

**MARKETING'S
FIRST ANNUAL**

30 UNDER 30

Our readers nominated hundreds of young, talented media, PR and advertising wunderkinds based on the criteria of vision, tenacity, industry success and a willingness to give back plenty. Our jury chose 30. Here are the industry leaders—from creative forces to fearless strategists—who have accomplished more in their 29 or less years than most have over an entire career. Yes, it's incredibly humbling. But more importantly, it's inspiring as hell.

**BY ALICIA ANDROICH, DAVID BROWN,
TOM GIERASIMCZUK, KRISTIN LAIRD,
JEROMY LLOYD & RUSS MARTIN**

**PHOTOS BY MIKE FORD
& DARRELL LECORRE**

HOW THEY GOT HERE

The selection process for *Marketing's* inaugural 30 Under 30 program began with a call for entries in late May. By the time submissions closed July 6, more than 250 nominations had been made with another small group invited to take part by the *Marketing* editorial staff. After a first round of review by the editorial team, a shortlist of about 70 finalists were asked to submit additional information about their careers and cause-related endeavours away from the office. Those expanded submissions were reviewed by the editorial team along with three industry leaders (below) to determine the final 30.

We asked our three judges to share their thoughts on the entries from for *Marketing's* inaugural 30 Under 30 list of the industry's top talent. Here's what they had to say:



"I'm impressed by the number of nominees who have taken risks so early in their career to start their own business or work for a start-up company. The web and social media have opened the door for this generation to take an idea and run with it, with little startup cost—creating more entrepreneurial minds than this country has ever seen before. The future looks very bright."

—ARI ARONSON,
*founder and executive recruiter,
Ari Agency Inc.*



"I was really impressed by the quality and scope of credentials of the nominees. From a digital perspective, it was enlightening to see how many of these notable folks were leading the charge in social and mobile marketing. The people who stood out were social and tech savvy marketers with an entrepreneurial edge and social consciousness."

—SHELLEY MIDDLEBROOK,
VP of integrated advertising, Postmedia



"It was fantastic being part of this year's 30 under 30 selection process. I got an in-depth look at the business landscape in Canada at large, not just Toronto; and as an agency that's relatively new in Canada with innovation and entrepreneurialism at our core, it was wonderful to see the breadth and depth of individual talent in this country. Truly world class."

—FRANKE RODRIGUEZ,
president, Anomaly Toronto



**... AND 15
OTHERS.**
Turn the page!

“He has been able to educate top executives on a completely new approach to youth and community advocacy.”

—Mia Pearson, founder of North Strategic



DAVE WILKIN, 24

FOUNDER, REDWOOD STRATEGIC

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... U2's *Joshua Tree* won Album of the Year at the Grammys.

JOSH SINGER, 29

PRESIDENT, KOGNITIVE MARKETING

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... The Who announced they are disbanding.

WILKIN A lot of brands' frustration comes from the fact that they are hitting [students] in September, then leaving them and not really talking to them again. In September there are so many changes happening with students. The biggest mistake we've seen and have been able to help brands with is to focus more on the long-term approach and become a part of the things that these young people actually care about. Become a part of their organization, their causes, their events. When brands did that on a local level, youth became their biggest fans online. Their biggest supporters offline. They became endorsers, not just amongst themselves, but with their families as well.

SINGER It's not easy to get onto campus. The big challenge or problem I see is companies not properly adapting the message to target youth. What I find is that companies have problems when they're trying to be too serious talking

“It's impressive to think at his age what he's been able to do. It's not every day you meet a president of a successful company who is under 30.”

—Lele Thai-Ward, Canadian Tire business manager, customer acquisition

to students. It's like their parents coming down on them. Students just really don't care and don't want to listen to what they're saying.

WILKIN With campuses it's such a local place for students. It's their home, where they celebrate some of the best times of their lives. These brands come on and they create one message based on one insight and scale it campus to campus. Even further than tone or message, it has to be about localizing the message, which is expensive for a lot of brands.

SINGER The media habits of students are going to be different than the media habits of different demographics. Events play a larger role in media consumption overall. In terms of shifting where you're spending your media, if you're targeting university students you want to have a larger percentage of your budget towards events.

WILKIN With students we've always seen the social and event space being where you want to play. More than 300 events happen every month on most campuses. For a brand to go on a campus and create their own event they have a lot of competition. When you think of the social space, if they listen first and understand the needs and what students are organizing, brands can become a part of those 300 events because they already bring a crowd. It's in a really authentic way and actually helps student life.

SINGER Just taking that one step further... a lot of what they do talk about is different events happening in and around campus. Another way to get additional brand exposure would be to integrate your message in a relevant way with these events. When students are talking about the events, they could hopefully be talking about what the brand is doing.

WILKIN Absolutely. Long-term engagement, so important for a brand, just happens because they are a part of their everyday activities. It's just not about that short intercept. You start seeing yourself on blogs, forums and on their Facebook.



“She is very forthright. She stands up for the team, which is important. She's strong, even though she's young.”

—Rufina Chang, director of operations, Cowie and Fox

TALIA COHEN, 25

CREATIVE DIRECTOR AT COWIE AND FOX, PRESIDENT AT TACN STUDIO

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Aretha Franklin became the first woman inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

A South African judo champ who came to Vancouver via New York and Rhode Island, Cohen put her stamp on a few big-name products before joining Cowie and Fox. The recently updated Axe packaging has her fingerprints all over it, as do several General Mills products (Yoplait and Fruit Gushers) sitting on Costco shelves in the U.S. She actually first applied to Cowie and Fox as an intern—and didn't hear back. Fast forward to April 2012: the agency's director of operations Rufina Chang hired Cohen as CD to deepen the shop's design credentials... although even with her background in industrial design, Cohen's smart enough on all things digital to steer projects in that medium as well.

Looking into the future, Chang says that even though Cohen hasn't yet worked there a year, they are discussing making her a partner.

EDUCATED

Brown University, 2006 – 2008, Business Economics, Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) / Babson College – Franklin W. Olin Graduate School of Business, 2007 Product Design Development / Massachusetts Institute of Technology (yes, that MIT), 2007 Product Development (joint program with RISD)

GETS IT DONE

As part of her re-imagining of BC Dairy Foundation's “Must Drink More Milk”

campaign, Cohen got top Vancouver photographer Kevin Clark to shoot the print work pro bono.

ENTREPRENEUR

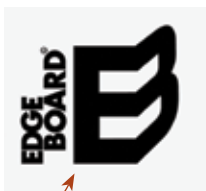
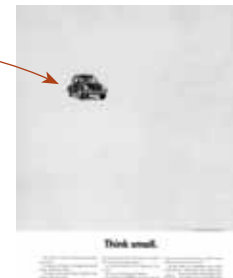
When she's not overseeing C&F's creatives, Cohen runs her self-started TACN Studio, which specializes in retail and package design. “There's not a lot of industrial design in Vancouver,” she says. “I didn't want to be seen as a freelance designer, so I started the studio... It's my opportunity to do things outside Cowie and Fox, my chance to be super selective.”



PACKAGING
The glass Coca-Cola bottle: Its silhouette is so iconic that it doesn't depend on graphics.



CAMPAIGN
VW's “Think Small” by Julian Koenig at Doyle Dane Bernbach in 1950s. The campaign changed the nature of advertising.



LOGO
A recent favourite is EdgeBoard by Hampus Jageland. It's smart and simple.



Yael Cohen, 25

CHIEF CANCER FUCKER (CEO), FUCK CANCER

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Iran-Contra affair erupted when Ronald Reagan admitted selling arms to Iran.

People in their 20s aren't supposed to be this fucking good at their jobs. At 25, Yael Cohen has already built a remarkable media footprint dedicated to promoting Fuck Cancer, her Vancouver-based charitable organization. From TED Talks to White House visits, international conferences to morning television shows (how do you get a brand with that word in its

name on daytime TV?), Cohen has been promoting the cause of early cancer detection—specifically aiming her message at young people—in her role as the charity's “chief cancer fucker” since 2009. She even got a write up in *Fast Company*. That visibility, plus some creative marketing campaigns and a few celebrity allies, led to a nearly 300% increase in Fuck Cancer's revenue in 2011. Though she's not a trained marketer, she seems to understand what much of the industry is struggling to learn about the online generation: honesty is the best policy. The name and the attitude are part of that. She's not trying to “raise awareness.” She's trying to fuck-over a deadly disease. Why mince words?

