



Qorvis Acquired in Management-Led Buyout

Group Eyes Global Expansion with New Vision at Nexus of Finance, Transparency, and Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. - December 31, 2022 - A team of Qorvis executives and diverse talent from around the world has acquired 100% of Qorvis.

Led by long-time Qorvis executive Matt J. Lauer, the management buyout team is motivated to more effectively serve clients in the face of an increasingly volatile geopolitical environment and the growing headwinds of a rapidly changing global economy.

“We are a reborn agency, ready to leverage our 20-year legacy. Serving at the nexus of finance, transparency, and public affairs, we provide shareholders and sovereigns with access to capital and influence,” says Lauer. “In the coming weeks, we look forward to unveiling the new Qorvis brand, reimagined to help our clients meet their most critical communications and reputational challenges.”

The management buyout team includes:

Matt J. Lauer, Chief Executive Officer. With Qorvis since 2004, Lauer founded the agency’s public diplomacy brand and manages communications campaigns for multinational corporations and sovereign governments. In the aftermath of 9/11, he served as executive director of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy at the Department of State under Secretary Colin L. Powell, and he advises the board of Mercuria Energy Trading, one of the largest commodities traders in the world, as global head of public affairs.

Maria Jose Abad, Chief Operating Officer. Currently a vice president at Qorvis, for over a decade she has advised consumer and corporate clients and sovereign governments on strategic communications and event management in Europe, Africa, and South America. Originally from Ecuador, she’s been named among Huffington Post’s 40 Top Latinos in American Media, 50 Top Latino Voices to Follow on Twitter, and 7 Young Latinos in Online Media.

Samantha Sault, Chief Editorial Officer. Sault is the founder of The Samantha Sault Agency, which provides bespoke editorial content and custom newsrooms to clients worldwide. She has 15 years of experience in media and communications in D.C. and Geneva, notably as vice president of communications for the U.S. Fashion Industry Association and an editor in the World Economic Forum’s Davos content newsroom. A Hachette Book Group author, she began her career as a digital editor at The Weekly Standard.

Richard Silipigni, Chief Development Officer. After leading the strategy behind the inception, growth, and ultimate acquisition of Bluetext, one of the top digital agencies in the U.S., Silipigni returns to Qorvis to lead business development and expand the agency’s full spectrum of digital-first branding, content, and policy communication strategies. Previously, he held top sales positions with WTOP Radio and the Washington Redskins.



Özkan Yilmaz, Chief Financial Officer. Based in Geneva, Yilmaz has a decade of experience in banking, commodities, and structured finance in oil and gas, first at ING in New York, Amsterdam, and London, then as vice president of principal investments at Mercuria Energy Trading.

Grace Fenstermaker, Managing Partner, EMEA. As she returns to Qorvis, Fenstermaker will oversee campaigns for sovereign governments and multinational corporations from Dubai, primarily in the energy and banking sectors. She has served as a public affairs advisor to SOCAR Trading, Wellbred Trading, and Novum Energy. She was a media strategy advisor to Egypt's Office of the Presidential Spokesperson during the country's 2014 election and began her career at Fox News.

Brad Klapper, Managing Partner, Washington, D.C. Currently a senior vice president at Qorvis, Klapper has advised foreign ministers, ambassadors, CEOs, and global religious leaders on communications, strategy, and geopolitical dynamics. Previously, he was an award-winning writer and editor at The Associated Press, covering the biggest stories in world affairs and reporting from more than 70 countries.

Brian Lewis, Global Head of Compliance. Based in Geneva, Lewis has over 20 years of experience in directing compliance programs for global commodities traders and banks, and will bring this expertise to the agency and its clients. Previously, he was compliance director for Gunvor Group and Cargill, and worked at Standard Chartered Bank, BNP Paribas, and Noble Group.

Qorvis will remain headquartered in Washington, D.C., with immediate plans to build upon its existing presence in Dubai, Geneva, Brussels, and Barcelona, balancing the need for global, round-the-clock talent in all time zones with the desire to nurture a culture that includes in-person creative collaboration between all team members and clients.

The agency will retain the name Qorvis, and will launch a new brand identity and vision in the coming weeks.

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