



THE WORLD'S B2B AGENCY

# THE **B2B** REPORT 2021



# Marketers are highly frustrated by CEOs.

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# PARADOX IN PRACTICE

**OUR 2019 ANNUAL REPORT FOCUSED ON THE INHERENT CAPACITY OF BBN TO ADAPT TO CHANGE AND EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITIES CHANGE BRINGS ABOUT. SINCE THEN, THAT MINDSET AND ABILITY HAS BEEN TESTED BEYOND ANY PREVIOUS REASONABILITY.**

Change is a constant. The difference is that the after-burners have been turned on and it's a rocky ride ahead. Today, the conversation invariably drifts to speculation on what will be the 'new normal'?

Predictions and opinions vary widely. What is certain is there will be no one new normal, any more than there was one old normal.

Actually, many of the quandaries already existed. The need to address and solve them just became dramatically more acute. In most industry sectors, companies are radically reviewing business models. Previously, that process might have been motivated by market changes envisaged in three to five years' time. The horizon is now tomorrow.

The last year has made us all more aware. The fragility of our mortality has caused us to question our own behaviours – and that of humankind. We look at things differently now, and as both producers and consumers, we realise the necessity for a different way of doing things.

Individual organisations, and, indeed, whole industries, are struggling to reconcile seemingly conflicting drivers. They are seeking ways to operate vastly more efficiently whilst becoming significantly more responsible, often with reduced and limited resources.

Within our industry sector, BBN is investing heavily to tackle a series of apparently paradoxical challenges by developing methodologies critical to the future success of our clients:

### Repositioning the importance of the CMO role

Despite having the tools and technology at our disposal to accurately measure, quantify and prove the return on investment in marketing activities, CMO stature and tenure, already amongst the lowest and shortest in the C-Suite, is shrinking year on year.

### Channelling sales and marketing to work together

Against a backdrop of restricted face-to-face contact, many sales and marketing teams are not collaborating to combine their skills and knowledge to develop innovative and perhaps better means of connecting with clients and prospects.

### Achieving the balance of art and science

We're certain that the use of technology will increase exponentially, with marketing and sales increasingly adopting a truly digital-first, digital-centric philosophy. But empirical evidence has proven short-term sales activation is dramatically less successful without long-term brand building and emotional connection.

### Bonding agency and client

Going forward, success will be defined by clients and agencies working together in a spirit of trust, openness and seamless communication. The last year has taught us that genuine collaboration and cooperation can achieve outstanding results. Now is the time for honest review by both agencies and clients to establish a new set of behaviours to move the current model from transactional to transformational.

Yesterday, clients *wanted* it all.  
Today, they *need* it all.



**CLIF COLLIER**  
BBN EXECUTIVE  
CHAIRMAN

BBN has operated in an environment of paradoxical challenges and constraints for 30 years. Over that period, we have forged the seemingly paradoxical into a unique, robust and effective business model. We learned to celebrate, not reject, opposing demands to leverage greater creativity, flexibility and productivity.

We have operated in the manner of 'The beautiful constraint' and we've 'Eaten the big fish'. Delivering high levels of performance on a limited budget is something we thrive on. Our collective mindset enables us to constantly reconcile apparently opposing demands. (Above all, mindset is the single most important dynamic for real change.) Yes, having leading processes to define and implement strategy, in-depth industry insight, transformative technical ability and the talent to convert emotion to action are essential play factors. But the real magic happens when that paradox-attuned mindset is distributed throughout our owner-managed, entrepreneurial agencies and galvanised by one common purpose. It happens through nurturing the highest levels of respect for our employees as individuals whatever their culture, ethnicity, faith, gender persuasion and values. Combined, this has allowed us to learn and grow together and deliver out-of-the-box solutions to new challenges. We demand high levels of trust and constantly seek ways to inspire each other whilst having fun in the process – now there's a paradox.

BBN was built from the bottom up. Each local office shares in the ownership of BBN (not the other way around), creating a more entrepreneurial culture with a diversity of perspective.

We continue to expand and build upon our matrix structure giving clients access to the best talent structured around their specific B2B marketing needs. From country experts and culturally sensitive creatives to world-beating production and data-driven media buying – all without the cost associated with more bureaucratic structures or mono-culture networks. The result? Better work that generates significantly improved economic value for our clients – fostering a longer-term client-agency relationship built on mutual trust, value and respect.

