

CLASSIC GUIDES

## Luxury Women to Watch 2019

October 11, 2018



*Bold statements: Saks Fifth Avenue goes for the maximilist look with Alice and Olivia's offerings. Image credit: Saks Fifth Avenue*

By STAFF REPORTS

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

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The Luxury Women to Watch 2019 roster includes executives from BMW, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, 24 Sevres, Olivela, Douglas Elliman Development Marketing, Kering, ReVive Skincare, Ritz-Carlton and Bulgari Hotels & Resorts, Oetkar Collection, IWC Schaffhausen, Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center, Lladr, Launchmetrics, Saks Fifth Avenue, Starboard Cruise Services, Muse at *Robb Report*, Sotheby's, Cartier, Bergdorf Goodman, Christofle, Reuter Communications, VIP.com, The Residences at Mandarin Oriental, Preferred Hotels & Resorts and Delvaux. Please read through their responses below to get a sense of their 2019 strategy.

### Judging process

Picking the 25 smartest women with potential was not easy. Readers were **invited to send** in their nominations. The *Luxury Daily* team also had its own table of candidates.

Once the deadline expired, the *Luxury Daily* team judged the nominees on their merits and whittled the list to those who showed the most promise to push the luxury envelope in 2019. All judging was based purely on merit and potential to make a difference.

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

Please read this article from first entry to last, listed alphabetically by honoree's last name. These Luxury Women to Watch are set to distinguish themselves even further in 2019, and raise standards even higher in the luxury business.

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

LUXURY WOMEN TO WATCH 2019



*Kate Alini*

Kate Alini, product manager for BMW 7 and 8 series, [BMW](#), Woodcliff Lake, NJ

"In the automotive segment specifically, there is an increasing demand for luxury SUVs"

What do you most like about your job?

What I enjoy most about my current role is the direct impact that I have on the U.S. product portfolio.

My team and I are ultimately responsible for deciding which features are offered as well as determining product positioning, vehicle specifications, pricing and volume for one of the largest markets in the world.

I find it both exciting and gratifying to see how my team's insight and contributions ultimately influence the vehicles we offer to U.S. consumers.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

One of the most challenging parts of my job is not only ensuring that the needs, requirements and expectations of U.S. luxury consumers are met today, but also planning for future vehicles that are only in concept form or still several years from production.

We are a global brand, so it's my responsibility as the U.S. product lead to be the voice of our market when conflicting requirements come into play or our needs are not aligned with others.

What is your work priority for 2019?

My priority for 2019 will be the successful introduction of several new models.

We are in the midst of BMW's largest product offensive ever, which includes adding several new vehicles to our luxury lineup.

My focus next year will be keeping a pulse on how these products are being received within the marketplace and gathering feedback for model year enhancements and future variants.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Launching the current generation BMW 7 Series, which represents the pinnacle of BMW quality, craftsmanship and technical innovations has been a highlight for me, but I'd say the best is yet to come.

Over the next 18 months, we'll be launching eight more all-new models within the luxury segment alone.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

In the automotive segment specifically, there is an increasing demand for luxury SUVs.

However, I expect that luxury consumers will remain as demanding and discerning as always and I look forward to showing them what BMW has to offer.



Melanie Asker

Melanie Asker, head of sales channel development, **Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**, Goodwood, England, U.K.

"There has been a fundamental shift in customer expectations in luxury retail in recent years, evolving from the need to be physically present, to digitally present"

What do you most like about your job?

It's an honour to work for an iconic brand like Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and inherently all it represents luxury, quality, striving for perfection. It's a privilege and something I feel very passionate about.

My role offers a huge amount of diversity and covers a range of topics from the private office and customer relations, to visual identity and data science. It's challenging but exciting.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

We are a lean team based at the Home of Rolls-Royce in West Sussex with a global responsibility. It's imperative we keep the lines of communication open and listen and respond to our many international markets.

What is your work priority for 2019?

As ever, it is to ensure we offer our clients the very best possible brand and ownership experience.

Our clients must receive the treatment they expect and deserve from a brand like Rolls-Royce.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Recently, I have worked as part of the Rolls-Royce Bespoke Collective, tasked with bringing some of our most high-profile customer commissions to life. These cars are future classics, highly individual, memorable motor cars.

To be part of the team that continually raises the bar of the pinnacle of luxury is an honor.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

There has been a fundamental shift in customer expectations in luxury retail in recent years, evolving from the need to be physically present, to digitally present.

Our clients have always valued our high-touch brand experiences. They now also expect us to also be high tech and immediately available.

The challenge for the luxury market is to create a seamless experience between these two very different worlds.



*Maud Barrionuevo*

Maud Barrionuevo, director of buying and merchandising, **24 Svres**, Paris

"Luxury is being able to get what you want, where you want, when you want it"

What do you most like about your job?

Buying into a brand or a collection that I absolutely love and watching our customers respond to that and follow suit. I love a good sell-out.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Making sure to address expectations from wide-ranging client profiles.

As a global business, we are speaking to a global consumer with different tastes, habits and preferences.

Our customers in Paris, Dallas, Milan, Singapore and Berlin all have their own specificities, which it is my job to address whilst ensuring we are telling a coherent product story.

What is your work priority for 2019?

2019 will be a big year for 24 Svres, and I look forward to unveiling what we've been working on.

The priority will continue to be our customers, both new and existing.

Collaborations with our brands, launching new designers and continually offering the best that fashion has to offer will be the center of it all. Stay tuned.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Launching a business just over a year ago that has already shipped to every country it delivers to, with loyal customers in countries we didn't think we even had customers in yet.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

Luxury is being able to get what you want, where you want, when you want it. I believe service will be at the heart of what luxury is all about.



*Stacey Boyd*

Stacey Boyd, founder/CEO, **Olivela**, New York

"The concept of luxury is expanding wider than a beautiful dress, handbag or perfume itself"

What do you most like about your job?

That's an easy one without a doubt, meeting the girls who are able to receive an education as a result of proceeds of fashion, accessories and beauty sold on Olivela.com. They are the core of every part of the work we do.

There's nothing more rewarding or inspiring than hearing their stories.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

We couldn't be more thrilled by how quickly and wholeheartedly the fashion world has embraced the Olivela concept. In less than a year, the Web site grew from offering 12 top luxury brands to over 200.

It's important that we continue to scale the infrastructure to keep pace.

What is your work priority for 2019?

