

CLASSIC GUIDES

Introducing Luxury Women to Watch 2020

October 24, 2019



British model Jean Campbell modeling a fall-winter 2019 look from Porter Magazine's outwear special. Photo credit: Quentin De Briey. Image credit: Net-A-Porter

By STAFF REPORTS

Luxury Daily annually honors 25 smart women executives who show the potential to make a difference next year in the luxury business. This year's list features honorees who have set ambitious goals to achieve in a luxury market that, while growing, is also challenged by rapid changes in consumer behavior and technology.

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The Luxury Women to Watch 2020 roster includes executives from Vacheron Constantin, Starboard, The Private Suite, Dealmoon, Modern Spaces, Mercedes-Benz, Sarah Gargano Communications, *Travel + Leisure*, LLG Events, OnTheList, Keeneland, Mobkoi, JOOR, Altiant, Estée Lauder Cos., The RealReal, Boll & Branch, Whitman Family Development, Guesst.co, Selfridges, Net-A-Porter, Beverly Hills Convention & Visitors Bureau, Christie's, The White Company and Pernod Ricard. Please read through their responses below to get a sense of their 2020 strategy.

Judging process

Picking the 25 smartest women with potential was not easy. Readers were **invited 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 2020.

All judging was based purely on merit and potential to make a difference.

Thank you to *Luxury Daily* team members Sarah Jones, Brielle Jaekel and Sarah Ramirez for their help. Many thanks as well to those readers who took the time to nominate candidates.

Please read this report 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 2020, and raise standards even higher in the luxury business.

Mickey Alam Khan, editor in chief, *Luxury Daily*

LUXURY WOMEN TO WATCH 2020

Angela Au-Yeung, chief digital officer, **Vacheron Constantin**



Angela Au-Yeung

“Fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and a startup culture internally is challenging, but also fun and gratifying at the same time”

What do you most like about your job?

Working at Vacheron Constantin’s global headquarters is a precious opportunity for me to get close to our beautiful creations and the real people behind them.

This is where we give birth to our timepieces, and being inside the sanctuary full of inspiration does spark ideas and creativity to amplify the Vacheron Constantin values through digital means, which is a major part of my job.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

I’d say meeting the growing expectations of our clients is the most challenging.

We hope to deliver the best we can on all fronts, and ensure they will experience our maison offerings consistently across all touch points and around the world. This is no easy task.

What is your work priority for 2020?

The number one priority is to focus on our clients.

Quoting Jeff Bezos, “It’s easy to say, but difficult to do.” In luxury, we try hard to provide tailored treatment and services that suit our client needs as much as possible.

Thanks to technology and the design of clienteling applications, we will be able to communicate, serve and listen to our clients more effectively.

The listening part is especially important.

In 2020 we will place stronger emphasis in using client feedback to constantly optimize our offerings, be it products, services, or experience.

Another priority is to transform the business together with our people.

Fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and a startup culture internally is challenging, but also fun and gratifying at the same time.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

First, built a team and an end-to-end platform from scratch in China for omnichannel, direct-to-customer digital activities, all on a legacy infrastructure.

Most recently, being part of a tribe at Vacheron Constantin and the Richemont Group to initialize a proof of concept leveraging blockchain technology.

The idea is to issue the clients of Les Collectionneurs, our vintage collection, digital certificates of ownership on the blockchain.

Our timepieces last for a long time, we may as well preserve their stories with the help of this rapidly developing technology that creates additional value to our clients.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

I expect to see luxury accelerate its transformation through digitalization in 2020, similar to what has happened in other categories.

Players who can apply technology to amplify the beauty, craftsmanship and quality inherent in luxury products and experiences will make the landscape more competitive and vibrant.

I also hope to see more competition and disruption that will make the industry even more interesting.

Lisa Bauer, president/CEO, [Starboard](#)



Lisa Bauer

“There is a mindset shift taking place, from transactional relationships with customers to offering experiential luxury”

What do you most like about your job?

I am thrilled to have recently joined such an incredible group.

LVMH brings together truly exceptional houses that embody luxury and l’art de vivre.

Having worked in the travel and hospitality industry my entire career, it is an honor to now lead Starboard Cruise Services, one of the selective retailing houses of LVMH.

I am truly passionate about elevating the onboard customer experience, finding ways to reinvent retail at sea and rethinking what’s possible.

So, one of the things I like most about my job is spending time on ships and driving innovation with the amazing men and women who are with our customers, delivering exceptional guest experiences every day.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

It is a very interesting time for the retail industry.

We are in a state of constant and rapid change, and technology is at the forefront of that transformation.

Experimenting with a myriad of ways to respond to new shopper expectations at every touch point – whether it’s before, during or after our guests’ journeys on ship – can be challenging, but once we find the right answers, these challenges become our greatest opportunities.

What is your work priority for 2020?

We are strengthening our core identity as a global travel retailer – customized for each of our cruise line partners – by creating a holistic cruise experience and memorable consumer journey.

We are focusing on information-based decision-making to ensure we deliver hyper-personalized customer experiences from beginning to end.

Beyond the transactional relationship with our customers, we will focus on providing invaluable memories around destination luxury and exclusive behind-the-scenes experiences we will bring to life with our sister LVMH brands, like only we can.

Also, in 2020 we foresee our continued explosive growth in China.

We will leverage our global presence to offer unparalleled productions and exclusive access to high-end fashion events such as the Bulgari Jewelry Fashion show that we hosted onboard Costa Venezia earlier this year.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I believe that the ultimate luxury is authenticity. Realizing that has been one of my proudest achievements.

Many years in the travel industry allowed me to understand what meaningful moments signify to our guests.

People embrace luxury for different purposes. Sometimes it's to celebrate. Sometimes it's to cherish the memory of a destination. Sometimes it's simply to be mesmerized by the beauty and wonder that life has to offer.

But the moment we indulge in the utter joy and delight of a new discovery, our authentic self comes through, and that precious moment is true luxury. That feeling is not acquired. It is experienced. It is priceless.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

Luxury is increasingly evolving towards holistic and exclusive experiences. There is a mindset shift taking place, from transactional relationships with customers to offering experiential luxury.

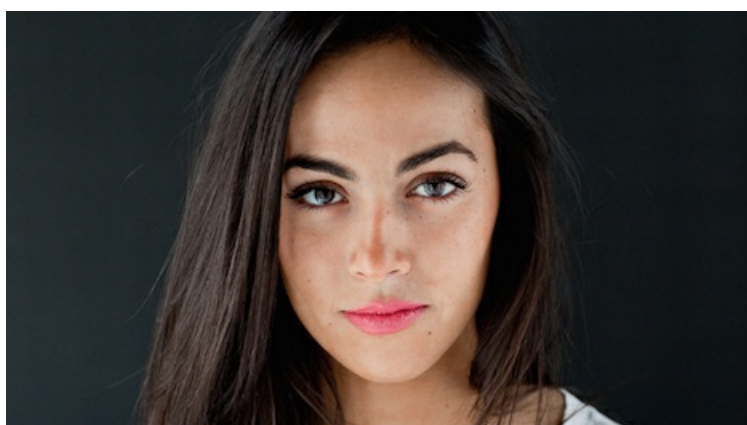
We are a B2B and a B2C company, so we must have a deep understanding of the evolution of our cruise line partners as well as their high-end customers.

