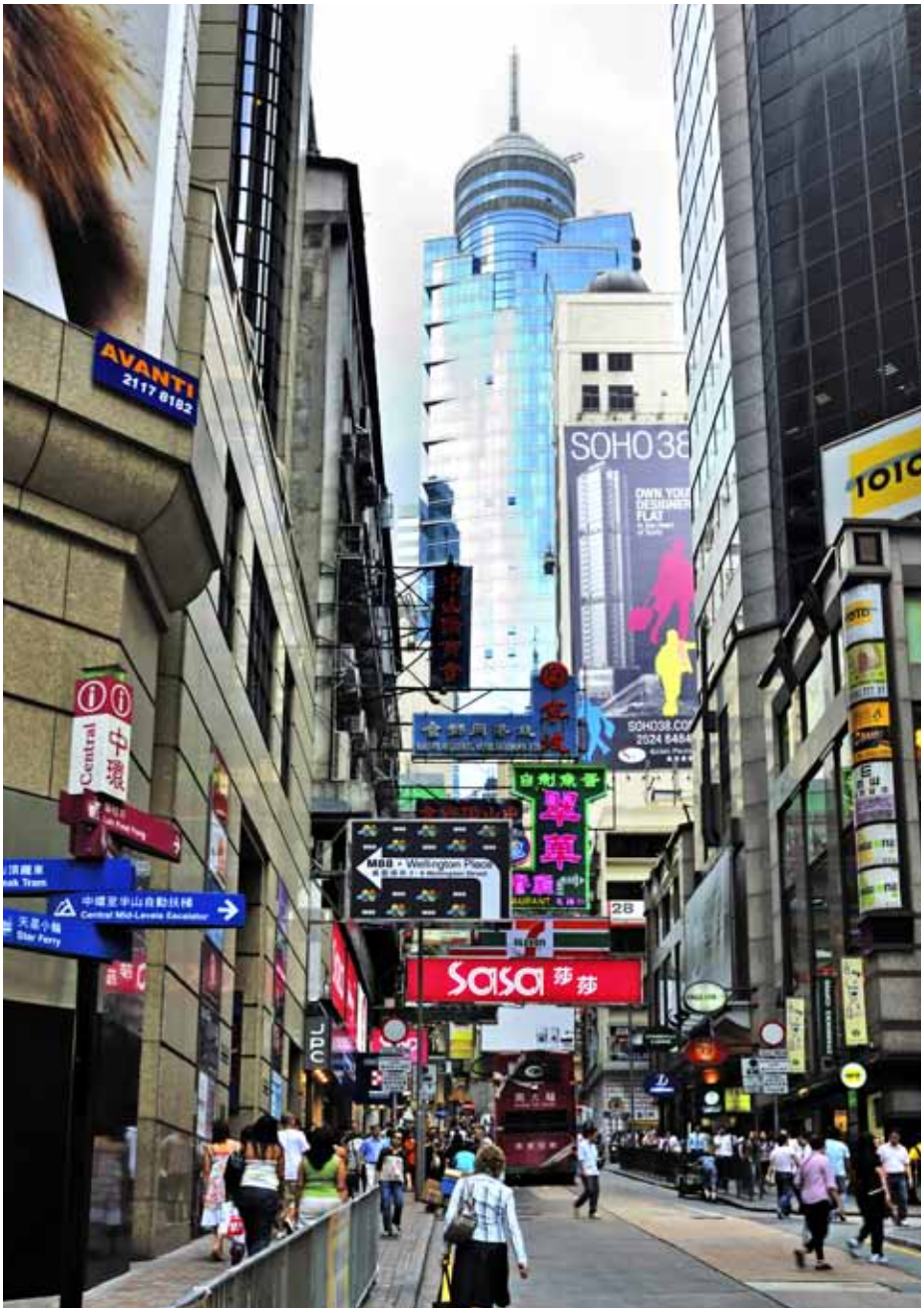
Greater collaboration with stablemates

Meanwhile, WPP and Publicis outfits are increasingly working more closely with their stablemates on joint offerings, be they formal ventures such as Hill+Knowlton and JWT's Colloquial content marketing arm, which launched in Australia, or informal tie-ups such as those between MSLGroup and its counterparts.



Glenn Osaki
MSLGroup's APAC President

With the restructuring of Publicis, we're working more closely with our sister agencies



As MSL's APAC president Glenn Osaki points out, these relationships had a significant bearing on the bottom line last year.

"With the restructuring [of Publicis], we're working more closely with our sister agencies. For example, for Axa, Nestlé, and Airbus we've taken on a significant amount of business across the region. These are Publicis clients, and we're doing more with them as part of our wider integration strategy."

The consensus is that once-traditional PR agencies are better equipped with the skills to meet current and future consumer demands than their advertising counterparts — especially in Asia, amid rapid digital growth that has jumped straight to mobile platforms.

Also, in emerging markets traditional ways of working do not always exist, especially as many local brands look to expand regionally and globally.

This gives PR agencies the chance to get a foot in the door from the outset, a factor highlighted by several agency bosses.

FleishmanHillard's Asia president Lynne Anne Davis adds that demand for cross-border transactions by Asian companies continue to prove lucrative for the agency, a trend it has long been mapping.

"It is no longer about business and revenue diversification," she explains. "It's about bringing Western business concepts, models, and franchises to growing domestic consumption needs of home markets."

It may be that working with local brands to expand their regional or global presence takes on even greater priority in 2016's uncertain economic climate.

In Southeast Asia, many economies risk flat-lining or posting only modest growth figures. A number of agency heads point to a stagnant market in Singapore, while Thailand is expected to grow at little more than 2%. The saving graces are likely to be Malaysia — predicted to grow by 4% — and Indonesia — at over 5%.

The ruling party in China has not posted a concrete growth figure, instead forecasting a "growth range" of 6.5% to 7%.

According to officials, in 2015 the world's second-largest economy grew by 6.9%, although most seasoned observers believe it was far lower than that in reality.

Martin Sorrell told PRWeek Asia late last year that he believed the figure to be more like 4.5%, and he's a self-confessed "bull" when it comes to the Chinese economy.

How this affects PR agencies in 2016 remains to be seen, but there are clearly jitters. A cautionary look at BlueFocus' figures for 2015 should set off alarms. The holding company's PR revenue increased by 37%, but total operating profit tumbled by more than 50% due to market conditions, higher interest rates, and extensive investment.

At the positive end of the spectrum, some say even if China's growth is only 4%, it's still greater than anything on offer in the West. But others are more cautious, noting that agencies whose regional growth has been driven largely by China may find the days of double-digit advances ending. But the fact remains, there are currently too many unknowns.

The talent dilemma

One certainty, however, is that a dark cloud on the horizon when it comes to PR in Asia is talent and recruitment. Many can hire, but few can retain. It's not uncommon to hear of turnover to be in the 60% to 70% bracket in China, while rates across the region as a whole can vary from 20% to 50%.

Innovative agencies are trying to devise credible and cost- effective ways to tackle this through training, incentives, and career plans, but in many cases they are not yet reaping rewards.

One thing is certain: If the industry is serious in its ambitions to not only expand but also to excel across a full range of marketing communications services, it needs to hire and retain the best people. If PR is going to be the main communications voice at the top table, clients will accept nothing less. □

Reading between the lines

Global revenue across the sector may be up, but PR failed to reach the heights it aspired to in 2015. To combat this, integration and convergence are now key battlegrounds for client work as firms look to forge ahead in the next 12 months. **By Steve Barrett**

Listen to the rhetoric that comes out of PR firms and you would be forgiven for thinking this is a golden age and the industry is breaking through to become the dominant force in communications.

And it's true that, in a world increasingly defined by PESO communications, that rhetoric should be reflected in reality. Agencies ended 2014 claiming to have fundamentally retooled for an integrated future and set fair for a big year of growth and progression.

Dig into the figures and big developments in 2015, however, and the picture becomes murkier.

Total global PR revenue reported for this year's PRWeek Agency Business Report showed growth of 5%; lower than the 12 months prior. Growth in the top 50 global firms — which are a good bellwether as they account for 80% of total PR revenue — was cut in half in 2015 compared to the previous year, from 8% to 4%. Growth in the U.S. was a little better, remaining steady at 7% compared to 2014 — but it is hardly earth-shattering or proof that PR has crossed the Rubicon into a glorious integrated future — especially when compared with growth posted by the advertising sector in the same period.

Some big firms did deliver on 2014's promise — Weber Shandwick, Edelman, Golin, and Cohn & Wolfe — albeit typically to a lesser extent than the previous 12 months. Others are navigating senior leadership transition or still talking of stabilizing, pivoting, and transforming: MSLGroup, Ketchum, Fleishman-Hillard, Ogilvy PR, Burson-Marsteller, and Hill+Knowlton Strategies.

The leader of the world's largest PR agency, Richard Edelman, believes we have reached a "pause moment."

"Six of the top 10 firms are in zero growth or negative," he notes. "That's a bad sign. We're missing the opportunity. We have to take more chances and persuade CEOs having PR working with CMOs is good for companies."

He sees the intersection of corporate reputation with brands as the sweet spot for the industry, and social media, community building, and social listening as inherent to PR's skillset. "We can't let this data play get away from PR," he explains. "We have to aspire to customized content based on data, and micro-targeting based on paid amplification."

It's clear that integration and convergence are key battlegrounds. Amid the talk of transition, integrated working, and the dovetailing of communications with marketing, holding companies are encouraging their constituent agencies to work more closely together. And agencies across all disciplines, especially PR, are discovering distinct advantages in terms of engaging clients by cracking interagency working and making it a win-win-win for all parties.

The rise of 'horizontality'

WPP CEO Martin Sorrell has long been a proponent of "horizontality" to describe this process, and the holding company's success with 45 cross-agency client teams such as Team Ford, Team Dell, and Team Bank of America illustrate the theory in practice.

Cohn & Wolfe got a special mention from Sorrell in WPP's full-year financial statement for 2015, and CEO Donna Imperato explains her vision five years ago of "a future made up of agencies integrating communications across disciplines."

"Most of our growth is coming from the integrated marketing arsenal of digital and social, but also mobile and content," she says. "I see vast opportunities that are going to become more important for our business. The only difficulty is growing too fast and finding the right talent to service that kind of work."

Following its aborted "merger of equals" with Omnicom, which collapsed two years ago, Publicis Groupe CEO Maurice Lévy restructured his organization into four solutions hubs at the start of this year to foster integration, with PR sitting within a Publicis Communications hub alongside the French holding company's advertising firms.

Ron Guirguis, newly appointed U.S. CEO, notes his new employer MSLGroup is the only PR agency within Publicis, which in turn is the only holding company with just one PR firm.

"Publicis Communications, the alignment of the [other three] solutions hubs, and the



Karen van Bergen
Omnicom PR Group

Omnicom PR Group was established to address client needs and access a broader pool of talent

creative agencies [Publicis Worldwide, Leo Burnett, BBH, and Saatchi & Saatchi], enables us to partner seamlessly in a transversal way," says Guirguis.

John Wren, president and CEO of Omnicom Group, will point to the Nissan United cross-discipline model and Philips OneVoice across its comms functions as examples of integration in action at his network.

In February, the holding company promoted Porter Novelli global CEO Karen van Bergen to CEO of the newly formed Omnicom Public Relations Group to address "growing demand for seamlessly integrated teams" across the group's PR portfolio and beyond.

"It was established to address client needs for more integration with other Omnicom agencies and access to a broader pool of PR talent," explains van Bergen, who cut her teeth on the client side at McDonald's and running OneVoice at FleishmanHillard. "I get four for one with Philips, building customized teams with the best talent in every market and expertise they need."

Other Omnicom cross-agency accounts include Procter & Gamble, through the MMK+ structure (Marina Maher Communications, Ketchum, Fleishman, and Porter), and Pfizer Accelerator across all disciplines. "It's especially relevant for big global clients," says van Bergen.

So it seems most firms at least have their eyes on the integrated prize and know their desired destination — even if they are at different stages on the journey.

An independent stance

For Edelman, there is continued appeal in being the independent and neutral "Switzerland" of PR, not tied to any holding company and in theory able to work with all of them.

"Despite horizontality, a lot of companies choose not to use it," says the agency's iconic president and CEO. "If you're really good at what you do, I'm not concerned. This has been around for five years when Sorrell started the move toward horizontality and we [Edelman] got aced out of Pfizer."

But he noted his agency still does a lot of business with, for example, HP, even though the tech giant consolidated with Omnicom firms in 2014. "Our HP work tends to be more digital than PR," he notes. "We work for HP's marketing organization."

Edelman says it is sometimes a cost and price decision, such as another tech company, SAP, which also went to Omnicom in 2014. "They bundle it to make it efficient overall," adds Edelman. "The big negotiation and spend is the advertising — the PR gets thrown in."

He says he was more concerned five years ago than he is today and notes a counter-trend evidenced by Edelman's recent inroads into Omnicom's Nissan account in France and around driverless cars in the U.S., "where we do really good work and we get the client."

"We redefined the business so we're not just a PR firm," he explains. "We're digital, experiential, communications marketing. If you want it in one place, you can get it with us."

Mutual benefits

Fleishman's new CEO, John Saunders, notes a similar trend at the third-largest firm in the market and looks forward to teaming up with longtime colleague van Bergen to supercharge the offer across Omnicom to their mutual benefit.