I think our next challenge will be to expand the Olivela world to brick-and-mortar.

We opened our first physical pop-up boutique in Nantucket [in Massachusetts, U.S.] this summer and the response from the community has been overwhelming, so we're looking forward to continuing on this path.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Being able to harness the tremendous power of luxury, and channel it into making a very real, very tangible difference to girls around the world.

Our charity partners Malala Fund, Too Young To Wed and CARE are doing incredible work in providing young girls access to a quality education and all the opportunities that come along with that.

It's an honor to be able to give luxury consumers a platform through which they can support this mission.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

More and more, the concept of luxury is expanding wider than a beautiful dress, handbag or perfume itself consumers want to know that the brands they support are aligned with causes they care about and are committed to ethical practices.

This new idea of luxury is having the ability to make an impact with one's purchasing power.



*Susan de Frana*

Susan de Frana, president/CEO, [Douglas Elliman Development Marketing](#), New York

"Affluent clients want access to the most advanced technological systems available without sacrificing a dedicated human advisor providing essential insight and guidance"

What do you most like about your job?

I am privileged to work with some of the most celebrated architects and designers in the world, from Jean Nouvel's Monad Terrace in Miami Beach, Renzo Piano's 565 Broome SoHo in Manhattan and 87 Park in Miami, Rafael Violy's 432 Park Avenue, which has already achieved over \$2 billion in sales, to Bjarke Ingels' XI, on the Highline.

At Douglas Elliman, we help our clients create a home: a living, evolving thing that takes so much attention to detail and creativity.

We're not just selling houses, but enriching lives.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Managing the needs and expectations of multiple clients requiring one-on-one attention and ensuring that each feels important and valued, while also spending quality time with my team.

What is your work priority for 2019?

In an increasingly competitive global marketplace, it is incumbent upon me and my team that we be discerning and spend meaningful face time with clients.

Affluent clients want access to the most advanced technological systems available without sacrificing a dedicated human advisor providing essential insight and guidance.

It is important to me to continue to demonstrate to our clients that our relationships truly matter.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Being actively involved in the development of an unprecedented global real estate platform through the Douglas Elliman Knight Frank partnership.

We represent the world's most elite properties, highlighting the best in architecture, design and hospitality.

We're proud to partner with many of the world's most heralded real estate developers in creating the most highly sought after properties.

We have represented high-profile projects such as 150 Charles, 10 Madison Square West and 111 Murray Street in New York, Faena House and Miami Beach EDITION in Florida, and West Hollywood EDITION in California, many of which achieved record breaking statistics.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

I believe the key to a luxury brand's graceful evolution is in staying true to a fundamental ethos, while adapting to the consumer's changing desires.

At Douglas Elliman, we have a rich heritage of over 100 years to draw on.

Our future success will lie in preserving tradition and embracing innovation.



*Nathalie Diamantis*

Nathalie Diamantis, president of jewelry for Americas, [Kering](#), New York

"Sales will continue to grow online due to convenience, but the retail store experience will determine how much"

What do you most like about your job?

I love working in multiple channels with various business partners and teams to develop the business while identifying the levers that make growth happen.

Creating a unique and strong team is crucial to being successful in a competitive environment and I love watching them thrive.

Retail development is a passion of mine. Being successful in retail is similar to a ballet or a perfect symphony. To make beautiful music every instrument must execute beautifully and the conductor must give incredible direction. Not to mention practice, practice, practice.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Staying relevant in the competitive landscape is always a challenge, which requires agility and nonstop creativity.

Tackling the millennial Rubik's cube as a heritage brand is another great opportunity.

What is your work priority for 2019?

In 2019, Pomellato will expand its retail network in North America and Mexico, so executing well and ensuring consistency will be a focus.

Retail excellence is always a priority in order to drive performance.

Boucheron in North America will grow through high jewelry sales and network development both in the U.S. and

Canada.

Raising brand awareness for both brands will continue to be a priority.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I have had the distinct pleasure to be a part of the brand development of several world-class brands in North America.

I am most proud of the qualitative network development and performance under my watch.

I worked with and created many incredible teams along the way.

I am also proud of the incredible partnerships I can list today as a result.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

Luxury will continue to be driven by experiences in-store, one-on-one and through events and activities money can't buy.

Sales will continue to grow online due to convenience, but the retail store experience will determine how much.



*Elana Drell Szyfer*

Elana Drell Szyfer, CEO, **ReVive Skincare**, New York

"Quality, emotional connection and incremental convenience or added value is what I think unites luxury across all sectors today"

What do you most like about your job?

I am lucky enough to be working for a second time with Tengram Capital Partners, this time, as the CEO of ReVive Skincare, which we purchased from Shiseido in December of 2017.

While we purchased the IP and the inventory and a wonderful field sales team, we didn't have a corporate team.

What I like the most is working alongside a team that was built at the beginning of a new chapter in this brand's life, and one that is wholly focused and dedicated to making the brand a global success and lucky for us, the brand's founder and creator has partnered with us to help lead the way.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Priorities and people, even when you have a clear vision, which in the case of ReVive we do.

Prioritizing is a daily discipline: what should we focus on versus what do we have to focus on, are these things the same or different, how much does one detract and distract from the other?

The other, of course, is people. It seriously takes a village, and finding great people, aligned with your values and your vision takes time and patience, which is exactly what we fight against.

What is your work priority for 2019?

My biggest priority for 2019 is to think China ecommerce first.

I don't say that with any disrespect to any of my retailers or other markets, but the thinking with an "E" focused Chinese consumer mentality in the luxury space will ensure accretive opportunity across every retail business around the globe.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I've had the honor earlier in my career of working on some of the finest luxury brands in the beauty industry, including both the Lancome and the Este Lauder brands.

Launching products and categories that today are considered global best-in-class in their category, whether a fragrance, a skincare product or a lipstick or mascara and upholding the traditions of these storied brands, while having the opportunity to learn directly from modern greats in our business like Leonard Lauder, Jean-Paul Agon, John Demsey and Thia Breen, is what I am most proud of.

These indelible learning experiences and teaching moments have shaped me and my thinking and left an imprint for me to use and evolve as the operator and leader of luxury independent brands.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

Tough question, especially because I don't think I'm a futurist.

That said, quality, emotional connection and incremental convenience or added value is what I think unites luxury across all sectors today.

