

May 3, 2010

Weber Shandwick Repeats as Global Agency of the Year

GLOBAL AGENCY OF THE YEAR: WEBER SHANDWICK

It's easy to look at Weber Shandwick and—seeing the world's largest public relations agency with more than 80 offices in 40 countries around the world—forget that the firm is still pretty new at this “global” stuff.

Ten years ago, Weber Shandwick—formed by the merger of Shandwick International, The Weber Group, and BSMG Worldwide—had virtually no genuinely global business, and very little in the way of an international infrastructure to manage such business. It lagged the global industry leaders—firms like Burson-Marsteller and Hill & Knowlton—by 40 years.

Today, the firm works with 42 of Fortune's 50 largest global companies, almost all of them in multiple markets. It has more than 30 clients that span both multiple geographies and multiple practices. It has a leadership team second to none, with global chief executive Harris Diamond, chairman Jack Leslie and president Andy Polansky and regional presidents Cathy Calhoun (North America), Colin Byrne (EMEA), Tim Sutton (Asia-Pacific) and Laura Schoen, recently named head of Latin America. And it has strength in every key practice, from corporate communications to consumer, healthcare to technology, public affairs to digital.

Last year was a difficult one for the public relations market as a whole, and Weber Shandwick was not immune from the effects of the global recession, but the growth of its global clients—Verisign, Samsung, General Motors, Honeywell, Mars, MasterCard, Microsoft, Electrolux and Siemens among them—was one factor that helped the firm outperform its multinational peers, and 2010 has already seen some significant additions to the global client roster, including HP, AGRA, and the World Series of Boxing.

Finally, Weber Shandwick has underscored its commitment to quality with a string of successes around the world over the past 12 months. It won six awards in our first Asia-Pacific SABRE competition, more than any other agency; five in the EMEA region (again, more than any other firm), including the Platinum SABRE for Best PR Programme of the Year; and in North America picked up five Gold SABRE Awards, one Silver SABRE Award and one Bronze SABRE Award—making it the world's most awarded agency last year and helping it repeat as our Global Agency of the Year.