In our industry specifically, it means bringing the cruise line brands to life by curating the right experience for any given destination.

Our guests love the cruise line brands they are sailing with, so offering personalized experiences with branded products to loyal customers at every touch point will become a must.

Guests will expect to be delighted with amplified end-to-end shopping experiences through the discovery of immersive moments into the finer things in life and gifting strategies that promise to delight families back home.

Amina Belouizdad, chief commercial officer, [The Private Suite](#)



Amina Belouizdad

"The luxury business is tough. The bar for excellence, precision and execution is extremely high and non-negotiable"

What do you most like about your job?

Two things stand out: Firstly, that I have the opportunity to flex both my left and right brain. One second I'm analytical, and the next I'm creative. It keeps me whole, sane and challenged.

Secondly, I love that we are in the people business.

I'm blessed to come to work to an incredible team that is dedicated to serving incredible customers. Nothing makes me happier than seeing our team grow and learn together.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Creating a new category from scratch.

There is no playbook as to what a private airport terminal should look like. We are, quite literally, writing the rules. It's fun, but it's a huge challenge. If we get it right – and we will – it will set the bar for this new industry we are defining.

What is your work priority for 2020?

My priority for 2019 was to set the stage for expansion. We have spent most of the year tweaking the business model

in terms of product, price and promotion strategies. 2020 will be laser focused on scaling the model beyond Los Angeles. We have our eyes set on every major city in the U.S.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement lies in the revenue growth we have been able to achieve over the past year.

The luxury business is tough. The bar for excellence, precision and execution is extremely high and non-negotiable.

To be able to grow at our rate in a business that combines the complexities of logistics with the customer demands of hospitality is an incredible feat. And we are just getting started.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

In an age of social media, data breaches and cameras in our pockets, I see privacy gaining in importance as an attribute of luxury.

Rose Blackmore, senior managing director of business development and partnerships, [Dealmoon](#)



Rose Blackmore

“Helping brands understand the Chinese shopper over and above what can often be a superficial grasp is always a challenge”

What do you most like about your job?

I've always been a shopper and love luxury brands, so being able to help some of my personal favorites expand their businesses is especially gratifying.

I feel very lucky to work with and make a true impact on the business of so many of the world's top luxury brands and, more importantly, the people behind those brands.

I also appreciate the unique opportunity to wholeheartedly understand the culture of the Chinese shopper within such a dynamic environment such as the Dealmoon platform.

I have never witnessed such a targeted and responsive source of valuable information in all my years in digital.

Working with teams of people where I can get insights into what is needed to be ahead of the curve is immeasurable.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Helping brands understand the Chinese shopper over and above what can often be a superficial grasp is always a challenge, but that's part of what Dealmoon's consultative approach exists for – to be the category expert.

The way the Chinese shopper interacts with peers and brands and the multiple channels they use can be bewildering to brands.

Once we have their trust and the first campaign delivers beyond their expectations, they never look back.

And, personally, my biggest challenge is learning to speak Mandarin.

What is your work priority for 2020?

Happy shoppers and happy brand partners.

Those 17.5 million users who engage with our site every month need to be entertained, educated and exposed to new and relevant messages and brands.

We spend a lot of time and resource understanding changing attitudes and tastes – feeding those back to clients and helping them identify new and meaningful ways of staying in the forefront of our community.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

On an everyday level, it's convincing a brand to try us out and then seeing their satisfaction when their faith has been justified. That never gets old, especially from the most established of luxury brands.

However, when it comes to the big-picture successes, three spring to mind.

Selling \$9 million for a luxury multi-brand store in less than seven hours during Singles' Day, pre-launching a product by one of the top three biggest luxury beauty brands with the Dealmoon audience before it was released to the general public and completely depleting them of all inventory in three hours, and creating a collection of Dealmoon exclusive drops with a luxury handbag company.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

Within luxury, micro-influencers, whose definition can expand to include a consumer's immediate circle of friends and family, will become increasingly important to provide quality insights and perspective from a source they already know and trust.

Leveraging technology to continue to engage the consumer in all aspects of the conversion cycle, even if that means looking back to former vehicles, such as QR codes, that may have been ahead of their time.

Arlinda Dine, executive vice president of new development marketing, [Modern Spaces](#)



Arlinda Dine

"The luxury market has been experiencing a shift in demand for hyper-tailored products that truly represent the lifestyles and values of consumers"

What do you most like about your job?

As a major advocate for [New York borough] Queens, I enjoy expanding the typical outsider's impression of the borough as a whole.

Modern Spaces handles a large portion of the new development market share in Long Island City, which is the nation's fastest-growing neighborhood, and we owe much of this success to our long-term commitment, knowledge and passion for Queens. I am proud to play a part in this positive change.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Modern Spaces has over 40 new residential real estate projects, which it has earned the exclusive right to market and sell, in its pipeline.

Each building has many moving parts, so prioritizing so many important tasks is currently my biggest challenge. Staying organized is vital to ensuring projects are moving along in a timely, smooth and successful manner.

What is your work priority for 2020?

My work priority for 2020 is to continue to support the team to the best of my ability by helping each person to develop his or her own unique skills and encouraging the expression of their ideas in a comfortable setting where creativity is deeply valued.

My team members happen to be predominantly female, and it's a perfect fit for new development, which tends to require creativity and multitasking.

I am always encouraging team members, male or female, to push themselves to think outside the box.

Modern Spaces also puts a great emphasis on company culture and, as a rapidly expanding company, it's important that our staff know they have a voice and are encouraged to contribute their opinions and to be their authentic, fierce selves.

Curating and maintaining a healthy work environment has been my number one goal since I joined Modern Spaces' leadership team. I am honored to work at a company that has made it possible to achieve this.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Over the past two years, I've had the privilege to lead the marketing and sales for what will be the tallest condo in Queens, Skyline Tower.

The impact this 802-unit project will have on Long Island City is larger than any project I've ever worked on. In under three months, we sold \$223 million worth of inventory, with units sold ranging from \$640,000 to \$2.365 million.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

The luxury market has been experiencing a shift in demand for hyper-tailored products that truly represent the lifestyles and values of consumers.

Keeping this in mind, we continue to prioritize personalization in our projects, so the homes we are marketing cater to our customers' unique preferences.

Bettina Fetzer, global head of marketing, [Mercedes-Benz](#)



Bettina Fetzer

"I am striving to stay authentic, to continuously provide orientation, to inspire and to empower my team"

What do you most like about your job?

I am lucky to work with a great team and empower people to break new ground to deliver outstanding brand experiences for our Mercedes-Benz customers and fans.

Working in a constantly evolving environment is exciting and I am happy to be part of this transformation.

No two days at the office are alike and we are jointly shaping the future of mobility – I think that's a pretty cool job.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Keeping pace in an environment that is constantly evolving, especially in IT and data while focusing on what matters most: the team, a great culture and the needs of our customers.

What is your work priority for 2020?