I don't think that's new, but I do think how its delivered the service, the speed, the format, the depth of the relationship, even the category and the feeling evoked that's what's evolving about luxury.

Rest has become a luxury, health, the ability to focus and any product or service that facilitates this in addition to this being found in the traditional luxury categories of food, travel, apparel, jewelry vehicles, homes et cetera, is part of the evolution of luxury.



*Caroline Gardner*

Caroline Gardner, senior manager for global brand management, [The Ritz-Carlton](#), [Ritz-Carlton Reserve](#) and [Bulgari Hotels and Resorts](#), Bethesda, MD

"The challenge and the opportunity is bringing together data and human intelligence to create individualized experiences that build meaningful connections to our brand"

What do you most like about your job?

I am so lucky to have the opportunity to travel around the globe hearing stories of human kindness and thoughtfulness.

Those stories are the result of our 40,000 "ladies" and "gentlemen," each of whom comes to work each day genuinely wanting to create memorable moments for our guests. Their commitment to anticipating what might bring someone joy, or make someone's life better, is truly inspiring.

That I get to support them in creating those moments is by far the best part of my job.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Luxury consumers are different today than they were when we were founded, and The Ritz-Carlton has to evolve along with them.

Today's guests challenge us to bring the exceptional experiences our ladies and gentlemen provide into their digital lives.

Blending the off- and online experience provides a new opportunity to exceed our guests' expectations. We just have to push the boundaries of what is possible.

What is your work priority for 2019?

Every interaction provides us with an opportunity to create a guest for life.

We were once limited to doing this only while a guest stayed with us, but the digital world has made it possible for us to bridge our interactions beyond the in-stay experience.

Imagine that a month after checking out, a guest from Hong Kong receives a digital copy of Esquire UK, with a note that says "We noticed you enjoyed catching up on trends while you were visiting, we thought you might enjoy copy of next month's issue. We hope to see you again soon."

It's those thoughtful moments when we can engage our guests long after their stay and deepen their relationship with our brand that we're looking to further in 2019.

The challenge and the opportunity is bringing together data and human intelligence to create individualized experiences that build meaningful connections to our brand.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

The Ritz-Carlton scored 902 points in the J.D. Power 2018 North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index.

Not only was our score 14 points better than last year, it was the highest score ever for a hospitality brand in the history of the index.

Among the many reasons we scored so high was our continued commitment to luxury service, which we have made a point of refining and reshaping this past year.

My team has worked with our properties to define what luxury service for the 21<sup>st</sup> century looks like, and to see our brand rewarded with top honors means we're doing something right.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

While global luxury consumers certainly have regional differences, I think we are seeing a few big trends that will continue to shape luxury in 2019:

Meaning: Luxury purchases are no longer solely about influencing external perceptions, they are increasingly about how a product or experience makes someone feel, physically and emotionally.

Knowledge gathering: As masters in their own craft, luxury consumers value the skill and artistry that goes into making a given product. But, we increasingly see a desire to learn from expert craftsmen about a given craft.

Social good: To earn the love of luxury consumers today, companies must demonstrate a shared commitment to making the world around us a better place.



*Caroline Goux*

Caroline Goux, vice president of sales and marketing, [Oetker Collection](#), Paris

"I see luxury evolving towards more authenticity, local immersion in endearing places and experience the finest [that] life can offer"

What do you most like about your job?

The encounters I am given to make should it be with our guests, our partners or the passionate hoteliers I work with, the meaningful connections built and the unique moments we create and live. This is a great source of inspiration and motivation to me.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The biggest challenge is managing time, finding the right balance between being connected with our guests and partners, driving properties' team [s] around the world, from Paris to London, Sao Paolo and more, and developing the strategy.

What is your work priority for 2019?

Managing and directing strategic sales whilst nurturing the great group of salespeople we have in the collection and each of the properties.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I am proud to have contributed with my great team to establishing Oetker Collection as a reference in hospitality worldwide.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

I see luxury evolving towards more authenticity, local immersion in endearing places and experience the finest [that] life can offer whilst building a true relationship with the guests. Meaningful connections in every aspect.



*Franziska Gsell*

Franziska Gsell, chief marketing officer, **IWC Schaffhausen**, Schaffhausen, Switzerland

"To be successful in creating and implementing new ideas, you need a broad skillset along with an appetite for contentious analyses and constant change combined with a lot of common sense"

What do you most like about your job?

No day looks like the other and the only constant is change.

I truly value the professional and personal challenge to manage fast, sustainable and cross-functional tasks within a mature and multinational team across the globe.

I compare my role as the conductor of a large orchestra, consisting of rather young musicians and their ability to perform a concert with different music styles and the agility to understand and adapt to the wishes of the audience in real time.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Marketing has never been more complex or fascinating than today.

To be successful in creating and implementing new ideas, you need a broad skillset along with an appetite for contentious analyses and constant change combined with a lot of common sense.

The customer is at the center of everything we do.

The challenge is to stay relevant and true to the brand's values while still harnessing surprising elements to create an emotional and effective brand experience among the up to 20 touch points in the individual customer journey.

The excitement is to truly understand the interaction of our customers with the brand, and translate it into

measurable activations across channels.

What is your work priority for 2019?

I value the moment when the vision crystallizes into a clear target.

At this point, the strategy has been crafted and activation tools are being refined.

We produce "mise en place" activations with ultra-fresh ingredients.

Innovation in communication is a key driver in our approach.

In a context of constant learning curves, adaption for the continuation of our long-term success to sustainably drive brand equity will be sine qua non, as every marketer would say.

From a leadership perspective, I will focus on bringing different talents closer together and fostering efficiency by building cross-functional teams.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

IWC Schaffhausen published the first sustainability report in the luxury watch industry aligned to GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) Standards in early 2018. As I also wear the hat of IWC sustainability committee chairperson, I'm very proud of this accomplishment.

Partnering with Google headquarters for the first-ever Google spotlight stories with a Hollywood cast including our brand ambassador Bradley Cooper as part of a highly targeted data-driven digital lookalike campaign.

Established content room to prioritize 1,000-plus brand assets, develop and distribute relevant information across all channels and convert into sales.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

As every aspect of our life is digitally influenced and constantly challenged, I strongly believe that the honest craftsmanship and beautiful design of luxury goods will only increase in terms of desire, their endurance a beautiful juxtaposition to the increasingly ephemeral nature of our world.

This is further complemented by the one-to-one conversation we are able to develop with different target audiences and the IWC individual service commitment.

