

Gift of gab...



Tory media handler **Ed Staite** (pictured) has left the Tories for a tidy lobbying post at Burson-Marsteller. Flack asked former boss and self-confessed hater of spin (hell, it's the party line) **Boris Johnson** what he thought of Staite. 'Ed Staite is a god-gifted spin doctor, a veteran master of strategy and all round general of the political battleground,' oozed Johnson. 'I would unhesitatingly recommend him to anyone who wants to win any comms battle.' That's Boris Johnson recommending spin. You read it here first... **Blue Rubicon** was among those to lose out last week when **Channel 4** had to pull part of its lunchtime bulletin due to the rapid evacuation of its staff. At the time poor old

Blue Rubicon was waiting for coverage of a 'Green Streets' campaign it worked on for British Gas. But the news programme was replaced by a documentary instead. Blue Rubicon staff were said to be 'alarmed'... MC2 is advising on the launch of a really rather plush hotel in Manchester. **Velvet Hotel** on Canal Street exists in the building that formerly housed Communique PR, having been sold by founder **Paul Carroll** to new proprietor, **Mark Hayes**. Carroll's feeling about the new hotel? 'I'm delighted to have been able to sell this building to Mark,' he beamed. 'After all, what better business to replace Communique than a hotel like Velvet? Long may the fun, frivolity, drinking and shagging continue!'



ON EXPENSES

The Botanist, London, SW1

Reviewer Sam Holl, senior account manager, Geronimo Communications

What's it good for?

Situated in über-trendy Sloane Square, The Botanist offers a stylish and upmarket dining experience, but without the intrusive waiting staff and steep prices that many of its rivals suffer from. A great location for lunches or trips to The Royal Court Theatre, opposite.

Signature dishes

There is nothing you haven't seen before, but everything I tried looked good and tasted even better. The tagliatelle with goat's cheese and artichokes on the lunch menu is not to be missed. A welcome touch is the selection of wines by the glass for the working luncher.

Who's the boss?

The Botanist is the latest venture from entrepreneurial brothers Tom and Ed Martin, who are also behind The Gun in Docklands and The Well in Clerkenwell, while the head chef is Shannon Wilson. Lady Lavinia Blundell-White is reservations manager.

Tips please?

Book in advance as The Botanist has been packed to the rafters since its opening, and do not forget to sample some of the venue's cocktails in the sleek front bar, which is as much a draw as the restaurant itself.
7-12 Sloane Square, London, SW1 8EE
020 7730 0077

1 Promoting a 4x4? Want coverage? How about massive pictures of **Zara Phillips**? Trimedia UK controversially used Phillips in a Land Rover exhibition. Royals aren't supposed to represent commercial outfits but Phillips was described as a 'non-working' royal. Is that a tautology?



2 Heather Mills has been dropped by another publicist. This time the PRO to part ways with the Beatle-seducing former model was Michele Elyzabeth, who declared Mills 'impossible' to work with. Phil Hall dropped the 'star' last year after TV rants.



3 'Angel Cabrera is about to come off the course and we really need someone who can speak Spanish to translate for the press conference,' said the chief press officer for the European Tour at the Scottish Open last month. Step forward Synergy Communications media manager Kelly Russell...



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