

# Global PLAYERS

The flavor of modern marketing U.S. is taking a more global perspective. *Ad Age* searched the world for individuals who are changing the industry in this first Global Players report. They include stars from the marketing giants, such as Unilever and Procter & Gamble Co., and small but influential shops like the agency Mother and the maverick media thinkers at Naked.

## PROFILES

<b>North America</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>Europe</b>
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## Far-flung units connected

[LONDON] When Simon Clift became Unilever's first president of marketing two years ago, it wasn't clear exactly how many home and personal-care brands the marketing giant had. Names and advertising often varied wildly.

"It was quite difficult just to count them," Mr. Clift says. So that's where he started.

Now, Unilever knows that more than three-quarters of its business comes from 20 global brands. "There are six personal-care brands for which we have exceptional ambition—Dove, Lux, Pond's, Axe, Rexona and Sunsilk—and they all grew last year in double digits," he says.

Mr. Clift has named 12 global brand managers to handle "the PC6" and key detergent brands. He's invested them with strong executional authority on issues of equity and advertising that used to rest with

junior local brand managers.

"It's mostly about connecting up the business," he says. Brand names may still vary, but positioning and ads make it clear that Sunsilk and Latin America's Seda shampoo, for instance, are the same brand.

By raising the level of scrutiny on brand equity and advertising, Mr. Clift says, he can tell agencies he wants their best creative talent, as well as high-caliber planning and account directors. To him, that's more important than "full-service agencies in 80 countries."

Mr. Clift, 45, studied medieval languages at Cambridge. He made his mark in the U.K. in the mid-1990s by boldly firing Unilever's biggest agency, then called Ammirati Puris Lintas, from the Lynx and Impulse brands, and daring to move them to Bartle Bogle Hegarty. Soon both were winning creative

**SIMON CLIFT**  
President-marketing, home/  
personal care, Unilever



awards, and Bartle got an international role on Axe (Lynx's name outside the U.K.), including last year's U.S. launch. A talent for inspiring creative thinking prompted a U.K. magazine to refer to him as a "living client saint."

Appointed chairman of the Latin America Personal Care Category Group in 2000 after three years in the region, Mr. Clift was living happily in Brazil, where he adopted a Brazilian street child as a foster son, when the global marketing job beckoned.

After two years of spending added time on organizational change at Unilever, Mr. Clift, clearly thinking about some of his competitors, says, "We're trying to strike a balance between being mindlessly global and hopelessly local." ■ —LAUREL WENTZ

He wants their best talent. That's more important than "full-service agencies in 80 countries"



## Big ideas for big brands

[PARIS] Mercedes Erra's management style is to inspire and delegate, freeing her up to think, study consumers and sell big ideas to Havas' Euro RSCG clients in France. Her special talent is reorienting huge brands. A decade ago, for instance, she spotted a seismic shift in consumers' attitudes toward health, and persuaded Danone that the brand had to be all about health.

"It's so hard to sell and sell and sell," Ms. Erra says cheerfully after a long meeting with cell phone client Orange about a big idea she's been easing them into for six months. That's nothing, she says. It took her almost a year to persuade Evian—a brand all about youth—to approve a commercial for 2003 in which adults speak in children's voices. That follows a giant water ballet by babies in an earlier Evian spot.

"When you have an idea, it's easy to torture it," she says. "It changes, and in the end, the idea is nothing. You have to defend the idea. Sometimes you say to clients, 'That's not

your work to execute the idea.'"

Ms. Erra, 48, is the president and the "E" in Havas' BETC Euro RSCG, France's biggest ad agency, and chairman of Euro RSCG France. Last year, she became the first woman to be elected president of AACC, France's ad agency association, where she says the erosion of agency remuneration is her big issue. She says it can be hard for clients to understand agencies must be both strategic and artistic. Strategic work can be compensated with a fee, but commission is more relevant for an enduring creative idea.

To nurture the inner artist, Ms. Erra's agency has a large cultural space—1,000 square meters—in its offices that's become known as a trendy spot for catwalk shows. So far, the biggest exhibition at the Passage du Desir, named for the 19th century passageway the agency is built along, is the current "Americaland" by aerial photographer Alex S. MacLean.

In France, Ms. Erra's career success, willingness to speak out on behalf of women and her own personal life make her a rare high-profile role model for French women. Rarest of all, she has a house-husband, who looks after their five sons, ages 7 to 15, including 8-year-old twins. ■ —LAUREL WENTZ

**MERCEDES ERRA**  
President, BETC Euro RSCG,  
and chairman,  
Euro RSCG France

## Creative rep rebuilding plus

**[BUENOS AIRES]** Ramiro Agulla saw business at his ad agency in Argentina plummet last year as clients slashed spending during the country's economic collapse. Now, though, he's busy again, handling assignments from Brazil, France and as far afield as China.

Mr. Agulla, the agency's president, and his partner, Carlos Baccetti, are working hard to extend the reach of Agulla & Baccetti beyond Argentina, where ad spending fell a painful 50% in 2002 and is expected to be depressed for years. Luckily, the agency has a creative reputation that appeals to multinational marketers.