"I envisage lots of scenarios where Karen will be with the CMO and CEO somewhere in the world and point them to the right assets throughout the group, using the most appropriate resource," he says. "It's in our interest to be in the conversation with Omnicom — continuing to work those relationships will be a drumbeat for how we behave."

He echoes Edelman's point that PR firms secure work from more than one master.

"The integration of communications and marketing depends on the category. We help [CCO] Kelly McGinnis on a few projects at Levi's, but most of our work is funded by brand marketing."

Fred Cook, CEO of Interpublic's Golin, also sees new tranches of client work opening up within brands and organizations due to the convergence of marketing and communications. He wants the agency's acquisition of U.K. creative hot-shop The Brooklyn Brothers to fast forward the process.

"We're dealing more with CMOs and Brooklyn Brothers will be a giant step in that direction," he says. "The walls are breaking down more and more."

It's not just client walls breaking down that is stimulating growth and helping PR firms realize their potential — it is also opening eyes within holding companies. On paper, Ogilvy should be the perfect location for truly integrated marketing services, with its unique heritage and all disciplines operating under the same umbrella.

Stuart Smith, 18 months into his tenure as the firm's global CEO, says: "It's about being well-connected in the [Ogilvy and client] buildings. It's about speaking the language our marketing colleagues speak, and talking about the role of earned media in activating a campaign platform, which is more their language than 'we know how to do some good PR for you.'"

He explains this is because Ogilvy PR can play both sides of the equation, on the one hand being a good agency in its own right that integrates with its Ogilvy & Mather colleagues, on the other bringing in marketing groups of its own through the PR door and creating value across the group through "earned influence that takes us out of the earned media box."

"Ogilvy can do integration by borrowing from the rest of the organization and, by being more porous, we should be able to



The Brooklyn Brothers was acquired by Golin in February 2016

move more quickly in that direction than other PR agencies," notes Smith. "I can walk down the corridor and borrow two creatives for a pitch. We've done that several times recently."

Exploiting one's 'unique positioning'

MSLGroup's Guirguis is also lookin to exploit the unique positioning of his firm within its holding company Publicis to grow business.

"Publicis is a 3,000-person enterprise in the U.S.," he says. "Conversations with ad agencies aren't just show-and-tell presentations — they're preset deep-dive account conversations about where we can help, add value, and extend campaigns."

Guirguis says another element unique to MSL and Publicis Groupe is its single P&L across the agencies and the U.S., which deals with any lack of incentive to collaborate.

"Everybody says they'll collaborate, of course," he explains. "Then you get busy, you don't have extra staff, you don't have time, 'our budgets are nowhere near their budgets.' I know that's the way it's been in other holding companies."

His objective is to create collaborative structures at scale, and not just for key accounts, because "when you start doing that across 100 clients, it's an entirely different proposition."

Guirguis says it's sufficiently exciting that his ad partners' eyes light up and they promise to pull MSL into every conversation with this offer.

"The group is fully committed to influence as part of the integrated communications mix, and MSL is the tip of the spear."

The most successful agency in the past two years in delivering growth numbers and embedding integrated attitudes and services within its organization is IPG's Weber Shandwick.

CEO Andy Polansky describes the firm's special sauce as follows: "We created a powerful global net-work, which we continue to enhance and add depth to. We then added specialist expertise in our practice areas. Then we focused more on client-centricity and created a career path for those passionate about client work versus running an office and a practice."

The agency integrated another layer to the matrix, which Polansky dubs "the engagement discipline:"

"We've added hundreds of people globally with different skill-sets: strategists, creatives, data scientists, journalists, and so on."



We created a powerful global network, which we continue toenhance and add depth to — Andy Polansky, Weber Shandwick

One thing's for sure: PR won't reach its true potential until it shakes off the lack of self-esteem that characterized its legacy and stops behaving as though it is still confined to the little kids' table.

"I'm not in love with our inferiority complex and proclaiming the demise of the 30-second spot and the 'advertising dinosaurs,'" says MSL's Guirguis. "[Advertising is] not going anywhere and they're really good. Let's not pretend we can do this better than they can. Let's pause and look at it from the client's perspective: 'We've got business challenges or opportunities and we're looking for the best integrated communications solution.'" □

— Additional reporting by Diana Bradley

CEOs and client work

The nature of leadership dictates that many agency leaders spend less time doing what they really love — client work — the higher up the organization they climb, but the CEOs of major PR firms increasingly insist their senior staff have regular interface with clients, and they're leading from the front. Weber Shandwick's CEO Andy Polansky says "all our senior people spend a substantive amount of time on client work," adding "it's part of our model and part of what makes us successful."

Percentage of CEO time spent on client work	
Andy Polansky, Weber Shandwick	**30%**
Richard Edelman, Edelman	**35%**
Don Baer, Burson-Marsteller	**50%**



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Momentum to drive PR forward

The CEOs of the world's largest holding companies credit integration for 2015's success stories. **By Steve Barrett**



Michael Roth
Chairman and CEO
Interpublic Group

How did PR perform for IPG in 2015? What secret sauce behind firms such as Weber Shandwick and Golin helps them outperform the market?
Our PR agencies grew in excess of IPG's overall organic growth rate of 6.1%. Weber Shandwick and Golin drove this market-leading performance.

Weber and Golin continue to be leaders in PR and the broader marketing services environment. But all of our PR agencies — including Current, DeVries Global, PMK-BNC, and Spong — have developed strength in digital, social, and content marketing. Their heritage in expert storytelling and engagement gives them a performance edge across platforms in a fragmented world.

How are content production and cross-discipline work altering IPG's PR and agency operations?
An open architecture model is a hallmark at IPG — collaborating solves a client's needs, which is a key factor in delivering an integrated marketing solution that works across all channels. IPG's ability to deliver a high level of collaboration has been a central driver of growth.

Because of PR's leading role in the digital, social, and content environments, we're taking on more integrated assignments across paid, owned, earned, and shared. This is important since clients increasingly look for integration in their communications strategies; in some instances PR is taking more of a leadership role.

Our PR firms have been named social, digital, and advertising AOR for a number of clients. Through their content offerings, our PR units continue to go broader in advising companies how to place the right idea across any of these channels. Because of this, they're a key partner on many of our open architecture solutions.

What are your PR prospects for 2016? How do you replicate two successive years of significant growth in your main agencies and how do you bring your other firms up to the same level?
I'm bullish on 2016 as another strong year. PR is increasingly in a position to advise clients how to grow and protect their reputation in a world in which all these forces play a major role. It's never been a better time for PR.



John Wren
President and CEO
Omnicom Group

How did PR perform for Omnicom in 2015? To what do you attribute the wide discrepancy between revenue growth posted by firms in the DAS unit compared to Omnicom's ad agencies?
In terms of financial performance, PR was down slightly compared to 2014 — by 1.4%. Q4 performance contributed to this result, plus we faced a difficult comparative to last year's Q4 organic growth in excess of 8%.

We saw an outstanding performance in 2015 as our agencies won a number of Cannes Lions and PRWeek Awards.

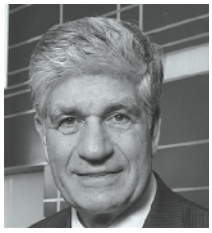
What are the aspirations for the newly formed Omnicom PR Group and how big a factor is the drive to improve margins within its PR businesses?
The strength of individual brands — ranging from global agencies like FleishmanHillard and Ketchum to specialty brands such as Cone Communications and Mercury Public Affairs — sets us apart in the marketplace.

Omnicom PR Group preserves those individual brands while addressing changing client needs and providing support through a focus on Omnicom's core strategies for growth — talent, collaboration, client service, innovation, and technology. Profitable growth is certainly one of our business goals, but the creation of Omnicom PR Group is a much larger strategic move. This will be a differentiator for us.

What are the prospects for PR in 2016? Are events such as the Rio Olympics, European Football Championships, and U.S. presidential election as important as they used to be?
The importance of authentic engagement with customers and stakeholders will continue to grow in 2016. Companies have come to recognize just how valuable — and vulnerable — brand reputation and the importance of having a proactive strategy in place to manage it can be.

PR plays an instrumental role in this. Integration will drive the conversation. At Omnicom, we do integration better and have been doing it longer than anyone else. We'll continue to build on our strength there.

The impact of events such as the Olympics and election always needs to be considered within the framework of the current environment. We certainly embrace the opportunity they create, but our business is significantly more diversified in terms of geography, clients, and services such that these events impact our business to a lesser degree than in times past.



Maurice Lévy
CEO Publicis Groupe

How did PR perform for Publicis in 2015? Where does its performance stand in relation to other disciplines within the group?
Our PR business showed a return to growth with single-digit organic growth of between 4% and 6% in 2015. It was a year of two halves with strong improvement and momentum for the PR business in the second half of the year. This strong momentum has carried over into 2016.

MSLGroup has had a turbulent few years in terms of senior leadership changes, especially in the U.S. How will the integration of MSL within Publicis Communications improve matters?
We have high expectations for the opportunities created through the integration of MSLGroup within Publicis Communications. We aim to deliver new value to clients thanks to a more complete, holistic, and integrated service offering. This is what clients across our network have told us they want and expect from us.

The integration of MSLGroup into Publicis Communications will not only help elevate our PR business, but also make PR services and thinking more accessible to clients throughout the group and generate more stability for MSLGroup locally and globally.

What are 2016's prospects for PR? How important is it to retain MSLGroup as a stand-alone brand rather than merging it under the Publicis banner?
The prospects for PR growth in 2016 are very positive. In several cases, PR now leads the charge when it comes to integrated communications with campaigns being developed on platforms that are PR platforms at heart.

Our new business model was developed to support our brands, not to dilute their value. MSLGroup remains the only global PR network in the Publicis Groupe and one of the strongest and largest networks of its kind in the world. We continue to invest in the MSLGroup brand globally: We have expanded it to Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Nigeria since the start of this year. And we have continued to attract new world-class talent.

I join MSLGroup's global CEO Guillaume Herbette in his optimism about the future. Our recent reorganization has been great for our PR business and I am looking forward to seeing MSLGroup have a very strong 2016.



Martin Sorrell
Founder and CEO
WPP

How did PR and public affairs perform for WPP in 2015? What do Burson-Marsteller and Hill+Knowlton need to do to reach the levels achieved by Ogilvy PR and Cohn & Wolfe?
Our PR and public affairs business delivered another good performance in 2015. Growth accelerated in H2 and Q4 was particularly strong, with constant currency revenue up 8.2%. All regions did well, especially the U.K., Latin America, and the Middle East and Africa.

Ogilvy PR, Cohn & Wolfe, and the specialist businesses in the U.S., U.K., and Germany had a very good year, and although Burson and H+K were less buoyant, their performance was solid. It's also worth noting that they operate largely in a different sector of the business.

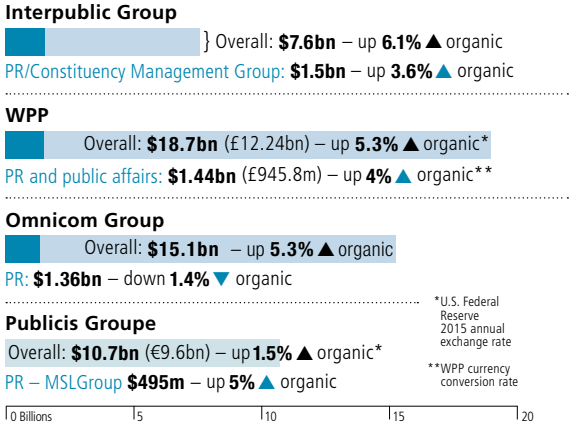
How is WPP evolving to encourage cross-discipline agency cooperation? Any examples of horizontality in action where PR played a key part?
Cross-group collaboration has long been a hallmark of WPP's approach to client service. We now have 45 cross-group account teams for clients ranging from Ford, Unilever, and IBM to Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble, and GlaxoSmithKline. More than 38,000 of our people work on these accounts, which represent more than a third of our total revenue. We take it as a compliment that others are now trying to copy what we've done.

There are countless cases of PR and public affairs businesses playing key roles. The latest winner of our annual Partnership Program competition is one such example. The team of WPP firms responsible for Johnson & Johnson's pharmaceutical business at Janssen was rated 10 out of 10 by the client for the hepatitis-C drug Simeprevir. GCI Health, Consitor, and Burson-Marsteller each played an important part in this success.

More broadly, our PR and public affairs businesses have benefited significantly from integration with our social and data capabilities.

What are WPP's prospects for PR in 2016?
The prospects are good but, in line with broader trends in the industry and beyond, unspectacular. We live in a slow-growth world and clients continue to be averse to risk and focused on costs. So the pattern for 2016 looks very similar to 2015's, but with the bonus of the maxi-quadrennial events of the visually stunning Rio Olympics, the UEFA European Football Championships, and, of course, the U.S. presidential election to boost the rate of growth by 100 basis points above GDP growth.

By the numbers (in PR revenue order)



BlueFocus

Agency Name
BlueFocus
Regional Principal in Asia
Oscar Zhao, Chairman and CEO
Ownership
Independent
Asia Offices
13
Asia Revenues
US$220,663,831. (Change: 37%) - PR REVENUES ONLY
Asia Headcount
5,448

If ever there was a year when BlueFocus was a victim of circumstance, it was 2015. For all the work being done at the firm in terms of investing heavily in digital and impressive international expansion, the China-headquartered company was left at the mercy of the highly volatile Chinese markets last year.

