



AGENDA

Hardee County Economic Development Council
Hardee County Industrial Development Authority

Hardee County BOCC Commission Chambers, 412 West Orange Street, Wauchula, FL Special Meeting,

3/17/2015 8:30 A.M

Board members

Vanessa Hernandez, Chairwoman | Gene Davis, Vice Chair | Mike Prescott | Monica Reas | Diana Youmans | Donald Samuels | John O'Neal | Dottie Conerly | Doug Jensen | Lory Durrance

	Item	Presenter
Item 1	Call to order	Vanessa Hernandez
Item 2	Approval of agenda	Vanessa Hernandez
Item 3	Review/Discuss/Approve responses -Responses Attached	Vanessa Hernandez
Item 4	Discuss/Approve Grand Jury recommendations -Recommendations attached	Vanessa Hernandez
Item 5	Discussion on communication/public education strategy	Bill Lambert
Item 6	Announcements/Other Business/Public Comment	Vanessa Hernandez
Item 7	Adjournment	

Hardee County Industrial Development Authority Response to Release of January 7, 2015 Presentment

Those entities and groups involved in economic development in Hardee County welcome the release of the Fall 2014 Grand Jury Presentment. The Grand Jury was convened in the late summer of 2014 to look at how the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) awarded and managed a grant, specifically the technology grant (hereinafter referred to as "the investment") awarded initially to a company called LifeSync and assumed by Continuum Labs.

While we concur with the Grand Jury and its conclusions that no laws were broken we are concerned with many of the "facts" offered in the Presentment and the resultant conclusions/recommendations. Because of this circumstance we respond, clarify and supplement the Presentment. We would also like to acknowledge, that we, as a board, recognize the need for constant improvement of our processes and increased transparency and will take all appropriate recommendations of the Grand Jury into consideration.

There are three points that need to be understood by the public regarding this process:

- 1. No one has been charged with a crime and no laws were broken;**
2. The Presentment is the Grand Jury's opinion based upon a closed-door process which by its very nature is one-sided and can often result in half-truths, distortions and inaccurate conclusions. Unlike a criminal indictment issued by a grand jury which has to be proven in a court of law, usually before a jury, those who are the subject of a Presentment have no way to prove or address the errors in a Presentment. **This document tells "the other side of the story."**
3. The timing of the State Attorney and Grand Jury investigations are of some concern, since a review of the measurable deliverables in the contract with the company were simultaneously being negotiated with the IDA as evidenced in the IDA March/April 2014 meeting minutes*. At this point the State Attorney's office intervened in the project, and it was staff's interpretation through language in the subpoena's they received, that they were to discontinue conversations with

Continuum.* This was a pivotal point in the project (conducting an audit and overseeing operation continues to progress towards deliverables.

To this point, the IDA was in the process of conducting their own examination, in accordance with the contract, into the investment to verify expenditures and review validity of expenses to the investment. Clifton Larson Allen was engaged to complete this review in November 2013 and was originally scheduled to be finished by February of 2014. This examination due to many factors, possibly including this investigation, did not come to a point of completion to be presented to the board until December 2014.

During the contracted examination, the IDA staff received notice of the State Attorney's renewed interest in investigating the IDA and the investment in April of 2014. The Grand Jury proceedings ironically closed out 3 weeks after the IDA's examination by Clifton Larsen Allen.

The investment is still an open and active investment of the IDA and has brought more than \$4.5 Million Dollars of outside capitol into the investment initiated in Hardee County. As of February 15, 2015 the company has 34 positions in Hardee County and is currently recruiting and has an annualized payroll (including benefits at current staffing levels) of \$1.125 Million dollars.

It is critically important for the citizens of Hardee County to be aware that during this 13 month audit process:

- The board agreed to have 25% of the draws reviewed in nearly forensic detail which is a substantial in government auditing standards.
- 25% of the draws selected (by the auditor) represented 43% of the \$7.25 Dollars Million invested (roughly \$3,118,000). This is considerably more than most governments would require.
- **The “error” or “questioned” cost rate was less than 5% of the total grant award. In government auditing standards <5% is normally noted as insignificant according to the contracted auditor.**

What is a grand jury and why did they look into matters involving IDA?

State law creates grand juries and empowers them to investigate criminal matters and the operations of public institutions. They express themselves in the form of

either a criminal indictment which involves charging an individual with a crime, or when no crime can be charged, in the form of a Presentment which expresses the grand jury's findings, conclusions or opinions.

How do they operate?

Grand juries are convened and operate under the direction of the state attorney. They conduct their proceedings in secret. They may subpoena witnesses to testify or compel the production of documents and records. To be clear, the IDA respects the service the Grand Jurors performed. However, unlike a courtroom jury, Grand Jurors are not there to decide guilt or innocence, and they hear only one side of the story; the state attorney's side. There is no opportunity for those who are the subject of the grand jury investigation to know the subject of the investigation, to present evidence or witnesses or cross examine other witnesses or to otherwise tell their side of the story. Persons who appear are not permitted to divulge the nature of their testimony, there is no challenge to the testimony provided, and no one may discuss anything that occurs before the grand jury.

What caused them to be interested in the Hardee County IDA and the Continuum investment?

The Presentment dated January 7, 2015, arises out of an investigation that began with the State Attorney's office in October 2011*. From the onset of the investment, there have been concerns levied from Hardee County citizens and from the media alleging impropriety in the grant award process, contract review and the management of the awarded grant funds. In the course of that investigation, the grand jury expanded the scope of its probe to include a review of Bill Lambert as an employee of the EDC, admonishment of the BOCC, and criticism of the overall investment prior to the completion or close out of the investment.

IDA Response to the Presentment

The IDA has summarized an outline of 3 main areas of "concern" brought forth in the State Attorney's Presentment:

-Lack of meaningful review/oversight of the investment

- Insufficient monitoring of the investment and expenditures
- Lack of measurable deliverables

There are also statements that are factually inaccurate and we would like to provide clarification to the citizens of Hardee County. The IDA would like to take the time to provide citizens with an explanation or response to the most relevant statements from the presentment. In addition, the IDA does not intend to provide responses for individually listed parties including former board members.

Factually Inaccurate Statements

Item 1

“To date, the IDA has received and dispersed more than \$14 million of the \$42 million total in the Mosaic Agreement expected by 2020.” Pg. 3

IDA Response - As of the date of the report, the IDA had received \$14 million of the Mosaic Agreement money, however has only dispersed \$9,258,438.

Disbursements of Mosaic agreement money are:

Continuum Labs (Lifesync) -	\$7,250,000
Chamber of Commerce marketing grant -	\$15,954
Hardee County Tourism Development Report (USF Study) -	\$92,552
Hardee County BOCC – Hardee Lakes Park	\$250,000
EZ Products	\$26,409
Communications Coordinator Position (2012)	\$35,600
Communications Coordinator Position (2013)	\$35,600
PRECO Purchase	\$474,145
PFM Spec Building	\$950,350
Broadband ILA Pop Reimbursement	\$127,828

Item 2

On page 6 of the presentment, the Grand Jury under the supervision of the State Attorney’s office outlines the IDA’s inability to effectively navigate the public records laws to sufficiently outline what Bill Lambert and the IDA should have reviewed to justify expenses. The irony of this particular criticism is that the

presentment went on to outline the “Year 1 AMEX” charges of **LifeDash** itemized out for over 2 and a half pages of the presentment. **LifeDash** was a private contractor to the **LifeSync** investment during year one and did not become affiliated outside of contractual development with the investment until February of 2014. The State Attorney has subpoena power that enables them to have this information produced, but this would be similar to requesting to review a public servants bank statements to observe how they are spending the public money they are paid for the services they render. This, in our opinion, appears to be an overreach of the scope of the investigation and the IDA would not have had the ability or interest to view credit card statements of a private contractor to the investment.

If these charges would have been relevant to the investment, these charges would represent .006% of the entire investment. Furthermore, in a software development company where sales and marketing would be paramount to the success of the investment; one would expect to see travel and conference related expenses as well as miscellaneous charges (meals, subscriptions, etc.). **To reiterate, these charges may have been related to the investment, but were the expenses of a 3rd party, privately contracted company who added additional revenue streams during the time frame they were reviewed.** In our opinion the use of this information to cause harm to a public investment is at best misleading and we would hope that this was not the intent of including it in the document.

