GroupM’s Global Chief Product Officer Leaves for DoubleVerify

Jack Smith, the former global chief product officer of GroupM, is now taking on the same role at measurement firm DoubleVerify.

In the newly created chief product officer position for DoubleVerify, Smith will focus on building products for brands and agencies, as well as bolstering the company’s offerings in the fast-growing connected TV space.

Smith’s hire comes after DoubleVerify named Mark Zagorski its new CEO in July. Zagorksi came over from Telaria, a supply-side platform that specialized in CTV, after it was acquired by Rubicon Project.

Smith will report to COO Matt McLaughlin, who lauded the newly hired chief product officer’s proven track record of product innovation.

“At DV, we strive to deliver best-in-class solutions across the digital ecosystem, helping to build a better industry. Jack is an excellent addition to our company, as we continue to build our brand and drive our advertiser suite of media quality and performance solutions globally,” McLaughlin said in a statement.

CTV ad spend is expected to reach $10.81 billion by 2021, up from nearly to $7 billion in 2019, according to eMarketer. It’s also seen steady growth during the novel coronavirus pandemic as more people stay home and watch TV.

The relatively nascent medium is also wracked with fraud, since it lacks standards and bad actors are attracted to the higher CPMs the medium commands. Around 20% of over-the-top impressions are fraudulent, according to advertising consortium AdLedger.

Prior to his seven-year stint at GroupM, Smith led product development at Simulmedia, a data-driven TV ad platform.

Smith said he'll be working on innovations in CTV and "performance solutions."

"I'm thrilled to bring my product expertise to bear in support of the company's mission—to build a better advertising industry," he said in a statement.

https://www.adweek.com/programmatic/groupm-global-chief-product-officer-leaves-for-doubleverify/

From Employment Law to Sports Marketing, This Exec Now Negotiates YouTube's Upfronts

Brian Albert has had a few careers, from employment law to sports marketing, Silicon Valley to Nascar race tracks. So when he courts advertisers for upfront ad commitments as Google and YouTube's managing director for U.S. agency video, he knows a thing or two from these different walks of life.

Two decades ago, Albert wasn't thinking about the future of

television; he was riding the highs of the dot-com boom. He had originally followed his head—and his dad's advice—to law school, practicing at a firm for one year before making a drastic change. For the next five years, he'd follow his heart, working in sports marketing for professional tennis players like Steffi Graf. After the bubble burst, he co-founded and sold a loyalty program for Nascar.

It wasn't until 2010 that he joined Google and began the latest chapter of his peripatetic career.

At each step, job and sector, his end goals involved securing deals.

"Across every stage of my career, I've been negotiating deals, whether it's soliciting endorsement deals for professional athletes, making a sales pitch to drum up revenue for an early-stage startup or convincing advertisers that YouTube can deliver the results they need for their business," Albert said. "No matter the context, negotiating is part art, part science, which has made every deal a new and different challenge."

Albert's work doesn't stop at bringing advertisers to YouTube. Once they're contracted, he also leads a creative team that works with brands and their agencies to produce the most effective ads for the platform.

YouTube's foray into the streaming wars is multipronged. There's YouTube Premium, a paid subscription on-demand service rife with original content; YouTube TV, an over-the-top linear television bundle; and, of course, the main YouTube platform, which over 2 billion logged-in users visit every month. YouTube Select, a new ad offering and a revamp of Google Preferred, is the company's new upfront product, which lets advertisers reach viewers on YouTube's most popular videos.

In an abnormal year, with the pandemic dynamically changing viewership habits and advertising priorities, Albert's job is

to make YouTube stand out from the pack.

“As we speak with buyers and agencies this year, we are working to understand where advertisers and agencies are at currently and be even more flexible and creative to meet them there,” he said.

Albert takes it one deal at a time.

Big Mistake

While working for a sports marketing agency early in his career, Albert boarded a plane to Tokyo to finalize an endorsement agreement. But when he arrived, he found out it was anything but a done deal. Executives scrutinized the deal from top to bottom, but he hadn’t done his homework. He returned home without a signed contract and negotiations were delayed for weeks.