And Latin pop star Shakira is so fond of Mr. Agulla, himself a music fanatic who has

sung jingles for commercials, that she insisted he handle a Reebok International commercial that she will appear in.

Coca-Cola Co. turned to Agulla & Baccetti for Sprite campaigns in Chile and Mexico, and Coke in China. Renault tapped the agency to create ads to launch the French carmaker's Megane model in Europe.

Messrs. Agulla, 39, and Baccetti, 38, started their agency in 1994. Interpublic Group of Cos.' Lowe & Partners Worldwide now owns 40%, and just named Mr. Agulla to the new post of Latin American executive creative director, even though the network owns only a minority stake in his agency.

One of the most-awarded spots last year

### RAMIRO AGULLA

President,  
Agulla & Baccetti

from Argentina was Agulla & Baccetti's "Yawn" for Telecom Argentina, showing the power of communication through a contagious yawn that passes from person to person.

While the agency's creative awards open doors to foreign assignments, they also create headaches for Mr. Agulla. Argentina's ongoing economic crisis and a 70% slump in the peso's value against the U.S. dollar have made his Buenos Aires shop "a factory for creating talent," he says. Agencies with deeper pockets lure away some of his best people with higher salaries for jobs in London, Chicago, Amsterdam and elsewhere.

"Everybody looks at this agency to hire away talent," he says. ■ —CHARLES NEWBERY



## Emerging media giant

**[HONG KONG]** Peter Brack was one of AOL Time Warner's rising stars before he decided to strike out on his own with Redgate Media, which is tapping China's lucrative media market.

China's participation in "the World Trade Organization is already happening, the Olympics are coming up in 2008, and domestic brands such as Legend [computers] and Haier [appliances] are springing up," the Redgate chairman-CEO notes. To advertisers' dismay, however, the mainland's media market is highly fragmented. Mr. Brack hopes to take advantage of both trends—growth and fragmentation. Fueled by Asian and U.S. investors, Redgate will invest in undervalued yet profitable ad-supported magazines and newspapers, and eventually expand into radio and TV.

Once Redgate gathers a comprehensive network of key demographics across China's major cities, "we can offer a fantastic network of partner companies to provide seamless deals for advertisers," Mr. Brack says.

At 31, Mr. Brack is already a China pro. He's also no stranger to the media and advertising world. His father is Reginald K. Brack, former chairman-CEO of Time Inc. and a board member at Interpublic Group of Cos.

In 1993, Peter Brack was one of Turner Broadcasting System's first six employees at its Asian base in Hong Kong. He managed Time



PETER BRACK  
Chairman-CEO,  
Redgate Media

Inc.'s *Asiaweek*, and rose to Time Inc.'s highest position in the region as senior VP, responsible for *Time's* and *Fortune's* Asian editions.

Mr. Brack won't identify his initial acquisition targets, which include sports, fashion, travel and electronics titles plus men's and women's lifestyle magazines. But he insists he's "closing deals now."

Apart from content, there are few barriers to investment. Companies such as Redgate can buy up to 49% of local media companies and introduce Western-style management, sales, marketing and accounting skills.

Mr. Brack, an American, and his four employees, mainland Chinese with media or banking backgrounds, face little competition.

"No one is doing this already, although a lot of people are looking at media in China," he says. "The market is so big, there's room for other businesses." ■ —NORMANDY MADDEN

## China warms up to P&G

**[GUANGZHOU, CHINA]** Laurent Philippe, 51, is one of Procter & Gamble Co.'s leading experts on developing markets, following stints in North Africa, Eastern Europe and now China.

His skills and experience are valuable as P&G expands its global business and could eventually propel this Frenchman to a top spot at P&G. Since he became president-Greater China 18 months ago, he has helped turn the mainland into one of P&G's most lucrative markets. Educated in France and the U.S., Mr. Philippe joined P&G's European engineering division in Brussels in 1977. He

soon moved to brand management in Germany, then supervised Pampers for all of Europe. Morocco was next. In 1996, he was appointed VP of P&G's Russian business, then VP-Eastern Europe.

Mr. Philippe spends most of his time at P&G's China headquarters in Guangzhou or out developing ties with trade partners and consumers in the provinces. So far, he and his marketing team are on target. Within five years, he believes, the world's most populous nation will become P&G's second-largest profit center, trailing only the U.S. market.

"P&G is putting tremendous focus on big brands, big countries and big customers," he says. China is "one of our top priorities."

Although P&G's U.S. business continues to grow, Mr. Philippe expects China to overtake it in one or two generations, but "definitely within the first half of this century."

Growing the business is no easy ride, considering China's enormous size, the increasing quality and variety of cheaper local brands, the need to develop logistics and communications channels, and the diversity of P&G's trade partners, ranging from big-city foreign retailers such as Wal-Mart Stores and Carrefour to remote family-run kiosks. A few years ago, for example, there were only a handful of local shampoo brands, but P&G now competes against thousands of products.

"Working in China is humbling," he says. ■ —NORMANDY MADDEN



LAURENT PHILIPPE  
President-Greater China,  
Procter & Gamble Co.



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