Geometry Promotes Manuel Bordé to Global Chief Creative Officer

Geometry, the “creative commerce” agency that WPP folded into VMLY&R last month, has promoted Manuel Bordé to global chief creative officer.

Bordé previously served as chief creative officer of Geometry’s North America region, a position he took on a little over a year ago. The last person to hold the global chief creative officer role at the agency was Jon Hamm, who left in October 2019.

Starting next year, Geometry will become VMLY&R Commerce as part of its recent merger. According to Geometry, Bordé will play an “instrumental role in launching the new company” and serve as a “global creative partner” to VMLY&R CEO Beth Ann Kaminkow.

At this point, it’s still somewhat unclear how, or to what extent, the merger will impact Geometry’s operations. Last month, Kaminkow told Adweek it could result in “some back-office efficiencies,” but did not elaborate further. At the time of the announcement, WPP said the merger would combine the “talent and scale of two thriving global offerings.”

Throughout his career, Bordé has held a number of creative roles at agencies including DDB and TBWA. He’s worked across Dubai, Puerto Rico, Panama and Colombia in these roles.

As Geometry’s North America chief creative officer, he helped lead a number of projects including a campaign for Trident gum

that involved a collaboration with T-Pain. The “ChewTunes” contest asked people to create an “original beat” with help from a customized Instagram filter for a chance to win a cash prize or a trip to the 63rd Grammy Awards.

Under Bordé’s leadership, Geometry North America also recently worked on a virtual voter registration event for When We All Vote, a nonprofit organization launched by Michelle Obama and a host of other celebrities in 2018. According to the agency, it helped “bring this event to life on Instagram Live.”

He’s also helped the agency win clients such as Bose, 3M and American Greetings since joining. In a statement, Kaminkow said Bordé’s impact “has been widely felt across the creative community in both North America and globally, fueling a resurgence of creative energy that inspires our teams and clients to continually push for more novel, inventive ideas and work.”

Bordé told Adweek that he wants to “build and nurture a truly global creative community” in his new role.

“My hope is that as a community, we become less reactive and more proactive, always keeping in mind the business needs of our clients, while inviting other voices and disciplines to the table for more diverse perspectives,” he said. “This will mean leading by example, not just getting involved from afar, and adopting an open door policy where collaboration is paramount to elevating our work output.”

Globally, Geometry has roughly 3,250 employees across 40 markets. Some of its clients include Coca-Cola, Danone, General Mills, GSK, John Deer, KFC, Kimberly-Clark, Twitter, Mondelez, Uber and Walgreens Boots Alliance.

This summer, Geometry’s Peru office worked with Skyy Vodka to create a glass inspired by the Pride flag. In the U.K., Geometry worked with WPP agencies MediaCom and Ogilvy last Christmas on elaborate holiday campaign for retail chain Boots

that involved the creation of physical and online “Bootiques” catering to different interests.

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MullenLowe Taps Chris Denson as Director of Innovation

Chris Denson’s career has flowed through several streams of the marketing ecosystem. And it can be a challenge to assign an overly specific title to his prodigious experience: He’s lived in advertising, entertainment, technology, content creation and leadership. Seeing an opportunity to leverage so many tools, MullenLowe has tapped Denson as the agency’s innovation director….
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Catherine Levene Named New President of Meredith’s National Media Group

Magazine publisher Meredith has appointed Catherine Levene as its new president, replacing Jon Werther who left the corporation in 2019.

In her new role, Levene will oversee all National Media Group activities from Meredith Magazines to Meredith Consumer Product, and report to CEO Tom Harty, who describes Levene as "relentless in pursuing the best experiences" for both consumers and advertisers.

Levene has a strong history with the company. Under her leadership as chief digital officer, Meredith launched a first-party data studio, optimized content performance and expanded digital advertising revenues. In addition, the National Media Group saw a 38% increase in total advertising revenue, published 30% more videos and introduced new multi-platform brands. Levene is also proud of the company's diversity and inclusion efforts and is a sponsor of :BLACKPRINT, Meredith's Black employee resource group.