Lesson Learned

He took an important lesson from the Tokyo incident: “Always know what you’re walking into.”

How He Got the Gig

Albert came to Google after reconnecting with a former colleague who had just started there. “It was serendipitous because I didn’t have a digital media background at the time, but I was in the right place at the right time,” he recalled.

Pro Tip

“If you’re going to play chess, not checkers, in a negotiation, you’re going to need to spend two to three times preparing versus the actual time you spend negotiating,” he said.

https://www.adweek.com/tv-video/from-employment-law-to-sports-marketing-this-exec-now-negotiates-youtubes-upfronts/

Mother Hires Chief Talent Officer, a New Role at the Agency

[unable to retrieve full-text content] https://www.adweek.com/agencies/mother-hires-first-chief-talent-officer-james-kinney/

AKQA Promotes 3 ECDs to Global Chief Creative Officers

|
6 hours ago
Three of AKQA’s executive creative directors have become global chief creative officers at the WPP agency: Diego Machado, Hugo Veiga and Peter Lund.

Rei Inamoto was the last person to serve as global chief creative officer at AKQA, which employs more than 2,000 people across the globe. He left in 2015 to start his own agency, IxCO.

Lund was part of the team that founded AKQA’s Paris office in

2012, while Machado and Veiga started AKQA's office in São Paulo a few years later. In their new roles, which they transitioned into late last year, they oversee creative output for the design agency's 29 studios around the world. They have taken their previous responsibilities into their new roles, meaning their prior positions will not be replaced.

"It's exciting to see a new generation empowered and recognized for their relentless creativity, vision and leadership," said Ajaz Ahmed, CEO of AKQA. "We could not be more proud of our chief creative officers and the incredible journey we share to imagine a better future."

Before joining AKQA, all three held creative positions at Ogilvy. At Ogilvy, Machado and Veiga worked on Dove's viral "Real Beauty Sketches" campaign. At AKQA São Paulo, the two have worked on campaigns for clients including Nike and the Association for Assistance of Disabled Children.

Last year, Machado and Veiga led a campaign for Nike Air Max that involved partnering with a graffiti collective to spray-paint the brand's new models around the city. The stunt won a Grand Prix in media at Cannes last year. In 2018, they helped create a short animated film for the Association for Assistance of Disabled Children.

Earlier this year, Lund led a project designed to commemorate the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union. In partnership with artist Olafur Eliasson, the agency created an interactive campaign that lets kids superimpose their faces on various environmental scenes.

Since co-founding AKQA São Paulo, Veiga said he and Machado have tapped into the larger network and connected with other offices on client work. For instance, he said the São Paulo office worked with AKQA London on Don't Look Away, an interactive music video created for Usher's 2015 song Chains about racial profiling and violence in the U.S.

Veiga said it’s this penchant for collaboration with different people and offices that makes them a good fit for the global chief creative officer role.

“For us, it’s something that we have been doing already,” Veiga said. “We really want it to happen more, because we believe in the power of diversity of talent that we have around the world.”

Machado said much of the trio’s jobs involve working together to connect various people, briefs and clients to ensure the right offices and creatives are working with one another to produce the best work.

“It’s all about finding people and putting them together for the best opportunities,” he explained.

Lund echoed his sentiment, explaining that they all “have a fundamental belief that when we are fulfilled in our jobs and challenged to the height of our capabilities, we produce our very best work.”

“That’s the work that our clients come to us for,” he said. “So as long as we nurture and protect our people, the business will always be in a good place.”

https://www.adweek.com/agencies/akqa-promotes-ecds-to-global-chief-creative-officers/

Bloomberg Media Adjusts Leadership Team to Prioritize

Digital Growth

|
7 hours ago
Bloomberg Media promoted four executives today to continue growing its digital brand.

The publisher, like many other news organizations, has seen an increase in interest for its subscription products and coverage during the pandemic. The new executives will prioritize continuing growing those offerings and determining a sound advertising model for after the pandemic.