Item 3

“Between 2011 and 2013 Travis Bond and his wife personally received over \$1,440,000 of Hardee County Money in salaries, consulting fees, and API fees.” – pg. 12

The declaration above that outlines “personally” makes this statement a false statement. The API fee went to **LifeDash**, where Travis Bond is only 1 of the 6 owners in the company. An API is an **application programming interface** defined as a set of routines, protocols, and tools for building software applications. Once an API is built, other software applications can be built to interface with it, or to pull data from it. The **LifeDash** platform was built before the investment was engaged with Hardee County. The API fee is a normal “course of business” type of fee that would be incurred when a developer contracts to build software and

permit ongoing usage of their platform. Normally, there is an initial “hook up” fee and then an ongoing licensing fee (to service or make development changes to the platform to accommodate the application. Furthermore, all investment in that API was later pushed back into the investment when the LifeDash platform owners decided to trade their ownership shares for ownership in Caresync in February 2014.

What parts of the Presentment were believed to be “unlawful and improper” or were otherwise unfairly damaging to the professional reputations of those named in the document?

The Presentment is a narrative combination of purported facts, opinions, conclusions and inferences. As such, when you review the document, you will see that there is a lot to object to. In the IDA response, we will not be addressing most of the personally damaging statements to professional reputations, but responding to the criticisms directed at the IDA. We are surprised and perplexed at some of the unprofessional language used in such an important document and feel the use of “name – calling” in the document diminishes the validity of the entire process (pied piper, fox in the hen house, flipper, timid, afraid, embarrassed, living large, bunker mentality, publicity stunt, cheerleading sessions, job producing boon).

The following are some of the inaccurate findings and conclusions. Most of the objections concern one-sided opinions and conclusions that were apparently reached without the benefit of the whole story. Had the whole story been presented to the Grand Jury, as reasonable people, they would likely reach entirely different conclusions than those stated in the Presentment. What follows are several quotations from the Presentment and the IDA’s responses to each:

Lack of Meaningful Review /Oversight of the Investment

“We recommend that the process for application, approval and monitoring of the IDA grants be completely revamped and that Bill Lambert not be involved with the process. A model to consider following is the grant approval process utilized by the Economic Development Authority.” Pg. 20

IDA Response - The IDA would submit that this recommendation had already been followed and is evidenced in the Presentment document on page 3 that this investment was ranked by the IDA against other applicants and subsequently funded (which is the EDA's process). The above statement was contradicted in the grand jury's own report with the statement below.

"It was the IDA's award process that the Blue Water Project was initially funded after being ranked by the IDA along with other applicants." Pg. 3

"no inquiry was made to verify this, nor was any meaningful review of Bond's background conducted, nor was his involvement included in the contract."

IDA Response – We respectfully disagree with the subjective statement that a “meaningful review” was not completed. Board members and staff completed background review of the prospective parties before the grant award was voted on. It may be a more accurate criticism to report that the staff or board did not document a review of any of the principals, but that is not the statement reported. Bond's involvement in the investment was disclosed from the onset as a part of the Management Team (ref. initial Bluewater presentation)* of the Bluewater investment and was the architect of the platform that the investment would be built on. He was also the contractor for the API and all development services.

This would be easiest to describe to the citizens as follows. If this would have been a real property construction contract, Bond's involvement would have been as the land owner and as the contractor of the building. Additionally, upon further discussion of 2nd year funding and the transition of ownership from Lifesync Technologies to Continuum Labs, a documented review and vetting of the investment and the new owner (Continuum Labs/Travis Bond) was completed through a partnership with the Hardee County Chamber of Commerce*. Even the presentment document evidences the knowledge and background that Travis Bond had in the medical technology arena. He successfully built and pioneered the first browser based EMR (Electronic Medical Records) program which through a series of acquisitions is now owned by a publicly traded company.

"Based on evidence we saw and the witnesses we heard from, we find that the reason the IDA approved the Lifesync Technologies, Inc. grant was because 1) Bill Lambert was a proponent of the grant and exerted his strong influence over the board to make it pass; 2) James Grant, a state legislator himself, assembled a team, including Jason Brodeur, who was a state legislator,

and Travis Bond to make a "pied piper" presentation to the IDA Board, which then did no meaningful vetting of the representations that Grant's team made to them;..." pg. 5

(Written by Chair Vanessa Hernandez) As one of the voting members at the time of the original grant, I did not discuss this investment with Bill Lambert before the first presentation, nor the 2nd where it was voted on, so this statement is untrue. I did however do my own due diligence of vetting of the so called "pied piper" presentation and found that Travis Bond had substantial success in the development of EMR systems and a lucrative exit. In my experience, having the team assembled and the expertise to build this type of technology is a premium in the business world today.

Our country cannot possibly train and educate developers through standardized programs to stay in front of the ever changing coding and development cycles of the technology world, thus the need for STEM programs and other accelerated technology training programs found throughout schools all over the country. A team with a proven track record could write their own destiny with appropriate funding. I found that Jason Brodeur had background and experience working in enterprise sales (pharmaceutical) for Proctor and Gamble and my impressions were that he would have the knowledge, connections and expertise to launch and scale the software and the servicing of the software (at Tchriver) based on his skills. James and John Grant both brought expertise in the legal arena as attorneys with background in Commercial Law and Strategic Planning. Jennifer Lux has a Computer Science degree, and a background in sales and marketing with a major pharmaceutical company, Schering-Plough, and Merck. I don't know what evidence could have possibly been presented to prove the 1st statement to be true, but find it difficult to believe that the jury was sold on this concept since I, as a voting member, did not feel this way then, nor do I now, nor have I EVER voted on an investment because Bill Lambert thinks it is a "good idea". On the 2nd statement, I would agree that this was what was presented to the board, and perhaps after elaborating on their experience and reviewing the business plan, one might draw the conclusion that there was truly a significant opportunity....had the other side of the story been told.

"As part of the agreement, the IDA agreed to pay Lifesync Technologies, Inc. \$2,657,813. The IDA agreed to pay this money to a company that had no track record, owned by a state representative with no track record, with a company that had been formed only weeks before the grant award."

The IDA does not disagree with criticisms stated above regarding the grant award agreement. It is of note that the company was formed in partnership with Travis Bond's company as the API service provider and the developer. There would have been no cause to create the company in this form, if the investment funding would have failed.

"The implementation and monitoring of the grant by Bill Lambert and the IDA Board Members was incredibly insufficient. Bill Lambert seemed more concerned with protecting the privacy rights of the company receiving public funds at the expense of truly understanding how the company was spending the public's money. We observed a mentality, among the IDA Board Members and Bill Lambert, that asking for documentation and verification from the grant recipient might in some way offend them. Instead of utilizing exemptions in Florida's Public Record Law to protect sensitive company information from the company, Bill Lambert simply chose to not take possession of documents that he needed to truly see how the public's money was being spent. Bill Lambert appeared timid, afraid, and embarrassed to scrutinize closely or ask questions about how the various expenditures were benefiting the project and the people of Hardee County. -pg. 6 - 7.

The IDA has long taken up the issue of how to balance our obligations of ensuring public funds are properly accounted for via documented evidence and the rights of privacy of a private company afforded in Florida Statute. This is an area that much consideration is being given by the IDA board in management and contract negotiation of future investments. There are many conflicts within the Florida Statutes (sections 288.075 and 119.07) that companies have the right to define what is proprietary and confidential, yet the IDA treats any and all documentation (unless under confidentiality) as a public record. Until the IDA comes to terms on what we are going to require contractually, we will continue to struggle with a perceived transparency issue and be limited in retaining documents that are proprietary to a company. Privacy could have been preserved by documenting reports of the observations made while verifying the records. Records could have been collected and mutually redacted for sensitive information. The statement that "Bill was timid or afraid" or that "the IDA Board members had a mentality of trying to avoid records so as not to "offend grant recipients" could best be responded to by saying there is an equally great danger of potentially releasing proprietary information and breaching contract, furthermore, improper release of records could also cause harm to the public investment by disclosing proprietary information. These are issues that need to be addressed in future investments

and moving forward. Also, to let the citizens know, that beginning in year 2 with the transition to Continuum, the investment had a significantly more defined plan to achieve sustainable outside capital and funding toward success. The IDA also improved the monitoring processes by adding in the draw proposal outlines to be followed with back up documentation each month and addressed contract provisions brought forth by the Auditor General and the JLAC. There were SUBSTANTIAL efforts to improve this process along and throughout the 3 years.