Amongst others, I am striving to stay authentic, to continuously provide orientation, to inspire and to empower my team.

At the same time, I want to be a role model for working parents who strive to balance a career with family life.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Time with my family.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

I would love to see a growing trend towards sustainable luxury. This is what we at Mercedes-Benz are working on.

Sarah Gargano, president/CEO, [Sarah Gargano Communications](#)



Sarah Gargano

“We see the next generation of public relations and communications as creating and maintaining a sense of community for brands, their clients and followers”

What do you most like about your job?

I love the luxury industry.

I have been incredibly fortunate to receive first-hand training in the factories and headquarters of the brands we represent, observing the craftsmanship and know-how of the artisans and workers, passed on from generation to generation.

Through these invaluable experiences, I have developed a passion for handcrafted, service-oriented luxury brands.

It is this love and appreciation of the luxury space that has driven to me to specialize my efforts in the promotion and education of luxury worldwide.

I feel so lucky that I get to communicate this devotion and excellence of our brands every single day in my work.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Consumers today want to feel connected to a brand and engage with that brand in new and exciting ways. They are no longer satisfied to walk into a boutique or event and simply observe product – they want to be players in the experience. They are also more sophisticated and educated than ever before, having done research online before entering a store. Many times, they know more than the salespeople.

Our challenge is to create highly personalized experiences that reward customers in creative ways, are effective in establishing long-term loyalty between the consumer and brand, and offer customers a sense of belonging and community.

Another challenge? To create Instagrammable moments at events. How do we grab the imagination and attention of guests and get them to post on their social media accounts?

What is your work priority for 2020?

It is such an exciting time for SGC and thanks to our incredibly dedicated team, we are taking it to the next level with expansion plans to double employee size in New York City and open a new office in London.

Since we are a luxury agency with mainly European clients, we feel it is important to have a presence overseas to strengthen and further our company as an authoritative PR luxury agency with knowledge of the key European countries.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I have been so fortunate to be part of many successes for luxury brands over the past 20 years all over the world, especially through my work with Lalique, the Hotel Santa Caterina in Amalfi and Valmont.

The biggest highlight for me this year was planning and executing McLaren’s first-ever global influencer campaign

with their U.K. team.

To help imagine, fashion and execute this program from start to finish, having a hand in absolutely all aspects, from securing an American Olympian for the campaign, to interviewing her, to experiencing the driving program with her, sharing in her emotions, to cutting the final videos, was a total high. It felt like this was the culmination of everything I had ever done up until this point: a total thrill. I can't wait for the next one.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

We see the next generation of public relations and communications as creating and maintaining a sense of community for brands, their clients and followers.

With social media and influencer marketing generating a huge audience of global consumers for brands, storytelling has truly become a brand's currency. And it's important that luxury and PR leverage this new currency.

Consumers really want to connect with brands that reflect their lifestyle and share their values.

Jacqui Gifford, editor in chief, *Travel+Leisure*



Jacqui Gifford

"I have the desire to always be on in the name of efficiency and I know this could lead to major burnout"

What do you most like about your job?

Meeting people, listening to them, understanding their stories.

I'm privileged that my job as editor in chief takes me all over the world.

This year alone, I've been to Udaipur, India; Seville, Spain; Aspen, CO; London; and many other places.

I've always thought of myself as a global citizen because I was born in Japan, and raised there, as well as in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and here in the United States.

Travel + Leisure is a brand for global citizens, so it's a thrill for me to share rich, emotional, visually beautiful editorial with our audience, stories that drive them to see the world.

I also believe that travel is a force for good, and it is rewarding to lead a brand that endorses getting out of your comfort zone and meeting new people, and embracing tolerance.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

I wish I could clone myself, so I could be in many places at once.

There's so much to do and, like most people these days, I want to do it all.

I have the desire to always be on in the name of efficiency and I know this could lead to major burnout.

What is your work priority for 2020?

We just completed a redesign of the print product of *Travel + Leisure*.

I am so proud of the work we've done, but I want to inspire our talented team to continue to dream big.

We've now hit 11 million uniques a month at travelandleisure.com – a huge achievement that reinforces the power and relevance of our brand.

I want to keep refining our voice and reaching people in new, compelling ways, whether that's through our IGTV

series, the Locals, or through an ambitious scripted series.

We've also just launched #TakeYourDays, an initiative at Meredith Corporation encouraging everyone to use their allotted, well-earned PTO.

Many Americans, including me, are leaving their vacation days on the table and it's a shame.

How can we as editors broaden and deepen the conversation around travel, to touch on mental health and wellness? This is an issue I'm focusing on as we head in to 2020.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

For me, one of the most luxurious moments of the year was having a small picnic set up in a field in Puglia by Borgo Egnazia, one of the top resorts in the region.

My husband and I stood under a giant, centuries-old tree and learned about winemaking and food from native Puglians. It was simple and authentic and true. That is the kind of storytelling we strive to do in *Travel + Leisure*.

Luxury is not about status or price. It's about access and understanding craftsmanship on a higher level.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

There is a reason that Marie Kondo is having a moment.

I see many people thinking about what they buy, whether it's an experience or a thing, and what the impact will then be on society and the environment. And many are realizing that it's not about quantity but quality.

Luxury is quality. It's access and thought, heritage and innovation, all at once.

Lauren Grech, CEO, [LLG Events](#)



Lauren Grech

"Having patience is the biggest challenge in my work"

What do you most like about your job?

I love how dynamic my job is. I am constantly learning and developing myself both professionally and personally.

I love having the ability to travel, explore new destinations, immerse myself into a new culture, experience the best of luxury hospitality, and be at the forefront of innovation.

I love being able to infuse culture, hospitality, weddings and travel into one career. It's amazing.

I recognize what a privilege it is to do something you love, with the one you love, so the best part of my job is building LLG Agency with my husband and sharing these experiences together.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Having patience is the biggest challenge in my work.

When you are developing an entirely new service or product for luxury events and hospitality, there are a lot of questions to be answered, a lot of work to be done, and the workload can easily feel overwhelming.

In order to overcome this, I create mini milestones for myself, allowing myself the ability to have normal-size task work that can be achieved within a certain period of time. This allows me to set realistic objectives, achieve my goals, and celebrate both minor and major accomplishments.

What is your work priority for 2020?

My work priority for 2020 is to continue working with tourism boards, hotels and vendors across the globe to share my holistic and comprehensive approach to attracting and retaining luxury destination weddings.

I'm determined on defining best practices and industry-wide standards for event management professionals and for event venues.

My adjunct professor position at New York University is just the beginning of teaching. It's time to share the knowledge I've acquired globally and apply it to the rest of the industry.

My priority is to continue being at the forefront of this change and being an advocate for both the industry and my students.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement in the luxury sector is setting the tone for event management standards and being at the forefront of change within luxury hospitality and experiential events industries.

This year, I realized the results of having put these industries above my career objectives, which led me to become a curriculum builder and adjunct professor for the first-ever Masters of Science in Event Management program in the United States.

