

PRWeek

Middleberg Communications acquires The Dowd Agency

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NEW YORK: Middleberg Communications acquired New York-based The Dowd Agency, in its [second](#) acquisition of 2009. Middleberg Communications will operate with The Dowd Agency as the consumer division, phasing out the name by 2011.

Don Middleberg, CEO of New York's Middleberg Communications, will serve as CEO of the combined firms. Jim Dowd, founder and CEO of Dowd Agency, will serve as MD, head of the consumer division, and a principal of the parent company. Middleberg and Dowd did not disclose the transaction price, but the company reported that combined revenue from the two firms will exceed \$4 million. Middleberg ranked 110 in PRWeek's 2009 Agency Business Report with revenues of about \$2.7 million.

"We've really wanted to grow a significant consumer group and Jim's firm is superb at it," Middleberg said. "They have some wonderful consumer clients, among them Yahoo. Jim comes with expertise that is completely complementary to what our skill sets are." For example, Dowd handles broadcast PR for Yahoo. A number of the agency's clients are media companies like A&E, Fox, and Turner.

Dowd told *PRWeek* that the decision was "not a deal that was done for financial reasons," saying that his firm is up 20% year-to-date, thanks to expanded work with Jim Beam and IFC. Dowd said he and Middleberg had been discussing the deal for a while, and that there were offers from two other firms on the table.

"The other two offers I turned down because they primarily were not willing to take more than one or two employees," Dowd said. "What Don and his team offer is a whole level of services and capabilities that we could never dream to buy or offer." He added that Middleberg's senior-heavy staff will also complement Dowd Agency's more junior-level staff.

All employees and clients from both firms will continue on with Middleberg Communications and, Dowd said, "two clients requested expanded business with us." The new firm is also in the process of signing a lease near New York's Grand Central, Middleberg said, as neither current office is big enough to accommodate all staff.