Insufficient Monitoring of the Investment and Expenditures

Lack of Measurable Deliverables

Item 1

"1) No tangible measurable outcomes or deliverables to be accomplished within established timeframes; 2) complete lack of ability for the IDA to monitor how the public's money was being spent as the grant money was being paid; 3) insufficient provisions to protect the citizens if the grant recipient decides to sell or move away from Hardee County; a 4) it allowed the private grant recipient to dictate the terms of the contract." -pg. 6

"Bond could pack up his things, end all operations in Hardee County.....with no obligation to repay Hardee County back any of the \$7,250,000."

Several of these statements can be easily responded to by following the timeline and changes that occurred over the course of the 3 years of the investment. The initial (Lifesync Technologies) investment deliverables were outlined within the contract as well as business plan (referenced in the contract) information provided to the IDA during public meetings. Language in the investment permitted the IDA to inspect any information relevant (invoices, receipts, canceled checks). As a matter of record, Bill Lambert reviewed not only product process reports, but also every check and bank statement from the Bluewater project. Provision of the contract also allowed for the IDA to require reports to be submitted to the satisfaction of the IDA, so the IDA had the purview to change the process at any time. During the 2 years that followed, as the investment transitioned from Lifesync to Continuum, there were several of these processes that were revisited to increase the transparency with the investment. The changes were made subsequent to criticisms from the Auditor General's office and subsequent audits, IDA input, and other criticisms. The investment principals began making their presentations publicly on the investment and the entire draw request process presented to the IDA monthly changed to include substantially more information provided on a monthly basis.

Additionally, all parties were well aware that there would be reconciliation (audit process) at the end of the investment and that the IDA had the right and ability to enact that at any time. It should also be noted that principals of the investment signed a Performance Based Note and issues of selling or moving the company were addressed therein. The contract was written to the benefit of the IDA being able to have ongoing input into the development and direction of/management of the investment along the way to react to technology developments, market developments, and most importantly, allow ability to respond to possible opportunities afforded under the unfolding "Affordable Care Act" and "Meaningful Use" legislation.

What happens now?

The purpose of the attached materials is to present other relevant facts that should be considered. Please understand that the investigation and proceedings related to the Presentment originally began back in October 2011 when the Bluewater investment commenced and have just recently been concluded. Although developments along the way dictated the action by all of the parties involved, the IDA believe it is time to close this chapter with the release of the presentment and confirmation that there has be NO criminal action and move on.

Conclusion

One of the most significant "misrepresentations" this presentment paints, is that there should have been a line of demarcation that would have been crossed with the last of the funding in January 2014. This marked the time that the investment funding was exhausted, but in fact, this was and still is, an open an active IDA investment that is still achieving deliverables and still operating successfully in Hardee County. This has been evidenced by added outside investor funding and additional jobs added in excess of contract deliverables of 25 full time equivalent positions in Hardee County.

Additionally, this company has demonstrated the ability to procure significant outside capital by achieving a Series A Round of venture capital funding for \$4.25 million dollars (and has since raised additional capital). This company currently has an allocated annual payroll in Hardee County of \$1.125 Million and 34 current

positions (as of Feb 15th) and expects to achieve significantly more in payroll dollars in 2015 (funded from outside funding and generated revenues). At present, there are 9 open/advertised positions and with the addition of 5 new sales professionals (in Feb 2015) to launch a nationwide campaign, more servicing positions will continue to be added in Hardee County. This information is in complete contrast to the assertion in the presentment that:

"this project has not produced the jobs promised," – pg. 18

If this would have been a "bricks and mortar" construction investment that would have been scheduled to be completed, there would not be a question of a lack of "return on investment" while concrete was being poured, trusses positioned, or electric and plumbing being roughed in. State Attorney Hill's office conducted a premature evaluation of this investment and investment deliverables because the evaluation was conducted before the full term of the agreement. Review of the meeting recordings and documentation would show acknowledgment by the board on all above stated items of concern along and throughout the course of the project. Many of the criticisms outlined in the presentment, can simply be answered by stating that the grand jury was led down a path of "facts" that were not supported by an underlying understanding of the construction of the technology investment, the timeline, the transition of Lifesync's Bluewater to Continuum's Caresync and the reasons and evidence supporting that. Surely, since this was a criticism of the IDA board and staff, the State Attorney's office would have ensured that a demonstration of the product or an evaluation by an outside technology expert would have been afforded to the grand jury. Had an outside technology expert reviewed this product created over the 3 year term, there would have been acknowledgement given to technology accolades awarded from all of the country to this concept and product.

- Sept 6, 2013 – Pasco EDC Technology Award
- September 28-29 2013 – Health 2.0 Code-a-thon Power to the Patient, Winner
- October 18, 2013 – Tampa Bay Tech Forum – Tech company of the year
- February 25, 2014 – Caresync wins favorite startup at HIMSS Startup Showcase
- March 11, 2014 - SWSX Interactive Awards Finalist for Community
- March 13, 2014 – Caresync wins favorite startup at HIMSS Startup Showcase
- June 3, 2014 - Health Datapalooza Main Stage Presenter
- September 10-12 2014 – TedMed Hive Startup Recipient
- March 6, 2015 – HIMSS Privacy and Security Panel Speaker 2015

The IDA Board takes special exceptions to a few of the criticisms:

"dismay over lack of return on the investment." - pg. 1

*"The resulting contract has thus far proven to be a bad deal for the citizens of Hardee County."
Pg. 6*

"we don't see how this benefits Hardee County." -pg. 18

"...Hardee County's largest single investment.....is a disaster." -pg. 18

"One must recognize that our elected (or appointed) representative officials are empowered by the public to make perfectly poor decisions. The IDA grant to Lifesync/Continuum has proven thus far to be a prime example." - pg. 19

"Reports regarding expenditures were packaged to the IDA Board in a fashion that said "Approve them." The Board did not know how or did not have the desire to ask meaningful and relevant questions." -pg. 20

All of the above referenced criticism's, as previously described in the responses appear to be from a premature evaluation of this project and it's return which we believe to have been spear headed by State Attorney Hill's office to the Grand Jury with the misrepresentation of this grant investment as a "reimbursement based grant" and also by supplying the impression to the Grand Jury that there should be a project evaluation completed as of the last draw (Jan. 2014), which again, would have been premature according to the terms outlined in the contract. This was a 3 year project that commenced in Oct 2011 and was originally targeted to be complete Oct 2014. There were extensions, pivots and provisions acknowledged by the board to transition funds away from creating jobs hastily and to focus funding more on the actual product development. None of these considerations which were Board acknowledged were afforded as evidence to the Grand Jury or given proper credence by investigating authorities.

Auditor General's Review

The IDA Board would also proffer clarification on the process/proceedings with the Auditor General's review and the subsequent JLAC hearing. There are criticisms within the report such as:

"One investigation was conducted by the Auditor General's Office. They concluded that the terms of the grant were extremely vague and non-descript there was no way to determine when the project was complete. The Auditor General's investigator was met with a lack of cooperation from both the IDA and Lifesync Technologies, Inc. in his attempts to obtain records to properly analyze the grant. The Auditor General's Report, a public document, contained findings showing that the IDA failed on multiple levels,..."

. Rather than complying with the Auditor's recommendations the IDA Board resisted disagreeing with the findings. We find that the Auditor's Report should be complied with in full, and the Board's response was unacceptable." -pg. 16

The referenced audit was conducted by the Auditor General of the State of Florida* for the time period of 10/10 – 06/12. The IDA Board has no knowledge of implied or perceived issues of a lack of cooperation with the Auditor General's office. The Board received no notification of such. During discussions with both the Auditor General's office and the JLAC, recommendations were discussed by all involved parties to seek the opinion on Finding 1 of the report by the Attorney General's office to proffer an opinion on the legal right of the IDA to enter the contract. This does not represent a lack of cooperation on behalf of the board. This represents the ability to challenge a regulatory body on an opinion by the provisions afforded in the law and under Florida Statutes. The Attorney General rendered an opinion on Finding 1* that the Hardee County IDA did have the authority to enter into this contract.