I developed global, accredited, industry-wide event standards and created an alternative to commission-based models between planners and vendors, showcasing how we can all work together, promote best event practices for our clients and create a system of accountability amongst one another.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

We've adapted our business and marketing models to captivate the millennial consumer very well, but for 2020 I think we're going to experience a shift in luxury marketing tactics as we begin to experience the rise of the Gen Z consumer, who prioritizes luxury experiences and travel rather than luxury goods.

I'm interested to see how companies will use events to create those experiences so they can market their product to this audience.

With the creation of LLG Agency, I believe you will see a rise in luxury experiential events, with hotels and restaurants infusing event spaces and experiences into their overall operational design, and event interiors will be built by event professionals.

You will see a rise in event marketing and companies allocating portions of their budget to market their events to the right audiences to attract new clientele.

Delphine Lefay, cofounder/CEO, [OnTheList](#)



Delphine Lefay

"Luxury growth should remain steady overall, but volatile market by market"

What do you most like about your job?

We built a diversified team with more than 35 great talents from different backgrounds, different countries and the number increasing year by year, also succeeding to acquire popular brands and adding to our diverse category portfolio.

After three years of development we make up the most unique brand and category portfolio in the market – from luxury to lifestyle, and across all categories from fashion to homeware.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Convincing brands to work with us instead of destroying past-season products.

OnTheList takes on the social responsibility of extending the product life cycle after outlet, creating a sustainable solution for the retail industry across the fashion, home and lifestyle categories.

In terms of operation, OnTheList is a unique concept.

Unlike traditional retailers we concentrate all planning into one week for both instore and online channels, working with multiple brands at any given time.

A high level of flexibility and attentiveness is required from operations and marketing in order to maintain members' loyalty and retention rate and, most importantly, guarantee a great shopping experience for all our customers.

What is your work priority for 2020?

Continue to increase market penetration and brand awareness of OnTheList in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan, offline and online, as well as expanding further to Mainland China by the end of year, an exciting market for us to prioritize in 2020.

We see great potential in this market as not only do they face inventory problems, but brands also have large quantities of past-season stock trapped locally due to high importation fees. This is definitely an exciting opportunity for OnTheList to tackle new challenges.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Our proudest achievement is being an exclusive exception for luxury brands.

While many of the high-end brands previously only host staff sales closed to the public, OnTheList have created partnerships that in turn help lessen the burden on the environment.

With such endorsement from fashion groups like LVMH and Kering, OnTheList is a unique business model that helps to change the destiny of products.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

Luxury brands that rely heavily on sales from the People's Republic of China market rather than the local market will be the first to be affected.

After the recent events in Hong Kong effecting tourist flow, stock allocation has not been optimized accordingly and brands will need to find other solutions to attract the local customers.

Luxury growth should remain steady overall, but volatile market by market.

Christa Marrillia, vice president/chief marketing officer, [Keeneland](#)



Christa Marrillia

"We live in an experiential economy and this has impacted every facet of our business, including luxury"

What do you most like about your job?

The passion I have for my job is fueled by the mission of my organization.

Keeneland is unique in that 100 percent of our profits are invested back into the thoroughbred industry and our community.

Whether we are auctioning off hundreds of millions of dollars in thoroughbreds, conducting world-class race meetings or hosting spectacular events, investing with Keeneland is an investment in the future of our sport and our community.

It is incredibly fulfilling to further this mission and be a part of this amazing organization.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The Keeneland brand is revered in the industry and steeped in tradition.

As a marketer, there is always the challenge of protecting the history and mystic of Keeneland, while being innovative and fresh.

What was once thought of as a boutique race track and global auction house is now applauded for hosting music festivals, culinary experiences and creating cutting-edge digital solutions to better understand the sport.

We've innovated in our 83-year history, but do so while being mindful of the protection and enhancement of our brand.

What is your work priority for 2020?

We're looking forward to a tremendous 2020 for Keeneland as we will be the host site for the Breeders' Cup World Championships. This spectacular event attracts the best horses from all over the world competing for \$30 million in purse money.

Keeneland and the city of Lexington shone during the 2015 Breeders' Cup when American Pharoah secured the first and only Grand Slam in history.

We are thrilled to have the opportunity to once again host this prestigious event and are focusing our efforts on the delivery of a spectacular experience for our participants and guests.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement is one that continues to evolve in the delivery of a luxurious experience to our buyers and sellers participating in Keeneland's four thoroughbred auctions.

Keeneland is the world's largest thoroughbred auction sales company, selling over \$600 million in horses annually to buyers across 30-plus countries.

Our team is relentless in the level of service we extend to these customers with culinary experiences, VIP hospitality lounges and on-site concierge amenities.

The delivery of a chilled bottle of Dom Perignon – even to your barn – to celebrate the purchase of a million-dollar horse is also a nice touch.

We continue to evolve these offerings and love surprising and delighting our guests.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

As we all know, we live in an experiential economy and this has impacted every facet of our business, including luxury.

The Keeneland team continues to find ways to connect our guests to our brand through unique and, often times, exclusive experiences.

From intimate farm-to-table dinners in the picturesque Keeneland paddock, behind-the-scenes sales tours or watching a race from the winner's circle, we have extended the opportunity to experience luxury and exclusivity to all our fans.

These moments create lasting memories and ultimately fans of Keeneland and our sport.

Megan Nolan, president/head of North America, [Mobkoi](#)



Megan Nolan

“Luxury is faced with the much-needed respect for gracefulness, which can be so intense that on the vendor side, most fail to innovate in a way that is suitable for luxury”

What do you most like about your job?

I'm a builder. I like identifying a successful product and finding ways to build upon it, such as in opening a new office or launching a new go-to-market strategy. And I have a particular love for doing this inside the luxury digital space.

I'm able to do all of the above at Mobkoi, which is a premiere mobile advertising buying solution specializing in luxury.

We opened the U.S. office just last year, alongside the opening of Asia, following five years of success across our E.U. offices.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

We've tripled business in under two years in the U.S. The rapid growth means we're continuously adding to our headcount.

The challenge becomes finding the right talent while forming a culture that creates a sense of community and shared vision, which are both crucial for continued growth.

Our founders, Quentin and Guillaume, take this seriously, from the daily use of Slack so that all 10 offices can disperse ideas to each other quickly, to yearly global social events such as company ski trips via setting aside a portion of profits. This ensures a team mindset and a team spirit that aren't siloed by market.

What is your work priority for 2020?

For context, Mobkoi utilizes client advertising assets to design interactive, full-screen mobile units, and then places those units on sites with transparent reporting.

In 2020 we'll be unveiling a new tech solution revolving around an increased use of transparent data, which really falls at the center of what we're all about: the combination of data with mobile creative innovation.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Luxury is faced with the much-needed respect for gracefulness, which can be so intense that on the vendor side, most fail to innovate in a way that is suitable for luxury.

Part of my initial attraction to this role is that Mobkoi found a way to push the boundaries in interactive mobile advertising, which historically could have a luxury brand feeling uncomfortable.

We're able to help countless luxury brands adopt their creative communication styles into rich, interactive mobile units, while still respecting brand safety, the luxury look and feel, and the needs within the environments in which to deliver the ads.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

In a world where simplicity in communication historically ruled, I see luxury brands leaping into interactivity in 2020.

