DDB Promotes Regional Leaders to Global Positions

DDB has elevated two of its leaders to new global positions.

Alex Hesz is taking on the role of global chief strategy officer. Hesz previously led strategy for both the network's EMEA region and London-based creative agency adam&eveDDB. He will continue to serve as adam&eveDDB's group chief strategy officer in his new role.

Meanwhile, Roisin "Ro" Rooney is becoming global chief people officer of DDB. She formerly held the chief people officer role for DDB's EMEA region.

Their appointments are the latest in a string of leadership changes at the Omnicom-owned agency network, which has 200 offices around the world.

Over the summer, DDB promoted Marty O'Halloran to global CEO, a role he took on following a 15-year run as chairman and CEO of the network's Australia and New Zealand offices. Additionally, Justin Thomas-Copeland became CEO of the network's North America region. Thomas-Copeland previously served as global CEO of OPMG Health, a division of Omnicom Precision Marketing Group.

Both took over roles held by Wendy Clark, who left DDB earlier this year to lead Dentsu International. Last year, Clark promoted Ari Weiss to global chief creative officer of DDB. He formerly served as chief creative officer for DDB North America.

According to DDB, Hesz and Rooney, who are both based in London, will remain there for the time being. "If Covid has

taught us anything, it’s that teams can connect from anywhere,” O’Halloran said. “There is no plan for either of them to move, although they will be in our offices across the world when we can travel again.”

Hesz has been with adam&eveDDB for nearly 10 years in various roles. He’s worked with clients including Lloyds Banking Group, BlackRock, Booking.com, Virgin Media, Beam Suntory, Mars and Unilever.

Rooney has held several roles at DDB over the past 20 years. As global chief people officer, she will be tasked with leading recruitment, retention, leadership development and training at DDB.

“I am thrilled to elevate our current leaders from within the network into these roles,” O’Halloran said in a statement. “Things are changing rapidly, and we’re moving at pace to stay ahead. Alex brings an incredible track record from adam&eveDDB, an agency known for its legendary work and clients. Ro’s experience in EMEA with growing the network, fostering our talent and creating culture will ensure we are helping our people through this challenging time and into the future.”

As to why DDB is focused on expanding its global team with new roles, O’Halloran said in a statement to Adweek, “We’re a global organization and I’m rewarding, recognizing and elevating the best talent we have to lead the next stage of our growth.”

DDB works with clients including Volkswagen and the U.S. Army. The agency has recently lost business from brands including McDonald’s and Capital One.

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