

Cassidy in EU limbo after office walkout

BRUSSELS: The entire team of Cassidy & Associates Europe has left to set up a government relations law firm called Alber & Geiger.

The new company is named after Siegbert Alber, the former advocate-general of the European Court of Justice, and Cassidy's former Brussels CEO, Andreas Geiger. Their new company is already up and running.

Geiger said: "This gives us the opportunity to set up a fully lobbying-focused law firm – something common in Washington DC but completely new in Brussels. We believe that this kind of legal lobbying provides more value to clients."

Geiger told *Public Affairs News* that 'all six professionals' at Cassidy's Brussels office were now working for Alber & Geiger.

Cassidy, whose global HQ is in Washington DC, is now reviewing what to do in Brussels, less than 18 months after launching in the city.

The agency's US-based director of corporate comms Tom Alexander told *Public Affairs News* in a statement: "We wish Andreas all the best in his new endeavour as we examine how to continue a strong presence in Europe."



Geiger: has set up own firm

The Cassidy group was bought by Interpublic Group – the parent of global PR giant Weber Shandwick – in 1999.

Citi promotes McIvor to EMEA group role

FINANCIAL SERVICES company Citi has promoted Rob McIvor to the role of director of corporate affairs across Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

McIvor, who joined Citi last year as director of corporate affairs for its corporate and investment banking arm, has already assumed his new position. He will

manage all media relations, internal comms and community relations in the 52-country region.

The change follows the promotion of Dan Noonan to global head of corporate affairs for Citi Markets & Banking.

McIvor previously worked at the Financial Services Authority for six years.

APCO lures Pfizer policy expert in Washington

WASHINGTON DC: APCO Worldwide has recruited healthcare policy expert Courtney Piron to the role of vice-president.

Piron, a former director in US-headquartered drugs giant Pfizer's economic and policy research group, has more than 15 years' experience in health policy, government relations and crisis comms.

At Pfizer, Piron's primary areas of responsibility included health-system reform, policy comms and dealing with regulatory issues.

Prior to joining Pfizer in 2001, Piron was director of health policy at another

drugs firm, Wyeth. During her five-year tenure she was responsible for federal health policy related to the pharma industry.

She previously worked as a comms consultant at Burson-Marsteller in its lobbying and crisis management departments in both Washington DC and New York.

She has also worked on Capitol Hill and in the US Food and Drug Administration's Office of the Commissioner.

Robert Schooling, MD of the agency's Washington DC office, said: "Courtney's experience is representative of our strength in this sector."

Martin Jay eyes lobbyists with web TV venture

BRUSSELS: Martin Jay, a well-known Brussels media figure, is targeting the PA community with a web TV venture.

Maramoja TV offers EU-related video reports and live news from Brussels and is available via the website www.maramoja.tv.

He told *Public Affairs News* that he was confident that all lobbyists, PR consultants and journalists with an interest in European policy issues would find its content "absolutely invaluable".

Jay explained: "The site was conceived as a journalists' tool as there is no need to go to the various news websites each day. I wanted to build a one-stop tool that would allow me to keep up to speed each morning while I enjoyed my breakfast hands-free."



Jay: service is 'invaluable'

The site offers live TV reports each day from the broadcast media, 20 live news TV channels and also Maramoja-produced footage such as a chatshow featuring MEPs called *Leaders of Europe*.

Maramoja aims to be 'entertaining as well as informative' with an archive of programmes that Jay hopes will "work as an added attraction alongside the conventional EU fodder".

Brussels to host two-day comms event in June

BRUSSELS: More than 60 speakers from business, associations, NGOs, media and politics from across Europe will headline an international conference for corporate comms and PR professionals this June.

Convened by the European Association of Commu-

nication Directors (EACD) and *Communication Director*, the quarterly magazine, the two-day conference will take place on June 11-12. It is aiming to attract more than 500 participants and will be held at the Residence Palace in Brussels' EU quarter.

The EACD was founded in November last year and is headquartered in Brussels.

Its president is Herbert Heitmann, senior vice-president of global comms at global software company SAP.

For further information on the event visit www.communication-summit.eu

De Jonge 'to establish dialogue' at Masterfoods

BRUSSELS: Masterfoods has appointed Klasje de Jonge as director of corporate comms for Europe and CIS.

De Jonge will take up the role on 2 May, overseeing internal and external communications for Mars in the region. She will be based in Mars/Masterfoods' European HQ in Brussels and joins from the Dutch Consumer Association (Consumentenbond), where she was executive director and a member of the board since 1999.

At Masterfoods, De Jonge will aim to 'establish a dialogue with media and the public on topics such as health and nutrition, the environment and social responsibility', according to a statement.

She will also co-ordinate corporate comms across all major European markets.

"With Klasje, we now have a strong and effective team in place that will participate in the debate around the food industry," said David

Kamenetzky, SV-P for corporate and regulatory affairs for Europe and the CIS.

He added: "Klasje, and our appointment of Matthias Berninger as director of corporate health and nutrition affairs [in December 2006], demonstrate our efforts to establish an open dialogue and to communicate our efforts to produce and sell products in a way that contributes to a balanced and healthy lifestyle."

Strategis launches in Second Life

BRUSSELS: Strategis Communications has opened an office in 'virtual world', Second Life.

Explaining the move, Nick Blow, managing director of the Brussels-based consultancy, said: "As a forward-looking agency we

have to be ready to deal with the development of new communication media."

He added: "While all Strategis staff had individually signed up to MySpace and YouTube, Second Life in comparison is a fasci-

inating innovation in social networking."

Strategis will not only be using Second Life to market its offline European PA business but also to offer PA and government relations services in Second Life as it develops.



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