I also see an increased interest in the smart use of live data. One way I see this playing out is by marketers actively working to bridge the gap between their media and ecommerce/Web teams by more often pairing live site-level data with live advertising data in order to best gauge performance at the add-to-cart, conversion or general site engagement levels.

At Mobkoi, we're trying to change the conversation from a need for innovative ads and transparency in data, which should be a given, to the live coupling of the two, all while still remaining best-in-class and graceful.

Kristin Savilia, CEO, JOOR



Kristin Savilia

“Traditionally, brands and retailers have had a specific way of doing business and are comfortable with the processes in place: manual spreadsheets. Or even pen and paper in some situations”

What do you like most about your job?

Being a part of the digital transformation of this industry.

JOOR's platform solves pain points that I experienced first hand as a buyer at Macy's: things like manual assortment planning processes and inefficient order-placing and tracking.

Not only do I truly believe in our product and how we're positively disrupting these cumbersome processes, but I also understand the problems it solves and am extremely passionate about how we can continue moving our industry forward.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Wholesale's business-as-usual.

Traditionally, brands and retailers have had a specific way of doing business and are comfortable with the processes in place: manual spreadsheets. Or even pen and paper in some situations.

Moving to digital requires them to move out of their comfort zone. Once we get them over the hump, they realize automation can not only be accessible and simple, it can totally change the game.

Putting the administrative aspects of wholesale online provides a huge advantage: newly-found time, human and financial resources they can redirect towards growth. That first step is always the hardest, but always results in a win.

What is your work priority for 2020?

To keep pushing for the wholesale industry's advancement and growth. Here's why.

Fast-evolving technologies are giving us access to data that offer all kinds of opportunities. Like access to understanding consumer demand without the long-standing delays that come with working in spreadsheets. But insight is only good if you can access it.

We need to promote the free flow of data so teams can act quickly. This means breaking down silos and artificial constructs like “front end” and “back end,” both within our companies and between wholesale partners – both brands and retailers – as much as possible.

The bottom line is that wholesale, including the luxury segment, is an interconnected and interdependent ecosystem. The faster we can pivot together, the better we can adapt and turn these challenges into opportunities.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

JOOR's heritage started in luxury.

Since joining JOOR, we created a pilot program in partnership with Neiman Marcus to look at how we can connect both sides of the wholesale. We set out to fully reimagine the journey, from setting market appointments to tracking orders and managing budgets in real time, to digitally curating assortments and efficiently measuring and analyzing results.

All-in-one platform: With the support of Jim Gold, the Neiman Marcus team helped us drill down into needs so we could successfully iterate for every pain point.

In the end, we created a smooth and smart online buying experience: JOOR for Retailers. It's available in Pro and Lite, our free tier, and has come to benefit the entire industry.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

Emerging and recovering markets offer luxury interesting opportunities.

According to **JOOR's Trend Edit** – data collected from the JOOR Global Platform of 8,600-plus brands and 200,000-plus retailers in 144 countries, transacting over \$29 billion in lifetime GMV – South Africa shows a 69 percent 2018-2019 spike in GMV, with West, East, and North Africa also dynamic at 57 percent, 53 percent and 43 percent, respectively. Some **analysts** have described Africa as the frontline for luxury.

Additionally, emerging South American markets – for example, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Peru – enjoyed a 60 percent 2018-2019 GMV increase. And recovering markets in Southeastern (57 percent GMV increase) and Southern (53 percent GMV increase) Europe have potential, as do emerging markets in Eastern Europe and Western and Central Asia – for example, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Poland, Turkey, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, etc. – at 30-35 percent.

Meryam Schneider, vice president of marketing and partnerships, **Altiant**



Meryam Schneider

"The biggest challenge in my work is keeping our base of respondents engaged, unbiased and dynamic using excellence and statistical rigor at every single stage to continuously align with our clients' research needs"

What do you most like about your job?

What I like is working in the field of luxury and wealth research, partnering with prestigious clients and forward-thinking agencies to perform robust and reliable quantitative research fieldwork.

I am proud to have spent years with American Express Centurion, where I understood the value of opinions and the importance of data. I truly believe that providing better quality data and insights contributes grandly to successful business strategies.

The wide variety of subjects and marketing problematics I face daily feed my natural curiosity.

Whether we are talking about high end hospitality, luxury fashion, automotive or wealth management, being able to research the top 5 percent and top 1 percent income earners and their impact in the world is a real privilege.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The biggest challenge in my work is keeping our base of respondents engaged, unbiased and dynamic using

excellence and statistical rigor at every single stage to continuously align with our clients' research needs. This involves complying and keeping up to date with privacy regulations as well as remaining a step ahead on the trends.

What is your work priority for 2020?

My work priority is to continue develop our foot print in the world of luxury research by growing our by-invitation community of verified affluent and high-net-worth individuals, LuxuryOpinions.

We currently operate in 13 markets and will be adding more markets in 2020 to respond to the growing demand from brands. This implies for Altiant to continue our tech initiatives to verify and authenticate members and fully deploy our image validation system, an AI-assisted platform to validate respondent possessions and wealth, and expand our integration of social media listening and pooling.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

The Altiant's GLAM monitor. The acronym stands for Global Luxury and Asset Management monitor.

Launched in 2019, GLAM is the first monitor of its kind to look exclusively at opinions from validated affluent and HNWIs.

The tool is completely interactive and covers different areas of interest from luxury automotive purchase intentions to confidence in financial markets and cryptocurrencies.

GLAM found a natural fit in our open Knowledge Center online accessible to researchers, marketers and anyone interested in understanding the global affluent consumers.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

The topic of sustainability in luxury is, rightly so, converting into actions from both brands and consumers and will surely continue to evolve intensely in 2020 and forward.

But as the luxury sector continues to be disrupted, new models are emerging, and I think that 2020 will definitely be the year of the circular economy with the emergence of new models such as rental, second-hand luxury and subscription-based models.

Florence Shaffer, vice president for IT operations and strategy, [Estée Lauder Cos.](#)



Florence Shaffer

"I'm passionate about employee well-being, sustainability, diversity and inclusion, and giving back to the community"

What do you like most about your job?

The boundless possibilities.

Because technology touches nearly every part of the business there's so much potential to inspire, support, delight. If you can dream it, we can create it.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Agility.

To respond to ever evolving consumer demand requires cross-departmental coordination to drive growth and innovation. This can be tricky when so many people have different understanding of what technology is and what it

is capable of. It isn't always visible. In fact, that's when it can be most magical.

What is your work priority for 2020?

Driving higher industry standards.

I'm passionate about employee well-being, sustainability, diversity and inclusion, and giving back to the community.

Being in luxury, we have a unique position and responsibility to drive better standards across our industries for a better world.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Localizing consumer journeys across digital platforms in Asia to meet customers where they were, in the way they wanted to interact. It was and is an honor working with such a talented, multicultural team across the globe.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

Embracing the redefinition of luxury.

This means breaking barriers, looking outside for collaboration and inspiration to offer something special and relevant to each individual.