The winds of technological change have revolutionised marketing, whilst the tsunami of global societal challenges demands dramatically higher expectation of marketers' social performance. Customers are setting the agenda and accept little or no compromise, and disruptive technologies have opened the door to new types of competitors who provide novel solutions and value creation. Interdependency, agility and accountability are no longer virtuous aspirations; they are now the anchors of sustainability and survival.

\*Adam Morgan & Mark Barden, published by Wiley. Adam Morgan, published by AdweekMedia.

# CHANGE TO SUPPORT BRAND GROWTH

Refreshing a brand and setting it up for smooth sailing to align with the business direction can be a challenge for B2B marketers.

Identifying and presenting the case for change can be harrowing. To begin, alignment to the business objectives must be carefully considered and presented to key decision-makers with absolute belief and positive prediction. Qual and quant, historic and predicted metrics will support the case. Deliver with the mind of a CFO and the goals of an entrepreneur so that key stakeholders recognise your passion to embark on a refreshing change to the brand for focussed growth reasons.

Justification for a refreshing brand review might reveal itself with the following triggers.

- More than 50% activation and 0% future customer brand building
- The who, what, why story isn't clearly articulated
- Slow growth, despite a strong economic climate
- Tired brand identity, that no longer fits with business goals and objectives
- Disruption in the marketplace or fresh competition
- A reputation affected by media
- Marketplace confusion – lacking distinction and clear positioning
- Global trade uncertainty – supply and quality challenges
- Considerable legacy focus on short term results, tactics vs. strategy
- Mergers and acquisitions – a time of difficult decision making

One or a combination of these areas can affect future growth. Conducting a brand health audit, CX research, and reviewing the brand can support your case and reveal further insights to inform the brand strategy.

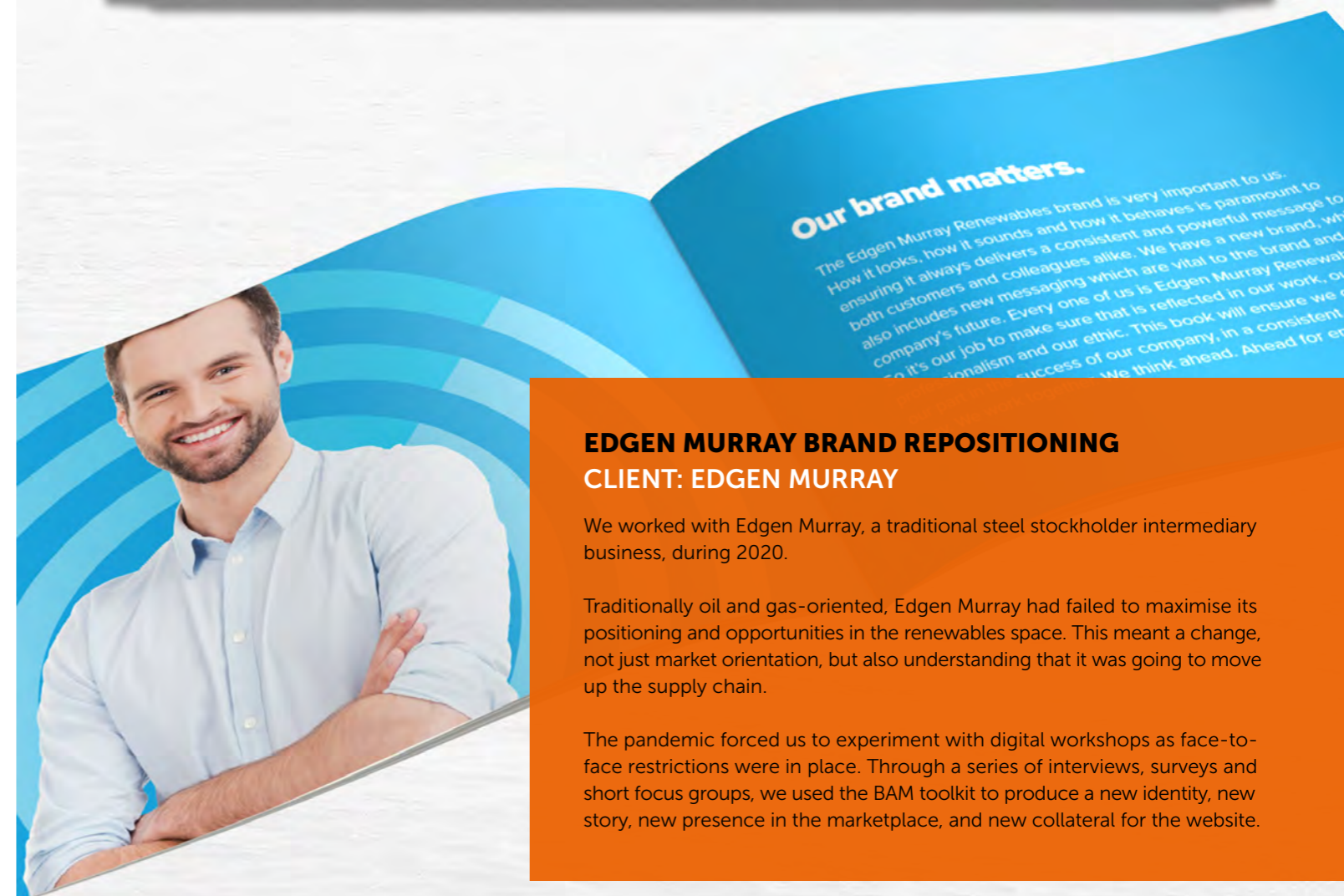
Insights can be revealing, embrace the good and the ugly. Consider this a chance build a brief to fill in gaps for a cohesive brand framework. We envy and rank the successful brands and creative wins of Apple, Microsoft, Google and Samsung – all have cohesive brand frameworks support marketing to succeed.