"I am excited for the future of the National Media Group under her leadership, and I am proud and thrilled to see Catherine make history as Meredith's first female corporate officer," Harty said in a statement.

Levene has spent her entire career in the media industry, working for companies like The New York Times and Daily Candy before moving to the Meredith Corporation in January 2019. As Meredith's National Media Group's president, Levene is focused on maintaining the company's history of serving American women of all ages. The media group reaches nearly 95% of U.S. women through brands like PEOPLE, Better Homes & Gardens and Allrecipes.

Levene also noted the company's ability to overcome challenges of the pandemic, adapting a print guarantee program to advertisers in April.

"I am extremely proud of what our Digital team has

accomplished," she said in a statement. "Together, we have powered through the Covid-19 pandemic to find more innovative ways to meet the demands of consumers and advertisers alike across our business. These examples prove Meredith's commitment to serving women at every stage of their lives by creating the information and experiences they have grown to know and trust from our brands."

"I am grateful to work for a company committed to becoming a more diverse and inclusive employer and ultimately to serving our audiences and customers in an even more rich and impactful way," she added.

Emmy Liederman
Emmy is an Adweek contributor who is completing her journalism degree at The College of New Jersey with minors in Spanish and broadcast journalism.

Recommended articles
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My Mantra: Deutsch's Val DiFebo on the Power of 'Yes'

In perhaps one of the odder nods to marketing in entertainment, one line in the 1995 film Tommy Boy rings true. While talking to clients, Big Tom (played by the late Brian Dennehy) says, "Why say no when it feels so good to say yes?"

That spirit of “yes” drives Deutsch New York CEO Val DiFebo, and is an essential mantra that she follows in her daily life. It’s so prominent that a large neon sign with the word greets people when they walk into her office.

Di Febo’s philosophy is the first of several lessons in Adweek’s first episode of “My Mantra,” a new video series asking marketing and advertising leaders about what motivates them.

In her mind, starting with a positive like this gives people “permission and the right and the power to do the things they want.” DiFebo, a longtime practitioner of positive leadership, believes this empowering approach lets people feel an investment in their futures.

More personally, for DiFebo, it’s not about doling out a “yes” without good reason. Sometimes, people may not be ready for the affirmative. But, in every case, she guides, teaches and encourages the agency’s talent to think the issue at hand through first.

Then, when the magic word is uttered, it becomes more powerful for everyone.

Recommended articles
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Former Zappos CEO, Tony Hsieh, Dies at Age 46

For all of the deserved plaudits for building a paradigm-changing ecommerce giant in Zappos, Tony Hsieh had a profound presence in his adopted hometown, Las Vegas. The former CEO, who died Friday from injuries suffered in a Connecticut house fire at age 46, was a champion of the city's downtown area, that he worked to revitalize.

In a tweet, Nevada's governor, Steve Sisolak, said that Hsieh "played a pivotal role in helping transform Downtown Las Vegas."

His dedication was part and parcel of what Hsieh brought building Zappos. The company was famous for a flat corporate structure that inspired and empowered employees to do whatever was in the customer's best interest. For consumers, Zappos was a revelation, allowing for free returns in a time when that practice was far from common.

"Tony's kindness and generosity touched the lives of everyone around him, and forever brightened the world," read a statement to the Las Vegas Review-Journal from spokesperson Megan Fazio of DTP Companies, which ran the downtown Las Vegas revitalization project. "Delivering happiness was always his mantra, so instead of mourning his transition, we ask you to join us in celebrating his life."

Zappos started as ShoeSite.com in 1999. Hsieh, who retired as CEO in August after 21 years, invested in the company and took over as CEO, changing its name. From the beginning, Zappos' customer service philosophy was the thing of legend and based on the simple concept of happiness, whether it was the company's employees or customers. A 2010 book he wrote, "Delivering Happiness," chronicled his customer service philosophy.