On Findings 2 and 3 of the Auditor General's Report, as outlined previously in the document, the IDA improved deliverables in subsequent contract revisions in accordance with the recommendations. While transitioning from Lifesync to Continuum, the IDA improved the grant monitoring process to include significantly enhanced demonstration of expenditures with documented back up.

Regarding Finding 4: there was no other provider for power capacity in the vicinity of the technology park that would have been able to provide power through the on-site generator purchased by the IDA. Any other proffer for a replacement would have still resulted in an additional unnecessary cost to the IDA to remediate the integration of this power system in to the PRECO building.

Findings 5-8 were all subsequently remedied either during or immediately following the audit.

Grand Jury Recommendations

We are not going to address all, as they do not pertain to the IDA Board, but some recommendations merit further discourse.

"Any future grants awarded by the IDA should have restrictions that require open positions be advertised and priority given to Hardee County residents."

~~In what world would we presume that the 16,500 working-age individuals in Hardee County should receive preference on job creation grants? How is this not true cronyism? Shouldn't evaluation be based on merit and opportunity? How does that attract outside capital and investment into Hardee County if we simply cycle the money around to Hardee County citizens? How does that support any other statements in the document regarding vetting, and finding the best investments/projects. We are creating opportunities for Hardee County citizens, not handing out jobs. Much of these funds (through construction projects) will be spent in Hardee County, through construction projects (where Hardee companies already receive local preference).~~

The IDA Board would like to agree that we would like preference for IDA grant recipients to offer jobs to qualified Hardee County citizens. Having acknowledged this, we also acknowledge that this is an area that we would have difficulty incorporating into a contract as a measurable deliverable. In order to comply with that, the IDA may get into additional confidentiality issues of reviewing and passing judgment on the "qualifications" of applicants which should be the decision of the employer. Making applicant information public would be a significant deterrent to getting qualified candidates to apply. We can certainly input contractual comments that the IDA and employer recognize that the purpose of the funding is to create opportunities for Hardee County citizens, but we want to be certain that we do not make management decisions for the grant recipients.

While the IDA does not disagree with the implementation of an evaluation process annually, the recommendation that we open that for potential director change annually, when we as board members understand that it takes at least a year as a board member to get up to speed and participate with some level of engagement, is a ridiculous recommendation by parties far removed from the process.

DRAFT

**We, the Grand Jury, recommend
as follows:**

- 1) We recommend that the process for application, approval and monitoring of IDA grants be completely revamped and that Bill Lambert not be involved with the process. A model to consider following is the grant approval process utilized by the Economic Development Authority. The process should start with a meaningful review of the applicant to determine the stability and legitimacy of the proposed grant recipient. The grant agreement should include tangible measurable outcomes that are closely monitored. The grant agreement should contain sufficient provisions to protect the public money if the applicants do not do what they agree to do. Finally, the grant should be paid in installments, only after proof that the prior public monies have been properly spent and the project, as proposed, is still on track.

- 2) A significant flaw in the process was the failure to have a technology expert looking out for the interests of the Hardee County citizens' interests. This failure should not be repeated in the future.

- 3) While we think good practice would be to have separate counsel for each county board, we strongly recommend that the IDA have its own attorney. Once a new attorney is hired for the IDA Board, the attorney should immediately begin reviewing all current grants for problems and make recommendations on how to best address those issues as soon as possible.

- 4) Any future grants awarded by the IDA should have restrictions that require open positions be advertised and priority should be given to Hardee County residents.

- 5) The Economic Development Executive Director should be retained pursuant to an annual contract. The director should be subject to an annual review that is subject to public comment and should be

performed by the Board of County Commissioners. Each year, the director should be required to reapply for the position and others who are interested in the position should be permitted to submit an application for consideration. Additionally, all IDA staff members should be required to undergo an annual evaluation that is subject to public inspection. We strongly recommend this process should begin June 1, 2015.

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Introducing Tucker/Hall

Tucker/Hall is a Florida-based public relations and public affairs firm. We provide strategic counsel to senior executives in the United States and Latin America. We are proud that the work we do produces measurable, positive change for our clients' diverse businesses and for the communities in which they live. Our primary areas of focus are strategic communications, public affairs and crisis management.

Since our founding in 1990, we have grown to become one of the largest independent public relations/public affairs firms in the southeastern United States. Our growth is a result of teaming with clients to help them achieve their corporate objectives. Our methods stress creative problem-solving, and we utilize tools such as traditional and online media, proprietary research, and innovative thinking to achieve measurable results. We work in a broad range of industry sectors from financial services, construction, healthcare, energy and the environment to municipalities and nonprofits.

Our consultants have a wide base of knowledge and experience gained from working with clients on demanding, critical and often high-profile communications assignments. While we provide strategic counsel to CEOs and teams of top corporate decision-makers, we also act as full members of mid-level client service teams. We are always prepared to roll up our sleeves to help our clients implement effective solutions in every assignment we take.

Tucker/Hall has been instrumental in working with many Fortune 500 companies and other organizations to introduce consumer products in Latin America, support complex litigation matters, provide public policy solutions to sensitive environmental issues and develop competitive strategies for fast-growth companies.

History

"Senior counselors offering seasoned advice to senior managers."

That was the original vision that spawned Tucker/Hall in 1990. Founders Jeff Tucker and Tom Hall had strong and well-placed networks of business contacts throughout Florida in major corporations, inside state government and throughout the nonprofit community. Jeff Tucker was a veteran business reporter, editor and publisher and Tom Hall had grown a small advertising agency into one of the South's biggest and best-known marketing companies before the two joined forces to start Tucker/Hall. Today, Tucker/Hall is one of the oldest, largest and most respected independent public relations and public affairs firms in Florida.

Shortly after the firm was founded, other senior counselors joined. Today, the Tucker/Hall business model continues to attract a cadre of interesting people with diverse backgrounds and deep experience in government relations, branding and corporate positioning, issues campaigns and reputation management. Together we are continuing to build one of Florida's strongest and most diverse consulting practices offering the deep experience of seasoned counselors while remaining politically nonpartisan. This is increasingly important as the state of Florida has become one of the nation's most politically important and culturally diverse marketplaces.

Our firm's history may be rooted deep in Florida, but our assignments and the management teams we work with are scattered far and wide. Our practice has taken us into many states and other countries; but while our ranks may have grown, our core values have never changed and our vision has remained clear. At Tucker/Hall, senior counselors are still providing senior managers with seasoned advice. It is a big part of what sets us apart; and it is what makes Tucker/Hall your best choice for value-added public relations and public affairs assignments anywhere in the world you may be doing business.

Values

Honesty	We are professional communicators who abide by a strict code of conduct by telling the truth in an ethical, forthright and compelling way on behalf of our clients.
Team-Oriented	We strive to create effective strategies, find solutions and build consensus to solve client issues by listening openly to each other while using our team's various skills and expertise.
Innovative	We cultivate new techniques, embrace creative ideas and implement a best-practice approach to our work by seeking effective solutions adaptable to our client's business.
Diverse	We embrace and respect the unique points of view that our colleagues bring to the workplace. Our individual beliefs form a strong set of collective skills which provide our clients with perspectives they may not otherwise see.
Community-Minded	We consider the impact of our work on the world around us. With every assignment we accept, we are conscious of the effect our advice may have on the communities our clients serve. We continuously encourage our counselors to seek and assume leadership roles in their communities through active volunteerism and community involvement.
Entrepreneurial	We are market-oriented both in our own business and with our clients. We encourage a climate that stresses new initiatives and encourages growth and opportunity to help turn good ideas into programs that help our clients achieve their goals and objectives.