Bloomberg Media's QuickTake network, which distributes short-form news videos and is considered among its most successful products with 131 million monthly views, will continue to be overseen by M. Scott Havens in his new role as chief growth officer and global head of strategic partnerships. Havens previously worked on media distribution, which he will continue to oversee.

With the new title of chief product officer and global head of digital, Julia Beizer will expand her purview to include consumer digital initiatives. For the last two years, she has overseen digital product and advertising operations, divisions which she will continue to grow in her new role. Beizer was named to Adweek's Creative 100 list this year.

Lindsay Horrigan will manage subscriptions for Bloomberg Media as global head of consumer marketing and general manager of consumer subscriptions. Horrigan will maintain her role leading Bloomberg's consumer marketing team.

Both Horrigan and Beizer will continue to report to Havens. Havens will also work closely with Stephen Colvin, who has

been named chief commercial officer of Bloomberg Media. Colvin is currently planning a “post-pandemic ad model,” the company said in an internal memo.

Bloomberg Media’s digital offerings represent the company’s “largest audience and revenue platform” and “our most significant channel for advancing Bloomberg’s brand and influence in key markets,” said Justin Smith, CEO of Bloomberg Media Group, in a memo.

https://www.adweek.com/tv-video/bloomberg-media-adjusts-leadership-team-to-prioritize-digital-growth/

This Cybersecurity Firm Was Founded During a Tour in Afghanistan

|
5 hours ago
Tamer Hassan was on his second tour of duty in Afghanistan (his fourth overall in the Middle East) in the fall of 2012. He was a pilot in the Air Force running search and rescue missions. He slept in a tent next to the helicopters, ready to fly at a moment’s notice.

In his downtime—and when he had an internet connection—he was also leading White Ops, the company he co-founded in January of that year while on standby duty.

White Ops, a cybersecurity company that tackles ad fraud and

bot detection, has held weekly all-hands meetings since its inception. Hassan used a satellite phone, which is usually used during missions, to join the call while on base.

“I would get on a [satellite] phone and dial in, and [co-founder, president] Michael [Tiffany] would just yell, because there’s a lot of wind in Afghanistan, ‘Somebody’s not muting,’” Hassan recalled. “I don’t even know where the mute button is on a sat phone, and so I would have to get into the back of [a plane] just to get out of the wind when they’re parked on the tarmac to do these weekly calls.”

Hassan always wanted to be an engineer, inspired by his two architect parents. His Coptic Orthodox mother and his Muslim father had to leave their home country of Egypt as political refugees. Hassan called his mom a talented, abstract thinker who’d get written up for wearing jeans and hard hats to construction sites.

“Needless to say, my dad fell for her there,” Hassan said.

Hassan bounced around a bit as a kid. He grew up mostly in California but moved at 16 to finish his last two years of high school in Southern Alabama. His dad was the architect of the school.

Now Hassan is the CEO of a global company of roughly 150 employees. The firm first drew buzz after uncovering Methbot, a $3 million per day digital ad fraud scheme, in 2016. A couple of years later, White Ops gained notoriety from outside the ad industry when it helped law enforcement end a $30 million scheme that saw eight people indicted.

Big Mistake

“For years, I was caught in this mindset that we all need to be working in an office together,” said Hassan. “At the time, I had just left the Air Force, where proximity can mean life or death. When I look back, my mistake wasn’t just hiring too

slowly; it’s that I wasn’t looking in all the right places for talent.”

Lesson Learned

Today, White Ops employs 150 staffers across five countries, including offices in Buenos Aires and British Columbia.

“Now we go where the talent is and build around them. There’s no 10-square-mile ring around our talent, and that’s made all the difference,” he said.

How He Got the Gig

Hassan co-founded White Ops as chief technology officer, but the board of directors asked him to step into the CEO role last April to lead the company’s next phase of growth.

Pro Tip

“If you’ve seen the movie Doctor Strange, there’s a scene where the characters enter a mirror world where the sky becomes the ground and buildings suddenly turn sideways. That’s working in cybersecurity,” said Hassan. “My advice is [to] learn how to break an ill-defined problem down to its component parts and come to a solution from first principles.”

https://www.adweek.com/programmatic/this-cybersecurity-firm-was-founded-during-a-tour-in-afghanistan/

Wonya Lucas Named Hallmark Channel CEO

|
2 hours ago
Key insight:

- She’ll be helping Hallmark Channel move past the controversy over pulling ads featuring a same-sex couple kissing.

