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Luxury Women to Watch 2016

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Luxury Women to Watch 2016

By STAFF REPORTS

Luxury Daily's Luxury Women to Watch 2016 list honors smart women executives who are set to make a difference in luxury marketing, retail, media and digital in 2016.

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As with their predecessors in years past, this cut of honorees shares the same qualities: dedication to craft, ambition, leadership potential and educator. These executives are also quite aware of their role-model status as a career in luxury marketing, retail, media and digital becomes a more welcoming and appealing option for talented women.

Winning hand

Picking the 25 smartest women with potential was not easy. Luxury Daily invited readers to send in their nominations. The Luxury Daily team also had its own table of candidates.

Once the deadline expired, the Luxury Daily team judged the nominees on their merits and whittled the list to those who showed the most promise to push the luxury envelope in 2016.

The list's responses to questions confirm their choice. While the realities of an emerging medium are acknowledged, so is luxury's place in the multichannel marketing, retail, media and digital ecosystem.

THANK YOU to Luxury Daily team members Jen King, Sarah Jones and Forrest Cardamenis for their nominations and judging. All judging was based purely on merit and potential to make a difference.

Please read this article from first entry to last, listed alphabetically by honoree's last name. These Luxury Women to Watch are set to distinguish themselves even further in 2016, no doubt realizing that luxury marketing, retail, media and digital's ultimate job is to move product across category.

Mickey Alam Khan
Editor in Chief

Luxury Daily

Luxury Women to Watch 2016

Shamin Abas, president, Shamin Abas Public Relations, New York

Shamin Abas of Shamin Abas PR

What do you most like about your job?
What I love most about what I do is the people I have the pleasure of working with. On the client side I have the great fortune of working with the most highly respected leaders in the world of luxury, and I am inspired every day by the passion and drive they have to continuously wow their most loyal customers.

Since a good piece of our business is experiential and brand marketing in the ultra-high-net-worth space, we get to experience first hand the magical moments that are created between these brands and their clients. I have been blessed to have the most incredible group of individuals on my team who share the same passion for pleasing our clients, and will not rest until that is so.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
The biggest challenge for me is creating separation between work and life. The two intermingle much of the time, which I must admit I really enjoy, but I find it difficult to take time away completely to recharge my batteries.

In 2016 I plan to work on that since I have a lot of experiences on my long bucket list that I need to start checking off.

What is your work priority for 2016?

The alignments we created in 2015 with several of the top private banks, individual wealth managers and hedge funds proved quite fruitful for the business development we do for some of our clients.

We plan to further expand that part of our business in 2016 quite substantially. We are also putting resources into continuing to develop our younger UNHW individual network to ensure we are able to help our clients maximize the opportunity to connect with this fast-growing group.

My team and I are also big believers in vision boards and we have one in both the New York and Palm Beach, FL office with powerful visuals of the clients we dream of working with in 2016. If the new client successes of 2015's vision boards are anything to go by, 2016 should be a very exciting year.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
There is most certainly a shift taking place in the luxury C-suite arena with more and more women taking on top roles.

Elizabeth Paton's recent New York Times piece "In Luxury, a Growing Female Factor at the Top" documents the changes that have taken place at luxury conglomerates Kering and LVMH and other companies, citing that while female graduates outnumber male graduates roughly two to one worldwide, therefore math dictating there will simply be more female candidates for executive jobs, another more subtle element may well be the catalyst for the current change in attitude:

"Acknowledgment of a major shift cultural shift toward the empowerment of women and both its impact on consumer value systems and the resulting new way of thinking about customer engagement in an era when average fashion shoppers are more educated and digitally savvy that ever before."

For a multi-billion-dollar industry propelled by female purchasing power, the luxury goods marketplace is still very much a male dominated field, but for women who plan to grow into executive positions in this arena there are great female role models who have shown that a women's natural ability to emotionally connect with and nurture her team can lead to substantial growth in company success.

One such role model who's leadership style has most certainly influenced and inspired me is Former Chairman of North America for LVMH, Pauline Brown, who I have had the great honor of coming to know in 2015.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Without any hesitation my proudest moment took place in 2015 when I celebrated ten years in business. At our anniversary party the room was filled with our clients and future clients from the luxury industry- in several cases, entire marketing departments!

I will never forget the warmth and appreciation they showed us that night. Many of them may never know the story of how much it took to get from the kitchen table ten years ago to where we are today, but for me it was like a dream to have all of these amazing people who I respect and admire so much there to celebrate with us.

Ana Andjelic, senior vice president and global strategy director, Havas LuxHub, New York

Ana Andjelic of Havas LuxHub

What do you like the most about your job?
I love having access to decision-makers and thought-leaders in the luxury, fashion and lifestyle landscape. It is fantastic to sit at the panel with persons like Gabrielle de Papp of FarFetch or Drew Elliot of Paper Magazine and just be exposed to their amazing thinking and amazing things they are doing.

It is also very professionally fulfilling to sit with CEOs and CMOs of the largest global luxury brands like LVMH or Sotheby's or Estee Lauder and guide them in figuring out the modern luxury landscape.

This is a very, very exciting time to be working in this space and being able to have these conversations and do the work that makes immediate, tangible and measurable impact is invaluable.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
It is always challenging to build something new from scratch.

There needs to be a strong vision, mission and point of view. At LuxHub USA, my business partner, managing director Rachel Conlan and I started out building our practice very thoughtfully, focusing on the offerings that no one else provides and building a rock-solid, strong point of view on modern luxury that we express, both in thought-leadership and in our client work.

It is a challenge to introduce a new practice into a global organization and prove one's value as quickly as possible, both internally and externally. But I think that we have done a good job thus far.

What is your biggest priority for 2016?
Getting more decision-makers and thought-leaders from the industry to take notice, getting more brands to partner with us, and getting smarter and keep learning in our work and thought leadership. My priority is always to keep learning, keep growing and be positively challenged.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
There needs to be commitment in the industry as a whole, and also across all its layers toward supporting, nurturing and rewarding women who currently work there and also those who want to work in this industry.

This isn't just a matter of saying things like "we support women," it is a matter of a careful strategy and tactics that go from enforcing diversity in hiring to making sure that we are part of diverse teams and that there is no gender discrimination when it comes to promotion and work rewards.