Mission	At Tucker/Hall, our mission is to produce measurable, positive changes for our clients and their communities through innovative communications.
Vision	At Tucker/Hall, our vision is to provide innovative communications solutions to clients nationally and internationally using proprietary processes and non-traditional teams.
Community Involvement	<p>One of our core values and passions is our commitment to our communities. For our firm that's not just a positioning statement. It's a part of everything we do. We back that up with time and other resources in the following ways:</p> <p>Each year we take on two or three pro bono projects. The shareholders and staff sift through the many proposals to choose the projects we will support that year. These are causes recommended and prioritized by our staff.</p> <p>We work with many nonprofits, and our policy is to give each a minimum of 10% in pro bono time above their paid budget. This allows us to give them much more value for their money.</p> <p>Our staff members are not only encouraged to get involved in the community – it's a requirement. We all take leadership positions in at least two nonprofits or community causes. Most do more.</p> <p>We won't take any new client assignment that conflicts with our values. The "values check" is a standard part of the way we do business.</p>

Practice Areas

Strategic Communications

At Tucker/Hall, we use many forms of communication to support competitive strategies, repair or protect your image, sell a product and establish credibility.

Our consultants use strong communications strategies to add value to your organization while sharpening your competitive edge. That's why we are often hired to advise CEOs and other senior managers as they engage in strategic planning that involves one or more forms of communication. To support your business plan, your mission and your firm's marketing and communications strategies, our account service teams may use any of our primary services.

Crisis Management

How you communicate during a crisis can make a big difference in the way you and your company are perceived. From the earliest minutes of a developing crisis, your handling of an event (i.e., accident, natural disaster) or a critical issue (class action lawsuit, employment practices, etc.) will have a direct impact on your employees, your firm's public reputation, your customers and many other key stakeholders.

A mishandled crisis can have a disastrous impact on your company and its revenues and may have lingering effects that may hurt employee morale, erode corporate culture and offer competitors an opportunity to increase market share at your expense.

Tucker/Hall senior counselors are accredited by the Institute for Crisis Management and have been further trained at the Harvard-MIT Program on Negotiation. We emphasize strategies that will help your company emerge from a crisis with its reputation intact.

Public Affairs

Tucker/Hall counselors have received national recognition for helping corporations and other organizations bridge the gap between public-sector and private-sector interests. We have a proven track record of using solid research, media relations, public involvement strategies, grassroots and "grasstops" campaigns to help our clients deal with regulatory agencies, elected officials, government policy-makers and concerned interest groups.

We have helped many businesses and non-profit groups successfully resolve conflicts and disputes with dissatisfied stakeholders, potential litigants and concerned interest groups such as neighborhood associations, internet groups and other special interest associations.

Primary Services

Brand Management	Corporate identity development is not just designing a good logo. The process also requires imbuing the symbol with the values and attributes that will make it effective in communicating with your customers, investors and employees. We've helped many clients develop their corporate identity and brand. We've also helped invent new products, reposition existing products and assisted companies and brands with building deeper, lasting relationships with their customers.
Communications Audits	Working closely with CEOs, senior communications managers and other decision-makers, we can assess how your target audiences perceive your company. We then provide counsel on how to more effectively communicate with various stakeholders. Our advice may be as simple as an audit report on the results of our analysis, or as detailed as a communications plan that can be executed by your in-house staff or in conjunction with our advisers.
Crisis Audits and Planning	Tucker/Hall counselors can inventory and audit your organization's vulnerabilities or provide proactive counsel to reduce the likelihood of potential crises. Our process starts with one-on-one interviews with senior management and field representatives and may involve site inspections of critical operations. Our consultants will offer you a detailed audit and a crisis communications strategy that will serve as the foundation of an overall crisis plan.
Financial Communications	A pending IPO, a drop in stock price, a merger or an acquisition require specialized communications, with SEC requirements. We can provide counsel on your specific circumstance and can help implement on-going and proactive communications solutions to enhance shareholder value. Our services include preparing quarterly news releases and reports, producing annual reports, counseling on analyst relations, arranging analyst tours and working with financial media.
Grassroots Campaigns	Using proprietary databases and other research, we are able to establish workable networks locally to communicate your message, position or issue among key leaders and decision-makers. We motivate these groups to support public initiatives by encouraging them to organize their messages at the local, state or national level to support policy changes or program reforms.

Primary Services

Initiative and Referenda Campaigns

We have a strong track record of ballot initiative and referenda campaign victories. As campaign communications strategists, we frame the issues, develop messages for stakeholder groups and significant individuals, define the approach for messengers and constantly measure the impact on the electorate throughout the process.

Internal Communications/Change Management

Today, nearly every company faces change, and an effective internal communication program is key to keeping your employees informed and helping them adapt to environmental adjustments. Our services are called upon during such stressful events as downsizing or a corporate takeover. We also can review their overall employee communications programs. Tucker/Hall can recommend and work with your team to implement employee communication programs that can help you attract and retain the best people in your industry.

Issues Management

Tucker/Hall has experience developing campaigns to help educate and build consensus on issues important to our clients' success. By applying research, creativity, traditional media approaches and community relations strategies, our senior consultants can define and manage an issue to a successful outcome.

Litigation Preparation and Support

Litigation can be complex and may have long-lasting ramifications. Tucker/Hall has extensive experience working with litigators to prepare for high-profile lawsuits. Even if you win in a court of law, you may lose in the court of public opinion. Tucker/Hall will work seamlessly with your legal team to ensure that your position is supported by a strong communications strategy.

Marketing Strategy

Our counselors offer creative business solutions based on solid research, strategy development and competitive positioning that will advance your brand, support product sales and define your service to set your business apart from competitors. We'll analyze your existing approach and help develop strategies to increase sales. This may involve repositioning your brand, communicating with new audiences or with current customers in new ways, and launching new products or services. Tucker/Hall will help your company create or modify target-selective business plans that will make a significant impact on shaping corporate culture.

Primary Services

Media Relations	Rather than blanketing the press with endless news releases, we target appropriate media for each story and use a variety of techniques in communicating with the proper contacts. With former journalists on staff, our toolkit includes editorial board meetings, media tours, preparing video news releases, placement of client-authored columns and planning press conferences and promotional events.
Media Training	Tucker/Hall offers a number of training programs for both executives and staff. Media training helps spokespersons become more comfortable and effective in dealing with the press. We often coach client teams to prepare them for new business presentations and other public speaking engagements.
Public Involvement	As grassroots organizations continue to become more active and effective, government agencies and companies cannot afford to be without an effective plan to involve multiple stakeholders in issues of community concern. More than ever, citizens and interest groups are experts at organizing and sophisticated in their use of media, litigation and lobbying. We have a strong track record in planning and implementing successful public involvement programs.
Reputation Management	At Tucker/Hall, we recognize that many times perception is reality. Your corporate reputation depends on the communications you have with investors, employees, customers and the media. Tucker/Hall counselors can develop a program aimed to enhance your corporate image and improve your competitive position or advance an issue.

Client Administration & Fees

The work we do for every client is directed by a senior consultant of the firm who supervises the activities of the account service team.

We bill our clients monthly, charging hourly rates ranging from \$35 to \$350 depending on the experience level of the consultant. Each client's needs are different and a monthly minimum fee is often arranged to complete client objectives while staying within budget. We also work on a project fee basis. Account activity is monitored closely throughout the month and a detailed report is provided with each monthly bill.

Basic expenses such as fax, phone, photocopies, postage and delivery services are billed at cost each month. Services provided by outside vendors such as press clipping services, printers and event-related services are billed with a standard agency mark-up of 17.65%.

Out-of-pocket travel and entertainment costs are billed without mark-up. Time spent traveling for a client is billed at standard hourly rates unless that time can be put to use for another client.

