

hanover opens in Brussels with Hierholzer hire

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London-based agency **hanover** communications international has hired the head of Weber Shandwick's Brussels public affairs practice, Christian Hierholzer. After a six-month search, Hierholzer has accepted an offer to lead **hanover**'s new Brussels office as Managing Director and will be starting in April.

Hierholzer, 39, has been tasked with growing a quality strategic communications and public affairs business and filling the 'independent agency' gap left by recent acquisition of some independent consultancies in the Brussels market.

hanover is one of the leading UK-based independent agencies. The new Brussels-based team will initially focus on growing a footprint in a number of key policy sectors including:

- Healthcare
- Financial services
- Technology, media and telecoms
- Sustainability and climate change

Hierholzer said: "**hanover** has ambitious plans and I have been given the freedom and resources to take a bold, entrepreneurial approach in building a team of consultants within priority disciplines. It was a natural choice for me; my experience is a good match for **hanover**'s existing expertise, and sector specialisms. This is an exciting time to be launching a new venture in Brussels with a new Commission and a relatively new Parliament in place. A lot of things are happening in our initial focus areas which will rank at the top of the EU's policy agenda over the next few years."

hanover international Managing Director Charles Lewington said: "It is the right time for us to be launching our Brussels office, building a genuinely pan-European team to offer our integrated communications solutions to clients. We have talked to a number of senior figures in the Brussels scene and were flattered by the interest of so many in our plans. Christian has a strong intellectual grasp of the key issues affecting our major corporate clients and a brilliant understanding of the strategic drivers of business. We are expecting great things from him."

There is growing expectation in the corporate world of the need for stronger representation for UK based companies. Under a possible Conservative government in the UK, Ministers and MEPs – who sit outside the EPP – will have to work harder to protect UK business interests.

David Wheeldon, Director of Policy and Public Affairs at BSkyB said, "**hanover**'s project management approach is just what the Brussels' public affairs scene needs."

Andrew McCall, Director, Global Government Affairs for Jaguar LandRover adds: "**hanover** will provide a welcome new service for those of us who need to keep abreast of regulatory developments in the automotive sector"

Hierholzer adds: “The European expertise of the London team is already impressive and **hanover** has made it clear that it only wants to hire the best that Brussels has to offer to supplement this capability. Despite having had an amazing time at Weber Shandwick over the last six years, I am personally delighted to have this opportunity to create an operation from scratch.”

Prior to his role at Weber Shandwick, Christian was Personal Assistant to German MEP Karl-Heinz Florenz (Member and former Chair of the European Parliament’s Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety). He has an MBA from the prestigious IESE Business School Barcelona.

Hierholzer will also be a Director of the UK business and member of the senior management team. From day one he will be supported by senior consultant Michael Cooper, formerly of the CBI in Brussels, who is a financial services specialist and has been co-ordinating **hanover**’s European advisory service from London. This core team will be supplemented as required by researchers and senior consultants with a range of European experience and flexible language skills which include fluency in Spanish, French, German, Italian, and Swedish.

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Notes to Editors

hanover’s blue-chip client list include the BskyB, Diageo, Unilever, Convatec, Baxter, Association of British Pharmaceutical Industries, the American Pharmaceutical Group, Santander, Association of British Insurers, 3, Microsoft and HPES.

hanover is one of London’s leading corporate communications and public affairs agencies, with 40 clients across healthcare, financial services, media, telecoms and technology. Hanover was established by Charles Lewington, former Press Secretary to British Prime Minister John Major. Other Directors are former Department of Health media and policy specialist Andrew Harrison and ex H&K Directors James Gurling and Sarah Richards.