Allison Sommer, director of strategic initiatives, [The RealReal](#)



Allison Sommer

"We see consumers shopping luxury retail in the primary market come to us, before making a purchase, to get a sense of an item's resale value in the secondary market"

What do you most like about your job?

Before The RealReal, I worked for U.S. Congress and Google, experiences that gave me a front row seat into the power of innovation to make sweeping change, but the threat of bureaucratic stagnation to stifle that opportunity.

I came to The RealReal because I saw an industry ready for disruption and a company focused on the big picture built by smart, scrappy action.

The chance to create positive change in how we consume and care for the planet are boundless.

We're growing and innovating and, as a result, my job is constantly evolving. No two days are the same and there's certainly no day that goes by without a new set of challenges or "ah-ha" moments.

I enjoy having real autonomy to think creatively and strategically to build partnerships and sustainable initiatives.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

I'm constantly thinking about how to quantify the impact of consignment on the environment. It's about understanding the where, what, why and how of fashion production and consumption, which drives The RealReal's circular model as well as a growing community of brands investing in smarter production and conscious buyers.

However, waiting for widespread industry change as fast as we know customer attitudes and behaviors have already changed requires patience.

After all, we've only just begun to scratch the surface on understanding the impact of fashion on the environment and the benefit of circular economy models.

What is your work priority for 2020?

I am looking forward to more and more conversations with brands and retailers around building innovative partnerships that bring conscious consumerism to the forefront.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Launching our partnership with Stella McCartney was one of the more monumental moments, not only for myself but I think for the fashion industry.

Stella is ahead of her time in recognizing that the secondary market helps introduce new customers to her brand and extends the life of her goods to keep them out of landfills by putting them in the hands of new owners.

It's a circular economy model that I believe has prompted other brands/retailers to look more closely at the benefits of resale not only to drive the financials of their business but for the environment.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

I think we're already starting to see that resale is becoming a built-in part of retail, and I hope that continues.

As traditional models of ownership change, the mindset of consumers changed.

We see consumers shopping luxury retail in the primary market come to us, before making a purchase, to get a sense of an item's resale value in the secondary market.

A strong resale value encourages the primary market sale.

What's more, customers are realizing the sustainable benefits of extending the lifecycle of items – whether that's buying consigned or shopping consignment.

It's also fun to witness luxury brands and retailers realizing the benefits of a secondary market to not only lessen fashion's environmental impact, but also extend their reach and desirability and then warm up to the idea of resale as a strategic partner.

Missy Tannen, founder/head of design and development, [Boll & Branch](#)



Missy Tannen

"As of this past fall, we've become the largest purchaser of fair trade organic cotton in the world, making a positive impact in the lives of our farmers, the planet and our customers"

What do you most like about your job?

I love being able to take an idea and turning it into a reality.

Everyday, I get to create and develop new products with incredible people, both abroad and in our home office in Summit, NJ. And the best part of each product we make is that we create a positive ripple effect across the world.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

We are a quickly growing business, so one of our biggest challenges is to continue growing, while maintaining the consistency and comfort level of a smaller team.

What is your work priority for 2020?

I oversee all of our products and design, so I'm already working on fall of 2020.

We are thrilled with new collections that we will be launching in the beginning of the new year.

We've taken our Signature Fabric and added more embroideries and trim details to reflect different styles that our customers have, all while maintaining our current, clean and timeless aesthetic.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I'm proud that Boll & Branch has been able to prove that luxury, sustainability and ethical manufacturing can all coexist. And not only that, but they make an even more beautiful product when together.

As of this past fall, we've become the largest purchaser of fair trade organic cotton in the world, making a positive impact in the lives of our farmers, the planet and our customers (*source: Textile Exchange*).

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

I see luxury brands truly stepping up and setting the example of how businesses should behave in the 21st century.

Every product we make has both a human and environmental impact in the world.

At Boll & Branch, we are keenly aware of our impact, and choose to make it a positive one.

Carolyn Travis, marketer general, [Whitman Family Development](#)



Carolyn Travis

"Relevant luxury is all about the emotional connection – how the consumer connects with the brand or place or product that he or she is faced with"

What do you most like about your job?

What I most like about my job is the amazing team.

Each personality and skill set impresses me on a daily basis, and I am fortunate to see the collaborative nature of everyone as we all share the same vision and are dedicated to the mission.

Our own individual commitments come together to form a group effort that is innovative and results in success.

Continuing to be family-owned, I am beyond lucky to work for a family that I admire and respect, and that I happen to have known for the majority of my life.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The biggest challenge was winning approvals for the expansion of Bal Harbour Shops, and with years in the making, our team was able to gain approvals in May of 2017 to move forward with this comprehensive plan.

Along with constantly improving the retail experience for our clients at Bal Harbour Shops, we have also maintained a decades-long commitment to strengthening the surrounding community, building the Bal Harbour name into a global brand and drawing visitors and investors to the community.

The enhancement plan will not only enhance the Shops, but it will build on the 50-year legacy of community investment by providing more than \$100 million in public benefits that will help sustain the Bal Harbour Village for years to come.

What is your work priority for 2020?

My work priority for 2020 is definitely to further brand integration and evolution.

It is important for us to continue to form a consistent message across multiple platforms and create touch points which support our goals.

Reinforcing our brand while inter-weaving our unique features will help us to continue to evolve.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

The creation of a new paradigm for tourism boards that focused solely on the luxury segment.

Bal Harbour Shops' expansion approval was definitely my most significant accomplishment. This successful lobbying effort was a complicated multi-year strategy that resulted in the ability to double the value of this iconic asset.

This \$550-million enhancement plan will add 241,600 square feet of new retail space to the open-air shopping center, nearly doubling the Shops' current retail space.

The upgraded center will feature the first Barneys New York flagship store in the southeastern U.S., major upgrades to longtime anchor tenant Neiman Marcus and new dining options, including Freds at Barneys.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

Relevant luxury is all about the emotional connection – how the consumer connects with the brand or place or product that he or she is faced with.

Bal Harbour Shops has always been focused on the customer experience. It is the foundation of our business, our secret sauce, caring about the customer and their experience all the way through.

In 2020, I see successful brands continuing to evolve their customers journey in an authentic way showcasing exclusivity, quality and prestige.

Michele Varian, cofounder, [Guesst.co](https://www.guesst.co)



Michele Varian

“Consumers are shifting from wanting status or trend pieces, to investing in heritage items. They’re prioritizing owning fewer things, versus acquiring too much stuff, partly because we’re replacing disposability with sustainability”

What do you most like about your job?

As both a designer and a retailer, I love working with emerging designers and bringing new product to market.

I get to provide opportunity for makers that are both established, and also small or emerging, and I get to work with unexpected designs or work, showcasing them to a New York consumer.

At [my shop](https://www.guesst.co), I create my own world that people buy into – daily, I hear customers say, “Can I move in?” when they visit it in SoHo. That’s extremely gratifying. I’m so lucky to get to do what I do.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

It’s challenging changing hats so frequently, every single day. But it’s a native aspect of being a small business owner: You go from managing employees, to creating new product, to curating other people’s product, to calling a repair man, to showing up on time for a panel discussion. And hopefully looking presentable while you’re doing it all.