Tucker/Hall Clients

We are proud of the clients Tucker/Hall represents and the results we've achieved for them. Much of our work is confidential, so we don't publish a current client list. However, this is a sampling of companies we have served:

AT&T
BP
City of North Port, Florida
Community Hospice of Northeast Florida
Cox Enterprises
Enterprise Florida
EVOS
Financial Florida
FitLife Foods
Florida Trend Magazine
The Florida Research Consortium
Florida Telecommunications Industry Association
Fannie Hillman
Fox Television Network
General Motors
The International Franchise Association
Jacksonville Aviation Authority
Jacksonville Transportation Authority
JMC Communities
Lennar Corporation
Marin County, California
McDonald's Corporation
Minute Maid
Operation New Hope
Publix Super Markets
The Salvation Army
Simon Properties
Skanska
South Florida Water Management District
Sprint
SRI International
Sweetbay Supermarkets
Take Stock in Children
Tampa Bay Water
TECO Energy
Tropicana
UF Health
Verizon
WellCare Health Plans
Women of the Vine

Global Reach

Tucker/Hall is a national public relations and communications consulting firm. Through the PROI network, Tucker/Hall is connected to more than 56 partners, 4,400+ clients and 3,200+ staff in close to 100 offices in 50 countries and regions and on 5 continents.

Tucker/Hall counselors have years of experience dealing with difficult issues on a multinational and global basis. As a firm, we have dealt with crises, litigation matters, branding issues, public affairs issues and many more in dozens of countries.

Through our membership in the Public Relations Organisation International (PROI) network, Tucker/Hall is connected to more than 1,000 consultants in 51 cities around the world. We can instantly reach out to the top independent public relations and public affairs firm in just about any country in the world.



Latin America

Tucker/Hall began working in Latin America in 1993 when we advised Tropicana on their entry into the region through Argentina. Over the years we have helped many U.S. and European clients do business in Latin America. We also have worked with a diverse set of clients in Latin America including Puerto Rico Telecom and the State of Tabasco, Mexico.

Biographies

Jeffrey Tucker

Tucker/Hall founder Jeff Tucker is an accredited crisis communications specialist accredited by the Institute for Crisis Management. In addition, he serves clients in the areas of business planning, corporate image management and media relations.

Prior to establishing the firm in 1990, Tucker spent nine years with the magazine division of the Times Publishing Co., publishers of the St. Petersburg Times newspaper, Florida Trend and Georgia Trend business magazines and Congressional Quarterly, a Washington-based weekly magazine covering the U.S. Congress.

Tucker was deputy publisher of Florida Trend magazine, the oldest statewide monthly business magazine in the U.S., where he helped oversee the marketing of Florida Trend books, newsletters, customized conferences and syndicated radio programming in Florida and Georgia. While he was managing editor of the magazine, Florida Trend won 60 state, regional and national awards for reporting and graphic design.

Tucker began his journalism career at the Sarasota Herald-Tribune. He was a business writer with the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and later he was a financial columnist based in New York City with the Journal of Commerce, a division of Knight-Ridder newspapers, prior to joining Florida Trend. His work has appeared in such publications as Barron's Financial Weekly, The Financial Times of London and Institutional Investor. Tucker served as vice chairman of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Telecommunications Task Force. In 2004, he was appointed by Florida Gov. Jeb Bush as an advisor to the Florida Turnpike Enterprise. He was appointed by the Florida Speaker of the House to the Florida Arts Council and served from 2004-2006.

He was educated at New College in Sarasota, New York University and the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

Biographies

Thomas Hall

Tom Hall, chairman of Tucker/Hall, works with clients as a communications strategist for corporations and nonprofit organizations.

Hall headed Ensslin & Hall Advertising and Public Relations, which became one of Florida's largest advertising agencies and received more than 500 awards for creative excellence. In 1989, Hall sold the firm to the Earle Palmer Brown Companies of Bethesda, Maryland, one of the top 25 agencies in the U.S.

From 1990 to 1995, Hall was chairman of the Governor's Partnership for a Drug-Free Florida (PDFF). Hall developed a nationally recognized system of media partnering to run highly effective public service advertising campaigns, which has been adapted by 54 similar organizations around the country and has resulted in more than \$2 billion in media devoted to preventing drug abuse. PDFF also developed the "Drugs Don't Work" marketing program used nationally by the President's Drug Advisory Council.

In marketing circles, Hall is well known as the founder of the successful Creative Seminar programs, which are now owned by ADWEEK magazine. Since their inception, the seminars have attracted more than 30,000 advertising professionals from throughout the U.S. and Canada. Hall is a former member of the board of ADWEEK's Creative Seminars in New York.

Hall was also president of Advanced Management Research (AMR) of North America based in New York. AMR provided educational programs, primarily to Fortune 1000 companies in major markets throughout the United States. Hall is currently president of Hall Equity Corporation, a commercial property company in Tampa Bay.

Hall attended Lake Forest College and holds a bachelor's degree from Florida Southern College in Lakeland. He is founding chairman of the Advertising Advisory Council of the School of Journalism at the University of Florida and a former board member of Leadership Florida. He belonged to the Executive Committee, a business education group in the Tampa Bay area, and is a member of the Business Advisory Council of the University of Tampa College of Business. In 1999, Hall was appointed to the Florida Film Advisory Commission by Senate President Toni Jennings. Hall is former chairman of the Tampa Downtown Partnership and past co-chairman of the Fellows Forum of the University of Tampa. He is a board member of the Tampa Bay Technology Forum. He chaired the Florida Aquarium Foundation and is a past chairman of the board of directors for the Florida Aquarium. He is a former member of the International Board of Best Buddies and currently serves on the Spark International Design Competition Board.

Biographies

William E. Carlson Jr.

Bill Carlson is president of Tucker/Hall. In addition to his responsibilities in firm management, he helps clients in the areas of marketing, brand management, community relations and public affairs.

Carlson joined Tucker/Hall in 1994. He has advised numerous government agencies and non-profits including cities and government entities in the United States, Asia and Latin America. He has also been a consultant to European and Latin American conglomerates, fast growing technology companies and Fortune 500 corporations.

His work involves helping companies and government agencies define the experience they will have with their constituents and customers. This may involve branding, communications, product/service design, public involvement or corporate strategy development.

From 1989 to 1994 Carlson lived in Singapore where he was a senior consultant with a Singapore-based marketing consulting firm. While there he advised a number of organizations across 15 countries. These included Citibank Asia, Singapore Airlines, the Development Bank of Singapore, regional conglomerates, financial institutions, technology companies, publicly listed corporations and government agencies.

Carlson holds a Bachelor's degree in marketing from the University of Tampa and a Master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He also conducted MBA studies at the National University of Singapore as a Rotary International Scholar, studied Spanish in Argentina and completed the Harvard Law School Negotiations Program.

Carlson is very active in the community and has served in a number of leadership positions at the Florida Humanities Council, the Hillsborough Education Foundation, Leadership Tampa Bay, the Tampa Chamber, the Florida Chamber and Rotary International. He is also a graduate of Leadership Florida Class XXIII. From 2007 to 2009 he was global president of PROI, the world's largest network of independent public relations firms.

Biographies

Darren Richards

Darren Richards is a Vice President at Tucker/Hall, joining the firm in 2009 after a 23-year career as a news executive at some of the strongest TV stations in the country.

During his time at Tucker/Hall, Richards has worked on a variety of different clients – from those with marketing and branding needs, to those in crisis communications situations. He has recently been accredited in crisis communications by the Institute for Crisis Management in Louisville, KY.

Before joining Tucker/Hall, Richards was news director at WTSP-TV, the CBS affiliate in Florida's largest television market. Under Richards' leadership from 2005 – 2009, WTSP went through a dramatic and forward-looking branding process, positioning the operation as a leader not only on TV, but also on a variety of digital platforms such as online and mobile. In addition, Richards helped WTSP grow ratings in all TV newscasts.

From 1998-2005, Richards was news director at WFMY-TV in Greensboro, North Carolina – one of the most successful CBS affiliates in the country. During his media career, Richards also worked at TV stations in Phoenix, AZ; Denver, CO; Jacksonville and Fort Myers, FL and in his home state of Kansas. During each of these assignments, Richards created and launched innovative news products (including websites, mobile products and other digital assets) that brought in bigger audiences and had a positive effect on ratings.

Throughout his career, Richards has been recognized with multiple Emmys, Edward R. Murrows, Associated Press and Society of Professional Journalist awards. In Tampa Bay, the WTSP-TV newsroom was consistently the most honored newsroom in Florida during Richards' leadership.

