



CLASS OF 2019

The 10 marketing executives on this year's list see opportunities where others see obstacles. They help their brands stand out by uniting behind a common purpose. And they never lose sight of who they're really working for—namely, their customers. But there is one thing these Brand Genius honorees don't know: the meaning of the term status quo. The list begins with our Brand Visionary, Chrissy Teigen, and ends with an inspiring Brand Save story about one organization's fight against a disease that has touched nearly everyone. —*Kristina Feliciano*



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VP, MARKETING ACQUISITION, HIMS AND HERS

Emily Boschwitz

BECAUSE TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF SHOULDN'T HAVE TO FEEL LIKE TAKING YOUR MEDICINE



It's safe to assume that most dudes would prefer not to look someone in the eye when discussing their erectile dysfunction. Actually, they'd probably prefer not to talk about it at all. But Hims is here for them. The telemedicine brand offers online access to an extensive network of over 200 licensed healthcare providers, resources and products for medical conditions that most guys would rather not admit to—and it does so with honesty and even humor.

By openly talking about the unpleasant issues that a striking number of men encounter, Hims has been able to "create awareness about these traditionally stigmatized conditions, normalize them and get men to be proactive about their health," says Emily Boschwitz, vp of marketing acquisition at Hims and Hers (Hers is Hims' sister brand).

Not afraid to be prickly

While one might expect a light touch when talking about ED, the Hims brand is memorable for imagery

that includes a flaccid cactus against a millennial pink background—a visual metaphor so clear in meaning that no explanation was needed.

That irreverent approach connected powerfully with consumers. Boschwitz says the brand saw \$1 million in revenue in the first week after its launch, and sales have continued to grow. Hims has also attracted over \$200 million in funding to date and has fulfilled more than 1 million orders since launch.

Key to the brand's success is showing just how common issues like ED and hair loss are. Recent advertising efforts have splashed statistics—56% of men suffer from hair loss by age 35, and 40% of men under 40 struggle with ED—in public places like subway stations and city centers that reach the brand's wide demographic (roughly characterized as all men).

Eyes on the prize

One way to get men to connect with a message about something they're avoiding is to capture their undivided attention—like with restroom takeovers.

"We're always thinking about where the consumer's eyes are and where they have 30 seconds of uninterrupted time," Boschwitz says with a chuckle. In the summer, Hims has flown banners over beaches, hoping to attract the gaze of prone sunbathers.

Boschwitz says that over the last year, her team has launched more than 50 channel tests—ranging from city takeovers (a Bryant Park subway in New York) or neighborhood dominations (like in San Francisco), always leading with stats in order to create awareness. Partnerships with influencers such as Dax Shepard and David Dobrik lend the brand authenticity and visibility. And on social, where Hims and Hers collectively have more than 200,000 followers, men have posted about unboxing products and given in-shower shampoo reviews. "It's incredible this community we've been able to foster around conditions that were totally taboo two years ago," notes Boschwitz.

A future in females

In late 2018, the company ventured into women's health, with Hers. While the mission was similar to Hims', the tone was different. Since its launch, Hers—where topics include birth control, female sex drug Addyi, hair-loss products, vitamins and skin care—has facilitated more than 50,000 patient/doctor interactions on the platform.

"We knew that women were already seeking care, but they weren't getting what they need," says Boschwitz. "We took a more direct and informational tone with Hers that allowed us to create trust with our consumers that they can come to us for a more beneficial experience." —Rae Ann Fera



CHIEF BRAND OFFICER, AT&T

Fiona Carter

THE STORYTELLER INTENT ON EFFECTING CHANGE

In 2016, Carter was reviewing a script for an AT&T Business ad when she noticed something was off: All the characters were male. “I realized in that moment that as an advertiser I had the ability to make a change,” she recalls, saying she immediately altered the casting. “It was an epiphany of the power I had to pursue a personal passion for equality.” Since then, she’s worked to ensure all of AT&T’s marketing and brand storytelling represent the diversity of the telecom’s customers and employees.

Leveling the playing field

Around the same time as Carter’s aha moment, the Association of National Advertisers was launching #SeeHer, a movement to improve the depiction of women and girls across advertising and marketing by 20% by 2020. Under Carter, AT&T became the first advertiser to incorporate the United Nations’ Gender Equality Measure (GEM) into its copy testing.

She also established an internal Inclusion Playbook, whose guidance on inclusivity in marketing includes attaining 50:50 gender split in casting and behind the camera, and ensuring women are in strong and primary roles in advertising.

An interesting thing resulted: “We found very quickly that those ads scoring more highly on GEM scores were scoring more highly on all our key business metrics,” she says. By the end of 2018, AT&T had delivered on its commitment to improve by 20% the positive portrayal of women a full two years ahead of the ANA’s goal.

