



ICR strengthens presence in Asia

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By Danielle Drolet

NEW YORK: Robert Koepp has joined ICR Asia as SVP, further expanding the strategic financial communications firm's presence in the region. The agency also recently moved its Beijing operation into a new, larger office.

"We've been building our presence in Asia for about four years," said Ashley De Simone, co-head and MD of ICR Asia. "What we basically did in the fall of last year was we put a lot more capital to work there. I think it's a better way for us to demonstrate our presence in Asia now that we have the more senior team augmented and a better office."

Koepp's hiring steps up ICR Asia's senior staff to four, which includes De Simone, Bill Zima, co-head and MD, and Jeremy Peruski, SVP, who was hired in late August 2010. Peruski was the co-founder of Welkin Media, consulting with companies such as Beijing Television and LoongStore. De Simone is based in New York, while the others are in Beijing. ICR Asia's total headcount is at 11.

Client work in Asia, specifically China has grown for ICR, said De Simone. Last summer, the agency worked on the IPOs for China New Borun and China Kanghui Medical. Since Q4 2010, ICR has signed on Tudou, Country Style Chicken, Xueda Education Group, Lentuo International, Global Education, and Zuoan Fashion.

"We bring a global approach to the China business," said Ashley De Simone, co-head of ICR Asia and MD. "The companies in China who are raising capital outside of there, when they hire us, they get a senior team in the United States -where most of the investors are- who are dedicated to them, along with the team in Beijing."

As SVP, Koepp will be responsible for delivering customized communications consulting for companies navigating the capital markets. Previously, he worked as MD of a Sino-foreign investment subsidiary at CITIC Group, one of China's largest state-owned financial conglomerates. Koepp also had experience as a financial advisor to institutional investors and as a strategy consultant to Asian and Western governments, and multinationals. He worked with clients from China's telecommunications, media, technology, consumer, and healthcare markets, as well as companies pursuing IPOs.