

# the holmesreport

PR  
Agency  
Report Card  
2007

## specialists, boutiques, small & mid-size firms

### **CooperKatz & Company** Multispecialist with strong consumer capabilities New York

Last year, we suggested that CooperKatz & Company had outgrown the “creative boutique” label that had distinguished the firm through its first decade and developed into a much broader public relations and marketing services firm. This year, it has evolved further. While still best known for its consumer and business-to-business marketing expertise, the firm is increasingly delivering a broader range of strategic communications counsel, helping clients develop distinctive brand positions and manage controversial issues. So in 2006, for example, in addition to its ongoing marketing support for Vespa (the firm created the term “Vespanomics” to capture the financial and environmental benefits of scooter ownership), CooperKatz helped the Association of National Advertisers formulate and communicate strong positions throughout its negotiations with the SAG and AFTRA talent unions and address the high-profile issue of food marketing to children and working with the American Society of Composers and Publishers to express “the voice of the music creator” on complex copyright issues in the digital realm.

It’s an approach clients appreciate. “CooperKatz has consistently met the high demands of our organization, providing superior strategic counsel, program execution and—most importantly—measurable results,” says Robert Liodice, president and CEO of the Association of National Advertisers. “Today the ANA is better known, and our value and leadership positions better understood, thanks in large part to our

terrific partnership with CooperKatz.” And Howard Handler, chief marketing officer for Virgin Mobile USA, adds: “From communicating our strategies to the business press, to introducing new service offerings and themes to the consumer media, CooperKatz has generated outstanding results through an energetic, creative and intelligent approach to our diverse public relations needs.”

Not surprisingly then, last year was the best in the firm’s history, with 20 percent growth taking fee income past the \$3 million mark for the first time. Its work for Piaggio (Vespa), Virgin Mobile and TowerGroup all enjoyed increased budget, and there were new programs for existing clients including

ASCAP, the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, Kemin Health and Waterfront Media. New business came from a diverse range of clients: Consulate General of Belgium (for economic development), Gap, and U.S. Preventive Medicine. The firm also bolstered its media training offering with a broad-based marketing and public relations training course, and saw its MicroPersuasion (blogging and social media) practice expand under the Cogence brand, handling assignments for ANA, Gap, Kauffman Foundation, NAIC, Pfizer, Piaggio, Virgin Mobile and Waterfront Media.

Principals Andy Cooper and Ralph Katz are veterans of senior management positions at Burson-Marsreller, with experience handling national assignments for blue-chip brands, and they are supported by a senior team that includes Anne Green, named general manager in 2005, and newcomers Meredith Topalanchik, who returned to CooperKatz from Alan Taylor Communications to lead the Cogence practice and the Piaggio account, and Jennifer Zwiebel, a

former public affairs officer at New York University and account leader at GCI and Ruder Finn.

The firm also continues to rank among the Best Small Agencies to Work For in our annual survey.

“We ask a lot of our employees,” says CooperKatz in its statement of values. “We want their best creative thinking; their commitment to achieving exceptional results for our clients; their loyalty to our company; and their dedication to our company’s business success. We understand that these are high expectations that will require our people to work hard, spend extra hours in the office or on the road, and endure challenging deadline and results-driven pressures. Being sensitive to these demands, we are committed to creating a collegial, team-oriented workplace in which everyone helps each other. We are respectful of individual needs to balance personal and business priorities. We recognize, value and reward individuals at all levels of the organization. We prize the individual and the team.”

Employees echo that philosophy. CooperKatz “expects a great deal from its employees [but] it also provides a wonderful network of support and encouragement to succeed at every level,” says one respondent. The culture is “extremely supportive and focused on mentoring,” says one respondent, while another says she has “more autonomy than I’ve had at other agencies where there is a tendency by higher-ups to micro-manage.”