As a result, some of the numbers don't make for pretty reading. But Oscar Zhao, BlueFocus' chairman and CEO, is not too worried; the firm itself is firmly on the right track and had a "remarkable year" overall. The factors under his control are all in order, and the markets will do what they will.

"Although the macro economy is facing challenges, we still managed to achieve pretty impressive top-line growth," he says.

In Asia, we still see huge potential, as there is a tonne of unmet needs out there, so I am expecting further growth in this region



Oscar Zhao
Chairman and CEO

From that perspective, BlueFocus certainly had a strong year. It saw revenues of 8.6 billion yuan (US$1.32 billion) in 2015, which is a significant 44 percent leap on 2014's efforts.

Zhao is optimistic that things could get even better. "In Asia, we still see huge potential, as there is a tonne of unmet needs out there, so I am expecting further growth in this region."

This headline revenue figure accounts for the holding company BlueFocus as a whole. What's more exciting, according to Zhao, is that the company's flagship PR unit BlueDigital, saw big returns in 2015, particularly from its digital work, something BlueFocus is hugely invested in.

"In our PR business, the digital-related revenue of BlueDigital accounted for 80 percent of its total income," he said. "We are excited to see this tremendous transformation from our traditional PR work."

But, then come the bad numbers. BlueFocus' total operating profit was 51.7 percent lower than in 2014, excluding asset depreciation and impairment of goodwill. Add that, and losses plunge to -447 million yuan (-US$68.6 million) 149 percent lower than the previous year.

The company attributes this to huge increases in financial expenses because of high interest payments on bank loans and bond issues, which in China's economic meltdown led to massive impact on profit.

In addition, BlueFocus saw long-term asset depreciation because of "market change and business adjustment", which particularly affected three units including We Are Social.

Zhao admits that one of his biggest challenges is "how to further propel the overall profitability of the company," but not because of the market fluctuations. In fact, he explains that "regardless of the turbulence of the Chinese stock market", the company raised capital by successfully issuing 1.4 billion yuan worth of bonds, illustrating the confidence investors have in BlueFocus.

Rather, the company has made significant recent investments, home and abroad, in its digital businesses and other areas, that have yet to bear fruit but are projected to do so eventually.

One such area is mobile, and in 2015 BlueFocus acquired two of China's top mobile ad platforms, Domob and Madhouse. The company then set up BlueFocus Mobile Internet to expand its services in the mobile space, because as Zhao puts it: "mobile is such an important vehicle that we have to win". The company also opened We Are Social's Shanghai office in early 2015, which Zhao says has been a rapid success, turning a profit since September.

Moreover, the company's expansion plans are progressing well. BlueFocus International, the holding company's global arm, hits its target of accounting for 20 percent of revenue in 2015. As the only China-led comms group breaking out internationally, Zhao is particularly pleased about this.

"We firmly believe this figure will be refreshed with a higher figure soon enough," he states.

The group's digital investments have seen it maintain an impressive stable of clients across many sectors, such as Tencent, Baidu, Canon, Toyota, Mead Johnson and P&G. Zhao said the firm also welcomed Audi to its portfolio in 2015, among several others.

The focus is very much on digital shaping the company's offerings, including PR. Zhao says the firm has built up its big data and analytics capabilities because it is set on integrating PR with other comms functions such as marketing, and with technology.

"We see technology and data playing a much more crucial role in marketing and communications, so it is imperative for PR companies to grow these capabilities to win over competition," he explains.

The key, Zhao says, is providing an end-to-end service for clients that tackles all aspects of a comms strategy, including creative, digital, social media and monitoring.

"By doing so, we can create more tailored and quality social/digital programmes that address the real issues our brand clients are facing," he says.

With the investments made and global growth looking upwards, Zhao is very positive about what 2016 holds for BlueFocus. It's the company's 20-year anniversary, and he is determined to perform even better in this auspicious year. □

Burson-Marsteller

Asia Head
Margaret Key, Asia-Pacific CEO
Ownership
WPP
Asia Offices
18 wholly owned; Partner: 10
Asia Revenue
US$55 million Change: -7%
Asia Headcount
600+

A lot can change in a year and that's certainly true of the PR industry. In January 2015, Burson-Marsteller named Terri-Helen Gaynor as Asia-Pacific CEO, following a lengthy search to fill a position that had remained vacant for two years. Less than six months into the role, Gaynor resigned, leading to Margaret Key's promotion to Asia-Pacific CEO. At the same time, Prema Sagar, principal and founder of Genesis Burson-Marsteller (GBM), took on the additional role of regional vice chair.

Key, who was previously COO for Asia-Pacific at the agency, has had a busy nine months. "Time has gone by quickly since I took over in June – there's obviously been a period of transition but it was much smoother than I thought it was going to be," she says.

Key has wasted little time in bolstering the agency's client roster across Asia, with account wins in the last year including Singapore Tourism Board, BASF and Asia Miles, as well as Cunard in China (its sister business, Princess Cruises, is an existing BM client). A common denominator across many of its campaigns is technology – wearable and wireless as well as digital platforms. "It influences how we do business and it's certainly changing the way our clients do business, all at an incredibly rapid pace," says Key.

She says the Asia-Pacific region achieved single-digit growth in the last year, with China the best-performing market in terms of revenue. Growth, she adds, was slowed by the completion of several projects as well as fallout from the significant losses of the HP and SAP accounts in 2014. Two of the agency's top clients, Bayer and Bank of America, expanded with projects across different markets in Asia.

In India, with its GBM operation, the agency built on its GBM Live! Newsroom offering launched in 2014, which is designed to curate news across all media channels and repackage this for clients. In 2015, GBM launched two centres of expertise – GBM Issues & Crisis Group and GBM Client Studio.

The former offers a complete range of crisis readiness, response and recovery capabilities 365 days a year, ensuring that clients have the structures, tools and resources in place to prevent or handle crises. The GBM Client Studio is aimed at training corporate leaders and offers coaching on specific communication needs.

"There is a centre of creative excellence emerging from India and we have some of the best crisis experts in the region," says Key. "We are focusing on strategic consulting and integrated comms – going beyond the crisis issue and looking at social media and how this is being amplified. The hub is in India but its expertise is being replicated all over Asia."

The agency also formed an alliance in April with WhiteKettle Consulting, an Indian CSR consulting firm. Headquartered in Mumbai, WhiteKettle is partnering with GBM to address clients' CSR requirements, where demand is growing. Key says she is also looking to capitalise on more links between India and China.

In February 2016, the agency launched StepUp China, a venture with Chinese PR agency Flyfinger, modelled on the original StepUp launched in India the previous year. Headquartered in Beijing, it aims to target growing local startups that do not yet have the comms capabilities to boost their brand presence.

"Our two biggest markets in the region [China and India] are working together to build capabilities in best case scenario planning," says Key, who adds that growth in these markets must be balanced by that in other parts like North Asia, specifically Korea and Japan, as well as Southeast Asia, led by Singapore as a hub.

The evolution of social and digital marketing increasingly means undertaking initiatives to seek and engage with new talent outside of the traditional PR realm, including creatives and planners. In February, Barry Wong joined as managing director of creative and innovation, having previously worked at Saatchi & Saatchi and McCann Worldgroup. He is based in Hong Kong alongside Key, and this hiring practice is a model she is keen to push across other markets.

"This is a new and quite aggressive move for us – we will be looking to appoint a creative head for other offices in the region. This is Barry's first time in PR and he will be transforming what we do on a digital front, with a focus on digital, creative, social and advertising, creating a centre of excellence based in Hong Kong."

Other key hires in the last year include Ruby Fu, who previously worked at BM as managing director in Taiwan and who was most recently head of corporate affairs for Hong Kong and China at Standard Chartered. She joined the agency as China CEO in January this year and will play a key role in growing the agency's China practice.

Retaining high quality talent is one of Key's biggest challenges. She sees the concept of integration not only extending across channels and services, but also relating to teams, whereby employees at both the highest and lowest level will be consulting clients. It's what she terms "an integrated, holistic approach to client management". □



Margaret Key
Asia-Pacific
CEO

There is a centre of creative excellence emerging from India and we have some of the best crisis experts in the region

Cohn & Wolfe

Agency Name
Cohn & Wolfe
Regional Principal in Asia
Lyle Closs, COO, Asia-Pacific
Ownership
WPP
Asia Offices
12
Asia Revenues
Undisclosed (estimate US$20 million)
Change: -16%
Asia Headcount
11%

As he surveys the performance for Cohn & Wolfe in Asia-Pacific during 2015, regional COO Lyle Closs is especially gratified by Cohn & Wolfe China's accomplishment of the world's first-ever WeChat press conference in the healthcare industry, for Boehringer Ingelheim.

"It's something that has since been copied by many of our competitors. We're extremely proud to be a market leader in digital communications innovations."

2015 was a strong year for the firm, with growth across the region supported by particularly impressive showings in China, India, Malaysia, and Indonesia's capital Jakarta. C&W Malaysia, led by newly promoted managing director Jonathan Tan, boasted a client retention rate of 90 percent, and a portfolio that includes Tetra Pak, 3M, AkzoNobel, Dulux and Nestlé Ice Cream. In Jakarta, new clients—either retained or on a project basis— included Puma and Red Bull.

"China continues to develop as the region's economic powerhouse, and we expect demand for PR to further increase in line with the consumer purchasing power of the country's booming middle class," Closs says.

To meet growing client demand in China, C&W opened a new office in the burgeoning market of Guangzhou in the fourth quarter, which Closs says "is already poised to become one of our fastest-growing offices in Asia". It became the agency's 15th office to serve multi-market client Colgate-Palmolive.

There was also significant expansion in India with C&W's acquisition of Six Degrees PR and its content and integrated marketing subsidiary Alphabet Consulting. Closs says this was the agency's "biggest achievement in the region".

"It added a new market for us in Bangalore [the new office was opened in September 2015] and expanded our capabilities in Delhi and Mumbai."

The company is also weighing up expansion into a new Southeast Asian market, with Myanmar on the radar in the next two to three years.

Procuring and keeping talent in Asia, Closs admits, is challenging, "as people tend to switch jobs more often here than in Europe and the Americas". The firm has increased its regional HR tools and employee offerings, with strengthened initiatives in professional development and knowledge sharing, among other areas.

The region witnessed its share of moving and shaking in 2015. Tiffany Bai joined Cohn & Wolfe to lead the mainland China team, opening the new Guangzhou office, and bringing on two new market leaders, Alex Zhu and Cyrus Young. Tan was promoted to managing director in Malaysia, while Alison Teh and Elizabeth Winiartati were added as heads of digital in Hong Kong and Indonesia, respectively.

On the flip side, there were some very senior departures that C&W is still contending with. Angelina Ong vacated her role as president of Asia-Pacific, and other leavers included Rafi Khan (CEO, India), and Marina Leung (managing director, chief branding officer, Hong Kong).

Closs says Cohn & Wolfe "has been very diligent about putting the right talent in place across APAC" with strong leadership in local markets. There are plans to hire a regional leader "once we identify the right person to take our APAC network to the next level".

The company's strongest fields were healthcare, technology, consumer and corporate, while the top three services used by clients were digital media, content development and marketing, and mobile engagement. Key APAC accounts include Dell, Carlsberg, Mandarin Oriental Hotels and Tourism Australia.

> **We continue to focus on generating innovative, groundbreaking ideas to meet this demand**



Lyle Closs
COO,
Asia-Pacific

In 2015, the firm expanded its China portfolio with clients such as Alibaba's AliCloud, HK Science & Technology Parks, Maserati, and Wyeth.

In Southeast Asia, similar strides were made with Shell in Indonesia; Tetra Pak, BMW, and Facebook in Malaysia; and IO, Amazon Lexus, VitaCoco and Sharp in Singapore, among others.

Dell, a b-to-b client for the last seven years in Singapore, hired the team for consumer social listening and social media community management across Southeast Asia, and expanded the account to include more in-country work with offices in Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

Integrated marketing has become a strong tool for C&W, "as companies across all sectors increasingly seek creative, digital solutions," says Closs.

"We continue to focus on generating innovative, groundbreaking ideas to meet this demand. In the years ahead, I expect communications and marketing roles to be much less separated, increasing client expectations that marketing programmes be integrated from press release to product purchase."

Cohn & Wolfe also launched The X-Files, the agency's first global knowledge sharing network, which allows colleagues around the globe to find critical information and collaborate on new business pitches and client projects.

Digital continues to be a key driver for all practices, and the firm is increasingly focusing on campaigns across paid, owned, earned and shared media. "Our approach early on was to fully integrate our digital team across all practices in our Asia offices, and we look for individuals with strong digital backgrounds for all new hires," Closs explains.

"Every RFP now includes a digital component and that wasn't the case in 2014." □

Dentsu Public Relations

Agency Name
Dentsu Public Relations
Principal
Kazunori Azeyanagi
Ownership
Dentsu Inc.
Offices
Tokyo, Osaka
Revenues
Not disclosed; (Estimate: US$44 million)
Headcount
253

Dentsu PR is not a company to make sudden changes, and seems quite comfortable to operate in the shadow of its far larger advertising sibling. But like its competitors, it is increasingly trying to play in the field of content.