“A woman who knows how to shake things up to get attention for a worthy cause.”
—Jamie-Lynn Sigler, actress

“Don't think you're smarter than your community or clients,” she says. “People are smart, and getting smarter thanks to the internet. They don't like to be sold to. Fully believe in what you do and tell people why you bring value in an honest and authentic way.” This is why she drops her charity's full name on stage at a fancy dress gala as easily as she does in one-on-one interviews. But how far can she defend her potty-mouth brand postion? Yes, it's getting attention now, but eventually it will be more a hindrance than a help. Newspapers don't print “fuck.” The website (Lets-FuCancer.com) skirts it to be more search friendly, and the government made it register for charitable status as “Yael's Indaba Charitable Initiative Society.” Once the novelty wears off, the organization will rebrand, right? No fucking way.

“The whole point of the movement is authenticity and a rawness that we don't seem to be allowed to have—letting people be brave and vulnerable. To choose a different name didn't really seem authentic. We take a stand. A lot of companies are really scared to put their foot down and say “This is what we believe in,” because they want to please everybody. “What you end up doing is diluting your mission and your message so that everybody likes it. But then you're beige, you resonate with no one. People either love us or we're not for them. And that's fine. We're built for our community, our demographic. If we don't resonate with you, I'm totally okay with that and I'm not going to try to convince you.”

JENNIFER DUNN, 28

SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER, DISPLAY ADVERTISING, MEDIATIVE

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Pierre Elliott Trudeau announced he was stepping down.

If Jennifer Dunn has it her way, you'll never see another ad for a Russian bride. Unless, of course, her data suggests you want a Russian bride. As senior product manager of display advertising at Mediative, it's Dunn's job to target consumers with relevant ads. Using data gleaned from both the web and Mediative's parent company, Yellow Pages Group, Dunn helps clients reach consumers with the potential to spend. Most recently Dunn built a suite of mobile products that deliver ads at a hyper-local level. If, for example, a consumer is at a pool, they'll see ads for bathing suits. The suite also uses other contextual data, like time and weather. If it's 5 p.m. and a user is on the road, they'll see ads for take-out or grocery stores. If it's raining, the suite serves up ads for DVDs. With so much data available, Dunn says marketers need to dig in and personalize their ads. Here's why:

1 TARGETING DRIVES IMMEDIATE PURCHASES: Nearly all smartphone users search for local information. And of those users, Ipsos Reid found 88% take action within the day. If a nearby consumer is searching for something you sell, they can be easily converted into a customer.

2 EVERY NEIGHBOURHOOD IS DIFFERENT: People with similar lifestyles cluster together. When crafting regional messages, marketers can better connect with

consumers if they know whether they live in a bohemian, working class or upscale part of town.

3 MOBILE CAN COMPLETE CROSS-PLATFORM INITIATIVES: Ipsos Reid found that most consumers use their mobile gadgets in the family room, where brand awareness is created through TV ads. While they're watching, they multitask on tablets and phones. By pairing TV ads with mobile, marketers can drive immediate action by pushing discounts and promotions.



WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT CANADIAN MEDIA

Two 28-year-old expats, both PR geniuses living in Vancouver, break down three Canadian nuances that took some getting used to.

MELISSA OROZCO, 28

OWNER, YULU PR

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Kiss made their first appearance without makeup on MTV.

1. REGIONALISM

The most stark media difference is the absence of national morning show. Having a nationally syndicated morning show in many ways connects an entire country every morning. When it comes to nationally syndicated radio, Canada trumps the U.S. The CBC truly does have something for everyone. Sadly, Americans don't take to NPR in the same loyal fashion that Canadians do the CBC. PR differs, too. New York media will not take your calls—they simply don't have time for it. Vancouver media, though they're also busy, will often hear your phone pitch. New York publicists are competing with thousands of others for media. In Vancouver, I'm competing with about 50 PR pros on any given day for CTV's attention. Also, because NYC is home to many of the leading media outlets in the world, New York publicists don't tend to focus on the local media outlets, as they do in Vancouver. They aim for the big fish.

2. HOCKEY

I do a little thing I like to call "issues hijacking," which basically means I take trending topics and hijack them to plug my clients and relate them to relevant trending news items. Come hockey season, I do this regularly. An example for one of my hospitality clients: come playoffs, we pitch local media to include the venue as a top patio spot to watch the game—they're always looking to do round-ups like this. We also work with the client to create fun, themed menu options and specials that play into each game.

3. THE SEASONS

The significance each target region places on the seasonal cue differs. For instance, though the 4th of July can be compared to Canada Day and Thanksgiving takes place in both countries, just in different months, both holidays seem to be celebrated on a larger scale in the States.

FULL
PROFILES

AT
MARKETINGMAG.CA/30



LIBERTY LEE, 28

ACCOUNT DIRECTOR, CITIZEN OPTIMUM

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Arnold Schwarzenegger became a U.S. citizen.

1. REGIONALISM

One of Canada's biggest nuances—when compared to Australia—is the importance of localizing communications to each province, especially given so many media outlets and bloggers are province-specific (*Breakfast Television*, for example). Ontario has a bigger media market than the West. Quebec requires in-language communications and local teams who are sensitive to the Quebec news agenda. Western Canada has fewer media, meaning journalists are sometimes under greater time and content pressures. Local angles and contacts are vital, so a wide-spread national PR team with accessible market knowledge is beneficial.

2. HOCKEY

It's incredible how much this one sport dominates the sporting and media landscape. There are more competing sports in Australia, including three different codes of football—four if you include soccer. During the hockey season in Western Canada, hockey is almost guaranteed to be one of the four leading stories on any given day. Any way that you can tap into this hype when it comes to a campaign is beneficial.

3. THE SEASONS

Some of Canada's biggest feature milestones vary in timing to Australia. Father's Day and back-to-school season are not universal and differ down under (in Australia, back-to-school is in January), not to mention new additions such as Thanksgiving which isn't celebrated in Australia. Both graduation and Halloween are much larger milestones here, too.

THE
AUSSIE
EXPAT
EDITION



"Alkarim has always impressed me with his thought leadership and his ability to listen and articulate things that people 10 to 20 years his tenure have difficulty doing. And that is a gift."

—Darrell MacMullin, managing director, Canada, PayPal

GIVE IT AWAY NOW

Three reasons why this hot shop founder spends his time away from the office training people in digital media—for free.

ALKARIM NASSER, 26

FOUNDER, MANAGING PARTNER, BNOTIONS

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... GE bought RCA and subsidiary NBC for more than \$6 billion.

Not long after starting BNotions, Alkarim Nasser, along with his co-founding partner Mark Reale, started Yorkville Media Centre—a training space in Toronto that offers mostly free courses in digital media. Today, despite having a fast-growing, rising star digital agency to worry about, Nasser and Reale remain committed to YMC. Nasser explains why.

IT GIVES HOPE In 2007 Nasser had quit school and was working a job he hated. He enrolled in the Digital Media Arts program at Seneca College where he met Reale who was in a similar state of mind. "We were really at a low point when we found ourselves in positions that weren't pushing us creatively," says Nasser. The program invigorated the pair who soon started dreaming big. Nasser and Reale believe there is a lot of people just like they were, in dead-end jobs and looking for something new, but unable to afford the time or the money to enrol in one of the major programs. They started YMC to provide those people with an introduction to the basic web technology toolkit and give them hope for a new life. What did Nasser personally get out of starting YMC? "It felt good," he says.

IT IMPROVES THE TALENT POOL—AND BNOTIONS' REPUTATION Part of the motivation comes from a desire to improve the talent pool—"enriching the whole ecosystem," says Nasser—and build long-term relationships with the people who go through the YMC. "We were trying to create great talent that could work with us one day, that would remember us," says Nasser. "They will always know that this is the company that helped us discover this new work." BNotions has hired a few people from the YMC programs and formed forged strong ties with many more. "Some of these people changed our lives," says Nasser.