Diversity is a matter of organizational design. More diverse organizations are the more successful ones, as they are more resilient to change and more adaptable to it.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
Why, it is becoming one of the Luxury Women to Watch 2016. That, and consistently inspiring luxury CMOs to think differently.

Catherine Bennett, senior vice president and managing director, IMG Fashion, New York

Catherine Bennett of IMG Fashion

What do you most like about your job?

I am so fortunate to be surrounded by talented, creative people, from my colleagues and our designers to the media and buyers who shape the conversation about what fashion is today and where it's headed.

From our New York headquarters to our offices in Berlin, Sydney and Tokyo, our team creates events and initiatives, from New York Fashion Week: The Shows and MADE to Mercedes-Benz Start Up that elevate and expand the fashion industry around the world.

I am inspired every day by the people who work tirelessly to bring designers' visions to life.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

This is a challenge I think many people in creative fields face: balancing art and commerce. Navigating how best to embrace creativity and innovation while running a successful business is a dance I do daily.

Working with so many creative people, there is never a lack of ideas. In the end, however, it's my job to take those exciting and interesting ideas and discern how they can be practically applied to our business.

Normally, the projects we take on are substantial investments, both financially and operationally. For me to feel comfortable dedicating resources to something new, I need to be confident that we have the right partners in place, a cohesive vision and plan that serves our clients and the industry.

What is your work priority for 2016?

Our fashion business has come a long way since WME acquired IMG nearly two years ago. We now have access to a multi-faceted network of resources across digital, original content, film, food, books, music, television, theater, sports and events.

We've spent the past year-and-a-half identifying how to best evolve our fashion events offering around the world. 2016 will be about integrating the various assets we have available to us and strengthening the value proposition for our designers and partners.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

The fashion industry is traditionally very welcoming to women and I am pleased to say that many of my colleagues are successful women who balance career and family.

To further attract female talent, companies need to recognize the female voice and give women the tools necessary to feel empowered. I think it is important to embrace the idea of mentorship at all levels women need to have a seat at the table as top executives.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

When I first started at IMG, I was handed an event that was globally recognized as one of the most important fashion industry events: New York Fashion Week. When I came into it, NYFW had suffered a bit of criticism in recent years, most of which was focused on over-commercialization.

Luckily, in the spirit of change, I was given carte blanche by WME | IMG to make changes. September 2015 became the target date for us to move into new venues, align with the right partners and completely change the look and feel of New York Fashion Week.

It wasn't easy, but my team and I set to work and from one season the next, we were able to completely reimagine our offering and deliver an experience that our designers and the industry were proud to call their home.

Dina Burns, vice president, Burns Motor Company, St. James, NY

Dina Burns of Burns Motor Company

What do you like most about your job?
I love the mix of family atmosphere and family values, combined with corporate structure, professionalism and branding that my father and I have developed with our dealerships.

Luxury automotive retail is about relationships because our clients want to come in and see familiar faces, feel comfortable making a large transaction, feel valued and appreciated through the entire ownership lifecycle of sales, service and renewal. We excel at this because of the relationships we have with our team members.

Our team knows we care about them and their families, we show our appreciation, we invest in them and in turn they take care of our clients.

It is never our intention to sell a client just one vehicle. We strive to cultivate relationships with every client at every touch point. It is not uncommon to have a client just stop by to visit with one of our team members and see the latest additions to the product family. It is about a familiar environment with friendly faces.

We know about our clients, we know about their family and we know about their charitable interests and their passions, and that is the difference between working a single transaction and developing a long-term client. I am proud to say one of Lexus of Smithtown's best clients is a woman who in just over 20 years has purchased more than 20 vehicles from us.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
Cultivating younger generations onto our team has been a focus in recent years and is still challenging. In reviewing resumes we are seeing a lot of very short-term tenures at previous positions which is always concerning.

We are also seeing some resistance to "retail" hours and we try to educate potential team members that retail hours are just different hours and not necessarily more hours, and that you can have a social life while maintaining a work schedule where you work a day on the weekend.

We have had the most success cultivating the younger generation into product specialist positions where they focus on the features, benefits and technology aspects of the vehicles. They spend as much time with a client to teach them about the vehicle as the client desires.

We are finding the comfort factor between the product specialist and the client to be a significant role in engaging the client with the vehicle, the dealership and the brand. The social component of this product specialist position along with the team structure is why we are seeing so much success in the younger generation embracing this position at dealerships.

What is your work priority for 2016?
Marketing, marketing, marketing will be one of the top priorities for 2016. We are in an extremely competitive industry and strategically differentiating yourself from your neighboring competitor who maybe just down the block or a few miles away is always critical.

Also, many of the luxury automotive brands we represent have recently introduced new high-volume entry level products in 2015 and there are more product introductions scheduled for 2016 in this segment, driving us to develop strategies, campaigns, and events to attract new clients into our dealerships that in the past we may not have had an appropriate product offering for but now we have quite a few options.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
Celebrating our teams' successes makes me proudest.

Through the years we have won DealerRater's Dealer of the Year Awards, Elite of Lexus Awards, Mercedes-Benz Best of the Best, Audi Magna Society and many other accolades.

Some of these awards are based on a number of different metrics but, most importantly, they measure how we are taking care of our clients in all departments while meeting and often times exceeding our sales goals.

We have always built our teams around one mission of taking care of the client and their individual needs. It is because of our reputation that we have grown our dealership group through the years, adding to our dealership count. We are proud to represent every major luxury brand in the automotive industry.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
We actually need to do two things. First, we need to focus on attracting women into the industry. Secondly, we need to retain them in the luxury community. Other industries are more proactive about getting on campuses and participating in career days.

We need to put the opportunities in front of young women. This would help bring a larger pool of talent into the industry. The next step is retaining this talent by participating in continuing education, mentoring programs, career advancement opportunities and flexible work schedules, if necessary.

The media buzz around equal pay sometimes clouds important issues like the amount of time a woman invests in different positions along her career path before advancing to the C' level position, if the opportunity was even presented, versus the amount of time a male may invest in different positions along his career path before similar advancement and recognition. So not only are there less advancement opportunities, it seems to take longer to get them.

The time invested to get these opportunities can be extremely frustrating and ultimately sends talented woman seeking other opportunities. More timely advancement opportunities based on merit is such a simple fix, it just needs to be on the radar screen.