All these aspects will remain key for loyalty and a sustainable customer relationship.



*Antonia Hock*

Antonia Hock, vice president, [Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center](#), Chevy Chase, MD

"The talent experience isn't being considered as a core foundation that drives customer experience, and getting clients to invest in this area can be challenging"

What do you most like about your job?

Every day at The Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center, we work to change the landscape of customer and talent experience for some of the biggest brands in the world.

Being at the forefront of the evolution of luxury experience is exhilarating, fascinating and challenging.

I love the thrill of helping our clients drive innovation and break new ground that translates into world-class results.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Investing in customer experience is happening across so many channels and vectors right now, but often, we find that clients aren't looking at the underlying factors for sustainability in this area.

Often, the talent experience isn't being considered as a core foundation that drives customer experience, and getting clients to invest in this area can be challenging.

Ultimately, no matter how beautiful your customer experience strategy may be, a passionate brand advocate will always be an exceptional asset.

What is your work priority for 2019?

Demand for our services has continued to increase at an incredible rate, and in 2019 we expect to further expand our delivery capability on every continent.

Managing that growth for our team and our clients, while continuing to lead the market in luxury experience innovation, is my priority.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Our team has delivered some of the biggest launches, innovations and transformations in luxury in the last 12 months, and seeing our clients lead their markets, drive loyalty, attract new customers and receive awards for their innovation makes our entire team so proud.

Our work is always in the service of our client's success, so that is the ultimate achievement for us.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

We have seen an incredible focus on digital and social investment over the past few years in luxury customer experience, and our clients are now looking for the next wave of innovation.

Right now, we are seeing a demand for connected and considered strategies that marry the digital and social to the human and personal experience.

Brands that are mastering this continuum and using technology to drive human engagement and personalization are forging ahead in the market.

In 2019, we will see a focus on driving a customer journey that leverages personalization, anticipation and creating wow-moments across every channel with seamless execution.



*Sandra Jordan*

Sandra Jordan, CEO of the Americas, [Lladr](#), New York

"I am tasked with expanding the American consumer's perception about porcelain and the versatility of its use"

What do you most like about your job?

I love working with a heritage brand that takes the art of luxury to heart.

Working with our incredible team in Spain inspires me.

I am in constant awe witnessing the beauty that the artisans we work with imbue into each piece.

I'm eager to introduce exciting new ways of living with the richness of porcelain into the American market.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

I am tasked with expanding the American consumer's perception about porcelain and the versatility of its use.

Lladr is an ever-evolving company that is reaching out into new points of distribution.

As we launch new products and expand our client base, it is important that we keep our core consumer engaged and preserve the heritage of the brand, all while moving into the future.

Maintaining these touch points can be a delicate balancing act.

What is your work priority for 2019?

To let the world know that Lladr is truly one of the enduring luxuries for the home.

Our artisans and collaborators conceive and create sublime objects, many of them limited editions, that sit in the same space as paintings or sculptures by leading masters in an art gallery.

Lladr has been known for encapsulating important moments that resonate with people in their lives.

As the world turns, we are working to identify what matters most to people now and translating these key elements into new and exciting product offerings that employ the time-honored traditions Lladr is known for.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

The best is yet to come.

That being said, I am very proud of the Lladr pop-up shopping experience that my team and I curated to showcase an evolution of the brand.

We captured attention and gained admiration from key tastemakers, celebrities and chic consumers in the Hamptons [in New York state] this summer.

The environment in Southampton [in New York] gave expression to what luxury looks like in today's world: our space was vibrant, modern and elegant.

I was honored that *Architectural Digest* named Lladr one of the Top 10 Pop-Ups in design for summer 2018.

I'm looking forward to exciting people with what's next.

We are coming this fall to Tyson's Galleria in Virginia and then to South Coast Plaza in Southern California, which will be a luxury shopping extravaganza.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

With globalization and the advent of the Internet, more people have become aware of high style and they have greater access to procure luxury items.

In the past, people were relegated to what they found in their hometown.

Today, people are looking far and wide for inspiration from tastemakers and other influencers. So much beauty is at their fingertips through the World Wide Web.

Consumers are more discerning than in times past.

The brands that make the biggest impact are those that curate exceptional experiences, and we are always looking at ways to elevate our brand experiences.



*Alison Levy Bringe*

Alison Levy Bringe, chief marketing officer, [Launchmetrics](#), London

"In 2019, individuality and authenticity will be key in any successful brand marketing strategy"

What do you most like about your job?

The collision of data and luxury.

Today, the industry is changing so quickly, and I love being part of the team who is really helping brands navigate this unfamiliar space.

There is so much to learn about our customers, market trends, digital strategies and more that data can support.

Helping brands to unlock this secret is an incredible opportunity.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

At Launchmetrics, our company is growing faster than ever and we are expected to quadruple in size over the next few years.

With things changing so quickly and new team members joining in offices worldwide, it's easy to lose sight of the big picture.

Staying true to our company mission is essential to our success in this stage, as well as hiring great people who value the same things we do.

I am lucky to work with so many talented unicorns, and looking forward to the task of finding new ones to come on board.

What is your work priority for 2019?

Beyond my role in helping support the growth of Launchmetrics, I believe to be a successful leader you must nurture others.

My work priority for 2019 is making sure that no matter how big the company grows that my team is still my top priority.

The secret to a successful company is great and happy employees, so giving them plenty of opportunities to contribute, empowering them and, most of all, making sure they have the resources they need to reach their fullest potential is key for 2019, no matter how busy we get.

On a personal note, I think women in tech and data are still underserved and I hope to continue my pursuit to encourage young talent to take the challenge of joining this thriving industry and make a difference.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

In my role as CMO, I have had the pleasure of working with many of our partners to offer one-on-one mentoring programs with the industry's emerging talent.

Being able to personally connect with each of these individuals has been really rewarding and gives me a lot of insight into the challenges companies are having in today's digital era.

That said, it's been most rewarding for me to help them conquer their fears of tech and data, and utilize these resources to power their business decisions.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

There is a whole revolution already beginning to happen, from the evolution of events like Baselworld, to the decrease in traditional ad spend or the importance of influencers and the role content plays in consumer decision making.

Customers are looking for personalization more than ever, not just in the products we sell them, but also in how we communicate to them.