The term 'content' is of course subject to many different interpretations. For Dentsu PR, it doesn't mean creating flashy videos or work that is likely to wow the cynical panels at Cannes.

Kazunori Azeyanagi, who replaced Takehiko Chikami as president in February (Chikami retired), says the main focus when it comes to content is on short movies. But "we are not an advertising agency or creative agency, so we don't focus on the very creative or invest in this area of expertise".

Rather than execution, "the main task is strategic planning but we also do creative brief writing," he explains. "If the client needs more, we work with creative agencies."

Still, the agency thought it prudent to invest in this area. Azeyanagi does not specify the exact investment made, but it involved the establishment of a content distribution division with a staff of five to ensure content is transmitted "relevantly to new media".

It also won some awards, including two Golds in the PRWeek Awards Asia: one for 'Rocking out with miso soup' for Marukome, the other for 'The shut-down island' for Miyakojima City.

Dentsu PR remains Japan's largest agency in terms of net sales, and while it does not disclose revenues, the figure of 11 billion yen (US$97 million) was an increase of 11 percent on the previous year. Headcount also rose by seven to 260.

Due to a non-disclosure agreement, the agency is unable to name its commercial clients. Azeyanagi explains however that growth came predominantly from the expansion of existing accounts, which include clients in the beverage and IT sectors.

In the public sector, it took on work from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Cabinet Office. Assignments ranged from supporting services for foreign visitors to conducting research to monitor the impact of "harmful rumours" following Japan's 2011 nuclear disaster.

While Dentsu PR does not have a global network beyond affiliates, Azeyanagi said inbound business was expanding, with foreign clients in some cases coming on board via the Dentsu Aegis Network. He claims the agency did not lose any major accounts.

Overall, while not expecting dramatic transformation in Japan's PR landscape, Azeyanagi is optimistic about the prospects for his company and the industry in the run-up to the 2020 Olympic Games. The economic climate is "not bad", he says, and clients are turning more attention to PR where in the past they would have bet all their chips on advertising.

"Advertising has its target audiences, but it's becoming more and more difficult to deliver messages to these audiences," he says. "What PR can do is deliver messages with social context." That understanding of context can also help support advertising to make it more effective, he says.

Like Vector, Dentsu was criticised in Japan's business media for apparent 'stealth marketing', or lack of transparency in media placements. The accusations were made under Chikami's tenure, and Azeyanagi does not list the issue as a challenge. Judging by the buzz in the industry at the time, it does seem likely that the activities of leading players like Dentsu PR will come under closer scrutiny over the coming year, however.

Unsurprisingly, Azeyanagi lists the hunt for top-level talent to meet the needs of a changing industry as the agency's biggest challenge. It's not unique to Dentsu PR, and he does not have a clear solution in mind.

"Once we're recognised as a capable content creation agency, we believe we'll be able to attract more talented people," he says, referring to the recruitment challenge. "For that reason we must publicise ourselves. In addition to that, we'd like to show our ability for strategic planning." Winning awards will ultimately help attract more talented staff, he believes, who in turn have their own networks of talent to draw upon.

Looking ahead, as PR and marketing become more closely aligned, Azeyanagi envisages closer collaboration with the mother ship.

"We are a member of the Dentsu Group, not an independent PR agency," he says. "While Dentsu [Dentsu Inc.] mainly supports clients' marketing divisions, we at Dentsu PR mainly support clients' corporate communications divisions.

"Even though we do collaborate on and jointly pitch clients together with Dentsu in the area of marketing communications, our main focus is the corporate communications side of the business." □



Once we're recognised as a capable content creation agency, we believe we'll be able to attract more talented people

Kazunori Azeyanagi
Principal

Edelman

Asia Head
David Brain, President and CEO
Ownership
Independent
Asia Offices
21 wholly owned; Partner: 5
Asia Revenue
US$107,131,000 (Change: 3%)
Asia Headcount
1,323 (Change: 3%)

Having said last year that he would like growth to be nearer the 20 percent mark in 2015, David Brain, president and CEO of Edelman APACMEA, admits that that while it was a decent year, it could have been better.

"We saw 12 percent growth in local markets," he says, having been nearer 15 percent in 2014. "We would have preferred more, but that has certainly kept us cruising along."

Encouragingly, all markets that Edelman has offices saw growth in 2015, Brain says, though some obviously more than others. Particularly successes were Singapore, Japan and Korea, where Brain says the integration of the consumer and digital teams has worked very well. "It's a substantial business for us," he notes.

Markets that had a few more challenges but still grew "in the high single digits", Brain points out, include China, Indonesia and Australia.

Despite perhaps not meeting expectations, APAC was the region that grew the most across Edelman globally, proving to Brain that the investments made are paying off.

"It's been a good year in the sense that we achieved a number of landmarks in the continual transformation of the business from its PR roots to a communications and marketing offer, something we've done over the last two years," he explains.

Digital has been at the heart of this transformation, and Brain is particularly pleased with the fact that in 2015, digital accounted for 21 percent of the overall Edelman APAC business.

"From pretty much a standing start three years ago, that has to be the standout," he says, closely followed by the sharp increase in corporate reputation and crisis work the APAC teams have taken on.

The ongoing transformation at Edelman feeds into all aspects of client work, Brain says, with evermore brands seeking digital and analytics capabilities in addition to more traditional comms services.

Building out the agency's digital abilities has been key to retaining most of its big-ticket clients in APAC, Brain says, and also brought plenty of new accounts on board. Of particular note are Alvarez & Marsal across Hong Kong, China and Korea; Asus in Indonesia; and PayPal in four APAC markets. Edelman did lose Visteon Corporation in APAC, although at the time the company decided not to work with any agency.

More specifically regarding digital capability, the focus for Brain in 2016 is on paid social media. "To get to a brand's audience, you now have to pay for that. If you are a PR company that produces great content, but you can't buy behind that, you will be disintermediated and it will go to media companies or people who can," he states.

As such, Brain is looking to hire a head of paid media in APAC, plus a team of around four staff, within the next six months. He believes this will add a significant string to Edelman's bow, on top of the other major changes the firm has made.

"We've gone from producing content for social and optimising that," he says. "Now we're promoting it and the scale at which that's happening means you've got to have people who can plan and buy on all of the key social platforms in the region, at scale."

However, driving all of this is the main challenge that Brain says all agencies still face in APAC: talent. While Edelman has hired a lot of new talent in the region – creative directors, planners, analysis, researchers and the like – Brain says getting the best staff is hard.

"There are definitely markets where if we could find more of the right kind of people, we could grow quicker than we have done," he says.

Edelman's turnover rate in APAC of 40 percent is the highest of any region, which Brain finds unsurprising given the difficulties faced by all firms in retaining mid-level executives.

That said, at the senior level, the firm brought in new talent that Brain is very pleased about. Carol Potter joined from BBDO as executive vice chairman for APACMEA, advising the agency's biggest brand clients and helping deploy the new creative and digital resources the APAC teams have built up.

In addition, Robert Kay joined as Malaysia CEO and Steven Spur was promoted to Australia CEO. There were some departures, notably Alan VanDerMolen, former global vice-chairman of Edelman's parent company DJE Holdings, and Stephen Lock, former Indonesia CEO.

Overall though, Brain says in 2016 in terms of top-line growth, Edelman will look to continue at least at the same rate in APAC, and possibly even more.

The agency will also move full steam ahead with its growth and digital transformation agenda, with plans to "rush to scale" in certain APAC markets.

"That's not just growth for growth's sake. We believe we have to get our teams in all markets to a minimum scale as fast as we can because then, whatever the currency, you can afford to have more of these specialist capabilities, which is what clients are needing to access to solve their problems," he explains. □

There are definitely markets where if we could find more of the right kind of people, we could grow quicker than we have done



David Brain
President
and CEO

FleishmanHillard

Agency Head
Lynne Anne Davis, President and Senior Partner, Asia Pacific
Ownership:
Omnicom
Offices:
17
Revenue
Undisclosed (estimate $50 million)
Change: 4%
Headcount
500

Growth across FleishmanHillard Asia-Pacific was steady in 2015, according to Lynne Anne Davis, APAC president and senior partner. She points out, however, that the majority of offices in the region grew revenues, several at double digits and that all are profitable.

Particular highlights include Japan, which increased revenues by 12 percent; Hong Kong, Indonesia and subsidiary BlueCurrent Hong Kong increased by 13 percent while offices in the Philippines and India grew revenues by 27 percent.

Thailand recorded the biggest growth in revenues, at 69 percent. Business in Korea, meanwhile, grew by 8 percent and headcount by 18 percent in 2015, driven by major assignments in public affairs and issues management for clients including Johnson & Johnson. Fleishman also added Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power to its client list.

"All of our offices in 2015 excelled, growing top and bottom line – it was pretty consistent across the region," maintains Davis.

In addition, 58 existing clients enlisted additional Fleishman offices in APAC and 74 existing clients doubled business in the region. New business wins included Alibaba, led from Hong Kong, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Hasbro and Marriott.

The region marked one closure in 2015, when subsidiary BlueCurrent Group's operations in Beijing were folded into the core business.

Healthcare has been earmarked as one sector with strong growth potential, and Fleishman is looking to establish itself significantly in this sector. Every APAC office actively serves healthcare clients, including Pfizer, Bayer and Novartis. Public affairs too, has been one of the agency's fastest-growing sectors in the last year, increasing, says Davis, by 18 percent.

"Some of this has been the result of the trend towards private/public partnerships, with significant assignments from MNCs and multiple ministries in the South Korean and Hong Kong governments," she says. "These are focusing on health, gender equality, family, national heritage, energy and global branding."

Demand for cross-border transactions by Asian companies continues to prove lucrative for the agency, a trend it has been mapping for some time.

"It is no longer about diversification of business and revenue from abroad; it is also about bringing Western business concepts, models and franchises to meet the growing domestic consumption needs of home markets and 'exporting' these success models to the West," explains Davis.

Initiatives launched in 2015 include FH ContentWorks, an offering of integrated studios throughout the world that provide content marketing services, including planning and strategy; listening and analytics; production across social, editorial, graphical and video platforms; amplification; influencer outreach; and measurement. In Asia-Pacific, these studios are located in Singapore, Beijing, Hong Kong and Tokyo.

The agency continues to pour resources into what would seem less traditional service sectors for PR – last year its APAC network built a specialised offering around risk management in the supply chain, driven by the fact that clients want insight into the biggest trends in the region. "It's a very important business for us going forward," says Davis.

This year FleishmanHillard has increased investment in cyber security – because, as Davis puts it, "everyone needs to worry about it". The FH Global Practice on Privacy and Cyber Risk, launched in May, provides a range of services to help clients cope with data security and privacy challenges.

Key hires in the last year also reflect the agency's investment in the region in priorities such as digital, creative, healthcare and strategic consulting. Michel Mommejat joined as partner & regional head of digital engagement for Asia-Pacific, in January 2015, while David Cho came on board as creative director for the Korean office in January this year.

With the 2020 Tokyo Olympics on the horizon, the agency is keen to exploit opportunities in Japan. It appointed Kuniyoshi Mabuchi as partner, head of digital in Japan in January while Satoshi Nakazai joined as vice president of FleishmanHillard Japan in December.

Megumi Hayakawa, meanwhile, joined BlueCurrent Japan as vice president in September, while its founding managing director, Tetsuya Honda, was also named PR Professional of the Year – Agency in PR Week Asia's 2015 Awards. FleishmanHillard's three agencies in Japan – including Vox Global Japan – drive 26 percent of APAC revenue, representing in total the largest non-Japanese owned PR conglomerate in Japan.

"This has positioned us well in a market poised for the next robust wave of outbound expansion by domestic enterprises and in the run up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games," says Davis.

With a new Omnicom PR structure announced in February, aimed at integrating the capabilities of subsidiary agencies including Fleishman, Davis believes this will provide a "collaborative spirit" to underpin the agency's success in Asia-Pacific.

"The new structure plays to our strengths and track record for collaboration across a well-established, expansive regional network. We are already working in close partnership with our sister agencies on our top 10 clients such as P&G, SAP, HP and Philips, to name a few," she says. □

> **All of our offices in 2015 excelled, growing top and bottom line**



Lynne Anne Davis
President and Senior Partner Asia Pacific

Golin

Agency Name
GOLIN
Global Principal
Fred Cook, CEO
Regional Principal
Jonathan Hughes, President International
Ownership:
Interpublic Group of Companies (IPG)
Global Offices
55
Asia offices
17
Revenues
Asia: undisclosed, (R3 estimate US$21 million) Change: 40%
Headcount
Asia: 300 (Change: 50%)

2015 was the year that clients really began to throw their weight behind a truly integrated approach to communications, spanning paid, earned and shared media, according to Golin president International Jonathan Hughes.

The firm, which has 300 staff and 17 offices in the region, picked up new work from Nespresso in Singapore for media and social. In India it secured briefs from Turkish Airlines and Starbucks, while in China the agency is part of an integrated team for shoe and apparel brand Vans. It also continues to work with Galaxy Entertainment Group to drive visitors to their range of properties in Macau.

"We have extended our work with Texas Instruments across Greater China and in Hong Kong we will be bringing the innovative Formula E race to town later this year. Regionally we're supporting Johnson & Johnson with content for their Beauty business," adds Hughes.