Jiannina Castro, director of communication, Maserati, New York

Jiannina Castro of Maserati

What do you most like about your job?
I am proud to represent one of the world's most legendary luxury products. With such a global facing brand, the job allows the opportunity to be creative while covering the gamut of public relations, branding and image management.

Spearheading communications, I have the unique opportunity to touch every facet of our organization, while collaborating on multiple projects on any given day, always keeping me on my toes. There is a certain entrepreneurial spirit to a niche brand with a strong growth trajectory, which I gravitate towards.

We are often under pressure, working at a swift speed, juggling multiple projects in an evolving environment, so, I'm never bored.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
In representing global luxury brands in a communications capacity, you are always on and on the move. Disconnecting can be difficult. As the gatekeeper of the information, you cannot necessarily turn off. You must stay ahead of the curve, anticipate problems and be the first to bring information forward.

The North American market is a vast territory to cover, so travel is a necessary evil and finding the perfect work/life balance can often be a challenge.

What is your work priority for 2016?
We have a pretty exciting task ahead as we are launching the first Maserati SUV this coming 2016. We are targeting a

new audience and covering new ground in every sense.

With the U.S. being the global market leader, we are the trailblazers and are looking to achieve hefty goals for the year ahead. This is a new chapter in the company's history and we are eager to take on the challenge. It should be an exciting and equally exhausting year.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
More women who are willing to take on the challenge and set a great example are the answer to attracting more women to the luxury industry. Women who are willing to help one another, eager to lift each other up and support one another in the workplace are a key ingredient.

This team-oriented approach certainly helps promote a positive, productive environment for future female business leaders.

I am lucky to be surrounded by an incredibly uplifting group of women at work, which certainly pulls you through the tougher days. We feel like there is nothing that we cannot handle as a team. It is quite the powerful dynamic.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
I have a difficult time reflecting on the successes and tend to look forward to the challenges ahead as in the luxury field we are always striving to be the best.

I am the youngest female on the senior leadership team who has a direct impact on the organization at large. I am proud to be a part of such a dynamic, successful global organization that is pushing this iconic brand past its traditional limits and unleashing its full potential.

In hindsight, I am proud to have swiftly and successfully developed a fully integrated communications department which specializes in brand building and communications across the automotive, luxury and lifestyle space over a short period of time.

We continuously create out-of-the-box media strategies and secure meaningful coverage across multiple media channels with the resources at hand.

Jennifer Catto, senior vice president of integrated marketing, Evolve Media, New York

Jennifer Catto of Evolve Media

What do you most like about your job?
I love balancing editorial points of view with a brand's core values. By putting readers first and using them as my compass, marrying those two positions is an incredibly rewarding challenge. Some days there's a great sense of accomplishment from cracking the code and landing on the big idea. There's no better rush than that.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

Conveying the value of an authentic editorial voice and connecting it to reader intent is an effort worth spending time to communicate. Luxury marketers take a great leap of faith into the branded content realm.

For heritage and luxury brands, this is an even bigger leap of faith, putting their sometimes century-old ethos into the hands of another storyteller. By creating a smart strategy and paring the right conduit, I help build trust with luxury brands in the branded content space.

What is your work priority for 2016?
Creating premium custom videos is my No. 1 priority in 2016. Beautiful, elegant storytelling is captivating, and luxury brands are best poised to tell amazing stories.

Take, for example, Miuccia Prada's backstory. She was trained as mime before inheriting her grandfather's steamer trunk company and making it a billion-dollar empire. Finding the right influencer, production value, and art direction

to share that story is key.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
Flexibility is paramount. I left traditional publishing years ago because there was a fixed idea about when the day starts and ends. As a new mom, that was soul-crushing.

I am so fortunate to be on the Evolve Media executive team. I have freedom to contend with the fast-paced world of media while not missing out on being a mom to two boys under the age of four.

Our CEO and president are extremely supportive and trust me to deliver my best on a schedule that allows for work/life balance. For this, my loyalty comes back to them tenfold.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
Partnering with a major luxury appliance brand to invest in the development of an editorial app devoted to gorgeous kitchen content was a wonderful win. There were no download guarantees, and product integration was extremely limited. The entire program was devoted to creating high-in-the-funnel halo effect, and they dove headlong into this idea. The success of the app far exceeded our wildest dreams.

Lindsay Davis, global director of partner office relations, Quintessentially, London

Lindsay Davis of Quintessentially

What do you most like about your job?

Quintessentially is a truly global organization. We have offices in more than 60 cities servicing the lifestyle management needs of the world's most discerning high-net-worth clientele in more than 35 languages 24/7, 365 days a year. It's an entrepreneurial, diverse, dynamic and fascinating place to work.

As the primary HQ global partner liaison, I aim to visit at least 30 percent of our offices annually, which is the best part of my role the first-hand, on-the-ground experience spending time with the local business owners and their clients and suppliers.

This experience allows me to better understand the main challenges in the luxury landscape in locations as varied as Marrakech, Lagos, New York, Beijing, Moscow, Oslo and far beyond. The result is a more well-rounded view to advise successfully on local execution of the broader commercial, operational and servicing strategies, and also to ensure the QHQ best practice established is relevant to all offices. The learning is constant, which is a key motivation for me professionally.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

The biggest challenge of my role is ensuring the company growth strategy, as applied locally, adheres to strict brand and service standards across so many international markets.

What is your work priority for 2016?

In 2016, we are looking to expand the Quintessentially brand significantly through opening six new office locations, developing multiple new products for our clients, growing our data research team and investing even more resource and time in the digital side of our business.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

There is no shortage of brilliant, driven women who want to, and currently do, work in the luxury sector. The challenge is the retention, development and visibility of female candidates to ensure consideration for opportunities to advance to the senior management level.

Mentoring within the workplace across genders is important as well as ensuring management has formalized

training to not just lead a team, but manage their respective line reports for engagement and growth.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

To date, my proudest achievement has been leading my talented team to successfully implement the expansion of Quintessentially from 38 offices in 2010 to more than 60 full-service offices today.

Anne-Marie Gaultier, vice president of global marketing and communications, Bally, London

Anne-Marie Gaultier of Bally

What do you like the most about your job?

I love the entrepreneurial spirit of my job. Bally is a startup with a heritage of more than 164 years. Everyone is fully dedicated to the turnaround of the brand.