IT'S JUST WHAT PEOPLE DO IN THE TORONTO TECH COMMUNITY The Toronto technology and digital media community has changed and grown a lot in the past five years or so, says Nasser. There was always a digital agency and social media community but it wasn't very youthful and had a bit of a "scenester" vibe, he says. But it's not like that anymore. People help out at events and experts are happy to speak at training programs and meetups, he says. "Every time a new technology comes out, there is a user group a few minutes later." BNotions started the Android TO conference in 2010, has plans for a new conference focused on Java this year and officially registered YMC as a non-profit so it could continue to grow and remain true to its founding values, he says. "It's about sharing and learning."

SHARE
THE
KNOWLEDGE



“She’s one of the next Canadian female leaders.”
—Vivian Prokop,
founding chair of the
G20 Young Entrepreneur Alliance

DEVON BROOKS, 26

FOUNDER, BLO DRY BAR,
SELF-EMPLOYED BRANDING EXPERT

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Tina Turner received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Devon Brooks was in her second year of university when she launched her first successful brand.

Five years later, that brand, the Blo Dry Bar, has 26 franchise locations across the U.S. and Canada. In late 2010 Brooks left the company, though she remains a shareholder. At that point she started working on a new venture: the brand of Devon Brooks.

She soon started landing public-speaking gigs through the Lavin Agency, speaking about branding, culture and her personal experiences with post traumatic stress disorder. Meanwhile, her business success landed her on list after list of top young powerhouse Canadians, from the *National Post*’s Worthy 30 to *Profit*’s Top 30 Entrepreneurs in Canada and *Chatelaine*’s Women of the Year.

Brooks now takes contract work helping companies build brands. Last year she spent seven months setting up a communications department for the popular website Metrolyrics and this summer she’s helping B.C. artist Martha Sturdy refine her personal brand. After that she’ll brand a top secret boutique hotel in Vancouver.

The Canadian Youth Business Foundation enlisted Brooks as its youngest-ever mentor to assist entrepreneurs building businesses. She has also represented Canada at two G20 Young Entrepreneurs Summits, in France and Mexico.

Vivian Prokop, CEO of the Canadian Youth Business Foundation until July 2011, says Brooks is one of the most effective mentors the foundation has had.

“She goes right into the nucleus of what a customer needs—and even what they don’t *know* they need,” says Prokop.

“I don’t know how she got all this skill at such a young age,” adds Prokop. “This is an old business soul.”



RYAN BANNON, 25

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, MANAGING PARTNER, PLAYGROUND INC.

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... *Crocodile Dundee* was released in theatres.

When the Toronto Standard launched its website in 2010, it was the first large scale implementation of responsive design on WordPress.

The design was courtesy Ryan Bannon, creative director and co-founder of the creative agency Playground, and his team.

The Standard originally asked for seven apps for each major mobile device. Instead, Bannon and Playground sold the website on responsive design, a format fit for both browser and mobile.

“There were a lot of things we did with the Toronto Standard that hadn’t been seen on the web before,” Bannon says.

The site was listed as one of *Dot Net Magazine*’s top 10 sites of the year and won three Canadian Online Publishing Awards.

In line of with the startup ethos, Bannon works 13 to 18 hours days. He spends what time remains as an instructor for Ladies Learning Code, a Toronto-based organization that teaches women web skills. He also hosts a series of meetups called the Secret Design Club for graphic designers in Toronto. The idea is to pool together talent to push the city’s design scene forward instead of looking to New York or Silicon Valley for inspiration.



We challenged Bannon to come up with his dream guest list for a Secret Design Club meeting. This is his response.

- 1 **GEOFF TEEHAN:** As the founder of Teehan+Lax, Teehan has shown Canada what it means to be a digital agency
- 2 **ANDREW WILKINSON:** The founder of MetaLab and through his work on products at the agency level he can provide insight into the future of digital marketing
- 3 **DANIEL BURKA:** The creative director at Digg during its heyday, this Canadian expat knows what it’s like to be in control of a product millions of people use—and love—every day
- 4 **ALEX BERNIER:** Bernier is the creative director of Sid Lee, an agency that’s using architecture, retail design and interactive and experimental marketing silos to bring together digital products and physical spaces
- 5 **BRIAN PULLEN or DAVID SENIOR:** These two Playground staffers are brilliant minds and it would be a disservice to the conversation not to bring one along



“He is literally the best talent I’ve ever come across in my 15 years [in the business] and I’ve seen a lot of great talent.”

—David Lafond, president, Proximity Canada

TYLER TURNBULL, 29

SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT, STRATEGY AND INSIGHT, PROXIMITY CANADA

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... the Space Shuttle Challenger took its first flight.

“One of the reasons I love advertising life is that talent is rewarded regardless of age, experience and tenure,” says Tyler Turnbull. It’s an appropriate statement from someone whose career has advanced at such a dizzying pace—he has moved from an intern at Publicis Toronto to senior vice-president, strategy and insight at Proximity Canada.

After graduating with honours from Queen’s University’s Bachelor of Arts program in 2006, Turnbull started with Publicis as an intern working on the Rogers Wireless account.

Despite not having any advertising experience or formal training under his belt, “it was like he had been in the business for years... There was something special about him when he came in and everybody recognized it,” says David Lafond, who at the time was VP brand director at Publicis, and is now president of Proximity Canada.

He was only there four months when the agency offered him a full-time position as an account coordinator to manage mass advertising including print, out-of-home and television. About a year in, he started gravitating towards “all things digital.”

While at Queen’s, Turnbull became an early friend of Facebook, which was still in its infancy. “I’m a geek by nature and I used all those [social media] services and kind of became the go-to person for [the Rogers] brand.”

In April 2007, he was promoted to account executive and a year later became a digital account supervisor at Publicis Modem Canada. But as business at the agency continued to grow, Turnbull split off from the account side and into digital strategy, working closely with Lafond.

“He was pretty much my partner,” says Lafond. “He was years younger but would come in on business pitches. He was probably 24 or 25 at the time and clients just responded to him.”

During his rise through the agency’s ranks, Turnbull’s girlfriend was working on her medical degree in London, England. After dating long distance for two and a half years, Turnbull decided to join her.

“From a personal standpoint I wanted to be with her but from a professional standpoint I was also interested in going to another market and discovering what different things and people and creative approaches there were,” he says.

At the end of 2009, Turnbull joined Publicis Modem in London where he started as a planning director and within 11 months became the joint head of planning, working with a team of 12 planners across a range of specialties including brand planning, engagement planning, SEO, data, analytics and community building. He was also responsible for leading Visa Europe’s London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic digital strategy and activation across 17 markets.

Earlier this year, Turnbull and his now-fiancé Jen returned to Canada. Lafond, who had kept in touch with Turnbull, offered him a position at Proximity Canada as senior vice-president, strategy and insight.

“Tyler is an incredibly loyal guy and I think after eight years at Publicis it was a big decision for him to leave,” says Lafond.

“I loved the creativity that Proximity has to offer along with BBDO as well as their global accounts,” says Turnbull. “BBDO/Proximity is one of the few places we actually run global work from this office... That’s kind of what excited me most.”

Outside of work, Turnbull founded TEDx Toronto, which has blossomed into one of the city’s most highly regarded speaker series. The free, inaugural event had more than 250 attendees and has continued to grow.

“It was a great way to get people around Toronto excited about ideas and show the ad world that ad thinking is just one example of creativity—there are many more out there,” he says, though clearly digital creativity is what has Turnbull most excited.

“We’re in such a transformation point in our industry and I think digital is at the heart of that,” he says. “I’d rather be in an industry that’s going through a transformation than one that’s kind of tried and true and I think digital changes every second and it’s fun trying to keep up with it.”

“The knowledge base he brings to a project is incredible, and the authority he has in front of a client is amazing.”

—Bertrand Cesvet, chairman, Sid Lee



ERIC ALPER, 26

VICE-PRESIDENT, PARTNER AT SID LEE TORONTO

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN.... Microsoft started shipping Windows I.O.