"Unilever remains an important client for us across several categories and on the B2B side we're helping LinkedIn with content marketing."

Golin lost work with the Enterprise Development Board in Singapore and did not take part in the Health Promotion Board's retender.

"In India we decoupled from the Times Television Network and Sodexo Food Solutions and in China we said goodbye to kids gear brand Joie and the Bahamas Tourism Board," concedes Hughes.

The key trend being seen across the board, according to Hughes, is the increasingly "channel agnostic" approach being adopted by brands.

"We are seeing demand for a lot more integrated, content marketing work across multiple channels," he says.

"More often than not clients are looking for a channel agnostic approach and therefore they are willing to look at fresh new ideas from a range of firms not just their historic 'creative' agency of record.

While this integrated marketing approach is not necessarily a new trend, Hughes says it was last year when it began to get some real traction among clients.

"This also translates itself into a trend around the new competitive set. A few years back it would be pretty easy to figure out who your likely competitors are. Now it's anyone's guess and is changing all the time," he says.

In terms of acquisitions, last year saw Golin finally conclude its takeover of Chinese PR firm Magic Group to form a new venture, GolinMagic.

The new agency operates from offices in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou and saw Golin's China staff swell from 50 to 150.

It also rebranded its joint venture with Mullen Lowe in India to GolinOpinion, while Hughes also believes the global acquisition of The Brooklyn Brothers (TBB) will have significant implications for the agency in Asia.

While TBB does not have an Asia office, Hughes said plans are in place for TBB staff to be on the ground in Asia within the next 12 months, based initially at Golin in China.

"The Brooklyn Brothers' team will remain a separate entity, but we hope to have TBB people in our offices to support the work we're doing already, firstly in China and then across Asia," Hughes explained.

"This kind of work is going to be in huge demand: world-class branded content generation and gives you a pretty good indication of our direction of travel. We're determined to be at the forefront of social and digital content and at the apex of paid and earned media."

In addition to the perennial problem of identifying and retaining talent, Hughes also points to the economic uncertainties that abound in the region.

The firm performed well in China, India and Taiwan last year, but experienced "some softness" in both Hong Kong and Singapore towards the end of 2015.

Looking ahead, Hughes says the economic climate is the most uncertain it's been since he arrived in Asia in 2013.

"Commercially, I think the uncertain outlook will be a challenge and we'll have to see if that uncertainty affects marketing spends," he says.

"Within marketing spend then, the challenge is growing our share of the spend by proving to CMOs that we have the insight and creative muscle to make their brands relevant to deliver great campaigns that deliver real change."

A key part of the plan to achieve this, says Hughes, is the continual refinement of its g4 strategy that it started back in 2011.

"A natural extension of our g4 strategy has been our focus on relevance. We're increasingly focused on helping brands become and stay relevant. If a brand is not relevant then it doesn't matter if you trust it or not," he says.

"We have new intellectual property around the Relevance Fingerprint, a study into the key elements that make a brand relevant, and a refined strategic planning tool called the Relevance Roadmap.

"We also continued to expand our network of 'Bridges'. The Bridge is the world's largest relevance engine that is helping over 250 brands in nearly 30 parts of the world stay relevant and part of everyday conversations."

As the agency approaches its 60th year, Hughes says it will continue to be driven by Al Golin's 'fix it before it breaks' mantra.

"As a result we're constantly changing and looking for new skills and expertise to bring into the business. So finding the right talent and partners is always a challenge, but when you get it right there's nothing more rewarding," he adds. □

We also continued to expand our network of 'Bridges'



Jonathan Hughes, President International

Hill+Knowlton Strategies

Agency Name:
Hill + Knowlton Strategies
Regional Principal in Asia:
Vivian Lines, Global Vice Chairman and Chairman of Asia Pacific
Ownership:
WPP
Asia Offices:
17
Asia Revenues:
Undisclosed (estimate US$49 million)
Change: 7%
Asia Headcount
600 (Change: 0%)

Even with client cutbacks and deferrals due to uncertain economic conditions in the region, Asia continued to be a strong market for Hill+Knowlton Strategies in 2015, firmly in line with previous years. Among the stars was Japan, invigorated by a new team led by John Morgan, who joined in 2014.

"We achieved significant revenue growth [in Japan], which helps prove that if you have the right people coupled with strong leadership, then client demand for services increases," says Vivian Lines, H+K APAC chairman.

Thailand also witnessed robust growth, the 15th year that revenues had risen year-on-year, credited to agency head Kanpirom Ungpakorn "and the team that she has built over the years."

The firm also launched EastWest at the end of last year, to provide PR services to Chinese firms looking to break into Europe and the Americas. "EastWest links our China team with key markets along key investment routes to help companies in those markets tie up with Chinese companies, and for Chinese companies to promote themselves more strongly in these international markets," Lines explains.

The agency's efforts in Hong Kong and China to integrate Rice 5 – a digital online agency acquired in 2014 – more comprehensively into the existing structure has paid off, says Lines. More joint pitches and greater staff integration have resulted in account wins such as content creation and management of the global Facebook site for China's Wanda Group, which operates the world's largest property business.

Elsewhere in the region, on the back of client requests H+K re-established a presence in Melbourne through a tie-up of its content arm with J Walter Thompson. Known as Colloquial, it will operate in key global markets and provide content solutions primarily to JWT clients.

In 2015, H+K added a broad mix of new clients to its stable, including ANA Airways, Costa Cruises, and Nikon (all Japan, plus each in another market), UFC, Ferrero Rocher, and Northrop Grumman (all South Korea), Morgan Stanley (India) and Aon (Australia).

The firm continues to face the industry-wide issue of key staff retention—in 2015 H+K lost global technology practice director Amanda Groty to PayPal; Sara Gourlay replaced her. Pamela Teo became head of Asia-Pacific HR, tasked with uncovering talent from creative and digital industries, to dovetail with the industry's growing demands. Overall though, these are part and parcel of the industry. "No significant changes at an Asia-Pacific level," is how Lines calmly puts it.

He identifies the need for a paradigm shift in response to helping clients communicate better. This has involved the greater use of content, online and digital, faster response times and adaptability, all initiatives that will be deepened in 2016.

The importance of social and digital marketing has matured to the point that it has "moved beyond 'evolving'," Lines says. It now has to be an integral part of any programme or campaign.

H+K's approach has been to develop or acquire in-house strength in Korea, China, and Hong Kong, collaborate with sister companies in the WPP Group in Australia, or to outsource some services in markets such as Singapore and India.

The biggest areas of growth for the company overall in 2015 were digital, B2B marketing, and publishing, media planning, and placement. "Clients want more integrated marketing solutions than ever before. They need their agency to be ahead of them in terms of strategic thinking. And they want responses very fast," Lines explains. The joint venture with JWT will help, he adds, "a great initiative for responding to clients needs with all types of owned, earned, paid, and shared content."



Vivian Lines
Global Vice Chairman and Chairman of Asia Pacific

The ever-shifting norms of technology are demanding creative solutions. In some markets such as India "whole cycles of communication are leap-frogged" as mobile access replaces more traditional internet access.

"This changes the way brands need to communicate and impacts PR strategies enormously," says Lines.

He sees Asia as sophisticated a PR market as anywhere else on the globe. "PR is as mature in Asia as it is in other parts of the world; sometimes it even leads the way. The challenge is to ensure that we are proactive with these trends as an agency rather than being reactive.

"Some of our largest accounts such as Ford, Microsoft, Coca-Cola, and LG Electronics are also businesses that use multi-branded Team WPP solutions. By being part of those solutions we get to work alongside our colleagues at other WPP companies in creating fully integrated marketing and communications campaigns for clients."

PR firms must also factor in that brands want to be seen to be responsible and sustainable, Lines adds, while also respond to the increased pressure from consumers to communicate more, respond faster, and to be seen to care. □

This changes the way brands need to communicate and impacts PR strategies enormously

Ketchum

Agency Name
Ketchum Asia
Regional Principal in Asia
Jon Higgins, Senior Partner and CEO, International
Ownership
Omnicom
Asia offices
14
Asia Revenues
Undisclosed, (estimate US$23 million) (Change: 53%)
Asia Headcount
Undisclosed, estimate 75 (Change: 0%)

There were two major highlights for Ketchum in Asia Pacific last year. "We made bold moves in strengthening our leadership," says Jon Higgins, senior partner and CEO, International. "There was also a big jump forward in the effectiveness of our digital and social work as evidenced by the most awards we've ever won in the region in a single year."

Due to economic challenges in China, Ketchum's Asia-Pacific region experienced less robust growth. To overcome this obstacle, Ketchum invested time and resources to strengthen their client offer, such as expanding their highly successful Ketchum Change business to the region and adding a strong exclusive affiliate in Australia, the Hausmann Group.

Higgins praises the Hausmann group for being "a creative powerhouse, particularly strong in brand marketing, digital/social and healthcare."

In terms of financial performance, markets like Korea, India and Singapore stand out. "Korea's business was phenomenal," says Higgins. "Korea demonstrated the highest growth of any market in our global network."



Jon Higgins
Senior Partner and CEO, International

Business in India also experienced double-digit growth, while the firm's Singapore office remains a top performer.

New account wins in the region include P&G brands like Head & Shoulders and Braun, Diageo, Blue Diamond Almonds, HP Enterprise, Booking.com and Tag Heuer.

On top of attracting new business, Ketchum managed to retain many of its existing clients. Higgins attributes this to the firm placing client success first and being passionate about service. With senior-level involvement with every client, the firm is able to spot and respond to important changes in clients' business environments and creating competitive strategies for each one.

Ketchum's success last year was due to bringing in new leadership to boost their business. "We made bold moves in leadership that is paying off nicely," Higgins says. "The new leaders have made a positive impact that has paid off immediately."

To highlight the growth potential for Ketchum's Asia-Pacific operations, in October 2015 partner Simeon Mellalieu was named client development director for the region. Previously he served as general manager of the Hong Kong office.

Another successful senior hire was Bruce Shu, who was named managing director of Ketchum Greater China in April 2015. Prior to joining Ketchum, Shu held leadership roles at Grayling and Citigate Dewe Rogerson, led corporate comms at ABN AMRO and helped to found CNBC Asia.

"Bruce did a terrific job coming right in, he's a great talent," Higgins says. "He brought in new thinking and new business."

Ketchum Change expanded to Asia and Gretchen Huestis relocated to Singapore in August 2015 to establish Ketchum Change's presence in the region as SVP and regional director. Previously she served as a director with Ketchum Change in London for two years. In her new role, Huestis focuses on change management, talent development, employee engagement, and creative solutions to drive demonstrable behaviour change and business results.

As a vindication of the firm's strategy to shuffle things at the top, Ketchum's leadership changes came along in a year that the agency experienced it's most successful 12 months to date in terms of industry recognition in the region.

Last year, Higgins mentioned that finding the right talent was a problem and he says the situation didn't improve much in 2015. "The lack of qualified, exceptional talent has been an obstacle to growth, not just for us but it's an industry challenge."

To solve the talent problem, Ketchum hired Trissi Yang, head of HR. "Trissy has done a phenomenal job identifying talent, and has implemented a robust training programme," says Higgins.

The future looks bright for Ketchum. "2016 will be a very good year for us," Higgins predicts. "The key components in 2015, the superior leadership we put in place, will take root and pay off. We'll also continue to invest strongly in digital and social." □

There was also a big jump forward in the effectiveness of our digital and social work as evidenced by the most awards we've ever won in the region in a single year

MSLGroup

Asia Head
Glenn Osaki, APAC President
Ownership
Publicis Group
Asia Offices
32 wholly owned; Partner: 15
Asia Revenue
Undisclosed; estimate US$140 million (Change: 8%)
Asia Headcount
1,200 (Change: -0.5%)

With growth mostly in double digits across all of MSLGroup's practices in Asia, its no wonder APAC president Glenn Osaki is feeling good.

"We saw good growth globally, but Asia was our best performing region bar none," he says. "Revenue grew in every market we operate in, and all had significant margin improvements."

The agency is reticent about giving exact financials, but in Asia it says revenues were between US$100-150 million, and Osaki says more specifically "in the upper-most level of that range".

He is particularly pleased with the firm's performance in Taiwan, which in 2015 was the Asia group's fastest growing practice. Other strong markets also include China and Japan, while in India Osaki says the quality of the work and clients was impressive, including the likes of Uber and Coca-Cola.

Osaki is particularly keen on the stat that revenue per headcount at MSLGroup Asia increased by 17 percent, showing that across the board the agency is on a rapid upward trajectory.

Key to this, he says, is the firm's ability to attract new clients. "If you're going to grow like we have, you have to win new business," he explains, and the agency demonstrated this with a 33 percent hike in new account wins.

More significantly, the value of those wins was 89 percent higher than in 2014, illustrating MSLGroup's growing portfolio of high-value clients. Notable wins last year include P&G, Alibaba, Allergan and Netflix, a brand MSLGroup was working with in Japan and then helped with its Asia-wide rollout.

"In some of our larger markets where we have many, many clients, we've been able to cut down on some of the smaller, local ones and focus more on the big, global or regional ones," he says, quickly adding that the agency "isn't losing any important clients"; MSLGroup retained its top 14 clients in 2015.