In the last two years, we managed to change the packaging, elevate the advertising, double the followers on our social networks, collaborate with great artists such as Josephine de la Baume and J Cole, partner with great magazines to do native advertising projects on Vogue, GQ and FT, launch a "Shoepidia" site dedicated to shoe expertise and caring, go to Art Basel in Basel, Miami and Shanghai with a Modernist traveling exhibition [and] launch a philanthropic program with Save the children.

What is the biggest challenge of your job?

My biggest challenge is to awaken the sleeping beauty, but with budget constraints. Therefore, we have to be street-wise.

It is balancing act between rebuilding the image of the brand and creating traffic to the stores now. We had to invest in efficient traffic builders such as CRM and digital visibility while elevating our communication.

What are your work priorities for 2016?

Besides opening up our flagships in Los Angeles and Ginza, I am currently spending quite a lot of time on the archives as we have more than 35, 000 shoes dating back to 1851 until now.

It is an extraordinary treasure and heritage that we must capitalize on to illustrate that Carl Franz Bally is probably one of the first shoe designers in history. I am working with a fantastic curator that is helping us identify the most relevant shoes of the archives. There is more to come on this exciting project.

What will it take to bring more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

I think it is about showing that luxury does not mean only the heritage and the past. True luxury is timeless and timely. This means it is about embracing digital and CRM but also tomorrow 3D printing and all the new techs yet capitalizing on heritage.

It also takes sharing the best cases in the press but also in schools. This is why I am very happy to teach a class in the marketing and communication master's program at Sciences Po in Paris starting in January.

What is your proudest achievement in Luxury ?

Slowly but surely revealing the best kept secret in the luxury industry: Bally. This has been quite an adventure as most people don't even have Bally in their radar.

Yes, it is one of the oldest luxury brands after Herms with incredible craftsmanship and now modern design from Pablo Coppola.

Felita Harris, senior vice president of global commercial development, Lela Rose, New York

Felita Harris of Lela Rose

What do you most like about your job?

Joining Lela Rose presents an opportunity for me to expand my knowledge in various facets of the luxury industry including ready-to-wear, accessories and bridal. I certainly feel excited to work with a brand that supports team collaborations and entrepreneurial ideas.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

I believe Lela Rose has a huge opportunity to expand its brand presence. The aesthetic is universal and fits the lifestyle needs of luxury customers around the world.

However, in the wake of global economic uncertainty, product is not enough. My challenge is to creatively explore solutions that will convey our brand experience globally.

What is your work priority for 2016?

My priorities for 2016 will include expanding distribution and partnerships across the Americas. That will entail investing in people, operations and systems. I am particularly excited about Lela's brand story and making sure that it's heard all over the world.

Philanthropically, I will continue my work with the Girl Scouts of Greater New York. I am passionate about helping girls grow into leaders. It's important to stay mindful and committed to the next generation of influencers.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

I think we need to acknowledge that women are continuously innovating in these spaces and that significant advances have been made by countless women in marketing, media and digital tech.

In addition, I believe that we need to create an open conversation around women and work/life balance. To procure talented women means to understand that our work week is no longer Monday-Friday. We need to have flexibility in the work place.

The reality is, our phones are glued to our hip and work is happening around the clock. Women need the space to nurture their families without feeling guilty or trading their career aspirations.

Finally, I believe we need to have more academic scholarships for young talented women who show promise in STEM. We have to proactively create pipelines for recruitment. Gender equality doesn't favor women. We need to be prepared and marketable for job opportunities.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I started my career in luxury with Neiman Marcus. Twenty years later, I've built strong partnerships and businesses around the globe.

I'm proud of having meaningful relationships with great people in the industry and connecting with luxury customers through presenting quality product and experiences. The best is yet to come. Onward and upward.

Francesca Helina, founder/CEO, Live the Look, New York

Francesca Helina of Live the Look

What do you most like about your job?
I truly enjoy the unpredictability of each day as new challenges and opportunities come up with Live the Look.

I am constantly making adjustments to what I do for the day and shuffling around to make sure I take care of our customers, business and my team. I also truly enjoy when we can find the perfect item for someone or help them get inspired around a new outfit.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
I think the biggest challenge is just being able to get it all done. I am constantly prioritizing and days seem to fly by.

I always set out the top three things I need to finish and make sure those are completed. Everything else gets done when I can make it happen, sometimes late at night.

What is your work priority for 2016?
Our biggest priority is to get the Live the Look iOS application in as many hands as possible and continue to develop it to be a delightful experience.

We truly want it to be like having a stylish friend in your pocket with daily weather tips, picks just for you and a live stylist and personal shopper available to chat in the moment.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
I believe that women already involved in the industry have to advocate for other women to jump in.

I'd like to represent and continue to connect with an approachable, hard working and successful group of ladies who can then be those advocates. I try to meet with at least one gal a month who either is in or is interested in being this sector.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
I am very proud of our iOS app! It is the culmination of a huge effort by many many people who helped us research, design, build and refine our first version. It also combines a strong range of retailer and brand offerings from Marc Jacobs to Free People to Ann Taylor.

Linda Hewson, creative director, Selfridges, London

Linda Hewson of Selfridges

What do you most like about your job?

I love that I have the freedom to innovate, reimagine and to dare to push the boundaries of what a department store can do. This aspect of my job is endlessly energising and inspiring.

Selfridges has a long-standing tradition of challenging the retail status-quo.

To be able to contribute to this legacy by looking at new ways to surprise amaze and amuse our customers with the most creative, pertinent and topical approach we can think of, is extremely gratifying.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

It's the responsibility I have with my team to honour the legacy and our illustrious heritage whilst adding to it and moving it on.

When a store like Selfridges has been revolutionising retail from 1909, it can be a challenge to always come up with fresh ideas and new concepts.

But that's also a fabulous way to create as you're allowed to really be wild and free with your vision and how you implement ideas.

What is your work priority for 2016?

Continue to inspire customers to visit our stores to find in them retail experiences like no other.

I'm especially excited about our Bright New Things scheme starting in January which will showcase a new generation of designers creating sustainable fashion.

And later in the spring, we'll celebrate the opening of a new concept bodywear department with an inspiring campaign.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

In the fashion-driven industry, in which I operate, women are already well-represented and at Selfridges, more than half our board room is led by women.