In 2019, individuality and authenticity will be key in any successful brand marketing strategy, and I am excited to be part of the team at Launchmetrics to prepare our clients for this shift.



*Tracy Margolies*

Tracy Margolies, chief merchant, [Saks Fifth Avenue](#), New York

"The biggest challenge is likely the speed by which consumers are moving"

What do you most like about your job?

The best part of my job is definitely the people.

I work with a smart, passionate group of individuals who I've come to know very well and they inspire me every day. They make it a pleasure to come to work and I have loved watching everyone grow and learn together.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The biggest challenge is likely the speed by which consumers are moving.

Even in the past few years, we've seen the client appetite for product increase and desire for speed-to-market.

With the development of better technology and social media platforms, the consumer wants instant gratification. If they see it on the runway, they want to pre-order it and have it first.

What is your work priority for 2019?

My biggest priority is the evolution of Saks Fifth Avenue, specifically the updating of the New York City flagship as part of the grand renovation.

We are midway through the project, and I know the work we are doing will truly excite our clients and bring our services and offerings to the next level.

We are constantly looking for new and emerging designers for all merchandising areas.

We want to continue to challenge ourselves and provide the best shopping experience for our clients with designer must-haves as well as interesting new and up-and-coming brands.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Redefining the New York City flagship store continues to be my proudest achievement.

This renovation project is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I've been lucky enough to be able change the face of luxury.

We recently overhauled our beauty area, moving it off the main space and up to the second floor. It was a bold move, but the newly expanded 32,000-square-foot area is truly something to experience.

With everything from 15 spa treatment rooms, manicures from sundays, Skinney MedSpa, lashes and brows by Blink Brow Bar, skinny massages by Martine de Richeville, FaceGym and more, the floor is truly a one-of-a-kind beauty destination.

Moreover, I worked on the launch of 10022-SHOE and it continues to be must-visit for any shoe lover, with a well-curated assortment of the best footwear brands.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

At Saks, we see luxury becoming more experimental, disruptive and engaging.

Luxury consumers are looking for new ways to interact with product and retail, and we strive to provide exciting in-store experiences.

We've recently partnered with Bumble, Goop and Frieze on in-store and pop-up activations. Events ranged from a speaker series, to a networking event, celebrity-hosted shopping parties, art lounges and more.

We also believe bridging the online experience with a personal in-store connection will be important as luxury continues to evolve.



*Beth Neumann*

Beth Neumann, CEO, [Starboard Cruise Services](#), Doral, FL

"The biggest challenge is transforming cruise retail from transactional retail to experiential retail"

What do you most like about your job?

The most inspirational moments for me at Starboard are when I sail onboard a ship and see the impact of our transformed experiential retail.

I see cruise guests enjoying shopping for exciting merchandise and watch them delight in fun, social events where they are immersed in brand experiences while connecting with other guests and being treated like VIPs by our talented shipboard staff.

Probably even more exciting for me is when I hear that our shipboard staff are enjoying their jobs more because they see how they are bringing joy to guests through exceptional experiences and personalized hospitality that results in a purchase of merchandise that will forever remind them of their joyful vacation.

It's also rewarding to know we are valued partners and collaborators with our cruise line partners and through that collaboration we helping to strengthen their brand image and relationships with the cruise travel market.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The biggest challenge is transforming cruise retail from transactional retail to experiential retail and inspiring brands and the cruise industry to embrace the change.

We call our new retail reality approach "The Starboard Way":

- Every employee sees themselves as the reason a guest comes back again and again
- Every employee genuinely connects with guests beyond the shopping experience as an "in-the-know friend" who has recommendations on how to best enjoy the cruise from restaurants to shore excursions
- Retail as a destination for fun experiences, for learning new fun facts, for meeting other cruise guests, and for

being treated as a VIP with exceptional one-to-one-focused hospitality to find the perfect item that will remind them of the joy of their cruise vacation

- When people have been doing a job a certain way, it is critical to demonstrate to them that embracing experiential retail will not only help them produce superior results but will create greater job satisfaction. Time and coaching are needed to bring about that change
- A good example is a talented fine jewelry specialist I spent time with onboard Celebrity Equinox. She has always been successful at Starboard, but her first reaction to embracing experiential retail was "I know what I am doing, and I do not need to evolve. I can't, and I won't."

Three months later, she told me she is even more engaged than she imagined because she has never seen such delight in eyes of her customers. She told me she "never wants to go back to the old way of selling" with the advice that every shipboard employee needs to have the same change journey to have a more successful and enjoyable future.

I love that she is now a powerful change agent demonstrating to her peers that they will love their jobs more by focusing on entertainment, discovery, social interaction and exceptional and deeply personalized hospitality

What is your work priority for 2019?

My top priority is bringing the next level of exciting merchandise and innovative new retail experiences to cruise retail and create a successful retail business model for our cruise partners and enhance their brand reputation within the cruise industry.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Creating firsts at sea experiences with some of the most iconic brands in the world, such as Cartier, Hublot, Tiffany and others and for gaining their trust to represent them as they would in their own stores.

Most of these brands have never had an operation on a cruise ship, and I'm thrilled that we have successfully opened their eyes to a new and worthy market channel.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

Successful luxury products will continue to provide high touch, exceptional experiences that align with personalization, authenticity and discovery through distinct and intimate experiences, like behind-the-scenes previews, exclusive product experiences and curated collections.



*Jill Newman*

Jill Newman, editor in chief, *Muse at Robb Report*, New York

"The luxury consumer is demanding more substance. Their time is ever more valuable because they are pulled in so many directions"

What do you most like about your job?

Storytelling. Developing meaningful, inspiring and engaging content.

Indeed, we are bombarded with content everywhere today, yet a good article or video is still compelling and can create emotion.

It's exciting to research ideas, learn about emerging trends, speak to industry leaders and luxury consumers, and

from this, generate stories that address meaningful topics that matter to people, now.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Keeping up with social media.

It is such a powerful tool to reach people, to amplify stories, to cultivate interest, and engage our audience.

It's hard to find the time to be present and active on all these various channels, but we must find the time.

What is your work priority for 2019?

To develop meaningful, insightful and entertaining articles and video.

Because there is so much content available to everyone, it is that much more important that we develop deeper, thoughtful and entertaining articles, videos and social media outreach.

The luxury audience is a more sophisticated, worldly group of people, and we need to make sure we are delivering content that is worthy of their time. It must be smart and authoritative, yet at the same time witty and whimsical.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Creating Muse, a new media platform that speaks to sophisticated affluent, educated women.