Moreover, with the wider restructuring at Publicis Groupe that began in 2015, Osaki says the results have so far been positive for MSLGroup as the PR firm has gained access to clients from other agencies within the network.

"With the restructuring we're working more closely with our sister agencies. Or example, for AXA we've taken on a significant amount of business across the region, Nestle, Airbus. These are Publicis clients, and we're doing more work with them as part of our wider strategy to be more integrated."

The firm's digital expansion has been the main driver of its growth in Asia, says Osaki.

"We're seeing more and more that it's a less traditional game here, it's much more digital, social, mobile. That has probably been as significant a focus as any for MSLGroup in Asia."

The rewards are being reaped. Digital revenue grew by 35 percent in Asia, and MSLGroup has invested heavily in boosting the digital skills of its staff as part of its i3 methodology.

This included establishing two centres of excellence in Shanghai and Delhi that deliver insights and analytics capabilities across all offices in the region. Of the 462 instances in which the centres have supported MSLGroup teams in Asia, 70 percent were for new business pitches.



Glenn Osaki
President, Asia, MSLGROUP

"The centres have been a game-changer and are being used by our Publicis sister agencies now," Osaki says. "They have allowed us to become more disciplined in what we do."

MSLGroup continues to enhance its digital offering in Asia and together with the centres of excellence, Osaki says 2015 saw the firm take big leaps forward in providing integrated comms solutions to clients.

"We're developing tools and techniques based on insights to understand the consumer better. With data and analytics, our agency is becoming much smarter."

Osaki believes such development is critical for PR agencies in Asia, and globally, as the industry landscape continues to change and integrate with other comms disciplines.

"We need to provide better integrated solutions. More and more clients recognise that everyone can create content. There are so many different touchpoints converging," he says.

"This is both the biggest challenge and opportunity for the PR industry. We need to show that what we're generating has the most value to the client. That's the area that PR has always been playing in and we need to maintain that and tell great stories."

Conversely to almost all others in Asia, Osaki does not feel talent is as much of a challenge as it used to be. "I've noticed now that it's becoming easier," he says.

He feels the industry has become more valued over time, and the growing trend of agencies recruiting from outside the media space means people with wide ranges of high-level expertise are now more available.

Looking ahead to 2016, Osaki is quietly very confident. MSLGroup already hit the ground running with its acquisition of Arc PR in Sri Lanka, and more is on the way.

"We did a lot of things in 2014 and 2015 to get us to where we are today," he says. "I'm very optimistic about 2016; it's going to be really big." □

The centres have been a game-changer and are being used by our Publicis sister agencies now

Ogilvy PR

Asia Head
Scott Kronick, president and Asia-Pacific CEO
Ownership
WPP
Asia Offices
26 wholly owned, five partner
Asia Revenue
Undisclosed, (estimate US$137 million)
(Change: 10%)
Asia Headcount
1,320 (Change: 2%)

Scott Kronick, regional president and Asia-Pacific CEO at Ogilvy PR is in a buoyant mood. In 2015, Asia was once again the largest region for Ogilvy PR globally, in terms of revenue, profit and headcount, mirroring its achievement from last year. This time though, it's gone one better.

"We had the best year ever", says Kronick, adding that the region posted double-digit growth "in the low teens", compared to single-digit growth last year.

The agency doesn't disclose exact revenue but the range in Asia falls between US$120m-US$150m. Globally, the agency says it experienced strong growth in 2015, the strongest for five years, with organic growth rates returning to above average levels for the first time in five years. All regions contributed to this; after Asia-Pacific, EMEA was the second region that grew the most, followed by Latin America and the USA.

Kronick looks after 31 offices across 13 markets and says that Malaysia was the one market to perform below expectations, largely, he says, as it had a hard act to follow from the previous year.

He attributes overall performance to an exceptionally strong year for new business, with technology and healthcare continuing to be key sectors for the agency, alongside public affairs. Significant wins for the Asia-Pacific region include, in Australia, Lenovo, Tourism Australia and Westfield, Fotile, MTI Singapore and Hong Kong Marathon.

Asia outbound work is also "buzzing", says Kronick, with an increase in the number of Chinese clients looking to extend their global reach. Among losses Kronick lists LVMH in Shanghai. "Our growth has been much bigger than our losses and we've also been very fortunate to maintain a strong and consistent leadership team across the region," adds Kronick.

Emily Poon was promoted to deputy managing director of Ogilvy PR's Singapore branch in December, while Andrew Thomas took on the role of head of Social@Ogilvy in Asia-Pacific, in conjunction with his position as Ogilvy PR president, SE Asia & India. A key appointment was that of Kavita Bhaskaran – Abbott India's former public affairs head, who also previously served as executive vice president at Ketchum Sampark.

She filled the vacuum of leading Ogilvy PR's India unit, joining as president in August and Kronick says that account wins thus far include Lexis Nexis following a competitive pitch. In India, the agency is also working with the Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship.

"Historically we have not been a big player in India, largely because of the strong perception of Ogilvy as an advertising business – the agency is well known but for disciplines other than PR," says Kronick. "Kavita is rebuilding a team, we are moving away from that perception and we have big expectations for the market. We have not had as big a presence in India as we want but we are now inching up towards this."

Other highlights in the last year include the 'Great Names for Great Britain' campaign for VisitBritain, run out of Ogilvy & Mather's Beijing office and in collaboration with Ogilvy PR, which encouraged people to come up with Chinese names to rechristen British landmarks. It won two Gold Lions at Cannes.

New divisions launched this year include The Boutique@Ogilvy in North America, a specialty division that provides comms strategy for retail, fashion and e-commerce clients, while helping brands forge strategic collaborations in the fashion space. Given Ogilvy PR's strong luxury fashion portfolio in China, where the agency works with the likes of Prada and Swatch, Kronick hints that it would not be surprising for a similar concept to be rolled out in Asia.

"The luxury goods sector in China is a hungry and fast-growing market – while we are not seeing the levels of crazy growth we experienced in the past, it's still a very attractive market," says Kronick.

He is also on a mission to continue spreading the word about 'earned influence' – the agency is increasingly working with CMOs on campaigns where earned media is playing a more important part in the communications mix, a trend that has followed through from last year and which shows no sign of abating.

"It's the one positioning I think you will see a lot more of," he says. "It reframes and redefines us and is all about how people consume information and ensuring you get the right message to the right people at the right time."

Increasingly, says Kronick, clients want a multi-disciplined approach and to this end, PR is now playing a central rather than a peripheral role. He points to how a growing number of agency employees with a PR background are now taking leading positions at the agency's regional offices.

This includes Selina Teng, co-managing director of Ogilvy PR Beijing, who was promoted in January to the position of president, Ogilvy & Mather Group Beijing and Jacey Lee, Ogilvy PR managing director, who was promoted in November to the role of chief operating officer at Ogilvy & Mather Malaysia. □



Scott Kronick
Regional President and Asia-Pacific CEO

It reframes and redefines us and is all about how people consume information and ensuring you get the right message to the right people at the right time

Ruder Finn

Asia Head
Jean-Michel Dumont, Asia Chairman
Ownership
Independent
Asia Offices
16
Asia Revenue
US$25 million (Change: 15%)
Asia Headcount
331 (Change: 24%)

With Ruder Finn's average growth across Asia an impressive 16 percent in 2015, Asia chairman, Jean-Michel Dumont says he is cautiously optimistic for this year.

India was particularly successful for the agency, growing by 66 percent with margins that rose 50 percent year-on-year. Dumont notes that the market remains highly competitive where agencies are required to constantly innovate and provide the expertise that clients do not have in-house.

Despite the economic slowdown and uncertainties in government policies in China, Ruder Finn has expanded its portfolio by adding two offices (Thunder Beijing and RFI Shanghai) and one agency (RFI Kyodo with offices in Beijing and Shanghai). China has consistently been a strong market for Ruder Finn.

"We are still very gung-ho in the market. We have the best team, which has been with us on average for 10 years. We are very confident that we will continue our growth," says Dumont.

The agency has continued growth in its primary sectors such as luxury, automotive and healthcare. Dumont notes that they are continuing to work with some big names in the market such as Sephora, Yoox and Porsche.

The agency is also working with young and promising startups that have shown explosive growth such as Grab Taxi, HappyFresh, TrustsSphere and PropertyGuru. "It has proven to be really interesting because by working on integrated campaigns we have really achieved great goals and it has built our name in that sector," says Dumont.

He notes the overwhelming move towards the digital space that is reshaping the entire industry and client relationships. Hence Ruder Finn strengthened its position in this area last year.

"We see an immense interest in this area, but the challenge is to create fully integrated communications campaigns – with digital taking a bigger share – while we need to continue to show strength in traditional communications, as well as to show value and how work ties back to the bottom line," says Dumont.

The agency also developed several new products last year. Dumont talks about the importance of the social media crisis simulation platform SONAR that was launched in June 2015. "This adds to the depth and breadth of our comprehensive offering in training and communications solutions," says Dumont.

Showing further commitment to digital, Ruder Finn integrated its online comms and digital services. All divisions are required to enhance their social media skills, which the agency has supported with a training programme. "At the end of the day, social and digital is also a part of their life now," says Dumont. Ruder Finn is also developing more training systems for c-suite clients in 2016.

Talent acquisition is a key area for Ruder Finn. Dumont says they are on the lookout for young talent, particularly fresh recruits from universities.

"Our brand is generating a lot of interest/buzz so we have no shortage of candidates. However, the industry is changing in front of our eyes and yet we still see people who think a 'media briefing' is the answer to every client situation or question. Thus we now look in different industries and especially the universities for bright graduates who are more of an open book. We are supported in this endeavour in a well-structured talent acquisition department, which helps our recruitment a lot," says Dumont.

The agency is also developing its proprietary HSI Digital research that focuses on how digitally savvy Heng Seng Index companies are in their communication. Dumont says that they are moving into high value "briefings" for clients in 2016.

In China, the agency has built a national luxury practice, added a public affairs unit, and strengthened its healthcare practice with senior hires in all APAC markets.

Dumont acknowledges that 2016 will be a challenging year but he is confident that they have the resources to prevail. The agency received a flurry of awards with an average of one win every 10 days last year.

Ruder Finn intends to explore new ways to further strengthen and enhance their capabilities and acquisitions for 2016.

"The challenge is to equip ourselves and transform ourselves fast enough for 'what's next'. Saying it is always easier than actually delivering it, so we need to really think ahead," concludes Dumont. □

The needle has moved away from traditional media into social media. That's becoming increasingly integrated



Jean-Michel Dumont
Asia Chairman

Text100

Agency Name
Text100
Global Principal
Aedhmar Hynes, CEO, Text100
Regional Principal
Anne Costello, Regional Director, APAC, Text100
Ownership Next Fifteen Communications
Asia offices
12. Licensed partners: 10
Revenues
Asia: US$18,877,111 (Change: 21%)
Headcount
Asia: 301 (Change: 11%)

2015 was the first full year of the firm's integrated Text100 and Bite business and saw revenues grow by 15 percent.

APAC regional director Anne Costello says China, India, Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia were strong markets last year.

"Malaysia has been challenged with economic and political issues, slowing decision making," she says, but adds: "We're seeing things come back there now though."

"We're also seeing a softening in Singapore as fears of a slowdown seem to be louder there than anywhere else in the region. Growth has been driven a lot by non-media relations services."

She says she was particularly pleased with a strong, stable year in mainland China, and substantial growth from the team in Delhi.

"We also saw great performance from our digital hubs in Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur, and we achieved our goal of getting 50 percent of our revenues from non-media relations a year earlier than planned."

This had led to significant growth in work across social, web build, design, email marketing, content and search, she adds.

Regionally, the firm's top six clients remain Lenovo, Four Seasons, Solarwinds, IBM, Vmware and Gartner, but 2015 saw it pick up accounts from Turner Broadcasting and William Grant & Sons, with the only significant loss being Optus.

Costello points to three key trends she is witnessing across Asia: fewer agencies are still splitting media from the rest of communications and marketing; more clients expect a fully-integrated service but at the same budget as before; and there are now a growing number of clients who fully understand integration and how to engage consumers.

"The other trend I see is that all ad agencies now seem to think they know everything about earned. For us, though, the increase in work is away from media relations. India is at a tipping point of integrated work, everywhere else expects it," she adds.

Internally, the firm focused on its Vision 2020 strategy to shape the agency's future direction and also increased its training programmes, CSR and staff-related benefits such as free breakfasts.

It also merged HyperText and its content team in India to create a stronger digital and content proposition locally and is working on plans to roll-out a new structure to better reflect the integrated work its now carrying out.

"We're also looking at potential acquisitions," adds Costello, "and we're hiring a digital team in China and more content specialists in India. We also want more social specialists in Singapore and Australia."

China and India are especially ripe for growth this year, she adds, citing huge opportunities in digital for the former and in content for the latter.

This, combined with solid performance elsewhere, should see the firm chalk up double-digit growth again in 2016.

2016 is likely to see staff numbers in Asia increase to 350, but finding good recruits remains difficult.

"We're hiring in new sectors and from different types of agencies now but it's a huge struggle. Our plan is to approach this with a 'shaped people' model, she says.

"Key to this is keeping our own staff and building word of mouth on the Text100 culture and work environment."