However, we can always push for a better representation of women across all levels of our industry and beyond, especially at board level.

It takes both men and women in position of power to influence this change within their respective industry.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

The idea of luxury can be personal and varies depending on who you are.

For some it is about amazing products, for others it's about an extraordinary experience or perhaps it's about luxury through intuitive design. What I feel proud of is the opportunity of making luxury accessible to all our customers, every day.

Alexandra Hoffnung, creative director of social commerce, Net-A-Porter Group, London

Stephanie Horton, chief marketing officer, Farfetch, London

Stephanie Horton of Farfetch

What do you most like about your job?

Launching and learning about new markets, and the diverse variety of people I get to meet around the world.

In my role I'm responsible for developing and executing the global marketing and communications strategy,

including global press, strategic partnerships, editorial, market strategy, advertising, VIP and social media.

A typical week can find me anywhere between Asia, the Middle East, the United States, Russia and Europe discovering and developing new opportunities.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

Being in two industries that are constantly evolving and changing - fashion and tech - it is a big challenge to continue to be revolutionary and offer new products first, while maintaining the consistency and identity of the brand globally.

Creating proper success measurements and KPIs for new initiatives and new markets is also a big challenge.

What is your work priority for 2016?

To further extend our international footprint in key and emerging markets such as Africa, Malaysia, Korea, Turkey and Mexico.

Over the past two years we have spent time investing in China, Japan and Moscow offering localized services and translated sites which has been very effective. We will also look to continue to test new ways to engage and communicate with customers through mobile

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

I think there are a lot of women in the industry but not at the C-level, especially on the digital/tech side. I think these positions need to be made more visible and companies need to take the time to support and develop this talent. I will say that Farfetch does a good job of this.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

We have had a two years of rapid growth at Farfetch, and I have an amazing team who has helped formulate and execute impactful strategies globally to further shift consumer and trade perception of the platform to a luxury ecommerce brand.

I love to see them celebrate milestones and successes as evidence of all the hard work they have put in.

Kristina Buckley Kayel, vice president of communications, Van Cleef & Arpels Americas, New York

Kristina Buckley Kayel of Van Cleef & Arpels

What do you like most like about your job?

Van Cleef & Arpels, a high-jewelry maison that dates back more than a century in Paris, has grown tremendously in the last decade, successfully preserving its exclusivity while increasing brand awareness. It is truly fulfilling to contribute to driving this growth concurrent with leading and developing the communications department.

The strategic objective I spearhead is to convey our content namely, supreme craftsmanship, incredible creations, rich stories, and our positive vision of the world across all client touch points in a way that is distinctive, captures the emotion and the imagination, and educates on our exceptional savoir-faire and heritage.

To achieve this requires internal collaboration and coordination across teams, in New York and with our headquarters in Paris, but also with external partners in the worlds of media, arts and culture, and, in some instances, directly with clients. The creativity that ensues from these collaborations is enriching and provides continual stimulation and development for my team and me.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

With rapid growth and increased awareness comes more competition. As a result, we need to continually

differentiate ourselves in how we convey our singularity, inspiration pillars and heritage.

I feel it is important to explore engaging and original ways for existing, potential and next-generation clients to experience the uniqueness and excellence of Van Cleef & Arpels.

Education is an especially important mission and value of the Maison, and one that my team and I deeply care about. This is epitomized by Van Cleef & Arpels nomadic school, l'COLE, which sheds light on the seemingly hidden worlds of high jewelry and watchmaking. We had a successful U.S. debut of the school in New York in June 2015 and I look forward to leading the implementation of its next U.S. stop.

Staying on top of and, in some instances, testing new technologies is also very important. Guiding an interdepartmental digital taskforce that is constantly tracking the digital landscape and opportunities is one example of ensuring this.

Leveraging deep, synergistic and long-term cultural partnerships as non-commercial, educational platforms to convey our DNA and values is a priority. I continue to steer the programming and optimization of such partnerships and have the privilege of collaborating with preeminent institutions such as the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum and the New York Academy of Art.

What is your work priority for 2016?

2016 is an exciting year: new collection launches in every category, new stores, new advertising, new digital assets and more. The priority will be to ensure that these new moments and opportunities are leveraged to drives sales and amplify the maison's qualitative visibility among clients and the public.

In overseeing advertising, digital media, P.R., visual merchandising, special events, VIP client treatment, strategic partnerships and educational programming, my goal is to optimize the new initiatives across all relevant channels in a consistent, integrated way that aligns with our business objectives. My approach includes seeking out less expected ways to express our content, and in this regard digital provides a great platform.

Moreover, as native advertising continues to develop, we are exploring interesting and original opportunities that attract a deeper engagement with our creations and their inspirations.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

Initiatives such as Luxury Women to Watch' certainly helps to formally acknowledge the opportunity for women's advancement and contribution in these areas.

Also of great benefit is affiliating with colleges that focus on retail, marketing, luxury and other such relevant areas. For example, I am involved with Columbia Business School and Parsons' Luxury Education Foundation program, which provides the opportunity to inspire and attract the young women involved.

As an executive and working mother, I strive to create an environment of mentorship, work/life balance and growth for my team, who are all women, and ensure they get the visibility they deserve within the entire company for achievements they accomplish. Such positive attention enables them to become role models for women within and outside the company.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement is one that still continues today at Van Cleef & Arpels: developing and leading the implementation of strategies that have been instrumental in taking our century-old heritage brand to the next level of awareness in the Americas.

I am also very proud of putting together a team of talented, passionate and committed individuals, and having taught them the importance of stepping back from the demanding work and pressure to simply share a good laugh.

Kathryn Kimmel, senior vice president and chief marketing officer, Gemological Institute of America, Carlsbad, CA

Kathryn Kimmel of GIA

What do you like most about your job?
I am the third generation of my family to pursue a career in gems and jewelry. My passion for this industry is in my blood. GIA gives me an incredible opportunity to realize that passion by allowing me to work in an environment that combines luxury and social responsibility.

Not only am I surrounded by some of the most beautiful objects in the world, but I get to work with the brightest minds in gemology and for an organization dedicated to research and education, and to protecting the jewelry-buying public.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
Reaching each consumer with up-to-date and accurate information they can use when and where they need it. There are so many ways to buy jewelry today, and so much information available. We have to be creative, nimble and take some risks to inform the gem-buying public so they can make purchases with confidence.