Of everyone on our Top 30, Eric Alper might be the one you’re most likely to think “He’s really under 30?” It happens a lot. The bosses at Sid Lee who hired him thought he was older than he really was, as do the clients he impresses.

“When people find out his age, it blows their minds,” says Vito Piazza, a partner at Sid Lee.

Alper has been a force since he entered the industry in 2008. In four short years, his job title has changed from lead strategist to vice-president. He’s moved from Texas to Montreal to Toronto, where he’s now on an executive leadership team. He’s pitched and won multinational accounts, impressing clients with his intelligence and business acumen. And this year, at age 26, Alper made partner: the youngest since Sid Lee’s founders.

His success story started with Piazza, who earned his MBA from McGill University and mentors business students there. Alper was a student seeking guidance (and a job).

“You could see he was head-and-shoulders above everyone else... He’s really passionate about what he talks about, but also earns the right to talk about just about anything with his width and depth of knowledge. He invests the time to understand a lot of topics.”

After being persistently dogged by the eloquent Texan, Sid Lee hired Alper as an intern on Piazza’s recommendation. Within weeks, his determination put him at conferences and dinner tables with senior global marketers. He never failed to impress. After the head of MGM’s global hotel brands called Sid Lee chairman Bertrand Cesvet, raving about Alper, Cesvet knew he needed to get to know the young thinker better.

“I sat down with Eric and asked when he’d finish his MBA,” Cesvet says. “He was so mature and smart, I thought he was in his late 20s.”

It was only then Cesvet found out Alper was not an MBA student. He was an undergrad. “I couldn’t believe it.”

Cesvet then tapped Alper to help author *Conversational Capital*, his book outlining the agency’s business philosophy. The relationship grew from there. “When he was 23, together we pitched and won the private label business for Walmart,” Cesvet said. “And *he* was the one pitching. At 25, he pitched and won Dell global with myself and Philippe [Meunier].”

Alper admits he “loves the hunt” for big-game clients, but enjoys mentoring even more. “It sounds a bit ridiculous to say I’m mentoring talent, given how long I’ve been in the business.” But a mentor he is, liaising with schools like McGill and VCU Brandcenter, helping students just as Piazza helped him.

Alper’s main job, however, is helping lead Sid Lee Toronto, where he constantly impresses co-workers not just with his strategy savvy, but his overall intelligence and worldliness.

“He’s got a bit of an Encyclopedia Brown thing going,” Piazza says. “If I want to buy a car, I’ll ask his opinion. If I want to go on vacation, I’ll ask him where to go. I expect him to bring me something I haven’t thought about.”

Alper says this comes from being the son of immigrant parents who left the Soviet Union for the U.S. “Like any upwardly aspiring family, around the dinner table we talked about current events and business. The topics du jour were the ones I wanted to consume. And I did, voraciously.” While some topics, like sports, don’t seem to take hold in his brain, “I read a lot about a lot, and I happen to pick it up in many cases... I get interested in anything that relates to consumer and human behaviour.”

It is this fascination with human behaviour that has led to his meteoric rise. Where a less-engaged strategist might see a survey as the end product of research (“Oh my God, 24% of consumer behaviour in X category is driven by Y,” as Alper sarcastically puts it), he believes real success comes from telling stories based on the truths behind the numbers.

“We live in a world filled with data,” Alper says. “The ability to take data and form insights from it is, fundamentally, something our society is starved for... I could take a voracious interest in a variety of topics and go into finance as an analyst. But you don’t tell stories with that data. You just make purchasing decisions with it. I love to tell stories around what [the numbers] mean and how we can affect people.”

Talking Trolls



ERIN BURY, 27

FOUNDER AND MANAGER PARTNER, BETAKIT

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... *St. Elmo's Fire* and *The Goonies* both opened in theatres.

MEGAN SIEGEL, 25

CONTENT/COMMUNITY STRATEGIST, TOP DRAWER CREATIVE

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Wayne Gretzky scored his 500th goal.

DAVE HALE, 24

FOUNDER AND CEO, SOSHAL GROUP

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... NBC bid a record \$40M to capture rights to 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

If social media wisdom comes with youth, then these three have social wisdom to spare—they write about it, tweet about it, build brands with it (their own and clients'), and they still have some left over to share. See below.

HOW DO YOU ADVISE ROI-FIXATED CLIENTS ABOUT WHAT MATTERS MOST WHEN IT COMES TO SOCIAL?

BURY I've always believed in the importance of tying online marketing and social media campaigns back to bottom-line goals. Those goals don't always have to be tied to sales, it could be brand-building, gathering testimonials, or increasing awareness. But it's important to know what you're trying to achieve, and then to follow through and analyze campaigns daily (Google Analytics is your friend).

SIEGEL You have to earn their trust. That way, when you explain to them that having a high number of followers isn't the most important thing in social media, they'll believe you. You need to be able to back up everything you tell them with both anecdotal evidence and stats.

HALE ROI-fixated clients simply need to remember that they need to leverage proper tracking programs at the onset of your social strategy. In my experience, social is a blend of content, community, conversation, and commerce, but no two brands are alike. I've had conversations with brands whose marketing efforts are 100% focused on customer acquisition and sales, but then their social channels are being used for customer service with no ties to any sort of tracking program that could suggest that these tactics are either saving the company money or earning new business.

SHOULD YOU RESPOND TO USERS WHO TRASH YOUR BRAND ON SOCIAL MEDIA—OR WILL A RESPONSE ONLY MAKE THINGS WORSE?

BURY Often people who criticize your brand just want to have their voice heard. There have been many instances of people who said something critical about our company, and once I replied to either provide a solution, or at the very least

address their complaint, their tone changed completely. The enemy of online marketers is ambivalence and silence, so at least when someone contacts you online, whether with a positive or negative comment, you have a chance to turn them into a fan.

SIEGEL If it's a troll who is trashing you for the sake of trashing you, they might not be worth your time. However, if it is a customer who could potentially add value to your brand's community, you're going to want to make them happy.

HALE Think of this in terms of a retail store, if a customer walked in and started shouting about how much they hate your product and you sit there saying nothing, then turn to the next customer and say "Hey Jeff, I hope you're having a great day" and show him a picture of a smiley face. That situation is probably not going to end well. Complaints should be addressed, regardless of their validity, just like in any other customer-facing channel. If a response will only make things worse, then perhaps the wrong person is responsible for handling the situation.

WHEN COMMENTERS TRASH YOUR BRAND, WHAT'S THE BEST DEFENSE—AN OPEN DIALOGUE OR LURING THE TROLL INTO A PRIVATE DISCUSSION?

BURY There's a difference between people who have legitimate suggestions or concerns about your work, and trolls who are just looking to comment negatively on everything you do. I always think the best solution is to address a complaint publicly and provide an email address where you can further resolve the issue. It doesn't always escalate to a private conversation, but at least you're giving people the chance to engage with you further.

SIEGEL You need to be able to read the tone and

severity of the comment before you can choose how to respond. The last thing you want is for the comment to blow up into a long thread with many others engaged. If you think it is a fire that can be put out quickly, respond to it publicly. But if it is a more serious matter, you should get the commenter to contact you directly.

HALE Any issue that can be resolved through open dialogue by the channel manager should be. If an issue is not being resolved with one or two interactions, it is likely that the wrong person is handling the situation. At this point, moving the conversation into a private channel (messages, emails, phone calls, etc.) will be more appropriate, simply because someone other than the social channel manager will likely need to be involved.

TRENDS AND TECH CHANGE AT LIGHTENING SPEED IN THE SOCIAL SPACE. DO MARKETERS REALLY HAVE TO CHASE THE NEXT SHINY THING?

BURY It's always worth it to stay updated on the latest tech trends, since you never know which online tool will become the next Pinterest, Instagram or Twitter. That said, I don't think marketers need to jump on every tech trend, since not all of them are well-suited for every business.

SIEGEL Again, it comes down to measurement—try everything once, whether that's an influencer campaign, an online contest, or a new social media platform, and then see which ones actually result in traffic or sales. Why wouldn't you? Social media is changing and evolving so fast that if you don't jump on board with the "next shiny thing" you could seriously miss out. And if you do jump on board and it fails, then there will be another shiny new tool just around the corner.