Since joining Tucker/Hall, Richards has gone through the Leadership Tampa program through the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and has attended various professional conferences – including the North American meetings for PROI network, a partnership of the world's independent public relations agencies.

Richards received his journalism degree from the University of Kansas, where he was recognized as the top broadcast journalism student during his senior year. In addition, Richards completed a variety of journalism leadership programs at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies in St. Petersburg, FL. He has also received additional training at the Center for Creative Leadership in North Carolina and accreditation by the Institute for Crisis Management, Louisville, KY.

Biographies

Guy Hagen

Guy Hagen joined Tucker/Hall in 2008 with a 20 year career as an experienced senior researcher and entrepreneur in Florida's technology sectors.

In 1990, he was a founder of Advanced Interactives Inc., a technology startup which developed solutions for seamlessly integrating multimedia felon databases across city, state, county, and federal law enforcement agency boundaries.

From 1995 to 2001, he helped to establish and direct the University of South Florida's economic development and technology industry partnerships. At USF he operated a \$13.3 million venture/technology fund for the US Departments of Defense and Energy. Hagen's early market research work made him a recognized expert on Florida's life sciences, modeling and simulation, photonics and lasers, and other technology industry clusters. His efforts have resulted in numerous peer-reviewed publications, and has been presented by invitation before members of the White House Office of Technology Assessment and the former Soviet governments. He has been a core team member of the Florida High Tech Corridor Council since 1996.

In 2001, Hagen founded Innovation Insight, a Florida research consulting firm that specialized in market and technology intelligence. Innovation Insight provided services for social media strategy, analysis and development, organizational and social network analysis, and qualitative+quantitative communications research design and execution. The firm has produced professional focus groups, interviews, surveys, panels, facilitated meetings, online data collection and analysis solutions, structured interviews, advanced statistics, and other analytical services for some of the largest companies and organizations in Florida and the US.

Hagen's entrepreneurial work has resulted in the development of several unique technologies. His Network Insight social network analysis utility is used by researchers worldwide, and has been used by the Army Human Terrain Team. He has developed social media analytic sites that have been featured on Mashable and which were frequented by over 50,000 visitors monthly. He is currently developing a number of new communications technologies, including WatchFire, a scalable online audience response measurement technology for mock trials, political messages, and television advertising.

Hagen has a Bachelor's degree in computer science and anthropology from the University of Minnesota, and a Master's degree in applied anthropology and social network analysis from the University of South Florida. He is regularly engaged as a speaker on the intersection of strategic communications, measurement and digital technologies.

Biographies

John Finotti

John Finotti joined Tucker/Hall in 2012 with the merger of Access Public Relations, a Jacksonville consultancy he founded in 2004. He has been instrumental in developing and implementing successful communication strategies for a wide-range of clients, including corporations, government agencies and nonprofit organizations. John has built a reputation as a trusted adviser to senior level executives and developed a close working relationship with many organizations' communications teams.

As a veteran journalist, John has extensive connections with local, regional and national media outlets. Prior to forming Access Public Relations he was Associate Editor of Florida Trend, an award-winning monthly business magazine. He wrote on a variety of business and public policy issues, including a regular column called Insiders that covered Florida's publicly traded companies. Previously, John served as a staff reporter for The Florida Times-Union covering business and finance. In addition, his articles have appeared in The New York Times, BusinessWeek and Southern Living.

John studied journalism at the University of Maryland, College Park. In 1995 he was awarded a Knight-Bagehot Fellowship to study business and finance at the Columbia University Business School in New York. John is the co-author of the books, *Insiders' Guide to Jacksonville* and *The New Columbia Knight-Bagehot Guide to Economics & Business Journalism*.

Earlier in his career, John served as vice president of a public relations firm in Atlanta where he represented a variety of clients, including a national accounting firm, real estate developers, banks and investment firms.

John has served on the boards of the Jacksonville Foreclosure Task Force, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (North Florida), the EDEN Group and Better Jacksonville Plan Citizens Advisory Committee.

Biographies

Stephanie Amberg

Stephanie Amberg returned to Tucker/Hall as a senior consultant in January 2012, and has recently been named Vice President. She previously served as a Vice President with the Company in the 1990s. Amberg is a public relations and marketing strategist and has experience with restaurants, luxury brands, commercial real estate, tourism and the arts. Most recently she served as Vice President of public relations at OSI Restaurant Partners, LLC (recently renamed Bloomin' Brands). For nearly 12 years she provided public relations support to the company's five brands – Outback Steakhouse, Carrabba's Italian Grill, Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar, and Roy's Hawaiian Fusion Cuisine – as well as OSI Restaurant Partners and retired brands.

Before joining OSI, Amberg was a member of the senior management team at Broughton International, a company that specialized in international cultural exchanges through the staging of blockbuster art exhibitions. They included Treasures of the Czars from the Kremlin Museums; Splendors of Ancient Egypt from Hildesheim, Germany and Alexander the Great, a loaned collection from museums in Italy, Greece, England and the United States, all presented at the Florida International Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Amberg served as Director of Advertising and Public Relations for Lincoln Property Company in the 1980s, and was responsible for commercial real estate projects throughout the state of Florida. In addition to her responsibilities managing advertising and public relations, she took the leadership role in staging high profile grand openings for Harbour Island and The Urban Center in Tampa, and Sun Trust Center in Orlando.

Amberg serves on the Board of Trustees for the Straz Center; and is the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Opera Tampa League. Recently she was asked to serve on the Straz Strategic Advisory Task Force. Amberg serves on the FARA Energy Ball Steering Committee as Chairman of the PR/Marketing Committee, and the Marketing Committee for the Tampa Bay History Center. Amberg was recently invited to serve on the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay's Community Awareness Task Force.

Amberg grew up in Bucks County, Pennsylvania and attended Susquehanna University before transferring to the University of South Florida. She graduated with a B.S. in Mass Communications. She has one son, James, who served in Iraq as a United States Marine and is currently with City of Tampa Fire Rescue.

Biographies

Justin Conrad

Justin Conrad is an account supervisor and joined Tucker/Hall in 2004. He has experience in marketing and advertising, non-profit management and international business development, having advised several companies on international expansions. He has been a vital addition to Tucker/Hall's own international growth strategy.

Prior to joining Tucker/Hall, Conrad worked for two Florida marketing and advertising firms. He also developed first-hand knowledge of public affairs, as a former employee of the Pinellas County Government.

Conrad has a significant history of volunteering and community involvement. He has devoted his time and resources to numerous organizations including Kiwanis International, Head Start and the American Legion. He has served on the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce's International Subcommittee and the board of directors of Financial Florida and the Kiwanis Club of Tampa Bay.

Conrad earned his bachelor's degree from Florida State University and his master's degree from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He speaks Spanish and Portuguese and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi.

Biographies

Sasha Lohn-McDermott

Sasha Lohn-McDermott is a Senior Account Supervisor at Tucker/Hall. She leads client teams in the areas of public affairs, crisis management, and strategic communications.

Lohn-McDermott joined Tucker/Hall in 2014, after serving as an assistant statewide prosecutor at the Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution.

During her tenure at the Attorney General's office, Lohn-McDermott managed multi-agency law enforcement teams in the prosecution of organized crime. In this capacity, Lohn-McDermott worked side by side with law enforcement officers on multi-circuit, multi-defendant cases in order to build the strongest possible cases for prosecution. Lohn-McDermott also worked with community leaders and nongovernmental organizations to engage and inform the public on issues related to crime and our community. For every year she prosecuted, Lohn-McDermott was recognized as a Top Government Attorney in Florida by Florida Trend's Florida Legal Elite.

Prior to joining the Attorney General's office, Lohn-McDermott clerked for the Honorable Virginia M. Hernandez Covington in the United States District Court, Middle District of Florida. Lohn-McDermott also worked for Tampa firm Bush Ross, P.A., in the areas of commercial litigation and bankruptcy. During her time at Bush Ross, Lohn-McDermott worked on both state and federal court proceedings.

Lohn-McDermott holds a bachelor's degree in English, summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, from Florida State University. She also holds a juris doctorate degree, cum laude, from the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where she was a member and editor of the Florida Law Review.