What is your work priority for 2016?
We are focusing on using the strength of GIA's brand to increase awareness and recognition. That is how we will advance our mission.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
The same things that it takes to attract anyone: encourage professional growth, provide equal opportunities for advancement through the decision-making ranks, recognize and equitably reward achievement.

The luxury industry has always attracted women. Women have an authentic connection to jewelry. They wear, and enjoy wearing, the product. They understand the language and power of brands. They consume the same media luxury uses to reach its customers.

The real challenge has been to keep them. The jewelry industry is just beginning to catch up to that challenge.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement has to be GIA's Jewelry Career Fair, an event I first organized in 1991. At the time, the goal was to connect GIA students with prospective gem and jewelry employers. But the event quickly grew into something more.

Leaders from every sector of the industry participate as speakers and career coaches, and prospective job seekers both students and the public have the opportunity to network, to be mentored, and discover the many careers available to them in the gem and jewelry world.

Career Fair is now global, and it's incredibly rewarding to see former job seekers return as industry leaders and employers.

Melody Lee, director of brand strategy and planning, General Motors' Cadillac, New York

Melody Lee of Cadillac

General Motors

What do you most like about your job?
Not many people get the chance to re-invent an iconic, 113-year old brand. I love that Cadillac is not the kind of job where I'm told daily, "Here's a strong brand. Now, don't screw it up."

Instead, I'm told, "Think big, take some risks, bring Cadillac back to greatness." It's a great privilege to be the steward of the first American luxury brand and position it for the next generation of luxury buyers. Not a single day is the same, and not a single day is boring.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

The biggest daily challenge is balancing between the long term and the short term; between doing things that build the brand and still drive the sales growth we need.

We need to position Cadillac with future, aspirational buyers but move the metal and hit our monthly sales targets at the same time.

It's a tension that I experience every day and nearly every hour in the job, but it's a necessary tension. Like most industries, automotive demands volume growth, but luxury marketing also requires a disciplined and deliberate approach over years even decades which is even more important with a brand in turnaround like Cadillac.

What is your work priority for 2016?
We have two major vehicle launches in the first part of the year: the Cadillac CT6, our top-of-the range sedan, and the Cadillac XT5, our all-new crossover SUV.

Both vehicles represent the new naming convention that Cadillac adopted last year, but moreover, are the initial indications of the direction of the brand when it comes to future product. We're going to be releasing eight new products between 2016 and 2020.

But beyond vehicle launches, my focus will continue to be strengthening the Cadillac brand, to build a world that future consumers want to be a part of, that is culturally relevant, that is cool. Cadillac was the pinnacle of cool once, and I believe it can be again.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

I don't think the luxury marketing world is any different than any other industry. I believe women are up for and can solve the world's greatest challenges.

But we've got to continue to create work environments that celebrate and account for women's unique qualities, preferences and multi-dimensional roles outside the office as well as in it. Frankly, the automotive sector remains a distinct challenge.

I'm proud to be a part of parent company that has Mary Barra as CEO, but there is still so much more than can and should be done to shape the auto industry into a place that is welcoming of diversity and, more importantly, a place where women can make a true difference.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
It's been a really gratifying three years at Cadillac, where I have been given a rare chance to take a brand that everyone knows, but do not necessarily relate to, and do what's necessary to re-invent it.

I got to start from the beginning in re-defining Cadillac's beliefs, values and essence, and be a part of taking that brand identity and applying it to future products and marketing communications.

The launch of our new brand platform, "Dare Greatly," in February 2015 was the culmination of that effort, but now the task ahead is to deliver proof. But watching the debut of Dare Greatly during the Academy Awards broadcast was an undoubtedly proud moment in my career.

Katherine Bahamonde Monasebian, chief marketing officer and head of business development, Tourneau, New York

Katherine Bahamonde Monasebian of Tourneau

What do you most like about your job?

I enjoy working with an incredible team at a company with 115 years of heritage and a long established reputation for selling and servicing the finest luxury timepieces.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

At times it can be the macro-economic environment. Currency headwinds and pricing disparities can create unanticipated business challenges.

What is your work priority for 2016?

Recognizing the influence and shopping trends of today's informed, tech-savvy luxury consumer, Tourneau has put a significant focus on re-imagining its digital platforms and in-store design to create a cohesive shopping experience. We relaunched our Web site this past fall.

One of my priorities for 2016 is to continue to expand our omnichannel efforts, including schedule-an-appointment, pick-up-in-store and store-associate orders.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

I believe that it is just a matter of time before women become more represented in these fields. There is much focus currently on the topic of gender balance in both corporate executive ranks and boards.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement in luxury has actually happened after hours when I lead the HBS Club of NYC, the largest network of Harvard Business School alums worldwide. Being at the helm of the local arm of such a powerful global brand, and working to make an impact in the New York community across thousands of passionate members, has been highly rewarding.

Fanny Moizant, cofounder, Vestiaire Collective, Paris

Fanny Moizant of Vestiaire Collective

What do you most like about your job?
My team. We started the company as six cofounders, which has now grown to a team of more than 180 employees in five countries.

The team is the company's best asset: they are passionate, enthusiastic women and men who are incredibly dedicated and inspiring. I feel truly grateful to work with such a great team every day.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

The company's growth, seeing a three-digit growth every year is a pure challenge. You constantly have to adapt, from local to global, opening new countries, enhancing our product offering, running the operations, scaling up. It's a

never ending learning curve, so challenging, but also so exciting.

What is your work priority for 2016?
Growing the United States market is a key priority for 2016. We have a strong team and big expectations to become one of the U.S. leaders rapidly.

Our model, inventory and French DNA are key strengths that help to define the company and give us a strong position in the market.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
I feel that there are already quite a lot of women in some aspects of these fields, but there is definitely a lack of women in the entrepreneurial field. More testimonials from entrepreneurial women might help to spark inspiration in other women.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
My proudest achievement is definitely what Vestiaire Collective has managed to build in such a short period of time.

We've developed the company to become a worldwide leader within the online resale market in just six years. I would have never dreamed that was possible when we started the company in 2008.

I sometimes wonder how we got to where we are so quickly but really it was really all down to a lot of hard work, dedication and passion.

Diana Verde Nieto, cofounder, Positive Luxury, London

Diana Verde Nieto of Positive Luxury

What do you most like about your job?

