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From: Morning Media
Sent: Thur 10/5/2017 9:42:02 AM
Subject: Morning Media: Crooked Media grows -- Fox & Friends expands -- NBC defends against Trump -- Newsweek retracts -- Weinstein prepares legal team

By Michael Calderone | 10/05/2017 05:40 AM EDT

"WE'RE THE NERDIEST TOURING BAND IN HISTORY," Tommy Vietor told me Wednesday while he, Jon Favreau and Jon Lovett were en route to Madison, Wisconsin. The Obama White House veterans and "Pod Save America" hosts are kicking off their 10-city tour in Madison tonight, a road trip Vietor hopes can help engage people around politics and register voters.

-- **"We come from a progressive perspective,** but we want to appeal to anyone who is interested in politics and doesn't want to hear the same canned bulls--t you hear on cable," Vietor said. The trio's frank approach to this chaotic political moment has helped propel "Pod Save America" to more than 100 million downloads since its [January launch](#), according to the company.

-- **Vietor chalked up the early success** of their company, Crooked Media, to "a combination of luck, timing and good content," along with the low barrier to entry in the podcast game. That allowed them to quickly launch shows with journalist Ana Marie Cox and activist DeRay Mckesson. On Wednesday, the company [announced](#) its expansion with a new podcast, contributors network and website, Crooked.com.

-- **Fellow Obama veterans Alyssa Mastromonaco, Ben Rhodes, and Dan Pfeiffer,** who already serves as podcast co-host, are part of the contributors network, which also includes Daily Beast culture writer Ira Madison III, author Julissa Arce, and Republican strategist Tim Miller. New Republic senior editor Brian Beutler has joined as editor-in-chief of the site. Despite hiring a well-known political writer, Vietor said "they're not going to try to get into a big volume journalism game." They wanted Beutler's writing on the site, he said, because it "cuts to the heart" of issues.

-- **Though Vietor joked that his touring group** is the only one to request WiFi in its rider, the company does boast a business model closer to today's professional musicians than most media companies. In addition to podcast ads, Crooked Media's other two main sources of revenue are merchandise and live events.

Good morning and welcome to Morning Media. Now I'm thinking the newsletter should go on the road. For now, I'll remain tethered to a computer at mcalderone@politico.com and @mlcalderone. Morning Media is edited by Alex Weprin (@alexweprin), with assistance from Daniel Lippman (@dlippman) and Cristiano Lima (@ludacristiano). [Archives](#). [Subscribe](#).

ADAM ENTOUS TO THE NEW YORKER? I'm hearing that star Washington Post national security reporter Adam Entous is heading to The New Yorker as a staff writer. The award-winning journalist joined the Post a year ago from The Wall Street Journal. Entous declined to

comment.

"AN AUDIENCE OF TRUMP": Secretary of State Rex Tillerson made a rare appearance before reporters to push back against an [NBC News report](#) claiming he had been on the verge of resigning and that he once referred to Trump as a "moron." Tillerson notably didn't deny calling Trump a "moron," instead saying he didn't want to address "petty stuff." (CNN said it also confirmed the "moron" jab.)

-- **"Tillerson basically called a news conference** to praise Trump for an audience of Trump," POLITICO's Josh Dawsey [noted](#). The president was indeed watching and jumped on Twitter immediately to claim that Tillerson "totally refuted" the NBC News report and the network "should issue an apology to AMERICA!"

-- **Stephanie Ruhle**, one of the reporters on the story, responded on MSNBC that Tillerson actually called the president a "f---ing moron," according to her sources. And Hallie Jackson said that it was "safe to say NBC News will not be issuing an apology to America."

SOUND BITE:

"Congrats to NBC News on surpassing CNN on the Trump most dishonest list. We had a good run atop the power rankings." [[Andrew Kaczynski](#)]

FOX & FRIENDS, NOW WITH MORE FRIENDS -- Alex Weprin writes: "Fox & Friends," the president's favorite morning show, is expanding to five hours per day, up from the four it currently airs. The new hour will be part of the "Fox & Friends First" franchise, and will start at 4 a.m. The regular edition of "Fox & Friends" starts at 6 a.m.

-- **Heather Childers will host the 4 a.m. hour of the program**, with Jillian Mele and Rob Schmitt anchoring from 5 to 6 a.m. The new show will start Monday, Oct. 9. When Fox News adds its new 11 p.m. hour hosted by Shannon Bream on Oct. 30, Fox News will have live programming 20 hours per day.

HOW POLITICO TRACKED PRICE'S PLANE -- Dan Diamond and Rachana Pradhan [describe](#) their reporting that led to Tom Price's resignation: "It was a tip and little else -- no times, no names of charter services and not even a schedule from a notoriously secretive cabinet secretary. So we embarked on a months-long effort to win the trust of sources, both in and outside of HHS, who were in a position to know about the secretary's travel. This required numerous meetings and phone calls, sometimes after hours, seeking to confirm what the original source acknowledged was just second-hand information. Neither of us had ever reported a story of this difficulty before."

-- **"It's a victory...for very narrowly focused beat reporting,"** The Washington Post's Erik Wemple [wrote](#) of the Politico scoop. Columbia professor Bill Grueskin [agreed](#): "Yes. A million times, yes."

FOUR JOURNALISTS ARRESTED COVERING ST. LOUIS PROTEST -- Cristiano Lima

writes: The Young Turks political reporter Jordan Chariton and his cameraman Ty Bayliss were detained overnight after covering protests over the September acquittal of Jason Stockley, a white former cop who fatally shot Anthony Lamar Smith, a black man. Two other members of the media were also detained.

