

RETAIL

HBC hires new CMO in wake of data breach

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Ms. Harlam joins as the company is attempting to deal with its data breach problem. Image credit: Lord & Taylor

By STAFF REPORTS

Hudson's Bay Company, owner of retailers Saks Fifth Avenue and Lord & Taylor, is taking its marketing in a new direction with the appointment of a new chief marketing officer.

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HBC has announced that Bari Harlam will join the company as the new CMO, heading up the company's marketing center of excellence for all of the groups' retail brands across North America. Ms. Harlam is taking over at a time when HBC is facing pressure from a major breach of customer data.

"Successful marketing is grounded in analytics and digital insights, and Bari has demonstrated an innate ability to translate this complex data into breakthrough strategies that put the customer first," said Helena Foulkes, CEO of HBC, in a statement.

Marketing leadership

Ms. Harlam comes to HBC without a major background in luxury retail.

Instead, she brings experience in the wholesale and health retail spaces. In the past, she has held senior marketing roles at BJ's Wholesale and CVS Health.

At CVS, Ms. Harlam created CVS ExtraCare, the largest consumer loyalty program in the world. She has focused much of her work on building these types of loyalty programs, a valuable skill for retailers that cultivate repeat customers such as HBC's Saks and Lord & Taylor.

Ms. Harlam joins the company at a difficult time. A group of cybercriminals have stolen more than 5 million credit card numbers from customers at Saks Fifth Avenue and Lord & Taylor in a major security breach.



Ms. Harlam comes to HBC from CVS. Image credit: Saks Fifth Avenue

The group known as Fin7 has claimed responsibility, listing the credit card numbers for sale online at a popular hub for selling stolen credit card information. Part of Hudson's Bay Company, Saks and Lord & Taylor are two of the most popular high-end department stores in the country, making this crime a huge liability for both the retailers and the affected customers ([see story](#)).

While the company at large seeks to deal with this problem, Ms. Harlam will focus her efforts on building out the retailers' loyalty programs and cultivating brand image.

"Bari is the ideal strategic leader to harness the power of our information to drive performance," Foulkes said. "Her experience will be incredibly valuable to our business as we work to reinvent the way we market and deliver unparalleled experiences to our customers across all channels.

"I am thrilled to welcome her to the team."

In this role, Ms. Harlam succeeds HBC's former CMO Milton Pappas, who left the company.

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