Co-founding [Guesst.co](#) – a platform connecting stores to brands for co-retailing – has made the last couple of years especially frenetic. But what we are building will ultimately make the job of being a designer and a retailer less laborious, and minimize the financial risks for independent businesses like mine.

What is your work priority for 2020?

We've recently launched multiple design collaborations with a couple indie design studios.

With Two Tree Studios, I co-designed a Brooklyn-made furniture collection, and with Lio and Linn, I created a new mobile chandelier using their hanging design elements.

I'm excited about growing those collections and product concepts, and I'm dedicated to making sure they succeed in the upcoming year.

I'm also excited about maximizing [Guesst](#) as a tool to maintain the integrity and the diversity of the design community, and my recent collaborations to continue supporting emerging designers.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I'm proud of having created a shop where people who have aspirational desires can buy in on an accessible level.

Somebody can come to the shop, for example, and buy a lower-priced product, like a giant copper or brass nail for \$5. These consumers can buy into the ethos of the store, and those are the ones that stick around, and pretty soon they're buying my luxury product and my own designs.

I really do want everybody to feel at home in my shop and to walk away happy.

Even though I'm a luxury retailer, I take pride in the fact that I'm not so exclusive that people are excluded.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

We've been heading away from a maximalist mentality. I see that becoming more and more refined in 2020.

Consumers are shifting from wanting status or trend pieces, to investing in heritage items. They're prioritizing owning fewer things, versus acquiring too much stuff, partly because we're replacing disposability with sustainability. And part of that considers valuing one-of-a-kind, handmade characteristics. That's what connotes luxury now: Less, but more special.

Daniella Vega, head of sustainability, [Selfridges](#)



Daniella Vega. Photo: Matt Writtle

"We are facing a climate emergency where we have just 10 years left to secure a sustainable future"

What do you most like about your job?

Being part of an organisation which genuinely places sustainability at the heart of its business strategy and combines creativity and sustainability to engage customers and team members in way which is solution-focused, imaginative and fun.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

We are facing a climate emergency where we have just 10 years left to secure a sustainable future. This means that the urgency to take action on climate change is becoming greater every day and our focus on sustainability becomes more and more vital.

What is your work priority for 2020?

My work priority will be focused on driving our “Buying Better, Inspiring Change” sustainability approach which sits at the heart of our business strategy. This includes furthering our ambition that at least 50 percent of the products we sell will be better for people and planet by 2022, using our global platform to talk to our customers and audiences about sustainability and the role they can play and co-creating change with our partners, collaborators, customers and teams.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Working for an organization which is leading the way on so many sustainability issues which are pertinent to the luxury sector.

For example, Selfridges & Co. was the first department store to ban the sale of fur in 2005, as well as the first department store to announce the phase-out of single-use plastic water bottles in 2015 and exotic skins earlier this year, and recently we became the first retailer to remove palm oil from its own label food products.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

More than ever, luxury will be tied to a strong underlying commitment to sustainability.

We know for example that at Selfridges, 94 percent of our customers already believe we should contribute to society beyond profit and 82 percent of consumers strongly believe that the social and environmental impact of the products they buy is important.

Elizabeth von der Goltz, global buying director, [Net-A-Porter](#)



Elizabeth von der Goltz

“I think the luxury sector, particularly ecommerce, will be focusing on new ways to bring product to life for the customer and continuing to perfect the personal touch with online shopping”

What do you most like about your job?

What I love most about my job is being surrounded by creative minds – buyers, merchandisers, brand creative, marketing – everyone is full of ideas, and keeps me inspired and challenged.

It is a high-energy environment that nurtures creativity and constantly poses the questions “what is next” and “how do we improve.”

I also enjoy the art of discovery.

We are constantly finding new talent and meeting up-and-coming designers with fresh points of view, and that keeps the job exciting.

My role gives me the unique advantage of working closely with designers, new and established, to create the right product for our customer.

It also doesn't hurt we are constantly surrounded by beautiful product.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

I'd say my biggest challenge is truly understanding the needs of our customer. Net-A-Porter's customer base is expansive and requires us to decipher what everyone is looking for, from the customer shopping contemporary, to

Power Designers, to our EIPs [Extremely Important People, highest-spending clientele].

Every decision we make is made with our customer top-of-mind.

What is your work priority for 2020?

My main goal for 2020, as always, is to continue beating company targets and to keep my team, as well as customers, engaged and inspired.

With the digital retail space evolving at such a rapid pace, it is imperative to recognize what is most important. To me that is my team and our customer base and making sure we are meeting the needs of both, while creating excitement and interest in what is to come.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

There are so many proud moments. I'm very lucky. One of the most recent was launching Net Sustain, a platform to highlight and celebrate brands sold on the site, that meet the business' criteria for sustainability, offering customers a way to identify those brands more easily.

Net Sustain is something my team had been discussing for a long time. It was very much a passion project, not only for me, but for the company. We wanted to make sure we were doing it in a way that ultimately gave customer's the choice. We have further rollouts taking place through 2020.

Another recent achievement was the launch of EIP Privé, an invitation-only digital destination for high jewelry and watches, on Net-A-Porter. The fine jewelry category has been a big focus for us in recent years and seeing this project come to fruition was particularly special, as we truly are shaping the way customers are shopping for high-investment, one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces. Seeing regular six-figure sales now is just amazing.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

I think the luxury sector, particularly ecommerce, will be focusing on new ways to bring product to life for the customer and continuing to perfect the personal touch with online shopping.

I also think the sustainability conversation will continue to be an important one.

Customers are more discerning than ever, and it is really forcing the luxury sector to reevaluate the way business is done.

Julie Wagner, CEO, [Beverly Hills Convention & Visitors Bureau](#)



Julie Wagner

"There are things that keep me up at night with worry. How will retail reinvent itself, what is the new five-star luxury, how does a city like ours provide unique experiences that can't be seen or bought online?"

What do you most like about your job?

Where do I start?

First off, I love that I represent a brand that has had a special place in my heart for many years.

One of my fondest childhood memories of my mother was our monthly Saturday shopping trips and lunch in Beverly Hills.

I feel so fortunate to work in an environment where innovation is embraced.

We have executed many programs that just started with an idea which were then crafted and massaged and brought to life.

I also like the fact that we are forward-thinking.

It is wonderful working for a mature brand. However, it is also challenging, as many people lock onto your niche that you represent and think that is all you can be/do.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

I think our budget limits us in some ways.

We have less to work with than most of our local competitors, but we are very resourceful and produce a lot of content with what we have.

What is your work priority for 2020?

In 2019 we created a destination development plan which takes a look at what we need to be concentrating on for the next 10 years.

I look forward to getting the stakeholders involved and mapping out how to meet our long term objectives.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

We have done a lot of great things, but I think I am most excited to tell everyone about our Suite 100 project.

The initiative was designed to celebrate our city's centennial in 2014.

All of our five-star hotels participated by creating custom rooms that matched an era in time over the last 100 years.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

Firstly I hope that we can come up with a different word for "luxury" that isn't so vanilla and overused, many times, inappropriately.