HALE A modern marketing plan should leave room

for innovation. If one of your goals is to build more digital touch points with your customers because you know that five touch points equals one sale and a sale equals \$100 in revenue with a gross margin of 10%, then you'll know which technology trends to focus on. If this was your situation and you knew that your customers were heavy users of mobile devices and share, on average, three Instagram images per day, then maybe you should consider leveraging it.

OF THE MOST BUZZED-ABOUT SOCIAL PLATFORMS TODAY, WHICH ARE MOST UNDERVALUED BY MARKETERS?

BURY YouTube is one of the most undervalued marketing tools out there. Two entrepreneurs I know, Alex and Mimi Ikonn, started a hair extension company called LuxyHair two years ago. They have done no marketing outside of their YouTube channel. Mimi does hair tutorials and other online style-focused videos. They've amassed over 450,000 subscribers and 73 million views. YouTube has been the primary sales funnel for their company, and they've grown sales 243% since their first year. Another entrepreneur friend Sunta Sem owns Helloberry jewellery, and has over 10,000 followers on Instagram and a vibrant community on Pinterest. I can't say any *one* network is the new holy grail for marketers, since you can build niche communities that translate to real sales on any network, as long as you find the right audience.

SIEGEL Definitely Instagram. Marketers were quick to pick up on Pinterest, but after seeing it not become as big as everyone expected it to, people seem to be a bit more hesitant to jump on board with Instagram. Instagram has a smaller, more targeted community that really understands the use of location tagging and hashtags. It's a great way to focus in on a niche market.

HALE I think that, despite all the hype, Facebook is still the platform most undervalued by marketers. Marketers need to understand that the true value of Facebook to their business is not likely found on their brand page but in the newsfeeds and tickers of their customers' timelines. Marketers need to build apps that provide utility to a user. Facebook also offers up APIs for core elements of its platform, which few marketers leverage on their other web and mobile channels. Websites, for example, should offer the user a greater experience if they are signed in to Facebook. They shouldn't see customer reviews from people they've never met, they should see those from their personal network, for example. If you think of Facebook as status updates and ads, then you're just looking at the tip of the iceberg.

"She helped completely change the face of the corporate practice here at Maverick. Kirsten understands strategy and how to turn it into tactical products we can use with our clients."

—Martin McNally,
senior vice-president,
corporate affairs,
Maverick Public Relations



KIRSTEN WALKOM, 28

SENIOR CONSULTANT, MAVERICK PUBLIC RELATIONS

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Prince released the hit single "When Doves Cry."

What do PR and psychological warfare have in common? Quite a bit, according to Kirsten Walkom. As someone who studied terrorism and counter-terrorism at Queen's University (where the psychological aspect appealed to her more than armoury) then zigzagged her way into a PR career after a stint in a law firm's marketing department, Walkom says her Jack Bauer-esque schooling set her up well for the PR battleground. Take her thesis on how the FBI used psychological warfare to undermine the KKK and the Black Panthers by creating mistrust amongst members; it taught Walkom the power of communications and that "words could solve almost anything... I know that no matter what the issue or problem is, there is a solution and it's 95% because of how it's communicated."

Walkom also applied her psychology training to advertising while she was with Henderson Bas Kohn as the in-house PR manager and an interactive strategist. Working on successful campaigns for clients such as Coca-Cola and Joe Fresh, Walkom says, "It was 'How are we going to get you to buy this product?' It's all psychological."

So is the ability to read a room—a valuable skill that Martin McNally, Maverick's senior vice-president, corporate affairs, appreciates. Not just anyone can pick up and successfully act on the nuances during strategy sessions, but Walkom does, he says.

It's not a teachable skill, but Walkom is generous about coaching others on succeeding in the trade. She helped launch Maverick's mentor program and, as McNally says, "She's great at not just directing people to do things, but explaining why to do them in a certain way; if she changes things, she goes out of her way so that people know her thought process behind it, which is really important."

So while she didn't end up protecting against terrorists, she will protect the hell out of a brand.

KUNAL GUPTA, 27

CEO, POLAR MOBILE

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... Michael Jackson bought every Beatles song for \$47 million.

In the world of mobile, Kunal Gupta is a dinosaur.

When the 26-year-old founded Polar Mobile in late 2007, phone software was an unexplored medium and the iPhone had yet to be released in Canada.

"The mobile market as it is did not exist. It was an ancient time," Gupta laughs.

In that first year Gupta pitched his software to *Maclean's* magazine and *Canadian Business*, who, Gupta says, didn't really understand what he was pitching.

He landed both as clients.

Even bigger names followed. Today, the likes of *Vogue*, *Wired* and *Glamour* all use Polar's software for their mobile content. "Top-tier brands are coming to a Canadian company because of the quality of our software," Gupta says.

In just four years Polar's apps have logged more than 2 billion views, a landmark that elicited McDonald's jokes when it was announced to Polar staff last month.

And Gupta wants to push the mobile market forward at the same break-neck speed at which his business developed.

Gupta's a member of both the Mobile Entertainment Forum and the Mobile Marketing Association and speaks regularly at the two organizations' events.



It's important advertisers and marketers learn about mobile to deliver rich, engaging mobile experience for brands, he says. "They need to be educated on how to use this medium."

Gupta also makes time to educate young entrepreneurs through Impact, a non-profit supporting young entrepreneurs he started as a freshman at the University of Waterloo.

Ray Cao, Impact's one-time president, describes the group as a playground where Gupta and other students built companies. Cao, now CEO of the online shopping platform Loose Button, says Gupta started Impact with a vision of changing how youth perceive entrepreneurship.

"The entrepreneurial landscape is very different from how it was nine years ago," Cao says, noting Gupta founded Impact in the pre-Zuckerberg days. Back then, he says, founding a company wasn't a sexy thing to do.

Gupta wanted to change that. "Kunal had a vision that entrepreneurship shouldn't be a last resort," says Cao, who remains an Impact board member.

Though Gupta handed over the reigns to current students, he remains highly committed as Impact's board chairman. And Cao says that isn't likely to change.

"Impact is what made Kunal who is today," Cao says. "He feels a big sense of responsibility not to forget where he started."



REID CAMPBELL, 27

FOUNDER, MANAGING PARTNER, VMG CINEMATIC

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... Coca-Cola announced it was changing its secret flavour formula and re-branding as New Coke.

Reid Campbell is the founder of VMG Cinematic, the video and social media marketing agency behind one of the most successful brand-produced viral videos of 2011: pro baseballer Evan Longoria's seemingly supernatural catch of a ball speeding toward the head of a reporter he's talking to.

BBDO New York produced the video and enlisted VMG to help with the distribution strategy. Instead of publishing it on Gillette's YouTube page, the agencies suggested creating a fake user account, MrSprts12. The only sign the video is branded is a stadium ad in the back of the shot, which led to a lot of discussion. Campbell says this tactic created buzz around the video.

"It was all about the real-or-fake question: did he actually catch it?" Campbell says. "The modest Gillette branding in the video itself, and the choice to upload it under the anonymous MrSprts12 user instead of through Gillette's official channel, helped to fuel early speculation and keep the debate going."

Within a month, it had been seen seven million times.

And so it's not surprising that clients often ask Campbell how they can go viral. Though he's been able to deliver big numbers for brands, Campbell says he's actually more focused on finding the best viewers for his clients than "going viral."

While he wants his videos for BlackBerry to collect hits on YouTube, it's more important they be featured on top tier-tech blogs.

"As a marketer, going viral is really about getting the right eyeballs rather than the most eyeballs. While getting millions and millions of random views may seem like viral success, what really matters is that you're reaching actual prospective buyers, who will not only



purchase something themselves, but become an extension of your marketing team and help you find other potential customers."

Thanks to its success in producing and seeding viral videos, VMG saw a 243% growth in revenue between 2009 and 2011. The agency funnelled some of that revenue into charities,

including the Remix Project, a youth program that helps Toronto youth prepare for careers in the arts. Campbell, who says his first love is actually music, also plays pro bono shows in a cover band, supporting charities like the Lighthouse Program for Grieving Children and Sick Kids. Rock on, brother.