-- **"St. Louis PD are out of control and all eyes must be on them,"** Chariton [tweeted](#). The reporter also said they had not yet been brought on formal charges and have since been released, and alluded to as many as seven other journalists potentially being held overnight, though the claim has not yet been verified. According to the [U.S. Press Freedom Tracker](#), the charges would bring the total number of journalists facing legal action this year to 16.

LOS ANGELES TIMES TRYING TO UNIONIZE, reports NYT's Sydney Ember: "Several people involved in the organizing push, all of whom spoke on condition of anonymity because they feared losing their jobs if they were to speak publicly about the effort, put the number of those who had signed the union cards at roughly 200."

-- **The Chandler family**, the California paper's longtime stewards before The Tribune Company (and now Tronc), was notoriously anti-union. In retaliation, union activists even [bombed](#) the Times' building just over a century ago.

WILL JEFF ZUCKER SURVIVE THE AT&T TAKEOVER? AT&T CEO Randall Stephenson said Wednesday that he aims to keep management as is following the Time Warner merger, but [didn't say anything definitive](#) about CNN chief Jeff Zucker. Vanity Fair's Sarah Ellison previously [reported](#) that CNN insiders are concerned that Zucker could be ousted from the channel once the deal closes. "We're paying a premium to get Time Warner, and when you pay a big premium, the priority is to not screw it up," Stephenson said at Vanity Fair's New Establishment Summit. "CNN's doing quite well, and the priority is to keep management teams in place... there will invariably be changes, but the hope is to keep the team in place."

RUPERT MURDOCH BATTLES BIG TECH: Back when media prognosticators were saying "information wants to be free" and publishers were still hesitant to charge for journalism, Rupert Murdoch was walling off much of News Corp.'s online content. Once out of step, Murdoch's antagonism toward tech titans has now made him a "hero" in the news business, [reports BuzzFeed's Steven Perlberg and Mark Di Stefano](#).

-- **"Murdoch and his chief newspaper lieutenant**, News Corp. CEO Robert Thomson, have taken a central role in the news industry's corporate war against Facebook and Google, technology leviathans that have eaten journalism's business model and forever changed how readers consume information," they write.

HARVEY WEINSTEIN PREPARING FOR LEGAL BATTLE: The film mogul is assembling a powerhouse team as The New York Times and The New Yorker ready pieces, [according to The Hollywood Reporter](#): "In addition to his usual attorney David Boies, Weinstein also has engaged Lisa Bloom, a Woodland Hills, Calif.-based lawyer and television personality specializing in sexual harassment cases (and the daughter of Gloria Allred), as well as Charles Harder, the Beverly Hills-based litigator who represented Hulk Hogan in the invasion of privacy

trial that brought down the Gawker website. Other lawyers also are said to be advising the mogul."

LAS VEGAS CONSPIRACY VIDEOS SPREAD ON YOUTUBE -- BuzzFeed's Charlie Warzel: One possible explanation for the glut of conspiracy content in the aftermath of the shooting is that there was simply a lack of reliable information being uploaded - vetted news reports from trusted outlets often take longer. However, the problem persisted long after reliable reports were available: On Tuesday night - nearly 48 hours after the shooting began - YouTube was still surfacing conspiratorial content high in search results.

NEWSWEEK RETRACTS STORY ON SHOOTER'S GIRLFRIEND: The magazine noted: "The initial report was based on the marriage record of [Marilou] Danley, who was known under a different name when she married Geary Danley in Clark County, Nevada. Newsweek mistakenly matched that record to a second public record of a different person."

BEYOND LAS VEGAS: I wrote Tuesday on the "grim routine" of covering mass shootings. At The Columbia Journalism Review, Karen K. Ho and Alexandria Neason are urging news organizations to resist now all-too-common ways of framing such deadly events after finding patterns in coverage. "As mass shootings become an increasingly common fixture of American life, and subsequently of American news coverage," they write, "journalists are uniquely poised to help shake the public discourse as repeat traumas threaten to desensitize us."

REVOLVING DOOR:

Warren Bass, a senior editor at the Wall Street Journal's weekend Review section, is joining Penguin Press as executive editor. He previously worked at the Washington Post and the State Department and served on the staff of the 9/11 Commission.

EXTRAS:

-- Facebook and Twitter to testify before Congress on Russia and the 2016 election.

-- Breitbart's Steve Bannon is reportedly backing Michael Grimm, the former New York Congressman and convicted felon trying to take back his old seat. (Grimm also once threatened to break a NY1 reporter in half for asking questions he didn't like).

-- New York Times political reporter Jeremy Peters returns to St. Thomas -- where he once worked for the Virgin Islands Daily New -- to cover the aftermath of two hurricanes.

-- Malcolm Gladwell edited Car and Driver magazine's package on self-driving cars.

-- ESPN is developing late-night show off the "Pardon My Take" podcast.

KICKER

"One legitimate criticism of the political press over the last two decades has been the appearance

of coziness between people in the media and the political elite. It's a lot easier for me, say, as a sports fan to accept a personal fandom, whereas in politics, I'm not going to tell anybody whom I vote for, not even my kids, who ask me all the time, because their friends ask them." -- *NBC's Chuck Todd to the New York Times Magazine.*

To view online:

<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-media/2017/10/05/crooked-media-grows-fox-friends-expands-nbc-defends-against-trump-newsweek-retracts-weinstein-prepares-legal-team-222647>

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