In 2004, Hsieh moved the company from the Bay Area to

Henderson, Nev., just outside of Las Vegas. As ecommerce started to accelerate, Zappos was the beneficiary of rabid fans and evangelists, resulting in massive growth topping $1 billion in sales in 2009. That same year, Hsieh sold Zappos to Amazon for an estimated $1.2 billion, an enormous sum for an ecommerce startup at that time.

After selling the company, Hsieh started pointing his efforts, while still running the company, to revitalizing the Freemont Street area of Las Vegas, long dwarfed by the city's iconic Strip.

According to the Las Vegas Review-Journal, he invested $350 million into real estate, tech startups and other ventures in 2012. Hsieh then moved Zappos to the former 11-story city hall in the area in 2013. He stepped down leading the Downtown Project in 2014 and, by 2017, had accumulated around 90 properties.

For all of his achievements and impact, Hsieh was never a big personality. He often deflected praise to his employees that drove a wildly successful business.

Guy Raz, on Twitter, may have summed up Hseih's manner most accurately, saying, "When I interviewed Tony Hsieh for @HowIBuiltThis he was so soft-spoken, modest and understated that I had to literally ask him to 'brag' about his incredible achievements. RIP."

Recommended articles
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Creative Agency Compound Joins Forces With Experiential Studio Helo

South Bronx-based creative agency and gallery Compound will now have support from experiential agency Helo in creating future brand experiences.

Helo, which is based in Los Angeles, has merged with Compound and appointed its creative director Set Free Richardson as director.

Richardson told Adweek the partnership provides a “structure to enhance what we do creatively and all the facets of culture we work in, which is production, art, music, fashion and sports.”

“Helo is big in the space of experience and technology,” Richardson said. “Those are the two areas that Compound is not that versed in, so we’re super excited to build out experiential projects, campaigns and films.”

Compound, which Richardson founded in 2007, is responsible for crafting culturally relevant projects such as this year’s The Art of Protest: an interactive virtual gallery that amplified the work of Black and Latino photographers to show the impact of Black Lives Matter.

Richardson said Helo and Compound’s work will kick off by creating a website and filming a commercial for the existing Play for Change campaign with the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA). Compound launched the campaign in September to support professional basketball players using

their platform to address racial injustice, with Richardson designing a logo that reimagined the NBA's Jerry West silhouette and was distributed through T-shirts to NBA players.

Another upcoming project will be a virtual cooking content series for Jägermeister, which Richardson directed via Zoom.

"Right now, when the aspect of being up close and personal right now is something we don't have the luxury of doing, company collaboration is really key," Richardson said.

Helo CMO Rupert Samuels said the partnership presents an opportunity for the agencies to show off their combined talents for prospective clients.

"Our goal with Compound is to create all kinds of experiences, whether they're experiential or content based," Samuels said. "With the world of individuals Free brings to the table through Compound, we will offer a very unique prospect for clients."

Helo's existing clients include Amazon Studios, Hulu and Bud Light.

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Q&A: Lagunitas CMO Paige Guzman on Canvas Worldwide and What's on Tap Next For the Brand

This week, Heineken-owned pioneering California brewery Lagunitas Brewing Company appointed Canvas Worldwide as its U.S. media agency of record, following a review conducted internally.

Canvas Worldwide, Adweek's Breakthrough Media Agency of the Year for 2020, already worked with Heineken USA but the Lagunitas brand largely operates independently from Heineken. We caught up with Paige Guzman, who recently joined Lagunitas as CMO from Pax Labs, to discuss the appointment and the brand's marketing going forward.

This interview has been condensed for clarity and brevity.

Adweek: How is Lagunitas attempting to differentiate its brand and continue to grow at a time with so much competition from other larger breweries and local microbreweries? What is the importance of media planning and buying in this process?

Paige Guzman: Lagunitas has the number one IPA in the world. And we're proud to have an IPA for everyone, anywhere, at any time. When people think about an IPA, we want them to think about Lagunitas. We're thrilled to be collaborating with Canvas as we communicate our IPA-focused message to a wide

variety of audiences through our media strategy and planning.

How has Lagunitas adapted to the impact of the pandemic? How can Canvas help the brewery to meet the resulting challenges?