Carter continues to find ways of driving equality and diversity at AT&T. The company supports Free the Work, an initiative that encourages the world of TV, filmmaking and music to employ a more diverse talent base. And in 2019, Carter was named co-chair of #SeeHer, which is now expanding its mission to TV and sports, working with networks like ABC, CBS, NBC and Viacom to improve representation. #SeeHerInSports has convened a collection of sporting leagues,

advertisers, sponsors and TV networks to address the fact that women’s sports make up only 4% of sports coverage. As a step in the right direction, in 2019 AT&T became a sponsor of the inaugural Augusta National Women’s Amateur golf tournament.

Supporting homegrown heroes

Another pillar of Carter’s commitment to equality is elevating the diverse stories of its employees, which is why, during the 2019 Masters golf tournament (of which AT&T is a sponsor), the brand launched its AT&T Believes platform, bringing national attention to the community-building work that was naturally happening by AT&Ters around the country.

Carter says the idea for AT&T Believes came from some technicians in Chicago who were witnessing increasing gun violence. Wanting to do something about it, they opened up their tech garages for Thanksgiving dinner for the local community. “Our leadership heard about this and saw how we could bring the full force of AT&T to bear to support the grassroots efforts to uplift local neighborhoods,” Carter says.

AT&T’s support of local employee-led initiatives has now spread to 30 cities and towns and addresses issues that staff identify in their communities, from revitalizing historic neighborhoods and helping the underserved find employment to aiding the homeless. “We’re a company of people for people, but we’ve never told that story before,” Carter says. “This allows us to shine a light on the true nature of AT&T ... that we’re restless and we have a bias for action.” —Rae Ann Fera

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GLOBAL CONSUMER CMO, CITI

Jennifer Breithaupt

BANKING ON THE POWER OF CONNECTION



When Breithaupt became global consumer chief marketing officer of Citi in 2017, she was given an unusual mission: to bring more emotion to a 207-year-old financial services brand that wasn't exactly dripping with the feels.

First, she addressed the tone of Citi's advertising. "If you look at our work pre-2017—and I will admit I was responsible for some of it—we focused on our products and services. We would talk and talk and talk and talk," says Breithaupt. Under her direction, Citi stopped talking at customers and instead put them at the center of its branding. This shift came with a new tagline, "Welcome what's next," which signaled all the life moments a customer turns to their bank for, from buying a home to sending a kid to college.

A new tune

Then Breithaupt dialed it up by leveraging Citi's longstanding connection to music. The brand launched Citi Entertainment a decade ago, which

provides customers with presale tickets, exclusive access and other offers related to movies, music, TV and sports. The Citi Sound Vault Series, meanwhile, has since 2017 provided cardholders with premium access to intimate performances with A-list artists. Having witnessed the impact of #SeeHer, the Association of National Advertisers' initiative to eliminate unconscious bias against women and girls in advertising and media, Breithaupt realized similar progress could be made in the music industry—and in the process, strike an emotional chord.

"It's just staggering how few women there are in music," says Breithaupt. "You talk to artists that are female and they'll tell you it was a struggle, how they had to hustle harder. If we can make it just a little easier on women coming up through the industry, that's a strong message."

On International Women's Day this year, Citi announced on The Today Show that it would lead #SeeHerHearHear (an extension of the ANA's #SeeHer initiative), which aims to bring gender parity and exposure to the music industry, as well

as to music in advertising. The program includes a mentorship component and \$5,000 awards for aspiring singer-songwriters. Additionally, Citi has committed to forming a collective of over 50 brands that will showcase music made by women in their advertising, whether it's by a female performer, songwriter, producer, engineer or marketing executive.

"Our consumers are demanding that brands stand for something. You have to select platforms and positions where your brand can have an authentic position and voice. It has to be something that's a core mission or commitment across your entire organization that you prioritize," she says.

A movement, not a moment

This focus on empowering women in music has dovetailed back to Citi's Sound Vault Series. To commemorate the 25th installment, the brand in August announced Madonna would perform two shows.

"Madonna has been able to reinvent herself over time," Breithaupt says of the decision to feature the iconic artist. "It's incredible the career she's been able to make possible for herself. So when we were thinking about how important #SeeHerHearHear is this year and how to mark our 25th Sound Vault show, Madonna was the obvious choice."

While getting Madonna involved was great headlines, Breithaupt says Citi's commitment to women in music is far from a stunt. "We want to show that we're making a difference, making change and showing women and girls what's possible," she says. "It's not a moment; it's a movement." —Rae Ann Fera



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