LINDSAY COOK, 29

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, JOE FRESH, HOME & ENTERTAINMENT, LOBLAW COMPANIES LIMITED

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Joan Collins won a Golden Globe for her role on *Dynasty*.

Lindsay Cook has a job that not only marketers would kill for, but fashionistas, too.

She's the director of marketing for Joe Fresh, one of the hottest Canadian clothing brands, and recently helped orchestrate its entrance into the U.S. market.

The company opened six locations in the U.S. over the past year, including an 18,000-sq.-ft. international flagship location on Fifth Avenue in New York.

The Loblaw-owned fashion line also recently announced it will open branded shops within nearly 700 newly renovated JC Penny locations starting next spring.

Despite the brand's success in Canada, Cook and her team of four were working with a relatively blank slate.

"As a marketer it's pretty cool to take your brand into a market where nobody knows it," says Cook, who first joined Loblaw's in-store signage and events team in 2007.

How did she overcome the challenge of launching Joe Fresh in the U.S., where it had zero brand recognition?

At the end of spring last year, the company opened a temporary location in the trendy town of East Hampton, a popular summer weekend destination for wealthy New Yorkers.

"That really was the first introduction of the brand to that market and it was great because it was totally led by marketing and PR. We pretty much pulled together a whole store within three weeks of making the decision," she says. Many of the team's discussions, she says, revolved around what mix of media would benefit the brand as well as individual store locations.

"We purchased ads in a lot of key publications [and] we had TV running," she says. "We had a pretty strong mix of media in conjunction with grand-opening offers and collateral around each store."

As if that weren't enough to keep Cook busy, she has also been instrumental in developing and executing a new retail model for Loblaw that puts non-food, general merchandising like home, leisure and entertainment products in a dedicated section of the store. The concept, including new signage, fixtures and reduced shelf heights, is currently being rolled out to more than 100 grocery stores across the country.

"It was gruelling at the time, but looking back it was a great experience because we dissected everything... We really had to rethink every inch of space in that store," says Cook.

"Lindsay is incredibly strong across all important marketing attributes," says Craig Hutchison, SVP marketing, Loblaw Companies. "Creative, great listener, task oriented, cost conscious and can-do attitude." All traits that never go out of style.



RHIANNON MacDONNELL, 27

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOW, MARKETING, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Kathy Sullivan became the first American woman to walk in space.

Rhiannon MacDonnell has a theory: if you want to understand consumers, like *really* understand consumers, you can't just read about them. You have to go out and talk to them and observe what they actually do. It's why she'll go to a farmer's market to talk with people about fair-trade coffee, for instance.

And it's why she found herself, wearing gloves and toting a flashlight, rummaging through Calgarians' recycling blue boxes at 4:30 in the morning in 2009. People weren't really committing to the new recycling program as hoped and MacDonnell was tasked with figuring out which recycling promotions were working and which weren't. To do that, she had to see what people were recycling and what they weren't.

It's that fascination with and deep commitment to understanding people that makes MacDonnell one of Canada's rising-star academics focused on "consumer behaviour"—blending psychology with economics and marketing.

She has been awarded more than \$185,000 in funding for her research and she's recently been published by two different top-tier journals.



After completing her PhD with a specialization in marketing from the University of Calgary earlier this year, MacDonnell was awarded a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Alberta to continue her research.

She focuses on "pro-social" behaviours like ethical consumption, sustainable consumer behaviour and corporate social responsibility. "I have a soft spot for non-profit and non-profit marketing," she says, though the research is certainly applicable for the many brands interested in adding those pro-social elements to their marketing. (And how many marketers don't want to do *that* these days?)

Consumers are more likely to "punish" companies that are anti-social than spend the money to buy from a company that is pro-social, she says.

But MacDonnell wants to know how to get people to act when they see a brand that gets it. "I want to figure out how to make consumers buy it."

She also practices what she preaches as a long-time volunteer with the United Way and more recently the group Classroom Champions. But even when she's spending time with those good causes, she's learning.

MacDonnell would go to workplaces canvassing for the United Way. "People would say 'I can't afford it.' I don't know if they are real problems or excuses... Ultimately you have to get out and talk to people."

So where does she find the time to do it all? "If you do things that get you excited, it gives you energy," she says.



CHRISTOPHER WALTON, 27

SENIOR BROADCAST BUYER, MEDIA EXPERTS

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... The *Beverly Hills Cop* soundtrack topped the *Billboard* 200 chart.

The word "broadcast" appears in Christopher Walton's title, but it's merely a technicality. The way he approaches media buying reaches far beyond a single channel and his unique take on how to get clients' messages the right exposure has proven successful time and time again.

The king (or perhaps prince, at his age) of helping devise integrated marketing solutions at Media Experts, Walton has earned a reputation for using different media in different ways.

One such buy, recalls Media Experts director of television services Carol Cummings, was for BMW and involved short-form executions such as stings and bugs. Walton ingeniously backed that up with VOD on television, which, as Cummings says, "nobody was using—they're *still* not."

"He's resourceful, and for his age he has an incredible work ethic. His own media consumption mirrors what's happening in the TV industry today and he just *gets it*."

—Carol Cummings, director of television services, Media Experts

She says the approach is a great complement to a regular TV buy and a strong way to "come in the back door"—especially since viewers that have missed season premieres or finales often watch them via VOD. Walton presented the idea to BMW and Cummings says they loved it. "I thought 'Okay, I want to clone this kid,'" she says.

Walton is also keen on social TV and is keeping very close tabs on the impact it will have on broadcast. He largely credits the way he's deeply embedded himself in that realm and adapted to the multi-screen universe with driving his career forward and helping him win a gold in the media category of *The Globe and Mail's* Young Lions. "I get the feeling he really wants [Media Experts] to be at the forefront of the social TV arena and to figure out how to best use it in reaching our customers, which is fantastic," says Cummings.

What keeps Walton motivated? "I consistently ask 'What can we do differently to be on the breaking edge?' I don't want to accept where we are; I don't think it's always the right move to do the same thing twice."

He believes a better move is to bring creative thinking to his role. "Too often in media buying it's easy to just connect the dots and move on from there, but there is a lot of strategic thinking that can be done within our everyday job."

And, as his buys prove, that approach can flourish when taken beyond traditional broadcast.



TREVOR BYRNE, 29

ACCOUNT DIRECTOR, TAXI TORONTO

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... *Trading Places* starring Dan Aykroyd and Eddie Murphy opened in theatres.

Most of Trevor Byrne's academic achievements and career highlights (so far) centre around cars. He studied at the Canadian Automotive Institute, beat out 150 students for an internship at Volkswagen Canada and held a marketing position at Nissan Canada, before moving over to its creative agency TBWA. Now he leads the automotive portion of the Canadian Tire account at Taxi. Byrne is steering a strong career course fueled by ambition, passion and a strong work ethic, and clearly he's impressed his colleagues; Byrne received multiple

“Trevor has the best creative instincts of any young account person I’ve worked with.”

—Jack Neary,
former chief creative officer,
TBWA\Toronto

nominations for *Marketing's* 30 Under 30 search. Jack Neary, former chief creative officer at TBWA\Toronto says. Without question Trevor has the best creative instincts of any young account person I've worked with in 34 years. He makes the work better.”

Aside from extolling Byrne's strategic thinking, former TBWA\Toronto managing director Philip George says Byrne is “one of the most decent, hard-working and genuinely pleasant people you'll find.”

Not bad for someone from humble beginnings. Byrne grew up in a small rural town in Southern Ontario where despite his fascination with cars, learned more about responsibility and work ethic than he did engines and break fluid. As a kid, he helped with his family's Rottweiler and Mastiff kennel and in high school he managed a free-range pheasant farm and worked in the tobacco fields around Tillsonburg, Ontario.

When he got his license his interest in cars grew along with his desire for freedom and the open road. He devoured any car magazine and how-to article he could get his hands on.