I love every aspect of my job, especially as I wear two hats: the entrepreneur and the CEO.

As an entrepreneur the best part is getting to break new ground, such as being the first to apply technology to our field of communication and so create a market opportunity that didn't exist before.

The worst part about this is that education takes time and let's just say I am a little impatient.

With my CEO hat I love solving problems and making a difference in the process. Overall, it is incredible to get to work with brands that I love and people that I admire and respect.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

We're rolling Positive Luxury out internationally, so the biggest challenge is to grow the team in the United Kingdom so that we can make this happen successfully. It takes a while to get the right people around you and requires patience, it's not just about finding people that can do the job but also people that get the company, the culture and the working style.

What is your work priority for 2016?

2016 is about consolidating our U.K. business and putting the team and infrastructure in place to roll out in the United States.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

Time. Technology is changing and young girls are appreciating the opportunities that the digital world can give them, so the upward turn will come. Karlie Kloss is one example of a key women making a difference today, as she's putting some glam and style in coding and attracting women to feel empowered by this.

On a senior level, a lot of progress is already being made, with some of the big groups already having women in

their boards which is a fantastic achievement, clearly there is a long way to go but every journey starts with one step.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

When we started Positive Luxury in 2012, the conversation of positive impact in the luxury industry wasn't happening. Four years on, not only are the big luxury groups talking about sustainability, but they are embedding it at the core of the business strategy.

Of course, I can't make this my claim to fame, but I like to think Positive Luxury had an influence and will have a continued role to play.

Elizabeth Pizzinato, senior vice president marketing and communications, Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, Toronto

Elizabeth Pizzinato of Four Seasons

What do you most like about your job?
There are so many aspects to what I do daily that drive and motivate me. Probably most exciting is the global nature of the work. I am able to work with our amazing teams around the world to help drive brand leadership and innovation for Four Seasons. That's particularly satisfying in places like China, where we are growing our brand footprint.

I would also say that the diversity of what my team works on is immensely exciting. There's never been a more dynamic time to be a brand marketer, and the dominance of digital and content marketing and an omnichannel lens mean that we are continually re-inventing the way we market to consumers today.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
There are an increasing number of distribution channels that consumers can use to purchase our product, much like in luxury retail. The challenge for us is to ensure that we bring the consumer back to our channels and help them transact there in a way that is highly personalized and adds value.

I would also say that a big focus for us is to ensure we're maximizing our budgets: doing fewer things but doing them extremely well.

What is your work priority for 2016?

I've long believed that content marketing is a key driver for the diversity of communications channels that we manage and getting content right is more critical than ever before.

That's especially true today, where content marketing is one of the most powerful tools in reaching and retaining new and existing audiences.We dedicate significant resources to digital and focus on building our dynamic content hub, with our Web site serving as the center of it all.

The process by which we create and syndicate information across various owned, paid and earned channels requires nimbleness to adapt quickly. This, coupled with the fact that we are committed to continually creating fresh content, provides guests with a reason to visit us regularly to take part in the evolving conversation.

In the year ahead, the need for quality content will only increase as we seek ways to communicate our brand values and experiences in a consistent, fresh, relevant way one that is true to our high standards.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
There are more great role models across the digital marketing spectrum than ever before high profile women who are driving change and leading powerful organizations to success, whether through a specialized lens or via a broader mandate.

Of course, Sheryl Sandberg is the pre-eminent role model in the category, but there are many others who are fast rising in the ranks.

From Wanda Gierhart from Neiman Marcus, and key social media influencers like Ann Tran in the travel and lifestyle space, the key characteristics that many of these women share is a tremendous entrepreneurial drive, exceptional communications chops and a total embracing of all things digital, even if that wasn't their initial background.

The luxury sector is ripe for innovative thinkers who can both help burnish a brand's luster and nurture the core elements that make it great, while at the same time helping them navigate the seemingly scary waters of digital marketing.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I'm so proud of what our team has accomplished with social media. Four Seasons has been an industry innovator in social media channels, and it has been a tremendous source of pride to lead the way in the luxury hospitality with our approach to social.

From creating the first luxury partnership with Pinterest - Pin Pack Go - to our latest UGC Instagram promotion, called Focus on Four Seasons, we continually challenge ourselves to think about how social channels can be leveraged to increase engagement with our guests. Hand in hand with this is our exceptional approach to creating content.

Four Seasons has long been a publisher of content, and our unique perspective on luxury travel and lifestyle is aligned with the affinity our guests have with our brand.

Melissa Pordy, group director for media, Tiffany & Co. North America, New York

Melissa Pordy of Tiffany & Co.

What do you most like about your job?
Besides everything, what I truly like the most is our complete collaboration across all functions. The global team members sit one floor below the North American team. This is ideal because it negates any time difference, language barrier or lack of market understanding.

As a preeminent luxury brand, born in New York, we are all able to draw our inspiration from this magical city of freedom, creativity and excitement.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
To remind my team, my partners and myself to never be satisfied. Status quo is the enemy.

Tiffany must lead by example. This means always looking at only the most creative ways to team with our media partners. Together we must continually elevate the Tiffany brand with not only current customers but also the next generation.

What is your work priority for 2016?

To continue to dial up Tiffany's heritage of excellence, with existing and new consumers, on all fronts. Shopping habits are changing quickly with our core audience.

Meanwhile, as millennials advance in their careers, they are driving many new trends as well. Tiffany must and will continue to look for the most impactful and relevant ways to reach them while always keeping our brand DNA and standard of excellence front and center.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
The fields of marketing and media have never been more dynamic. There are powerful new channels to communicate with our audiences emerging daily. This is a unique moment in history for brands to be creative and

inspiring.

For women looking to make their mark, there is now more opportunity to do so than ever before. It's an exciting time and one I am very proud to be part of especially as we continue to elevate Tiffany to become the world's most important house of luxury.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I've been fortunate enough to have had a few achievements that I'm very proud of: the launch of the CT60 watch in unison with the new men's style section in The New York Times which led to our collaboration and urging them to create a complementary digital channel for a multi-touch-point execution, our breakthrough campaign targeting same sex couples via a 360 takeover with the New York Times and other key channels, and the wildly successful debut of Tiffany T with the help of all of my wonderful media partners.

Overall, I have to say my success is a result of having a great boss, team and partners. They are what I am most proud of.

