

# Weber Shandwick

## THE JUGGERNAUT

performance turnarounds under new leadership, WS is also growing quickly in China, and says its Asia Pacific operations enjoyed "solid growth in all key markets."

### » Practice areas

WS has 26 practice areas. In 2005, a broadcast media services practice was added. Core areas are consumer, corporate, financial services, healthcare, public affairs, and technology. Distribution of accounts across practice areas was not disclosed.

### » Practice performance

The consumer marketing, financial services, healthcare, multicultural communications, technology, and Web relations practices were cited for their strong expansion in the US and globally, last year. The public affairs practice was the sole unit cited for performing poorly.

### » Accounts

Key account wins in 2005 included Ace Hardware, American Financial Services, BEA Systems, Celgene, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Clorox, Frescale, Genentech, GSK, Network Appliance, Raytheon, Reliant Pharmaceuticals, Serono, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the US Army, and the US Department of the Treasury. Account losses included regional work for Dunkin' Donuts, and Unisys. WS said it experienced a "substantive increase in multinational engagements." Existing accounts which expanded last year included ExxonMobil, GM, Hitachi, Honeywell, Microsoft, and Pfizer. The agency said it had seen a "fair amount" of dormant clients starting to spend with the agency again.

### » Financial performance

Revenue figures were not disclosed, but the agency said its performance in 2005 "exceeded expectations both in terms of revenue and profit." WS is enjoying "strong growth" among its multinational clients.

### » Outlook

WS is well positioned to maintain its status as the preeminent global behemoth in the PR world. The agency's broad cross section of new account wins points to strength across its multitude of practices, and an ability to draw a diverse range of new business. Further, the decision of many clients to invest more in order to broaden the international scope of their programs can only bode well for WS, whose ability to execute campaigns in every continent can be matched by few other agencies.

"Our deep practice area expertise and our global footprint are often cited as differentiators when we talk with clients," says president Andy Polansky. The firm is already heavily invested in the current hot markets, China and India, and its combination of affiliates and owned offices in Eastern Europe means it is well positioned to take advantage of anticipated growth in that underserved area.

Interpublic Group, which has been plagued by accounting troubles, client losses, and defections of key personnel, cited the performance of WS as one of the bright spots in the stumbling holding company's 2005 results. The fact that multicultural communications and Web relations—arguably the two most forward looking practices in all of PR—were cited as particularly strong indicate that WS is working to stay ahead of the curve even as it grows, along with the rest of the industry, in what is perhaps the most positive business climate since the end of the tech boom.

Harris Diamond Group also as head of IPG's Constituency Management Group rolls the firm to tap into global resources across disciplines, and move into new markets, such as those in Eastern Europe. "We'll take advantage of IPG anywhere, anytime there is a client need," he says.

Public affairs was one area that did not find the same pace as the other practice areas this year, though government contracts both in the US and abroad did increase.

The agency's principals, long known for their unwavering optimism about the firm's prospects (even while its detractors predicted failure), are newly energized by their deepening global footprint.

"It used to be that business would almost always be hubbed out of a major city," Polansky says. "But now we are looking at hubs like Brussels, Beijing, Cologne. That's been an interesting development, and it speaks to the depth we have in our offices around the world." ■



### KEY FACTS

**Principals:** Harris Diamond, global CEO; Andy Polansky, president  
**Ownership:** Interpublic Group (as part of Constituency Management Group)  
**Offices:** 20 US, 81 total around the globe

### » Staff

Weber Shandwick does not disclose total staff numbers or turnover figures. The agency made a number of key hires in 2005, including Paul Jensen, GM of New York office and EVP of the corporate practice, from Euro RSCG Magnet; Tim Marklein, EVP and GM of Northern California, from Hewlett-Packard; Robert Dowling, EVP and director of the tech practice in New York, from Cohn & Wolfe; and Baxter Jolly, MD of the Singapore office, from Golin Harris. Jamie Parker, president of the tech practice in New England, left the firm. Key promotions and appointments included Rolf Olsen, to CEO in Europe; Sally Ward, to vice chairwoman in Europe; Josep Catlla, to CEO of the Brussels office.

### » Regional performance

WS plans to open a new office in Miami this spring. The agency says performance in North America last year was "very strong," particularly in the New York, California, Chicago, and Minneapolis markets. The UK and "nearly all Continental European markets" also experienced growth. Germany, Brussels, and Switzerland were cited for strong