I’m incredibly proud how our marketing team. The entire Lagunitas family has been able to improvise, adapt and overcome as we continue to navigate the ongoing crisis. After the pandemic hit, we had to take our marketing playbook and throw it out the window. Given the current circumstances we’re under, we knew we needed to focus on our core portfolio of products, and find creative ways to get beer to our fans including delivery and ecommerce platforms.

What will this relationship look like going into 2021? Can you tell me anything about changes to media strategy?

Our relationship with Canvas is being built around trust, collaboration, a willingness on both sides to try out new things, and being open to seeing what works and what doesn’t. As for specific changes to our media strategy, you’re just going to have to wait and find out, but we’re excited about what’s on tap!

How does Lagunitas view the importance of the nonalcoholic category? How much of a focus will this be for Lagunitas heading into 2021 and will Canvas be involved in any campaigns for nonalcoholic offerings?

We know there’s a huge opportunity in the non-alcoholic space, which is why we’re excited to be launching our first N/A IPA in early-December. We are investing significantly in IPNA beginning in Dry January and throughout 2021, and are looking forward to working closely with Canvas on a wide variety of campaigns next year.

Recommended articles
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Pinterest Taps Former Exec From Coworking Brand The Wing as Consumer Marketing Head

Pinterest has hired Celestine Maddy as head of consumer and brand marketing, the platform confirmed to Adweek today. Maddy was most recently svp of marketing and communications at women-focused coworking space The Wing, which she departed in July according to her LinkedIn page.

In the new role at Pinterest, which she started Monday, Maddy oversees global consumer brand strategy and campaigns, product marketing, social media and content innovation for the platform. She reports directly to Pinterest chief marketing officer Andréa Mallard.

“As the world’s inspiration company, we heavily bias towards inspirational leaders, and Celestine brings that to the table in spades,” Mallard told Adweek. “But we were equally impressed by her curiosity, intelligence and willingness to question the status quo. Pinterest is where people come to create a life they love, and I am certain Celestine is going to help us continue to ensure the Pinterest brand is increasingly beloved the world over.”

Prior to joining The Wing in February, Maddy held senior marketing roles at Foursquare, Reddit and consumer product development company Quirky. She has more than 15 years of experience working in tech startups, media and ad agencies, including as the founder of industry blog AgencySpy in 2008.

The Wing, where Maddy spent just six months, was embroiled in controversy over the summer after reports surfaced of racism against Black and brown employees at several of the company's locations. In response, CEO and founder Audrey Gelman stepped down from her role on June 11. She later lamented in a letter to former employees posted to Instagram that leadership had upheld "the kind of societal inequality we set out to upend."

When Gelman resigned, she was replaced by a three-person Office of the CEO, which Maddy was part of alongside co-founder and chief operating officer Lauren Kassan and svp of operations Ashley Peterson.

Pinterest also had its share of turmoil over the summer—a season largely characterized by a national reckoning with historical and systemic racism after the police killing of George Floyd on May 25 in Minneapolis and the ensuing worldwide protests.

In June, two former Pinterest employees, both Black women, publicly accused the platform of racial discrimination in a series of Tweets. After initially denying the accusations, Pinterest CEO Ben Silbermann sent an email to employees acknowledging that "parts of our culture are broken," and outlined a series of steps the company would take to improve awareness and understanding of racism and bias as well as increase diversity among leadership, according to Bloomberg News.

Recommended articles
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Publicis Groupe Hires US Chief Growth Officer From AT&T's Xandr

Publicis Groupe brought back a familiar face, hiring Jay Askinasi as its chief growth officer, U.S.

In the newly-created role, Askinasi will be tasked with leading connectivity of Publicis Groupe's data and tech solutions across creative, digital and media operations to accelerate the holding company's U.S. transformation plans. This includes digital media across Epsilon and Publicis Media, marketing technology between Epsilon tech platforms and Publicis Sapient and data-driven creativity connecting the creative agencies with Publicis Groupe data.