After a six-month search, Hallmark Channel has found its new leader.

Wonya Lucas has been named president and CEO of Crown Media Family Networks, and will oversee the three Hallmark linear networks—flagship Hallmark Channel, Hallmark Movies & Mysteries and Hallmark Drama—as well as the company’s streaming service, Hallmark Movies Now. Her first day will be Aug. 10.

She replaces Bill Abbott, who had been Crown Media Family Networks president and CEO for 11 years before leaving the company in January. His exit came a month after Hallmark Channel sparked outrage for briefly pulling several ads from wedding planning brand Zola that featured a same-sex couple kissing at their wedding.

“Wonya is a brand builder at her core who shares Hallmark’s beliefs and values. She has a deep understanding of the role our brand plays in fulfilling a bigger purpose in people’s lives,” said Hallmark Cards CEO Mike Perry, to whom Lucas will report, in a statement. “After a thorough search process, we found a remarkable leader with proven general management skills, as well as a track record of success in driving business results and evolving the positioning and programming of a brand.”

Lucas had been president and CEO of Public Broadcasting

Atlanta, overseeing the city's NPR and PBS stations, and was previously TV One president and CEO. Prior to that, she had worked at Discovery Communications, The Weather Channel networks and Turner.

"Hallmark has been central to my life since I can remember, starting with those Hallmark Hall of Fame movies that were as enriching as they were entertaining," said Lucas in a statement. "In some ways, my entire career has led me to this incredible opportunity to use the breadth of my experience and skills to evolve an iconic and beloved brand, a culture and a business."

Lucas will be tasked with helping Hallmark Channel move past its controversial decision last December to pull several ads by wedding planning brand Zola featuring a same-sex couple kissing in response to pressure from conservative group One Million Moms.

Zola responded by saying it would no longer advertise on the network for the foreseeable future. The hashtag #BoycottHallmark trended on Twitter, and Glaad called the network's action "discriminatory," urging other advertisers to reconsider their own involvement with the company.

One day later, Perry apologized for what he called the "wrong decision." He vowed to "be more inclusive and celebrate our differences," and the company said it will "be reaching out to Zola to reestablish our partnership and reinstate the commercials."

In a statement at the time, Hallmark said it "is, and always has been, committed to diversity and inclusion. … It is never Hallmark's intention to be divisive or generate controversy. We are an inclusive company and have a track record to prove it."

https://www.adweek.com/tv-video/wonya-lucas-named-hallmark-channel-ceo/

Beau Ferrari Promoted to Chairman of NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises

|
16 hours ago

NBCUniversal has found a new chairman of NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises, following Cesar Conde's promotion in May.

Beau Ferrari has been tapped to succeed Conde in the role, overseeing the company's media portfolio, including the Telemundo broadcast network, entertainment, sports, news, cable, global studios and 30 local stations.

"Beau is a strong leader with extraordinary business acumen and deep media experience across all media platforms and the Hispanic market. During his three years with the company, he has made a tremendous impact as Telemundo became one of NBCUniversal's fastest-growing businesses," said Mark Lazarus, chairman of NBCUniversal television and streaming, in a statement announcing the promotion today. "Beau is ideally suited to seamlessly take over the reins of Telemundo and build on its phenomenal success."

Ferrari replaces Conde, who in May was promoted to head up all news properties as part of a major NBCU reorganization that also put Lazarus in charge of all entertainment TV at the company. In his new role, Ferrari will now report to Lazarus.

“It’s an incredible honor to lead the talented team at Telemundo Enterprises, particularly at a time when there is so much momentum in this business,” said Ferrari in a statement. “I am excited for the opportunity to take the company to the next level and guide Telemundo’s continued growth.”