One person that the firm was unable to keep hold of was Paul Mottram, who recently joined Allison+Partners as managing director of its All Told digital and content unit.

Mottram was Text100's managing director of integrated strategy for APAC. Prior to that, he served as COO of independent agency Upstream Asia for eight years before it was acquired by Bite and its parent company Next Fifteen in 2009.

He then became executive vice president of Bite, helping oversee significant growth before it was merged into Text100 in 2014.

Costello now has full control over the firm's Asia strategy and said she was investigating several options to boost recruitment and retention.

"We are hiring in different sectors, from different agency backgrounds, and looking for new differentiators that appeal to Generation Y and Generation X employees such as tagging company holidays on to offsite visits, offering free travel passes and catered lunches.

"If we can get the people right and the skills we need, we will win the business and keep clients." □



Anne Costello, APAC regional director

Key to this is keeping our own staff and building word of mouth on the Text100 culture and work environment

Vector Inc.

Agency Name
Vector Inc.
Principal
Keiji Nishie
Ownership
Vector Inc.
Offices
Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, Jakarta, Singapore, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh, Taipei
Revenues
US$82,000,000 (Change: 22%)
Headcount
465 (Change: 31%)

Vector's focus in 2015 was squarely on content production. The agency created a service called VideoWire, which CEO Keiji Nishie sees as eventually replacing the written press release as a means of disseminating information.

VideoWire enables the creation and distribution of original online video content. This usually takes the form of press conferences or exhibitions and events. Instead of charging clients for organising a press conference, Vector makes money from putting the content out online and hitting a certain viewership target specified within the budget.

In the space of around five months, Nishie claims around 200 clients have made use of the service, mostly on a project basis. He expects that number to reach 1,000 by the end of the new fiscal year. In particular, it has helped Vector get a foot in the door with more luxury clients, Nishie says. Companies on board so far include Ferrari, Ikea and Laforet, the latter a retail site that used VideoWire to appeal to potential visitors to Japan in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Nishie says what makes the service important is that unlike a press release, it can appeal directly to consumers as well as the media. It also gives more control to clients in promoting their products. Typically, at a press conference where a celebrity endorser is involved, the media ignores the brand and focuses on the celebrity, he says. VideoWire aims to redress the balance—although we think it's doubtful that viewers will respond well to an overload of product shots, so the service should be used with caution.

Overall, Vector's business grew 30 percent year-on-year in revenue terms. Nishie does not attribute that to anything concrete, but it's worth noting that the agency has grown steadily for the past five years. Its newswire distribution service, PR Times, listed on the Mothers (Market of the high growth and emerging stocks) section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange in March.

The biggest challenge Vector faced, he says, was the controversy around its alleged use of so-called 'stealth marketing' techniques for clients—essentially, the media placement of paid promotions as legitimate pieces of editorial coverage. Negative coverage of the alleged activities in a business tabloid resulted in a fall in Vector's stock value, but Nishie says it has since recovered, and that client relationships were not affected.

Vector is still one of few Japanese PR agencies to be able to boast an international footprint, with offices in a number of Asian markets (see credentials above). Nishie claims around 30 percent growth here too, but the overseas pie remains small—just 10 percent of Vector's total business. Clients are mostly Japanese, but it does work with some local companies too.

The agency did not claim any award wins and in fact Nishie says they are not important to him. Rather than winning awards for creative work, he says his guiding aim is to be creative in business. The agency hired around 100 people over the past 12 months, many of whom Nishie says come from non-PR backgrounds.

The purpose of this, he says, is to help rejuvenate the industry and make it more creative. Again, for him that doesn't mean winning awards at Cannes, but acting as a true partner to clients rather than as an order-taker. Technology has given PR agencies the option to be much more proactive, he says, and he plans to capitalise on that opportunity. To build on the launch of VideoWire, he says the priority for the coming year is to host casting sessions for celebrity influencers on behalf of clients.

He chooses not to compare Vector to other PR agencies. Instead, he looks to holding companies like WPP, or tech startups, for inspiration. "A typical PR agency [in Japan] can only do PR," he says. "They can't do video, and they can't do that much online or with social networking. We think our approach is different. We are trying to find our own way." □

A typical PR agency [in Japan] can only do PR. They can't do video, and they can't do that much online or with social networking



Keiji Nishie

Weber Shandwick

Asia Head
Tim Sutton, Asia-Pacific Chairman
Ownership
Interpublic
Asia Offices
18 wholly owned
Asia Revenue
Undisclosed (estimate US$103 million)
Change: 5%
Asia Headcount
900

"Satisfying" is the word that features a lot when asking Tim Sutton about Weber Shandwick's performance in Asia-Pacific in 2015.

Named PRWeek's 2015 PR Agency Head of the Year in APAC, Sutton has overseen another year of "stunning growth" for the agency, beyond even his initial ambitions.

"I went into 2015 perennially cautious. We've had such a great run in Asia now, and I thought it might slow down because of China. But I have to say I was completely wrong, it's been another amazing year."

While not giving exact figures, Sutton says the Weber Shandwick APAC business grew "very well north of 20 percent" for the third year in a row. More impressive is that all this growth was organic; Weber made no acquisitions in 2015.

"When you're still growing a business of our size at this rate, it's pretty satisfying," he adds.

Of all the markets that saw growth, Sutton says China was the largest, while India, Australia, Singapore and Korea also came in for special mention. For Weber, all its Asian markets grew except Malaysia, which Sutton says remained flat. "I think that relates to the some of the political and economic dynamics there," he suggests.

A lot of it, says Sutton, is attributable to the leadership teams in place across the Asia practices and the new additions to them. Weber promoted Baxter Jolly to APAC CEO last July, added Rafi Khan as executive vice president India, and hired Megan Rosier to lead the Australia technology practice.

Particularly satisfying for Sutton is Weber achieving steep growth in Asia-Pacific while at the same time overhauling its entire business model and becoming a broader comms services firm with a strong focus on digital.

"Three or four years ago we were a conventional PR firm, doing what PR firms have always done," he explains. "But now it's all about digital engagement, and our business model is transforming all the time, just as our clients are."

To that end, Weber has invested heavily in bulking up its digital offering. Sutton says there are now five studios across APAC alone that have around 80 digital design staff, and that on the front-end the firm is developing its client-facing executives into "experts in digital engagement strategy".

The firm's broader digital work has seen it take on more work in Asia for clients including Samsung, Mattel, Amazon, Novartis and Ocean Spray, among several others. The growth in multi-market assignments has also been extremely good, Sutton says.

He highlights that Weber's APAC teams won more than US$50 million in new business in 2015, which he believes is largely down to the new budgets the firm can target because of its broader, digital comms services.

"A lot of the digital engagement work we're doing is obviously related to PR, but its much broader now too," he says. "We now have the ability to take engaging ideas to CMOs in a way that would have been very difficult for us a few years ago."

The agency is developing more tools like Firebell, the social media crisis simulator that is now in its second iteration, to help brands understand the new digital environment they operate in. In addition, Sutton says it has bolstered its big data and analytics capabilities through its content unit Mediaco, which is "helping clients to understand they are huge publishers of content in their own right, making sense of that, and aggregating it".

Weber Shandwick APAC's commitment to becoming a full-service digital marketing and comms agency was further exemplified in its establishment of I/O – integrated operations – that corralled Mediaco, digital team Innovation Lab and other practices into one integrated content marketing arm.

> **At the lower and middle levels, we have to work very hard, like everyone else, to keep those people**



Tim Sutton
Asia-Pacific Chairman

However, the leaders of this unit, Jon Wade and Jye Smith, both left Weber, while Wendy Loh, former vice president at Weber Singapore, also left for pastures new.

Sutton says for the most part, the APAC senior leadership has been very stable, but admits that lower-level talent retention remains a significant challenge, particularly at a time when the firm is transforming its whole business model.

"At the lower and middle levels, we have to work very hard, like everyone else, to keep those people," he says. "Because of the change in the model, we're trying to fundamentally change a lot of the kind of people we're getting in. Previously we were fishing primarily in the PR pond, but now its people with the right experience from anywhere."

With everything continuing to point in the right direction for Weber's Asia-Pacific operations, Sutton is optimistic for 2016, but as always, with some caution.

"This year could be more difficult, and we are always vigilant as to what's happening out there. But the early signs are pretty strong," he says. "Whether we can do another year north of 20 percent, I don't know. But with the new kinds of work we're doing and the new budgets we're getting access to, we have every reason to cautiously believe that it's going to be another solid year." □

INTE**GREAT**

scale

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MOST-*awarded*

MOST-*connected*

MOST- INTEGRATED

MOST-COMPLETE

growth

PROUD TO BE

MSLGROUP

MSLGROUP -- Publicis Groupe's strategic communications and engagement group -- is fully integrated into Publicis Communications, alongside Publicis Worldwide, Leo Burnett and Saatchi & Saatchi.

Rank 2016	Agency Name	Asia-Pacific Revenue 2015	Asia-Pacific Revenue 2014	Change %	Rank 2015	Asia-Pacific Staff 2015	Asia-Pacific Staff 2014	Change %	Revenue Per Staff 2015	Revenue Per Staff 2014	Change %	Headquarters
1	BlueFocus	$220,633,831	$179,214,216	23%	1	5448	4,837	13%	$40,498	$37,051	9%	Beijing
2	MSLGroup**	$140,000,000	$130,000,000	8%	2	1,200	1,206	0%	$116,667	$107,794	8%	Paris
3	Ogilvy Public Relations**	$137,000,000	$125,000,000	10%	3	1320	1,300	2%	$103,788	$96,154	8%	New York
4	Edelman [1]	$107,131,000	$103,740,000	3%	4	1,323	1,287	3%	$80,976	$80,606	0%	Chicago
5	Weber Shandwick*	$103,000,000	$98,000,000	5%	5	900	-	-	$114,444	-	-	New York
6	Vector [2]	$82,000,000	$67,000,000	22%	6	465	354	31%	$176,344	$189,266	-7%	Tokyo
7	mc Group (media consulta International Holding AG)	$55,208,148	-	-	N/A	275	-	-	$200,757	-	-	Berlin
8	Burson-Marsteller*	$55,000,000	$59,000,000	-7%	7	750	-	-	$73,333	-	-	New York
9	FleishmanHillard*	$50,000,000	$48,000,000	4%	8	500	-	-	$100,000	-	-	St. Louis
10	Hill+Knowlton Strategies*	$49,000,000	$46,000,000	7%	9	600	600	0%	$81,667	$76,667	7%	New York
11	Dentsu Public Relations** [3]	$44,000,000	$42,000,000	5%	10	253	253	0%	$173,913	$166,008	5%	Tokyo
12	Kyodo Public Relations	$32,540,241	$35,668,040	-9%	N/A	224	227	-1%	$145,269	$157,128	-8%	Tokyo
13	Ruder Finn	$24,600,000	$21,297,000	16%	12	331	282	17%	$74,320	$75,521	-2%	New York
14	Brunswick** [4]	$24,500,000	$20,000,000	23%	22	110	101	9%	$222,727	$198,020	12%	London
15	Ketchum*	$23,000,000	$15,000,000	53%	15	90	75	20%	$255,556	$200,000	28%	New York
16	Strategic Public Relations Group	$21,807,618	$19,700,000	11%	13	282	280	1%	$77,332	$70,357	10%	Hong Kong
17	Golin**	$21,000,000	$15,000,000	40%	16	300	200	50%	$70,000	$75,000	-7%	Chicago
18	Cohn & Wolfe*	$20,000,000	$18,000,000	11%	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	New York
19	Text100	$18,877,111	$15,586,026	21%	14	301	271	11%	$62,715	$57,513	9%	New York
20	Newgate Communications	$14,852,467	$11,832,199	26%	N/A	71	-	-	$209,190	-	-	London
21	APCO Worldwide	$13,874,400	$12,428,900	12%	20	126	57	121%	$110,114	$218,051	-50%	Washington, D.C.
22	Porter Novelli*	$12,500,000	$12,000,000	4%	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	New York
23	Finsbury** [5]	$11,000,000	$8,000,000	38%	34	30	17	76%	$366,667	$470,588	-22%	London
24	CYTS-Linkage Public Relations Consulting	$10,075,000	$4,412,000	128%	N/A	100	80	25%	$100,750	$55,150	83%	Beijing
25	WE [6]	$9,909,000	$9,503,000	4%	25	123	130	-5%	$80,561	$73,100	10%	Bellevue, WA
26	SenateSHJ	$8,521,358	$6,341,607	34%	N/A	53	38	39%	$160,780	$166,884	-4%	Wellington
27	124 Communications Consulting	$8,520,000	$7,100,000	20%	N/A	35	35	0%	$243,429	$202,857	20%	Bangkok
28	Sermo Communications	$8,288,557	$8,131,670	2%	N/A	115	131	-12%	$72,074	$62,074	16%	London
29	Lewis	$8,059,000	$6,783,000	19%	29	81	84	-4%	$99,494	$80,750	23%	London
30	DeVries Global*	$8,000,000	$8,000,000	0%	26	100	108	-7%	$80,000	$74,074	8%	New York

Notes Asia-Pacific Table

*Indicates 2015 and 2014 revenue and staff figures are PRWeek estimates owing to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (2002) or agencies declining to take part
**Indicates 2015 and 2014 revenue figures are PRWeek estimates as per* (staff numbers were provided by the agency)