Askinasi joins the holding company from AT&T ad-tech unit Xandr where he oversaw go-to-market sales and strategy and was responsible for agency and partnership revenue advanced TV, digital, linear and programmatic as svp, agency and platform partnerships. Before that, he was president of ad-tech and data platform RUN, which Publicis Groupe acquired in 2014. He then spent around two years as global president, investment solutions for Publicis Media before leaving for Xandr.

"We are thrilled to welcome back Jay within the Groupe. Almost a year after the implementation of our country model there, our U.S. operations are demonstrating the strongest resilience in organic growth within the industry, thanks to our unique model," Publicis Groupe CEO Arthur Sadoun said in a statement. "With Jay's appointment, we are now accelerating on the execution of our roadmap to connect our best-in-class capabilities in data, creativity, media and technology to

accelerate growth for our clients and ourselves.”

Askinasi marks the latest in a line of leadership departures at Xandr this year, beginning with Brian Lesser unexpectedly stepping down from his role as Xandr CEO in March. The following month, AT&T consolidated its Xandr and WarnerMedia ad sales units, moving the former within WarnerMedia under chief revenue officer Gerhard Zeiler. Interim CEO Kirk McDonald also left Xandr to join WPP’s GroupM as North America CEO in August.

“I couldn’t be more excited to rejoin Publicis at this critical time for marketers, agencies and media companies,” Askinasi said in a statement. “Led by our world class talent, product and data assets, the Groupe is incredibly well positioned to drive growth for our clients and move the industry forward.”

The departure also comes on the heels of Xandr adding A&E Networks and Crown Media to its Invest TV buying platform and a round of layoffs at WarnerMedia last week. Welch told Adweek that while the cuts impacted the company, they were much smaller at Xandr than WarnerMedia.

Recommended articles
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Sarah Watson, BBH New York Chairman and Global CSO, Is

Leaving

After a long run, BBH’s global chief strategy officer and New York chairman Sarah Watson is calling it quits at the end of this year.

She’s leaving to pursue a career in “transformational coaching,” according to email sent to BBH employees by CEO Neil Munn. The email was provided to Adweek by a BBH spokesperson.

“After an extensive training program, her first clients will be able to benefit from her wisdom, experience and her kindness,” Munn wrote in the memo. “This is a transformational moment for Sarah, following a number of transformational contributions at BBH. Fittingly, her ambition now is to be a transformational coach. There is no doubt that she will make a fantastic success of it.”

Watson has spent much of her career at BBH. In 2001, she joined BBH London as a strategist before jumping ship to DDB nearly a decade later. Two years later, she returned to BBH to lead strategy at its New York office. She was promoted to global chief strategy officer in 2016 and named chairman of BBH New York in 2017.

During her time at the BBH, she’s worked on campaigns including Johnnie Walker’s “Keep Walking” and Playstation’s “Greatness Awaits.”

Under her leadership, BBH New York won clients including FanDuel and nonprofit Care. The agency has also rolled out campaigns for brands including Seamless, Planned Parenthood and Samsung over the past few years.

“Sarah has been a fantastic part of the BBH story for almost two decades. She has the rare ability to set a strategic context for a brand that goes beyond where most of us would naturally tread,” Munn said in a statement. “And she has always done it with great flair and decency. We wish her luck with her next endeavors as a coach—no doubt there will be many people who can benefit from Sarah’s new focus.”

At BBH, Watson established Griffin Farley’s Beautiful Minds, a program that helps young strategists and planners break into the industry. The initiative was created in honor of Farley, who served as a strategy director at BBH New York before passing away in 2013.

She was also the inaugural ambassador for See It Be It, a program dedicated to helping female creative directors network and meet industry leaders at Cannes Lions. She’s also supported Creative Comeback, a two-week program that helps people who’ve left the advertising industry for reasons such as parenthood or illness return to the workplace.

Watson’s departure comes nearly after a year after BBH New York’s chief creative officer, Gerard Caputo, left for Wieden+Kennedy. Caputo left roughly a year after BBH New York declined to participate in a global creative review for PlayStation, an account it won in 2013.

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