We launched the Muse brand this past April with a print edition, digital content and social media, supplemented and amplified by a national thought-leadership speaker series "Musings."

We are focusing on topics like impact investing, the changing perception of beauty and what the affluent, dynamic, female audience looks for in a multitude of luxury categories ranging from automobiles to timepieces, as well as more controversial topics like that of ethical pornography.

Muse is a forum in which influential women trailblazers, tastemakers, idealists and disruptors share their views and values on topics ranging from style, design, the arts, travel, wellness, wealth management and philanthropy.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

Now, more than ever, the luxury consumer is demanding more substance. Their time is ever more valuable because they are pulled in so many directions. They will continue to want experiences, products with depth be it an artisan craft, something tied to philanthropy or impact and, most of all, authenticity.

It isn't about a price point or a logo, it is about delivering a story, an experience, originality wrapped up with authenticity.



*Laurence Nicholas*

Laurence Nicolas, executive vice president and global managing director for **jewelry** and **watches**, **Sotheby's**, New York

"When you have a brand with almost 300 years of history, you need to constantly reinvent yourself, adapt and foresee new trends"

What do you most like about your job?

Certainly, the constant reinvention that comes with my responsibilities and the nature of the art and luxury markets.

Every few months, we start from scratch and build entirely new sales, like a painter in front of a white canvas. And then, of course, having the privilege of seeing masterpieces and treasures on a regular basis is a treat for any one

like me who loves art, jewelry and watches.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Probably what also makes it so interesting.

When you have a brand with almost 300 years of history, you need to constantly reinvent yourself, adapt and foresee new trends. This is even more so on the jewelry and watch markets which are growing at a very fast pace.

What is your work priority for 2019?

Build live auctions and online sales as successful as the ones we had this year and continue to educate more collectors around the world about how seamless the auction or sales process can be, hand-hold them through the experience, curate their precious collections and, crucially, build a relationship of trust that, like a diamond, lasts forever.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Perhaps my journey so far. This industry always provided me with new challenges and fascinating projects. Recently, moving from fashion to the arts is another exciting chapter in my career.



*Valerie Nowak*

Valrie Nowak, international communications director for media, digital and PR, [Cartier](#), Paris

"An important issue is how to remain desirable and at the same time inclusive and open to new generations, while preserving the essence of luxury such as excellence, rarity, sophistication"

What do you most like about your job?

Be part of one of the most beautiful luxury maisons in the world with a truly unique heritage, timeless and yet modern.

Understand the evolution of society, its new trends and new clients and audience habits.

Think and act. Be strategic and operational at the same time.

Do my best efforts to support my team in growing and experience our work at Cartier as a joint adventure.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Manage the transformation and the revitalization of the maison in communication, remaining faithful to Cartier's DNA, singularity and elegance.

Be contemporary and able to speak to large audiences, while not falling for fashionable trends.

Express the richness of Cartier universe beyond product launches and surprise our audiences.

Articulate consistency and localization to develop a relevant and exciting vision of Cartier all over the world.

What is your work priority for 2019?

Pursue innovation in our communication action plans by developing breakthrough initiatives.

Develop a communication strategy that combines physical and digital experiences.

Enrich the Cartier community of friends of the maison and develop meaningful projects with them.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I would mention three achievements.

The launch of Black Opium, a YSL Beauty fragrance which has been a great success worldwide and a major step in the rejuvenation of the brand.

Having been deputy general manager of the L'Oral Corporate Foundation which has created meaningful projects such as For Women in Science, along with key initiatives around beauty as a contribution to rebuilding confidence.

Having been part of the success of the Panthre watch relaunch when I joined Cartier 18 month ago, because, to me, this relaunch encapsulates what Cartier stands for: audacity, sophistication and timelessness.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

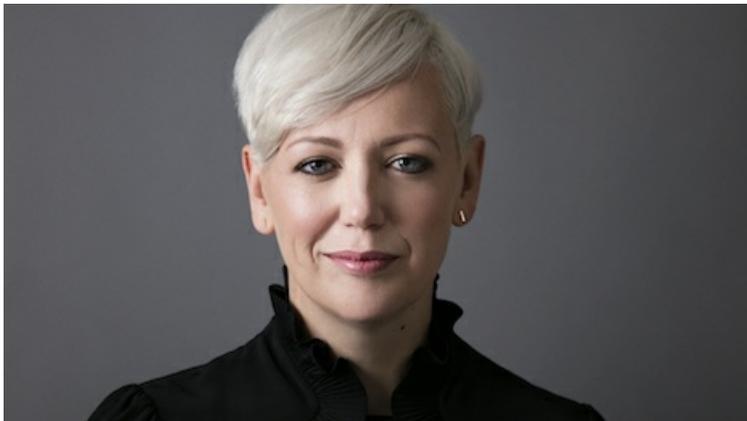
We will see more and more complexity in the luxury field, with various aspirational models and some questions about the luxury cycles.

An important issue is how to remain desirable and at the same time inclusive and open to new generations, while preserving the essence of luxury such as excellence, rarity, sophistication.

Obviously, digital will continue to disrupt luxury and create new ways to interact with our audiences and clients.

More and more, luxury brands will develop their narrative power, becoming media and interacting with an evolving media landscape.

Luxury will be more and more about emotion and culture.



*Darcy Penick*

Darcy Penick, president, **Bergdorf Goodman**, New York

"I have always associated luxury with creating emotional, unique and exclusive experiences for customers"

What do you most like about your job?

I enjoy working with a best-in-class, talented team. They truly live and breathe the Bergdorf Goodman brand and are passionate about serving our customers with a spectacular fashion experience.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Bergdorf Goodman is an iconic brand with a rich and storied history, and it's important that we honor that heritage while still innovating our experience to inspire our customers and meet their lifestyle needs of today. This includes evolving, developing and enhancing our customer service, Web site and stores.

We have a lot of exciting and challenging work ahead of us to improve the online experience and further translate our brand into an equally inspiring online experience to better serve customers.

What is your work priority for 2019?

My priority is to strategically invest in initiatives that help create a fluid and seamless Bergdorf Goodman experience across the store and our online channels. This experience should leverage our rich heritage while innovating to best serve our customers worldwide.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

I'm proud to have started my career with a foundation in luxury.