1 Edelman's 2014 revenue has been restated because last year's supplied revenue figure – $117,000,000 – included Middle East and Africa revenues
2 Vector's 2014 staff number reported last year – 376 – has been restated following an internal review
3 Dentsu's 2014 staff number reported last year – 235 – has been restated following an internal review
4 Brunswick's 2014 revenue estimate – $10,000,000 – has been restated
5 Finsbury's 2014 revenue estimate – $6,000,000 – has been restated
6 The firm was previously known as Waggener Edstrom Communications

Rank 2016	Agency Name	Asia-Pacific Revenue 2015	2014	Change %	Rank 2015	Asia-Pacific Staff 2015	2014	Change %	Revenue Per Staff 2015	2014	Change %	Headquarters
31	**Bell Pottinger**	$6,113,600	-	-	N/A	38	-	-	$160,884	-	-	London
32	**Creative Crest**	$5,859,050	$5,185,000	13%	N/A	48	43	12%	$122,064	$120,581	1%	New Delhi
33	**Grayling***	$5,800,000	$8,000,000	-28%	28	45	-	-	$128,889	-	-	London
34	**Integral PR Services**	$4,805,000	$4,450,000	8%	N/A	78	78	0%	$61,603	$57,051	8%	New Delhi
35	**Redder Advertising**	$4,000,000	-	-	N/A	50	-	-	$80,000	-	-	Ho Chi Minh City
36	**Citigate Dewe Rogerson***	$3,500,000	$6,000,000	-42%	31	20	-	-	$175,000	-	-	London
37	**EON The Stakeholder Relations Group**	$3,244,444	$2,800,000	16%	N/A	104	89	17%	$31,197	$31,461	-1%	Makati City
38	**M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment**	$3,212,653	$2,800,038	15%	N/A	16	10	60%	$200,791	$280,004	-28%	London
39	**Allison+Partners**	$2,900,000	-	-	N/A	66	-	-	$43,939	-	-	San Francisco
40	**Racepoint Global**	$2,814,401	$3,230,755	-13%	40	25	27	-7%	$112,576	$119,658	-6%	Boston
41	**Avian Media**	$2,810,249	-	-	N/A	136	-	-	$20,664	-	-	New Delhi
42	**Concept Public Relations India**	$2,529,391	$2,156,228	17%	N/A	210	190	11%	$12,045	$11,349	6%	Mumbai
43	**Value 360 Communications**	$2,332,872	$991,448	135%	N/A	200	70	186%	$11,664	$14,164	-18%	New Delhi
44	**Instinctif Partners**[7]	$2,090,000	$2,003,000	4%	41	34	28	21%	$61,471	$71,536	-14%	London
45	**MHP Communications**	$1,841,850	-	-	N/A	14	-	-	$131,561	-	-	London
46	**Glimpse Public Relations**	$1,581,685	$1,072,340	47%	N/A	30	25	20%	$52,723	$42,894	23%	Shanghai
47	**Hotwire Public Relations**	$1,418,335	$1,358,083	4%	N/A	12	12	0%	$118,195	$113,174	4%	London
48	**Frank**	$1,255,163	$1,608,636	-22%	N/A	10	9	11%	$125,516	$178,737	-30%	London
49	**JTA**	$964,457	$774,929	24%	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	Tunbridge Wells, UK
50	**EastWest Public Relations**	$850,000	$750,000	13%	N/A	8	10	-20%	$106,250	$75,000	42%	Singapore
51	**PRHUB**	$840,000	$720,000	17%	N/A	46	38	21%	$18,261	$18,947	-4%	Bangalore
52	**Simulations Public Affairs Management Services**	$437,310	$442,720	-1%	N/A	11	15	-27%	$39,755	$29,515	35%	Ahmedabad
53	**Smarts**	$393,372	$418,899	-6%	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	Belfast
54	**The Honey Partnership**	$89,770	-	-	N/A	2	-	-	$44,885	-	-	London
55	**Aspectus**	$63,000	-	-	N/A	2	-	-	$31,500	-	-	London

7 Instinctif Partners' 2014 revenue number reported last year – $2,347,322 – was adjusted after an internal/audit review

Rank 2016	Agency Name	Revenue ($) 2015	Revenue ($) 2014	Change %	Rank 2015	Staff 2015	Staff 2014	Change %	Revenue ($) Employee	Headquarters
1	Edelman	$854,576,000	$812,300,000	5%	1	5,849	5,455	7%	$146,106	Chicago
2	Weber Shandwick*	$735,000,000	$680,000,000	8%	2	4,300	4,000	8%	$170,930	New York
3	FleishmanHillard*	$570,000,000	$600,000,000	-5%	3	2,750	2,700	2%	$207,273	St. Louis
4	Ketchum*	$530,000,000	$510,000,000	4%	4	2,575	2,500	3%	$205,825	New York
5	MSLGroup**	$495,000,000	$485,000,000	2%	5	3,025	3,016	0%	$163,636	Paris
6	Burson-Marsteller*	$450,000,000	$450,000,000	0%	6	2,500	2,300	9%	$180,000	New York
7	Hill+Knowlton Strategies*	$380,000,000	$380,000,000	0%	7	2,700	2,500	8%	$140,741	New York
8	Ogilvy Public Relations**	$353,000,000	$300,000,000	18%	8	2,550	2,500	2%	$138,431	New York
9	Brunswick**	$260,000,000	$230,000,000	13%	9	980	900	9%	$265,306	London
10	BlueFocus [1]	$245,055,844	$179,214,216	37%	10	5,622	5,000	12%	$43,589	Beijing
11	Havas PR*	$218,000,000	$208,000,000	5%	11	1,200	1,200	0%	$181,667	New York
12	Cohn & Wolfe*	$195,000,000	$18,000,000	11%	14	1,250	1,200	4%	$156,000	New York
13	Golin**	$192,000,000	$178,000,000	8%	13	1,400	1,200	17%	$137,143	Chicago
14	FTI Consulting [2]	$189,974,000	$189,367,000	0%	15	599	566	6%	$317,152	New York
15	Media Consulta International	$165,236,084	$189,881,160	-13%	12	808	684	18%	$204,500	Berlin
16	Porter Novelli*	$153,000,000	$145,740,000	5%	16	720	686	5%	$212,500	New York
17	ICF Olson [3]	$142,808,294	$141,808,636	1%	20	735	528	39%	$194,297	Fairfax, VA
18	APCO Worldwide	$119,858,300	$118,112,600	1%	18	680	635	7%	$176,262	Washington, DC
19	Finsbury** #	$110,000,000	$100,000,000	10%	23	220	206	7%	$500,000	London
20	WE Communications	$99,082,866	$106,676,000	-7%	19	666	705	-6%	$148,773	Bellevue, WA
21	inVentiv Health PR Group**	$99,000,000	$90,000,000	10%	21	368	344	7%	$269,022	New York
22	Grayling*	$96,595,000	$125,000,000	-23%	17	762	950	-20%	$126,765	London
23	W2O Group	$95,504,860	$82,625,212	16%	24	427	402	6%	$223,665	San Francisco
24	Vector [4]	$82,000,000	$67,000,000	22%	28	465	354	31%	$176,344	Tokyo
25	FischerAppelt [5]	$78,000,000	$73,600,000	6%	37	395	360	10%	$197,468	Hamburg
26	Ruder Finn**	$74,000,000	$73,891,000	0%	25	603	565	7%	$122,720	New York
27	Finn Partners	$71,643,901	$52,797,000	36%	36	476	370	29%	$150,512	New York
28	Lewis	$68,585,000	$61,470,000	12%	32	568	490	16%	$120,748	London
29	PMK-BNC** #	$65,000,000	$56,000,000	16%	31	304	258	18%	$213,816	Los Angeles
30	FSB Comunicação	$63,025,835	$85,876,448	-27%	22	704	655	7%	$89,525	Rio de Janeiro

Notes

* Indicates 2015 and 2014 revenue and staff figures are PRWeek estimates owing to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (2002) or agencies declining to take part
** Indicates 2015 and 2014 revenue figures are PRWeek estimates as per* (staff numbers were provided by the agency)
*** Indicates only 2015 revenue is an estimate (2014 revenue and both years' staff numbers provided by the agency)
\# The revenue estimate made last year has been restated

Notes Global Table

1 Last year's global revenue figure for BlueFocus was submitted incorrectly
2 The figures reported last year for FTI Consulting — $169,600,000 and 630 — were incorrectly submitted
3 ICF Olson's revenue reported last year — $96,726,560 — was restated because it did not include revenues for non-advertising content work, digital and social strategy, events and organizational development/comms consulting
4 Vector's 2014 staff number reported last year — 376 — was restated following an internal review
5 FischerAppelt's revenue published last year was mistakenly reported as USD when it was actually Euros. It was also adjusted after an internal review.

Rank 2016	Agency Name	Revenue ($) 2015	Revenue ($) 2014	Change %	Rank 2015	Staff 2015	Staff 2014	Change %	Revenue ($) Employee	Headquarters
31	**Text100**	$62,650,245	$57,306,333	9%	33	602	54900%	10%	$104,070	Chicago
32	**Res Publica**	$60,006,998	$66,547,626	-10%	29	431	41800%	3%	$139,227	New York
33	**Hopscotch Groupe**	$59,807,440	$71,017,947	-16%	26	550	54200%	1%	$108,741	St. Louis
34	**MWWPR** [6]	$58,000,000	$56,715,000	2%	34	228	24800%	-8%	$254,386	New York
35	**ICR**	$56,208,757	$51,663,463	9%	38	162	13000%	25%	$346,968	Paris
36	**Bell Pottinger** [7]	$53,231,115	$54,293,351	-2%	27	266	27800%	-4%	$200,117	New York
37	**Instinctif Partners** [8]	$50,639,620	$48,505,000	4%	35	450	37200%	21%	$112,532	New York
38	**Kreab**	$49,932,000	$63,958,570	-22%	30	450	40000%	13%	$110,960	New York
39	**DKC**	$46,950,000	$41,500,000	13%	44	239	19900%	20%	$196,444	London
40	**Newlink** [9]	$46,500,000	$44,000,000	6%	45	300	35000%	-14%	$155,000	Beijing
41	**Marina Maher Communications**** [10]	$45,000,000	$40,000,000	13%	46	185	16300%	13%	$243,243	New York
42	**Freud Communications**	$44,202,856	$46,774,164	-5%	40	223	21300%	5%	$198,219	New York
43	**Dentsu Public Relations****	$44,000,000	$42,000,000	5%	43	253	25300%	0%	$173,913	Chicago
44	**Allison+Partners**	$43,409,004	$32,730,000	33%	49	300	23000%	30%	$144,697	New York
45	**Sermo Communications**	$41,495,100	$40,486,222	2%	N/A	488	52100%	-6%	$85,031	Berlin
46	**Four Communications Group**	$39,958,415	$22,345,188	79%	N/A	229	14700%	56%	$174,491	New York
47	**Zeno Group** [11]	$39,762,527	$32,672,776	22%	47	317	27600%	15%	$125,434	Fairfax, VA
48	**Hering Schuppener**	$38,392,160	$42,816,340	-10%	42	180	18000%	0%	$213,290	Washington, DC
49	**DeVries Global***	$37,000,000	$45,000,000	-18%	41	233	24300%	-4%	$158,798	London
50	**Brodeur Partners***	$35,000,000	$32,000,000	9%	N/A	250	24500%	2%	$140,000	Bellevue, WA
51	**PadillaCRT**	$34,813,666	$31,625,000	10%	N/A	205	18500%	11%	$169,823	New York
52	**Portland**	$34,006,900	$35,440,600	-4%	N/A	120	10000%	20%	$283,391	London
53	**Llorente & Cuenca**	$33,335,000	$32,458,343	3%	50	482	35000%	38%	$69,160	San Francisco
54	**Kyodo Public Relations**	$32,540,241	$35,668,040	-9%	N/A	224	22700%	-1%	$145,269	Tokyo
55	**Global Strategy Group**	$31,000,000	$32,378,000	-4%	N/A	87	7600%	14%	$356,322	Hamburg
56	**Citigate Dewe Rogerson***	$30,600,000	$38,000,000	-19%	48	176	12500%	41%	$173,864	New York
57	**Newgate Communications**	$29,827,405	$21,457,348	39%	N/A	142	0%		$210,052	New York
58	**Racepoint Global**	$29,529,363	$27,279,597	8%	N/A	168	16400%	2%	$175,770	London
59	**Coyne Public Relations**	$27,300,000	$23,010,000	19%	N/A	190	15500%	23%	$143,684	Los Angeles
60	**MHP Communications**	$27,132,615	$27,213,436	0%	N/A	168	16800%	0%	$161,504	Rio de Janeiro

6 Indicates MWWPR's 2015 revenue is an estimate (2014 revenue and both years' staff numbers provided by the agency)
7 The global revenue reported last year for Bell Pottinger was gross revenue
8 Revenue numbers reported last year for Instinctif Partners — $55,640,094 — were adjusted after an internal audit/review
9 Revenue reported last year for Newlink — $41,000,000 — was adjusted after an internal review
10 Staff number for Marina Maher Communications provided last year — 150 — was estimate; exact figure supplied this year
11 Zeno's Asia and Brazil 2014 revenue restated to exclude revenue reported



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