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The Morning Leverage: Deal Market Loosens Up

In this morning's media roundup:

News: Looks like Goldner Hawn's New Year's resolution is to [complete a Marathon](#) this year. Or rather, complete fund-raising for Marathon VI, a vehicle the firm put on hold last February. However, Goldner has reduced the distance it will have to run, opting for a target of \$250 million rather than the previously announced \$350 million. Read more details via [LBO Wire](#).

Although massages as part of due diligence would normally raise eyebrows and legal implications, in Sentinel Capital Partners' latest deal for massage franchiser Massage Envy, it was business as usual. While it initially regarded massages as discretionary spending, and therefore very susceptible to the downturn, Sentinel, which teamed up with Golub Capital and Princeton Ventures for the deal, eventually loosened up. The LBO Wire story is [here](#).

Re-Bath LLC's survival of the worst housing crisis in memory was enough to convince Fifth Street Finance to help finance Webster Capital and Soerenson Capital's purchase of the bathroom remodeler. "If it survived this, it's got to be a decent company," Leonard Tennenbaum told [LBO Wire](#). Separately, Fifth Street had a banner month to cap off 2009, committing \$208 million in senior secured debt to 4 PE deals in [December](#).

Analysis: Bankruptcy was a word we saw far too often during 2009. [The Wall Street Journal](#) takes a look at the changed nature of proceedings, and whether some of the drive-thru restructurings (including that of Chrysler) will hold up in years to come.

Thankfully, we needn't worry about what's to come in 2010. The Blackstone Group's Byron Wien has gazed into his crystal ball and given us predictions for everything ranging from rate increases by the Federal Reserve to the ouster of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. See his "Top Ten Surprises For 2010" [here](#).

Some ventures are too risky, even for private equity, and NASCAR appears to be one of them. Ray Evernham pontificates to [Insider Racing News](#) on why a "predicted influx of PE ownership in NASCAR never took hold." Boston Ventures might disagree, though. Last year, the firm combined portfolio company Petty Holdings with Evernham's former club, [Gillett Evernham Motorsports](#). Perhaps PE is just riding the brakes for the moment.

Just For Fun: [This Wall Street Journal story](#) is a serious take on the likelihood of more private equity firms going public this year. But we have to say, the lead just makes us giggle.