My first role out of college was in Neiman Marcus' executive development program. Immediately following, I was a buyer for Bergdorf Goodman.

I'm thrilled to be back with Neiman Marcus Group and entrusted with leading this luxury institution.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

I have always associated luxury with creating emotional, unique and exclusive experiences for customers.

I believe that in the coming years, luxury will continue to see the convergence of technology with personalized experience to even better meet and exceed customers' expectations.



*Nathalie Remy*

Nathalie Remy, CEO, **Christofle**, Paris

"Find the right balance between short-term actions required every day and long-term initiatives that are critical to our success"

What do you most like about your job?

I am truly excited to lead such an amazing brand, with true craftsmanship and 188 years of very rich history with presence around the globe in all distribution channels.

I love the intrinsic complexity of Christofle and managing a global team of very diverse talented individuals by helping them grow, and jointly contributing to make our customer's life more beautiful through the art of sharing in their everyday life as well as exceptional moments.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

There are many challenges, but maybe the most prevalent one is to find the right balance between short-term actions required every day and long-term initiatives that are critical to our success.

What is your work priority for 2019?

I started at Christofle this past March, so after outlining a clear strategy, my priorities for the coming year are to finalize implementation of our new organization through further strengthening our teams, enriching our product offerings in the areas we have selected, accelerating our digital and overall presence in key markets like Greater China.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement is yet to come.

Having spent two decades advising leading brands in the sector, I'd say that I'm very proud of their success, which I continue to follow carefully and to have contributed to the shaping of our industry through thought-provoking ideas and insights.

Being only six months into my current role, I am already proud of the new dynamic at play in Christofle and the great team spirit that emerges.

I'm, of course, also very proud to be nominated one of the Luxury Women to Watch in 2019.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

I see 2019 as a continuation and even an acceleration of some of the key trends we have witnessed in recent years,

primarily casualization, digital experience and, luckily for all of us, continued global growth.



*Chloe Reuter*

Chloe Reuter, founder/CEO, **Reuter Communications**, Shanghai, China

"There will be around 200 million Chinese traveling outside of China by 2020, so this presents a tremendous opportunity for brands across luxury: hospitality, fashion, art and design"

What do you most like about your job?

I love so many aspects of my job. But, to be honest, I don't really consider it as a job. The company is an all-encompassing part of my life and I love it.

It's a privilege working with so many beautiful brands and having a voice at the table to help them shape and grow their business in China.

The market here evolves so quickly. It's a learning curve every day to stay ahead, I love that challenge.

A big highlight is also seeing colleagues in our offices grow and reach their potential.

Though there is a lot of pressure, the best part has to be, that as my own boss, I have the flexibility to manage my schedule. This means carving out quality time every day with my children.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

We've had the same key challenge since the business launched in 2010: how to scale and grow the business to keep up with a booming market.

While we have amazing people and have recruited even more this year, finding the right people at all levels is a real challenge, especially somewhere as dynamic and diverse as Shanghai and China.

I am also anticipating a challenge in how we can maintain our company culture as we grow. The key here is always to hire smart and, importantly, nice people.

What is your work priority for 2019?

As above. Recruiting talent.

Aside from that, we are always looking to evolve our offering.

We recently launched an intelligence and research department, which I'm excited about.

We also opened in Dubai and Singapore, which are key priorities for us to focus on and develop.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Two-fold. Building the go-to agency in China for luxury brands and playing a part in the success of our clients in this crucial market.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

China will keep playing a hugely important part in the luxury sector in two key ways.

Firstly, there will be around 200 million Chinese travelling outside of China by 2020, so this presents a tremendous opportunity for brands across luxury: hospitality, fashion, art and design.

Secondly, China will continue to develop its unique digital and social media ecosystem, which is key for luxury brands to connect with young consumers. We're here to help navigate the market.



*Hillary Wang*

Hillary Wang, head of global buying, [VIP.com](#), Guangzhou, China

"Unlike in the U.S. where online buyers are interested in speed, in China the storytelling around a brand is almost as important as the brand name itself"

What do you most like about your job?

I have the honor of meeting with some of the most influential luxury brands and their visionary leaders from around the globe.

I am very excited to be able to introduce them into the homes and lifestyles of the Chinese ecommerce consumer, who is loyal, growing and economically empowered.

It's an exhilarating time to be in this marketplace and to be part of this luxury phenomenon.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

One of the most important aspects of our mission at VIP.com is to bring authentic, premier quality international brands to the Chinese consumer.

We know that to be successful over the long term, these new relationships must be built on trust. That's why we have invested in the technology to ensure efficient logistics and rigorous brand registration controls at every step of the supply chain.

What is your work priority for 2019?

To bring as many U.S. brands to the Chinese ecommerce consumer as possible.

We have been successful in introducing European and Australian companies to VIP.com.

While we are a large player, we also focus on curating the range of products available to our shoppers based on their profile and shopping history. This differentiates VIP.com from our competitors and serves as a launching pad for new brands entering the market.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Being the third-largest and fastest-growing ecommerce platforms in China and accomplishing that as a luxury business.

We are on track to grow from \$2.2 billion in 2017 to \$6 billion in sales by 2020 by representing the likes of Tory Burch, Juicy Couture, Converse and Under Armour.

We're currently reaching some 300 million Chinese consumers who are 80 percent female, interested in quality and willing to pay for it.

Thanks to our parent company VIPShop receiving an equity stake from WeChat, a leading social media platform in China, VIP.com brands could access potentially 1 billion active users monthly in the future.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

Unlike in the U.S. where online buyers are interested in speed, in China the storytelling around a brand is almost as

important as the brand name itself.

Consumers seek information-rich product descriptions and will linger on luxurious details about the brand and adjacent products.

This level of engagement with the largest consumer market in the world presents an extraordinary growth opportunity for both established and emerging U.S. luxury companies.



*Adelina Ettelson*

Adelina Ettelson, head of residences marketing, [Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group](#), New York

"Given the new GDPR, it has been increasingly challenging to reach and connect with our UHNW owner base"

What do you most like about your job?

The dynamic, global nature of the role is what I like most about my job.

As the brand ambassador for Mandarin Oriental to our developers around the world, I can take advantage of my background in luxury marketing in true global scale.

Being culturally curious, I find it stimulating to work alongside seasoned, international teams and adapt our strategy to local consumer expectations, needs and perceptions.

We have a record pipeline of residential projects for the group, with locations ranging from London to Istanbul, Melbourne to Bali.