Byrne ended up in Georgian College's automotive program and while he was there landed his first paid marketing gig with Desperado Marketing, working on the Nissan account and later landed a full-time position as marketing operations analyst with Nissan Canada. The account team at TBWA (Nissan's creative AOR) lured him over “to the dark side” in 2007 where he held a senior account executive position for just over a year before joining digital shop Grand. He returned to TBWA in 2010 and focused on moving Nissan's efforts online, specifically around its Sentra SE-R model, which was a challenge at first.

“The argument I made was this: I understand that TV has a role in marketing and it's a very valuable medium to have, but the fact of the matter is when you have a very specific vehicle you're marketing... building something of value for the ones that are actually going to want this car means more than just 30 seconds on a TV spot.”

The strategy was to reach young male car enthusiasts interested in performance cars, a proposition made more difficult by ad regulations that prohibit depictions of driving deemed extreme, unsafe or fast.

The solution? TBWA produced an online video titled “Drift” that showed a Sentra speeding through the streets only to reveal part way through that it was a toy car. Behind-the-scenes footage was also available on the branded YouTube channel. The campaign won Gold at the 2011 Cassies and made the North American Effie shortlist.

Byrne moved to Taxi in 2011 and started working with Canadian Tire, which was “a staple” in his community growing up. “That's where I bought all my supplies. If I needed something I knew exactly where it was at Canadian Tire,” he says. “Having that very intimate exposure to it on a regular basis I kind of felt like I knew the brand like the back of my hand.”

This, paired with his passion for cars, makes the two a natural fit, he says. As a result, Byrne's career is racing along in top gear and he feels very good in the driver's seat.



JENNIFER KAISER, 25

SENIOR CONSULTANT, MEDIA PROFILE

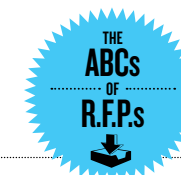
IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Hulk Hogan defeated Andre the Giant in WrestleMania III.

Jennifer Kaiser gets the distinct honour of having one of her PR pitches used for fodder in *Saturday Night Live's* Weekend Update segment. The nutty premise—tethering the type of smartphone people use to their dating habits—helped online dating site Match.com snag more than 100 stories in outlets from *Forbes* to the *Toronto Star* earlier this year. (For the record, *SNL's* Seth Meyers took a jab at a stat about how Android users are most likely to have sex on a first date.)

Kaiser is a master at crafting winning pitches. Mere months into her job at Media Profile, she created an RFP that helped the agency win Canadian AOR status on the Match.com account. How'd she do it? She designed and wrote it in the style of an online dating profile that, she says, “positioned ourselves as Match.com's perfect match.”

WANT TO CREATE YOUR OWN KICK-ASS RFP? HERE ARE HER TIPS:

- 1 Don't just say you're creative—show it. While content is king, looks count too. Showcase your creative spirit and personality from page one. A huge component of successful agency/client partnerships is chemistry. An RFP is a lot like a first date—first impressions count.
- 2 Do your research. And then do more research. Skimming over the details of a potential client's back story—their challenges, successes, competitors, stakeholders and emerging trends—is a real disservice to both parties. Go wide and go deep.
- 3 Don't skirt the issues. Make sure you actually—and comprehensively—address questions asked by the potential client; they can tell if you don't. And don't be afraid to be bold in your answers.



FIVE COURSES EVERY MARKETER SHOULD TAKE THIS FALL

A distilled digital marketing curriculum from the man who develops them for Canadian universities.



TYLER CALDER, 28

DIRECTOR, ENTERPRISE PAID SEARCH & SOCIAL MEDIA DEPARTMENTS, SEARCH ENGINE PEOPLE

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... the first case of a robot killing a human in the U.S. was documented.

1 THE DIGITAL LANDSCAPE TODAY

Budgets are moving towards digital. This isn't incremental, net new budget; it's budget that's coming from TV, print and radio. Shouldn't you know where those dollars are going and why your clients are willing to invest more into AdWords than they are in the same print ad they've been doing for the past 10 years?

2 SEO IS NOT JUST A THREE-LETTER WORD

When you sold that new microsite or developed those flashy landing pages, did you consider the SEO implications? Without taking it into account, there's a good chance people won't find your website. If they don't find your website, does it really exist? What about all those press releases, or those videos you uploaded to YouTube or even the amazing infographics you developed. This course will arm you with the knowledge to make sure your great work actually gets found!

3 DISPLAY & SOCIAL ADVERTISING THEORY

Are you still speaking the CPM language? Clients would rather pay for each click and look at CPCs than paying per thousand. Google's Display Network has become the largest in the world with one



of the most extensive reaches in Canada. It offers full control over placement, time-of-day delivery, demographic and interest-based targeting. Facebook Ads, LinkedIn Ads, Promoted Tweets, YouTube Ads... they all offer advertising options that deliver back real numbers and don't require a \$50,000 investment in a Facebook app.

4 WEBSITE ANALYTICS 201

Everything you do drives people to your client's website. To be truly effective and derive actionable insights, you need to be comfortable with analytics, whether it be Google's, Webtrends, Omniture or any other suite. Are people engaged with your

website or are they bouncing? Are they converting and driving revenue? What proportion of traffic is coming from your content or social channels? Without a strong understanding of this, you'll be stuck reporting on GRPs.

5 CONVERSION OPTIMIZATION 101

A knowledge of conversion optimization is key to continual improvement and bringing budgets back campaign after campaign. Sure, the new site you developed looks fantastic and will make your competitors drool, but when your customers hit it, do they do what you want them to? No? Then say goodbye to your budget.



Talking Strategy

MARLA NATOLI, 26

PRODUCT MANAGER, MOBILE, TORSTAR DIGITAL

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Prince Andrew married Sarah Ferguson.



MELISSA SMICH, 26

SENIOR CULTIVATOR, TRIBAL DDB TORONTO

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... an explosion at a nuclear plant caused the Chernobyl disaster.

Both **MARLA NATOLI** of *TorStar Digital* and **MELISSA SMICH** of *Tribal DDB* have wowed their colleagues and clients with deep, almost intuitive understanding of the digital space and how brands can thrive within it. Marketing asked them to share some of that digital insight.

HOW DO YOU KEEP UP WITH THE RAPID CHANGES IN YOUR FIELD?

NATOLI The best way to stay current is to live and breathe what you're selling. In my case, I not only embrace mobile and social, I integrate it into every facet of my life as much as I can, so that I become the consumer I am trying to reach.

SMICH I stay current through the Radar DDB 10 a.m., where we share our insights and trends in the space. Twitter also provides some of the best curated content, so I maintain multiple Twitter lists and scan them through dedicated TweetDeck columns.

HOW CAN A BRAND THRIVE ONLINE WHEN ANYONE CAN ADD TO THE CONVERSATION?

NATOLI The key is to be authentic and accountable—if you have a quality offering and brand, mistakes are forgivable if approached in the right way. Online conversations provide a great opportunity for customer feedback you may have never heard.

SMICH Brands thrive online through fostering relationships and becoming part of the conversation. But don't feed the trolls. Trolls are simply looking to provoke an emotional response and their end game is to cause trouble.

WHAT KINDS OF NEW SOCIAL MEDIA MODELS MIGHT EMERGE IN 2013?

NATOLI I think most people will agree that social media is here to stay, but what isn't as clear is how social media companies will generate sustainable revenue. Mobile and social are now clearly intertwined—but some of the most successful social media companies are still struggling in the revenue department. I look forward to new revenue models popping up in 2013.

SMICH I think 2013 will be the year of SoLoMo (Social Local Mobile), as well as commerce and social media CRM and customer service. These may not be new models, but are definitely on clients' radars. Social media is going to grow up into a commerce platform.

WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT?

NATOLI Mobile is still very much looked at as a standalone media and the focus is largely on the technology and what can be done on the device. I often challenge myself to look beyond the technology itself and think about all the amazing opportunities there are to extend that mobile experience beyond the screen to truly tap into mobile as a physical device that is always on.

SMICH Surviving the imminent Zombie apocalypse. Are you prepared?

“[Smich is] committed to shift disturbing—thinking about new ways to do things that will move our clients' businesses forward.”

