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[2017 Marcum MicroCap Conference to Shed Light on Washington's Impact on Small Caps – Q&A with David Bukzin](#)

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After a strong post-election run-up in the market, volatility is creeping back in as Wall Street's uncertainty grows on whether the Trump administration will be able to deliver on its economic agenda. As corporate executives and investors try to piece together their own outlooks, information and networking will be key to identifying opportunities and potential challenges going forward.

With that in mind, the **2017 Marcum MicroCap Conference** looks to address these topical issues head-on in what is shaping up to be another record-turnout year for the event. Held at the on June 15-16, 2017 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York, this year's MicroCap Conference is expected to feature larger-profile presenting companies and attendees than in previous years, building upon the event's status as an industry staple for the small-cap community.

Equities.com spoke with David Bukzin, Partner-in-Charge of Marcum's New York City office and its Assurance Services division, to see what's in store for this year's

conference, which includes big-name keynotes like Larry Kudlow, James Carville and Mary Matalin, as well as pertinent panels and exciting companies that attendees have come to expect from the Marcum MicroCap Conference.

EQ: We're just a couple weeks away from the 2017 Marcum MicroCap Conference. The conference itself has quickly become one of the premiere events in this space, and this year's event already looks to be outpacing last year's record numbers. What can we expect at this year's conference?

Bukzin: Well, we've built the framework for the conference and have really been focused on enhancing the attendee's experience over these last six years. One example is attracting higher-quality presenting companies, and this year's attendees will notice that the average market cap of the companies presenting is greater than in years past. We're also happy to report that many of the presenting companies have been at the conference six years in a row!

We're also thrilled at the quality of the attendees. We know the presenting companies are primarily interested in meeting with investors and to network with investors, as well as buyers and analysts and the investment community. So, I am happy to say that the concentration of that part of the MicroCap community continues to support the conference and turn out in record numbers.

EQ: The Marcum MicroCap Conference is geared toward companies and investors of the \$500 million and under market cap segment of the market. This is a very distinct segment of the market that has very different opportunities and challenges than that of the larger-cap, blue-chip space. What are some of the challenges that these companies face?

Bukzin: Absolutely. Blue-chip companies, and even Fortune 1000 companies, are followed by analysts, and are listed on major exchanges. So, they have big followings, diverse shareholder bases, and easier access to capital and liquidity. That's the challenge for the smaller end of the market, which is the market that we focus on. Certainly, while most of the companies presenting will be on some recognized exchanges as well, there are also companies that have not graduated to an exchange, and, as a result, many institutions can't invest in them. That impacts the liquidity of these companies. So, if you're not on an exchange, it's harder to raise capital, build liquidity and public awareness.

EQ: You mentioned the framework of the conference earlier, which has remained consistent over the years. How do you tailor the conference to help address the particular needs of small-cap and microcap companies and their potential investors?

Bukzin: You really need to enhance the quality of the offering, which means attracting the investors and other interested parties who want to meet these presenting companies. As you raise the quality of the audience, you get a better quality of presenting companies. It's about raising the quality of the conference, from the interactions, the way we do the

one-on-one meetings, to even the quality of the food and the entertainment. We're always trying to improve on how we conduct this event so people see it as a first-rate event. This attracts more of the buyers and sellers, if you will, in terms of the investment community and presenting companies, and the conference becomes a must-attend event. This helps our firm from a brand awareness and marketing standpoint, as well as the service providers that help support us because they want to be associated with high-quality business events.

EQ: One of the pillars of the conference each year is the quality of speakers that you bring. Obviously, the political and regulatory environment is the dominant theme and driving force for the market right now. Can you talk about the keynote speakers you're featuring this year to help shed light on this topic?

Bukzin: Well, we all operate in an ecosystem that is affected by geopolitical events. So, really understanding what's happening at the highest level and how it affects each service and each industry that a company operates in is critical. Having a sense of what's going to occur and where the political trade winds blow is critical to every CEO and CFO and their investors.

So, this year we're really excited to have well-known economist Larry Kudlow speaking on what's happening from Wall Street to Washington. I am expecting a real drill-down in how business will be affected by the geopolitical headwinds. He is a wonderful speaker and that will be a lot of fun. We're also excited to be hosting a moderated debate between long-time Democrat and well-known speaker James Carville and his wife, well-known conservative Republican Mary Matalin. And I'm going to be in the middle of them both, trying to stir it up and make it an interesting experience for our audience.

From them, I'm expecting a little bit more of an entertainment factor and really focusing on what's happening with the current administration. So, they'll be assessing topics like the economy, immigration, and health care. We're going to just duke it out and see what the conservative and liberal angles are on a lot of these topics.

EQ: The panels are also a major draw each year. This year's panel discussions include a few staples like "Uplisting to an Exchange" and "Best Practices in Corporate Governance, Legal and Accounting Matters." There are also some very topical ones like "Chinese Investment in the United States" and "Up in Smoke? How to Invest in the Cannabis Industry", as well as several panels on capital raising for small-cap companies. Can you tell us about how you curated the topics and speakers for this year's panel lineup?

Bukzin: When we built this conference, we really wanted to give it kind of a symposium feel. Not only is it a meeting and networking event, but it's heavy on the educational aspect as well. We at Marcum like to think of ourselves as thought leaders. So, the event that we produce, we like to avail the attendees an opportunity to really put leadership in various aspects of topics that affect the companies that are presenting. We typically

divide the topics into two types. One set of topics is geared toward the interests of issuers, CEOs, CFOs and other top management.

The other half of the topics are for the investment community; whether it's the life sciences panel or the China panel or the cannabis industry panel. Part of the reason that I think our conference has been such a success is it's not a one-dimensional event. You have great presenting companies, and on top of that, you have interesting panels. So, you can come and look into the cannabis panel and then go see one or two presentations by cannabis companies. Or, you can sit in on the life sciences panel to get takeaway on them, and then go sit in on four or five of the life sciences companies that are presenting. So, we really want to make the event conducive for you to come there, stay and just take in a lot of information, so that you hopefully walk away with some good ideas and some knowledge that you didn't have prior to the event.

EQ: Obviously, the key component of the conference are the presenting companies, which want to tell their stories and the opportunities they offer to the investors that are attending. Can you talk about this year's makeup of presenting companies?

Bukzin: The makeup of companies is really a cross-section of the marketplace. We generally have seven principle industries:

- Technology, Media & Internet
- Software & Business Services
- Life Sciences & Healthcare
- Retail & Consumer Products
- Energy & Natural Resources
- Industrials
- Financial & Asset Management Services

Between those seven industries, that covers 90% of the marketplace, and then there are certain unique companies that possibly don't fit within those sectors that we will include as well.

EQ: Looking at Marcum itself, the firm has been growing remarkably over the past few years. Can you give us some recent highlights?

Bukzin: Well, the firm continues to grow. We were thrilled to make our most recent acquisition and we announced it last week. We acquired a firm with offices in Maine, Connecticut and New York and about 60 professionals at the firm. Marcum today has about 1,600 people. We have continued to be recognized as one of the top 15 firms in the United States. We are also continually recognized as the seventh largest auditor of public companies in the US and we're proud to say that for the last two years running, other than the Big Four, we've been the top auditor on IPOs in the US. So, we're really excited about that, and the firm is marching along just as well as can be expected.

For more information on the Marcum MicroCap Conference, visit <http://marcumllp.com/MicroCap/>

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