Rania Sedhom, managing partner, Sedhom Law Group, New York

Rania Sedhom of Sedhom Law Group

What do you most like about your job?
First and foremost, I love helping people and companies monetize their business by using my passion for clients, knowledge of law and business to navigate what is sometimes an expert and complex ski slalom.

When I tell people about my firm's differentiators all of our attorneys also have business expertise, we work as a partner with fashion businesses, we strategize, we only provide practical solutions and we generally do not charge by the hour, and I see the excitement on their faces as if they share my same zest for life and business, I am elated beyond words.

I took the time when launching my firm to trademark the firm's soul A Bespoke Law Firm. This term is clearly borrowed from luxury fashion and resonates in everything we do.

We are a law and advisory firm that provides customized solutions and, at the time of service, your experience is second to none. We love treating all of our clients as if they are our only client.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

There is likely no single biggest challenge because business promises challenges and rewards us with success. However, the firm is a dichotomy. We are a disrupter firm because we practice law differently than other firms.

By its very nature, being a disrupter is challenging.

Since my practice involves ingesting the luxury brand's true mission, understanding their financial and people goals, and working with businesses and investors who are either at a crossroads, either strategically or financially or are simply no longer accepting of their current relationship with counsel, it is sometimes difficult to convert a prospect to a client and gain trust all while educating them about a new legal and advisory business model.

What is your work priority for 2016?
My work priority is simple: continue to forge strong relationships built upon mutual enthusiasm for success, a shared thirst for the business of fashion, and strong curiosity for improving the business and its employees so that it resonates with consumers.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
Pardon me for being a bit of a contrarian. Women need to be self-reliant and unapologetic for their intellect and

business prowess.

The societal norms regarding a "women's place" will not change until we, as women, empower ourselves and each other, change vocabulary - e.g., B-- to assertive, aggressive to self-confident, et cetera. - and support each other across business lines and diagonally within the entire luxury space.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
In addition to building my own brand, I am equally humbled and joyous to be the only woman attorney, to date, to receive this great honor.

When I first told a few close friends about my idea to marry law, strategy and business, several people told me that it couldn't be done. Being a Luxury Woman to Watch in 2016 is proof that my brand is authentic, my advice is appreciated and that my vision is being executed.

Tammy Smulders, managing partner and global executive director, Havas LuxHub, London

Tammy Smulders of Havas LuxHub

What do you most like about your job?

I enjoy the opportunity to work with talented professionals at top luxury brands as a true strategic partner to my clients. On a daily basis, I interact with senior executives from a wide variety of luxury businesses, ranging from Herms to De Beers to Starwood Hotels.

Each of these clients has different strategic imperatives, and it's exciting to develop and deliver meaningful marketing solutions for their businesses.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

Human capital is certainly the biggest challenge. I'm fortunate to have built a strong team of excellent people, but we're constantly on the lookout for skilled marketing and media practitioners with an instinctive knowledge of the luxury business.

What is your work priority for 2016?

My priority for 2016 is to continue to build Havas LuxHub, alongside our global CEO Isabelle Harvie-Watt. In addition to servicing our existing clients, we are looking to bring new luxury clients into the LuxHub fold.

We are also expanding our international footprint in 2016, with the formal launches of LuxHub in China and France, which will complement our existing LuxHub offices in the United Kingdom, Italy, United States, Middle East, Spain and Poland.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?

As our business becomes increasingly complex, there is a real need to identify and attract talented women, who understand luxury. As an industry, we are fortunate to have many superb female role models.

That said, we should continue to create exciting opportunities for the best and brightest graduates to choose this career path. Mid-career, creating a flexible working environment that allows women to adjust their schedules to address both work and family commitments will ensure that women stay in the business and ascend to leadership positions.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement has been building SCB Partners into one of the leading trend-based marketing insights consultancies over 11 years.

Having sold SCB to Havas in 2011, I have been fortunate to learn from experienced professionals like Havas Media UK CEO Paul Frampton, and to further develop the SCB business and transition to LuxHub leadership.

Jacky Teplitzky, real estate broker and leader, Douglas Elliman, New York

Jacky Teplitzky of Douglas Elliman

What do you most like about your job?
There's never a dull moment because no two days are the same. Real Estate is exciting, stressful and nerve wrackingjust how I like it

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
The biggest challenge is staying at the top with constant new competitors coming into the industry.

What is your work priority for 2016?
To have the best possible team. Happy, well trained, focus and motivated. Another priority is to survive the lifestyle change of becoming an empty nester.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
Good pay and flexible hours.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Having just sold a $35 million apartment before it even hit the market.

Sarah Watson, vice president of social commerce, Net-A-Porter Group, London

Sarah Watson of Net-A-Porter

What do you most like about your job?
I love working on a team with such a wide variety of skillsets. The Net Set is like a startup within a large business and we are pretty self-sufficient.

I oversee everything from the app design and build to the marketing copy and editorial, which means I learn something new every day and am constantly having to use different parts of my brain. There is never a dull moment.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?
Creating the future of fashion is not an easy task. The Net Set is the first time a luxury retailer has created its own social network and that comes with its own set of challenges. For a start, there is nothing to benchmark us against. Also, we are taking a risk.

We believe that social shopping is the future, but not everyone thinks the same, so we've had to master the arts of persuasion and stay focused no matter what. It takes a lot of confidence, and is incredibly nerve-racking, to launch something new into the world. But that's also what makes my role so exhilarating.

What is your work priority for 2016?
My focus is 100 percent on growing The Net Set community and making it the social destination for women who

love fashion and style. As with any new business, there is a very steep learning curve at the beginning, but staying positive and motivated helps to keep us all on track.

There is a lot of competition in the social shopping space, so we need to constantly innovate and challenge ourselves to ensure we stay ahead of the game.

What will it take to attract more women to luxury marketing, retail, media and digital?
I have quite a skewed perspective as at Net-A-Porter there is no shortage of women in these areas. In fact, we have a great balance of men and women in our tech department too, which is something I am particularly proud of.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?
Encouraging and implementing change. The luxury consumer is changing and so must the luxury business.

I am proud to work for a forward-thinking company and being given the opportunity to launch our own social shopping network. The Net Set is definitely my greatest and proudest achievement to date. I am still floating on Cloud Nine since the launch in May.

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