—Ed Lee, director of social media, Tribal DDB Toronto



KYLE LAMB, 26

ART DIRECTOR, JOHN ST.

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev met for the first time.

Kyle Lamb has been on a hot streak almost since he got into the business with John St. five years ago. Because of that, he's rung up an impressive list of honours—formal and informal. The One Show, Cannes Lions, D&AD, Webby Awards, Marketing Awards, FWA's Site of the Day, ADCC, Young Lions... you get the point.

And his work has been covered by *Time* magazine, CBS News, *Wired* and New York Magazine. But the highlight so far? Probably when Conan O'Brien was blogging about one of his projects, the super-huge viral hit “Catvertising.”

And while that was a self-promotional video for the agency, those accolades, garnered with his writing partner Kurt Mills, have also come for clients like Mitsubishi, WWF, Tetley and Autos.ca.

“He's a perfectionist without being crazy,” says John St. creative director Angus Tucker. “There is just not a lot of drama, he takes everything in stride and gets it done. You love that in people.”

Marketing asked Lamb to help us tell the story of his career so far. And here's what he gave us. (Match the numbers below with the art above.)

- 1** **21:** Lamb's ad career begins after graduating from the Ontario College of Art of Design
- 2** **Rosé:** the drink of choice in Cannes, where Lamb went as a Young Lion in 2010
- 3** **Elusive awards:** trophies like a One Show Pencil (he's got one) are tough to snare, with no shortage of challengers trying to steal them away from you
- 4** **Self-portrait:** In a head-scratching moment
- 5** **Lamp:** a vital tool for late nights ahead of looming deadlines
- 6** **An ever-present cup of coffee** and the emotional tug-of-war common for many jangled creatives. “Sometimes

it is amazing and sometimes it is just like ‘Oh my God, what am I doing?’” says Lamb.

7 **Many bright ideas are floated:** some get shot down

8 **Cat:** one of Lamb's biggest achievements was working on John St.'s viral hit, self-promotion video “Catvertising”

9 **Tubes:** to capture every drop of creative juice

10 **Omnipresent “suits”:** keeping an eye on creatives and applying the requisite pressure to get things done on time

11 **Juggling balls:** Lamb just took up juggling—that's not a metaphor

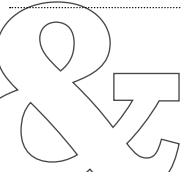


Talking Influence

MARTA TRYSHAK, 24

CREATOR, WITHLOVEGABRIELLE.COM

IN THE MONTH SHE WAS BORN... Jose Canseco became the first major league baseball player to steal 40 bases and hit 40 homeruns.



PIROUZ NILFOROUSH, 27

PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, NETSHELTER TECHNOLOGY MEDIA

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... Coca-Cola announced it would bring back its 99-year-old formula after New Coke tanked.

Influential fashion blogger, brand consultant and TV host MARTA TRYSHAK chats with PIROUZ NILFOROUSH, creator of NetShelter, a network of blogs and review-based editorial ad units called inPowered Stories that find, promote and distribute positive earned media about expert recommendations versus Likes, the death of creative and trust, trust, trust.

NILFOROUSH I don't see it as a question of trusting an expert's opinion over your friend network. It's complementary. When it comes down to a brand's product, determining how people go about making a purchase decision is vital. It's the most important thing. If it's a considered purchase like tech, the reliance on expertise trumps everything else. Things like what kind of coffee shop to try, it's a friend's decision. A brand must understand what category it's in and how do people go about purchasing its products.

TRYSHAK When it comes to purchasing something, I trust the expert blogger that I've been reading for the past few months. I trust a blogger's opinion versus anonymous Likes or recommendations. You don't know everybody. If it's a [recommendation] from my best friend's friend that I don't know, it's not enough to influence me.

NILFOROUSH The big question with influence marketing is what happens to display advertising and creative in advertising? With research coming from Nielsen that says people really trust earned advertising above and beyond any other form of media, I'm wondering how long it



"Pirouz is one of the smartest and most strategic thinkers I have ever met, and it's been exciting to see NetShelter push the boundaries of innovation under his leadership."

—Gokul Rajaram,
product director of ads at Facebook

will be before the ad dollars start flowing that way. What does this mean for the agency business model where everything is created around a sales pitch when data is showing that users trust not marketing message and pitches but the expert's or friend's opinion? This is the biggest change in the ad landscape in 50 years—when word-of-mouth *advertising*, not just word-of-mouth *marketing*—becomes a scalable [ad unit].

TRYSHAK I agree that audience trust word of mouth and social media over paid pitches, but there is room for creative. Branding establishes [consumer] opinions for the long term. And if creative resonates, it will be used for the long term. It's important for a product to have that long-lasting demand and the best way to do so is to have a carved image created through branding. So in the future, we may not necessarily see ads on TV selling products, but perhaps TV ads will be used to imprint an idea for the long term. Brands still want to have that perfectly carved image, but they want a lifestyle approach—that personal touch of a friend or the trust of a blogger. They come to me to ask "How do we engage with our audience and communicate with our audience around our brand?"

NILFOROUSH That's exactly it. It all comes down to that initial trust. The end consumer trusts the blogger a lot more than they trust a brand trying to pitch them on a product. Brands are increasingly trying to figure out how do we leverage that trust that exists among expert and end consumer in order to promote and build our brand. What NetShelter is trying to enable for advertisers is if you have an endorsement from an influential blogger like Marta, how do you get that consumed by more of your audience. That endorsement has more impact on end users than any other marketing message that you can come up with. We've built a platform to help brands identify what are the experts writing about their products and give them the ability to distribute that out to a much wider audience to consume that positive news and reviews. It's all completely separate from what the blogger does. All you're doing as a brand is curating all those positive reviews.



BRAD CANARIO, 27

BRAND MANAGER, PEPPERIDGE FARM, CAMPBELL COMPANY OF CANADA

IN THE MONTH HE WAS BORN... *Back to the Future* opened in theatres across the U.S.

During a six-hour flight, Brad Canario watches a mom try to entertain her young kids. She pulls out an oversized bag stuffed with crayons, note pads, Gameboys and a bag of Goldfish crackers. In the end, it was the crackers that distracted the kids while also satisfying any hunger pangs.

It's an anecdote Canario had heard from moms around the Campbell office but not one he had ever witnessed first hand. Canario was inspired, and wanted to bring the idea to life. He worked closely with Weber Shandwick to develop the "Goldfish Moments" social media campaign that encouraged moms to share their Goldfish stories on Twitter.

"We reached out to mom influencers in the community and they reached out to their following and it caught on fire," he says. The effort garnered over 3.2 million impressions, a social media record for the company. Canario was recognized internally at Campbell with a 2012 Creativity Award.

Canario has been with Campbell Company of Canada since 2008 and started working on the Goldfish brand the following year. Since then, annual retail sales for the brand have nearly doubled. As of July, the brand had experienced 53% growth compared to the same period the year before.

Canario has no problem coming up with strong, creative brand ideas on the fly. Last March, he and his partner Aaron Nemoy participated in *The Globe and Mail's* 2012 Young Marketers competition (part of the Young Lions) and were given 24 hours to write a two-page creative brief to help drive awareness for the YMCA. In that small window of time, Canario and Nemoy visited a few YMCA locations across the Greater Toronto Area and discovered that many Canadians are unaware that membership fees help fund social programs.

"Instead of lining the pockets of big corporations it actually goes back into society," he says.

The duo won Gold, beating out 48 other teams from across Canada for the "Your Membership is Your Donation" concept, securing them a trip to the International Festival of Creativity in Cannes to represent Canada in the official Young Marketers competition. There, teams were asked to develop a creative brief for a product or service that would benefit Room to Read, a global organization that focuses on literacy and gender equality in education. Canario and his partner won Bronze.

Cannes, says Canario, is unlike anything he's ever experienced and is his proudest accomplishment to date. At one event, Canario chatted for 30 minutes with a man who said he was an "executive at an agency." Turns out he's the CEO of Leo Burnett in Europe.

Based on what he's done so far, don't be surprised if big-shot execs are soon excited about talking to Canario.