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## **The Castle Group launches post COVID-19 business recovery communication program**

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Sandy Lish

Boston, MA The Castle Group has launched a suite of consulting and communications services for businesses to begin planning how, post COVID-19, they will re-open to customers and employees. Seasoned Castle team members include nationally renowned medical experts, who have been providing guidance regarding protocols and safety measures, in addition to communications professionals and crisis management experts who have been working with clients on communicating across channels to external and internal audiences.

Said Castle principal Sandy Lish, “When the pandemic hit, we quickly realized that many of our crisis and retainer clients didn’t have in-house the medical and scientific perspective to inform sound short- and long-term business decisions. We immediately turned to trusted partners Dr. Michael Jaff, former hospital CEO and chief medical officer at a global medical device company, Dr. David Shulkin, former US Secretary of Veterans Affairs and hospital CEO, and Dr. Carlos Del Rio, Emory University chief of infectious disease. Their counsel to our new and existing clients has been a game changer, with one client referring to it as ‘transformative.’”

According to Jaff, companies need to be able to react to numerous questions from their stakeholders (employees, customers, local/regional regulators, sources of capital), regarding business performance and strategy, but also safety, health and ongoing protocols.

“Construction firms, developers and architects will only be able to resume operations if their employees and customers feel safe. This pandemic is unlike anything the business or medical community have seen before and will require a different approach to unifying a company’s safety, health and commerce priorities. Demonstrating a commitment to keeping stakeholders safe is not just common sense or business sense—it’s a moral and business imperative.”

Castle’s business recovery programs include two-, three- and six-month packages with a customized mix of communications and medical expertise. Castle’s events management team can supplement the packages with virtual event programs that allow companies to creatively and

effectively deliver their messages.

Jaff said, “The questions we’re already hearing businesses struggling with include how safe is it to be at work or to patronize a business, whether there will be new health screening processes required, how to protect confidentiality, how to support employees’ mental health, how to honor and communicate illnesses and/or deaths, how day-to-day work habits and work spaces may adapt, and the willingness and recognition that flexibility will win in the market. Most importantly, they need to be prepared to engage once public safety and health issues give clearance to do so and communicate that they’re open for business.”

Said Lish, “What comes next is vitally important. As communicators, we’re always planning ahead. What unifies all businesses, across sectors, is the need to balance the unknown while still planning for the future. They need to make sound business decisions about how to safely open their doors for employees, customers, patients, students, clients, vendors, subcontractors. They must effectively communicate internally and externally how they are adapting operations, services, products and protocols AND continue to demonstrate their value proposition to customers. Both the planning and communications require expert communications skills and reliance on medical and scientific expertise.”

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