Biographies

Keith Lee Rupp

Keith Lee Rupp rejoined Tucker/Hall in 2013 and has recently been named Vice President. He has extensive experience in issues management, public affairs and crisis communications. Keith has developed strategic communications programs for corporations and industry organizations on matters ranging from global marketing communications to public referenda. His background includes substantial work for major corporations, the U.S. Congress, and as a journalist.

Following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, Keith was on a two-and-a-half year assignment with BP, leading the world's fourth largest corporation's external relations reputation rebuilding efforts in Florida. Keith's responsibilities included leading a team of external relations professionals and overseeing \$50 million in corporate programs to restore consumer confidence in Gulf Coast tourism and seafood.

In addition to his private sector experience, Keith served on Capitol Hill for 12 years as a senior staff member to three members of Congress, including six years as a chief of staff, and four years as a senior adviser to a member of House Leadership.

Keith began his career as a journalist. He was an award-winning editorial page editor in Virginia and later a television news producer in Tampa Bay. He continues to write a column for US News & World Report on public affairs and reputation management issues.

Keith earned his Bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He and his wife Rebecca live in Bartow, Fla., where they raised two children and are active in a number of local community organizations.

Biographies

Megan Duda Dodd

Megan Duda Dodd is an Account Executive with Tucker/Hall. She has experience in the areas of public affairs, government and community relations and nonprofit management.

Prior to joining Tucker/Hall, Dodd worked at the World Affairs Council of Jacksonville, where she was successful in developing and implementing best practices for membership outreach and retention. She also spearheaded the Council's planned giving initiative and created the inaugural marketing plan and materials for the program.

Dodd received her bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Florida and her master's degree in public administration and policy from Florida State University. As a graduate student, Dodd received the Florida Gubernatorial Fellowship and served a nine-month tenure at the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. In 2011, Dodd was awarded the Jeb Bush Award for Outstanding Achievement for her policy proposal on job creation initiatives for persons with disabilities in Florida.

Dodd is a member of ImpactJAX, the young professionals program of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, as well as the North Florida chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. Additionally, she is a member of the Junior League of Jacksonville and is on the board of directors for the Discovery Circle, the young professionals program of the Ronald McDonald House of Jacksonville.

Biographies

Noelle Muniz

Noelle Muniz is a senior account executive with Tucker/Hall. She has extensive experience in media relations, grassroots marketing, experiential marketing, consumer marketing and strategic public relations. From 2007 to 2012, she worked in Hollywood as a communications specialist for various clients ranging from consumer brands and celebrity talent to production companies, large corporations, restaurants, non-profit organizations and major film studios.

Prior to joining Tucker/Hall, Muniz worked for Rogers and Cowan in Los Angeles where she led strategic public relations and marketing initiatives for various entertainment and consumer brands. She has also worked for ID Public Relations where she developed comprehensive national media relations campaigns and facilitated innovative grassroots marketing solutions for clients targeting specialized audiences. Her work in the entertainment industry has taken her to the red carpet of the Emmys, Grammy's and the Academy Awards as well as the Sundance Film Festival, South by Southwest Film Festival and Toronto International Film Festival.

Muniz holds a Bachelor's degree from Emerson College in Theatre Studies and Integrated Marketing Communications. Muniz is active in the Tampa Bay community and has been on the leadership team of Emerge Tampa Bay, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce's young professional organization. Muniz is also on the Advisory Board for Film Tampa Bay, Tampa's newly re-instated film commission. She is involved with the Tampa General Hospital Foundation and the Tampa Pig Jig which raises awareness and funds for a rare kidney disease called, FSGS. Muniz is also a passionate advocate of the arts and has been on the development committees for Stageworks Theatre and the Tampa Theatre.

Biographies

Tamara Joseph

Tamara Joseph is the Office Assistant at Tucker/Hall. Her primary responsibilities include administrative support, media relations, program coordination, social media management and analytical research.

Prior to Tucker/Hall, Joseph completed several internships while attending school where she gained experience in communications, event planning and International protocol. She also volunteered at a non-profit dedicated to providing quality education to Haiti.

Joseph graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Tampa, where she completed the Honors Program, with a Bachelor's of Arts in Advertising and Public Relations and a minor in Business Administration.

Growing up in Haiti instilled in her a passion for community service and a strong work ethic where she brings valuable international perspectives to her work.

Biographies

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Reputation Management in Times of Crisis

*What to Do When YOU Are the
NEWS!*

Headlines You Don't Want To Read

- **“Tainted Coke Raises Critical Questions”**
- **“Human Remains Found at Wendy’s”**
- **“Guilty Plea Raises Stakes In U.S. Inquiry
Of KPMG”**
- **“Crimes, Lies, and Credit Suisse”**

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What is a Crisis?

“A crisis is a significant disruption resulting in extensive media coverage and public scrutiny leading to potential financial setbacks.”

Rules to Live By

Rule Number One: If you don't take control, you lose control, and there is no middle ground;

Rule Number Two: If you create a news vacuum, the media will create its own reality;

Rule Number Three: Court of Law, Court of Public Opinion

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Today's New Realities

- There are NO secrets
- Use the truth as fast as you can
- Stonewalling is NOT handling the crisis
- Low-probability events/highest-cost

What should you do first?

Be prepared!

Get Ready. Identify vulnerabilities.

Think: “What procedures will I need to have in place to save time, embarrassment and money?”

Types of crisis events:

- Internal (whistle-blowing) • Predictable (plant siting)
- External (Issue erupts/consumer action) • Unforeseen (sexual harassment; violence)

Reputation vs Business Impact

- Sales/Profits
- Operating Expenses
- Jobs
- Employee morale
- Reputation
- Government inquiry
- Competitive strength
- Legal/consumer

Origins of Crisis Events

- Management decisions: complacency, denial, arrogance
- Accidents/human errors or mechanical failure

Origins of Crisis Events

- Insulation from changing public attitudes
(bankers –financial bailout)
- Spillover from another crisis event
(Enron/Arthur Andersen)
- Eruption of a business issue
(discrimination suits)

The Crisis Outlook

Most prevalent crisis categories in 2011?

- Sexual Harassment (Penn State; Syracuse University, etc.);
- White collar crime (accounted for most negative news coverage all year);
- Consumer actions (J&J got hit with social media campaign re: cancer agents in baby shampoo).

Industries In Trouble

- Pharmaceutical manufacturers
- Securities Industry/brokers/dealers
- Air Transport
- Petroleum and natural gas
- Banking
- Electric utilities

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Troubled Companies

- News Corporation/WSJ
- BP
- PG&E Corp.
- Massey Energy
- Goldman Sachs
- American Airlines
- Bass Pro Shops
- Citigroup

So How Can You Minimize Potential Damage?

- Start developing a crisis management scenario to manage reputation as well as the crisis event;
- Shockingly 1,500 corporations, non-profits and government agencies surveyed were vulnerable in Q:3: 2011:

Minimizing Damage

- 76% had no formal crisis management plan
- 72% have no crisis response team
- 57% have no training in dealing with crisis situations

Priorities for Reputation Management

- You can't communicate your way out of it -- you have to resolve the issue.
- You can't educate consumers in a crisis.
- You have to control your own agenda.

What You Can Do Right Now

- Audit your situation
- Engage management in crisis discussion (+in-house counsel)
- Establish communications priorities!
- Have a written plan outline!

What You Can Do Right Now

- If you're in marketing or brand management, make sure you have routine open and honest dialogue with corporate communications;
- Plan together so goals and objectives are in line with overall business goals

What You Can Do Right Now

- As a marketing professional, you are uniquely qualified to help management and corporate communicators to protect the brand by advising on strategies to deflect or control negative media;
- Understand the 'brand benefits' of proactive planning with in-house PR and legal teams

What You Can Do Right Now

- Do benchmark research to establish a measure of your brand and reputation among key decision-makers, employees and consumers;
- Do more research annually to see if you're moving the needle.

Managing Your Reputation During a Crisis

- Remember you have to maintain credibility at all times –so be sure to have the facts
- Your recovery begins with the style you communicate during the crisis

Managing Your Reputation During a Crisis

- Remember that a company will succeed only for as long as it enjoys public consent.
- Remember to stay positive -- but be realistic