But that aside, there are things that keep me up at night with worry. How will retail reinvent itself, what is the new five-star luxury, how does a city like ours provide unique experiences that can't be seen or bought online?

The things we know about luxury today are a given for most people – they expect to receive the finest quality and service when they are seeking luxury experiences and products.

Moving forward, we need to continue looking for new multi-sensorial opportunities and ideas that marry heritage, technology, human interaction, craftsmanship, sustainability and reimagined spaces.

I also think it is imperative that we continue to look for new ways to cut through all the digital marketing noise out there to ensure that we are using our distribution channels in a way that is going to have a genuine and memorable impact.

Amy Wexler, chief marketing officer, [Christie's](#)



Amy Wexler

"Digital underpins all aspects of modern life, and digital power and technology remain at the forefront of our priorities"

What do you most like about your job?

With so much on offer, there is always a wonderful collecting story to tease out and share with our audiences.

There are many ways to communicate, and we are able to blend visual and editorial elements with more immersive features – both online and embedded into our exhibitions – which is very exciting.

Our digital components for the recent “Maharajas & Mughal Magnificence” sale incorporated multi-dimensional photography and were the first of their kind to appear anywhere.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

My days are unpredictable and packed with interesting challenges that require creative yet strategic problem solving. I have to be ready for anything.

In most cases, a solution can be found through effective communication, a genius design or calm logic. When all else fails, pivot to a full charm offensive.

What is your work priority for 2020?

While Christie’s was founded in 1766, we have an innovative spirit and a global outlook.

We are focused on personalized experiences that enhance our clients’ journey and deepen their connection to Christie’s.

Our marketing portfolio is only one element of this. It is a holistic approach to business supported by the full Christie’s team.

In the luxury realm, clients are buying and selling in a number of ways –online, in live auctions and through our private sale services – so seamless integration is key.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I love blending the creative with the commercial to create potent multi-platform campaigns, backed by client data and success metrics.

Partnering with our talented experts within Christie’s elevates our marketing opportunities even further.

Our audience has been steadily increasing across the luxury segment over five years, and nearly half of Christie’s new clients actively participate across our range of luxury sales, including jewelry, watches, wine and handbags.

Those who are completely new to buying and selling can begin learning about the luxury market through our content and social media, and then move to the next step of participating in an online sale.

Online continues to be our most popular channel for attracting new clients, and we have more than 500,000 followers on our luxury-specific social media accounts.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

Digital underpins all aspects of modern life, and digital power and technology remain at the forefront of our priorities.

For clients, access, convenience and versatility are key.

One of the benefits Christie’s has over a more traditional retailer is direct access to some of the world’s most exclusive collections.

Our global network means many of the luxury items we offer are custom and unique. Our sales truly offer once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for collectors.

To that point, we are seeing a lot of participation from millennials, who are drawn to the sustainability and long-term investment value of luxury pieces along with the notable provenance.

Looking ahead, we will evolve to meet demand and discovery of new markets is sure to be much of the fun.

Elizabeth White, founder/CEO, [The White Company](#)



Elizabeth White

“My proudest achievement in luxury has been the ability to get my clients what they want within minutes”

What do you most like about your job?

The best part about my job is being able to apply technology to the world of luxury.

I have been fortunate to be a leader in the use of blockchain technology and cryptocurrency to facilitate luxury purchases. This has allowed me to work with individuals who traditionally have not had access to luxury, and help fulfill their dreams of VIP access, elite vacations and fine goods.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The biggest challenge has been bringing together the world of traditional luxury with the often flamboyant and untraditional culture of the crypto wealthy.

Sometimes a fine art dealer has no idea what bitcoin even is, much less how someone could have become wealthy from it.

On the other hand, the crypto wealthy tend to be much more private, so it can be difficult planning events that are extravagant on one hand but don't draw too much attention on the other.

What is your work priority for 2020?

For 2020 our goal is to continue bringing the technology that we built to support our luxury business to a broader audience by focusing on our fintech offerings.

Namely, we have expanded our White Wallet payments system that allows users to exchange the top Cryptocurrencies into 10 worldwide currencies and use it at top merchants like Uber, Amazon [and] Apple as well as Visa and Mastercard debit cards.

We will be expanding the capabilities of White Wallet even more in 2020, making it the premier alternative to traditional banking for crypto transactions and international payments for individuals and businesses.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement in luxury has been the ability to get my clients what they want within minutes.

For example, I had a buyer from Singapore that wanted to purchase a piece from a very famous artist that was not available for public sale. Normally, this buyer – who was not known in art circles yet – would have had to reach out to a gallery or art dealer, develop a relationship with them, show proof of funds and send in a deposit prior to securing the piece. This would have taken days, if not weeks, and by then the painting would have been likely gone.

However, leveraging our payments systems, we were able to arrange for deposit and even professional storage of the piece all in the same day, and the buyer walked away smiling knowing he didn't miss out on a fantastic opportunity.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

I believe that, in 2020, luxury will be more accessible.

There are less barriers these days, for example, for a buyer in China to buy a vintage car in the U.S., or a multi-millionaire living in the Caribbean buying luxury properties across the world.

It used to be that the process, not just the cost, of luxury was what made it hard to obtain.

With technology, including blockchain for payments, the best in luxury will be available for anyone across the world who is willing to pay for it.

Kate Zaman, director for new business development, [Pernod Ricard](#)



Kate Zaman

“There will be more and more of a focus on the full story of a product, where it’s from, how it was made and the whole supply chain transparency”

What do you most like about your job?

The people and the convivial spirit.

I am lucky to work with a team of passionate, entrepreneurial women that push me to be more creative, drive brand equity, over-deliver our sales goals and continue to look for new business opportunities.

Not many people can say their company’s main purpose is conviviality.

I am proud that Pernod Ricard stands behind this in how they do business and it is this culture that makes my job so amazing.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

My biggest challenge is always not being able to do everything.

So many great opportunities come across my desk, but I have to weigh against the overall strategic vision and mission.

Prioritizing and balancing the opportunities that fulfill our goals for the short- and long-term to create a continued success. While this is sometimes a challenge, it is also a chaos I thrive in, I love that the possibilities for my business are endless.

What is your work priority for 2020?

The year ahead will include a real expansion of the experiences that we can offer our corporate clients and customers.

Utilizing the power of our amazing luxury portfolio to create bespoke moments and customizations that were not available before.

Our clients look to our brands for their gifting needs, so it is important that we are always innovating and offering beautiful selections each year in our annual Pernod Ricard Gift Guide.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I am proud that I have been able to develop amazing symbiotic relationships between our Champagne and spirits portfolio with some of the most prestigious brands in fashion, beauty and jewelry.

Together we have created some of the most beautiful activations and gifts.

Sometimes I have to pinch myself when I look at our calendar of events or agenda for a meeting. The people and brands I get the pleasure of working with are truly astounding.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2020?

I think there will be more and more of a focus on the full story of a product, where it's from, how it was made and the whole supply chain transparency.

Consumers are more interested than ever on the quality story, the raw ingredients from a health perspective, sustainability and the authentication.

We have seen a few luxury brands embracing the blockchain technology and I think this will expand in 2020 and beyond.

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