I love extending our brand beyond our current footprint and to translate our global luxury brand in new markets.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

Given the new GDPR [European Union's Global Data Privacy Regulation], it has been increasingly challenging to reach and connect with our UHNW owner base.

Privacy is certainly a concern and, yet, our owners have high expectations to receive relevant information about our hotels and residences.

As a global luxury player and a brand renown for our service, we must find the fine balance between accommodating and anticipating our residents' needs, whilst also respecting their privacy.

The main challenge remains how to engage and stay relevant to our owners. They are interested in personalization as well as sophisticated yet authentic access and experiences.

As hotel-branded residences, we constantly work on developing relatable benefits and amenities at the property and corporate levels.

What is your work priority for 2019?

My priority in 2019 is to manage and direct the market launches of nine new luxury residential projects. They are all unique. Some are high rises in city locations, some are resort properties.

We have residences launching in markets where branded residential is a new concept, whilst still others are in a mature, sophisticated market.

Each market has a different perception and understanding of our brand as well as specific local attributes.

The challenge is to balance the intense workload of nine launches worldwide with our ongoing engagement programs for our current residence owners our most loyal fans.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Over the last 10 years, I am grateful to have driven and contributed to Mandarin Oriental's success as the highly coveted luxury brand partner for residential developers worldwide.

We continue to add more residential developments in our global portfolio and I am excited about our nine new developments in U.S., Asia and EMEA [Europe Middle East and Africa].

Another significant achievement is the creation of a unique recognition and benefit program for our residence owners.

At Mandarin Oriental, we pride ourselves in innovation. Now in its sixth year, we are constantly evolving and enhancing the program based on owner feedback and colleagues' insights.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

Luxury consumers are sophisticated and savvy about brands and marketing programs.

What UHNWIs perceive as luxury has changed in the last few years. Luxury now is increasingly about enjoyment, delight and discovery of experiences that are meaningful to the consumer.

From our proprietary research conducted by Wealth X, we know that this means highly bespoke, experiential amenities and relevant information delivered seamlessly.

The balance of high touch and high tech will be even more important in 2019.



*Michelle Woodley*

Michelle Woodley, president, **Preferred Hotels & Resorts**, Chicago

"The hotel industry is exciting. However, we have a challenge in attracting and retaining talent"

What do you most like about your job?

I love that I learn something new every day.

Whether a new piece of information comes from discovering an unknown talent of one of our associates, celebrating the joining of a new unique hotel in an awesome location, or hearing from one of our hoteliers about a challenge and knowing that our team at Preferred Hotels & Resorts can help, it excites me to be enriched and utilize the new-found knowledge to the benefit of our company and member hotels.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

The hotel industry is exciting. However, we have a challenge in attracting and retaining talent.

We find that bright young adults graduating from hospitality schools around the world are lured in to other industries for high-paying jobs.

We are working with several universities to place interns at our independent hotels and many of our executives participate in mentoring programs.

By exposing the emerging workforce to the variety of roles and opportunities within the hospitality industry and by engaging them on a personal level, we hope to contribute to bringing in the talent that is passionate and appreciative

of the business.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

Establishing and executing on the strategy to launch the I Prefer Global Guest Benefit Program in 2006 was a major accomplishment and definitely something I am proud to have led.

At the time, we were a house of brands with more than 500 worldwide hotels. This program provided the platform to unite these independent luxury hotels across our brands with discerning like-minded travelers.

We have evolved and, today, we are a single brand, Preferred Hotels & Resorts, and our guest loyalty program, I Prefer Hotel Rewards, is now the largest points-based hotel loyalty program for independent hotels with more than 650 participating properties.

The program is a critical piece of our strategy in uniting our hotels with our guests.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

Luxury will continue to be defined by each individual. There is no standard formula.

We see that many of today's travelers define luxury as an authentic and genuine experience that teaches them something beyond what they had previously heard from others or experienced virtually via social media.

This evolution will continue and authenticity and personalization will be key.

What is your work priority for 2019?

Alongside our ownership and leadership group headed by CEO Lindsey Ueberroth, our goals are to grow our brand through the addition of new hotels to the portfolio, expand our consumer reach through guest-facing programs such as our I Prefer Hotel Rewards program, meet evolving consumer needs through new areas such as Preferred Residences, and ensure our associates across the globe understand our values and mission and the important role they play in helping us achieve these goals.

As part of this, we remain focused on making our pineapple logo a globally recognized symbol of our brand promise to deliver unparalleled levels of hospitality and service to independent-minded travelers.



*Christina Zeller*

Christina Zeller, artistic director, **Delvaux**, Brussels, Belgium

"The luxury industry goes into many various directions, and even the term "luxury" becomes more and more vague"

What do you most like about your job?

Two aspects of my job are at the source of my enthusiasm I have working for Delvaux:

- The diversity of my responsibilities. As artistic director, I have to make sure that all our activities convey a unique and coherent image of Delvaux' unique personality: the oldest fine luxury leather good company in the world, established in 1829, who has become today the most innovative actor in its sector
- The incredible growth Delvaux is experiencing, moving from a 100 percent Belgium company with 10 local boutiques in 2011 to 50 in the world in 2018

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

In my creation process, I am exposed to a lot of noises, trends, influences, both externally and internally. I have to

decide the path I want to follow, my intuition for what will seduce our clients, then stick to it and generate in my team the enthusiasm they will need to deliver.

What is your work priority for 2019?

To contribute to the success of the openings of our first own boutiques in Milan and New York [in November] as well as our second boutique in London.

To further develop our notoriety in these markets, it will require to further enhance our audacious and sometimes bold approach to creativity and innovation in our upmarket handbag collection.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

In my career as executive in the luxury industry, I always applied the same humble approach: to reinterpret the DNA of the brand I am in charge of to make it one of the most creative and successful ones, rather than to reinvent its personality.

My other great source of pride is to look at the career of several of my ex-team members who have brilliantly succeeded in the luxury industry.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2019?

The luxury industry goes into many various directions, and even the term "luxury" becomes more and more vague.

The brands which will succeed will be the ones which have a strong personality, relying not only on their products, but more on their unique "art de vivre," culture and identity.

By doing so, they create for their clients an experience that generates a sense of identification to the brand, belonging to a community which share these same values.

[Want to see the Luxury Women to Watch 2018 roster of honorees? Please click here](#)