Ferrari had been evp of NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises since 2017, and previously worked in several roles at Univision Communications, including evp of corporate strategy and development, and evp of operations.

Conde, who had previously been chairman of NBCUniversal International Group and NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises, now has oversight of all the company’s news divisions—NBC News, MSNBC and CNBC—in the new role as chairman of NBCUniversal News Group.

In May, NBCU said a new Telemundo Enterprises leader would be named later, replacing Conde, and the Telemundo leadership team would report to Lazarus until that person is found.

https://www.adweek.com/tv-video/beau-ferrari-promoted-chairman-nbcuniversal-telemundo-enterprises/

The Trade Desk Makes Tim Sims CRO Amid Slate of 5 Other Senior Promotions

|
7 hours ago

Ad tech’s biggest independent firm, The Trade Desk promoted Tim Sims to chief revenue officer today, up from his prior capacity as svp of inventory partnerships.

“Tim has his finger on the pulse on evolving customer demand across all channels,” said CEO Jeff Green. “His ability to help customers map that demand to premium content makes him the perfect leader for this role.”

Sims’ C-suite debut coincided with the hiring of Michelle Hulst as evp of global data and strategy and promotion of Matt Goldberg as evp of global operations. Three other leadership promotions were also announced, totaling six in one day.

Despite Covid-19, The Trade Desk’s share price has been on a tear in recent months, up 59% year over year. The company’s market capitalization broke $20 billion in June and has hovered around that threshold since. Accordingly, as Luma Partners CEO Terence Kawaja noted on Twitter, the two biggest ad-tech outfits, Roku and The Trade Desk, are now worth more than the four largest ad agency holding companies.

Sims, who previously held director gigs at ad-tech firms Spot Runner and OpenX, will continue overseeing the inventory partnerships team as CRO. His expanded portfolio “signals our commitment to making sure our inventory screens work closely with our sales and business teams to provide clients with any screen they need,” according to the company.

“Our customers are applying data to their massive TV campaigns for the first time and building bridges between their traditional media investments and CTV,” said Sims in a statement. “This presents The Trade Desk with a significant opportunity to grow.”

https://www.adweek.com/programmatic/the-trade-desk-tim-sims-cro-5-senior-promotions/

Zeotap Scoops $42 Million as CrossFit’s Eric Roza Joins Board

|
1 hour ago

Eric Roza, the incoming CEO of CrossFit, is joining customer analytics platform Zeotap’s board just as the company announced $42 million in fresh capital. The latest funding round follows a projected 431% growth in revenue over the past year, according to Zeotap.

“Zeotap is the most important data platform to emerge in years,” said Roza, who previously led data firms Datalogix and Oracle Data Cloud, in a statement.

The news comes a month after the German company announced ID+, its universal ad identity project—on which the recent funding will let Zeotap “double down” to help advertisers identify audiences amid expanding data privacy laws.

In place of cookies or mobile identifiers, ID+ uses concealed phone numbers and email addresses to target consumers without compromising privacy, Zeotap founder and CPO Projjol Banerjea told Adweek.

When asked what differentiates ID+ from competing offerings, Banerjea pointed to Zeotap’s global publisher footprint. Publishing companies like the International Business Times and Hearst—alongside regional publishers in Italy, Mexico and

elsewhere—have already signed on to the project.

Still, Banerjea expects ID+ can co-exist with other solutions like LiveRamp's IdentityLink. "We anticipate that the post-cookie world does not look like a monopoly in the context of identifiers. We believe there will be between three and five universal IDs that will replace the cookie and device IDs," he said.

"Nobody wants to replace a duopoly in the form of Google and Facebook with just another duopoly," Banerjea noted.

Zeotap CEO Daniel Heer told Adweek the firm's longstanding compliance with Europe's GDPR has eased the transition to California's CCPA, the sweeping privacy law which began to be enforced this month.

"In Europe, you need people to say 'yes.' In the U.S., it's enough if you give people a technical way to say 'no.' It's ex-ante versus ex-post," explained Heer.

https://www.adweek.com/programmatic/zeotap-series-c-42-million-crossfit-ceo-eric-roza-joins-board/