If time is of the essence, and finding time is more challenging than ever, it's wise to enlist a B2B Brand team to support change and build a framework. Address commonly overlooked areas such as the brand story, architecture, essence, code, proposition, personas, visual strategy etc. Set a stakeholder deadline, create a resource, share it with those responsible to amplify the brand into the future.



**ROCHELLE SANKO**  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Rochelle is our resident brand expert in Australia. She brings two plus decades of industry experience in brand and creative strategy, brand creation, evolution, and ongoing management (internal and external), as well as campaign creative. Rochelle has led creative studios in Australia and New Zealand, assisting a diverse range of B2B and B2C brands to push boundaries and communicate their proposition effectively across the entire customer journey.



## EDGEN MURRAY BRAND REPOSITIONING CLIENT: EDGEN MURRAY

We worked with Edgen Murray, a traditional steel stockholder intermediary business, during 2020.

Traditionally oil and gas-oriented, Edgen Murray had failed to maximise its positioning and opportunities in the renewables space. This meant a change, not just market orientation, but also understanding that it was going to move up the supply chain.

The pandemic forced us to experiment with digital workshops as face-to-face restrictions were in place. Through a series of interviews, surveys and short focus groups, we used the BAM toolkit to produce a new identity, new story, new presence in the marketplace, and new collateral for the website.

# ARE WE REALLY FEELING IT?

Over the last two decades, B2B marketing has seen a significant bias towards short-term lead generation over long-term brand building activity – leading to an astonishing decline in creative effectiveness. This was recently validated by global marketing research and effectiveness agency, System1, which uses facial recognition technology to measure the emotional response to advertising with a five-star 'emotion-to-action' score. The ads with the highest ratings evoke a strong mix of emotions, with surprise and happiness leading the mix. And B2B ads significantly underperform against their B2C counterparts, with around 80 percent of ads scoring only a one-star rating. And while that is alarming, it is not that surprising when you look at the quality of work across the industry.

Part of the problem is that there seems to be a fundamental misunderstanding among marketers about what emotional communication actually is. It is about making your audience feel. Building a connection. Evoking a smile, a laugh, a look of surprise. Unfortunately, as we see so often in B2B, many believe that it simply involves using a stock image of a parent holding a child's hand as they walk through wheatfield towards a sunset.

Given that creative campaigns that evoke emotion are six times more effective at driving sales, profit and market share, the most rational thing that B2B marketers can do is to invest more in creativity and emotionally led campaigns. As well as new research, we now have various econometric models that enable us to attribute brand-building activity directly to sales and market share in a much more immediate way – so the arguments for investment are now much easier to justify to company stakeholders, who may have previously questioned large investments in marketing activity that was difficult to measure.

Creativity in B2B needs a renaissance and B2B marketers need to remember that emotive campaigns that build brand equity have the biggest role to play in shifting the needle for their organisations over the longer term. The industry's 'creativity' currently plays it far too safe and there's no bigger waste of marketing dollars than running a campaign that goes unnoticed. True creativity has stand-out and memorability built in – and that is what makes for effective marketing.



## COS MINGIDES CO-FOUNDER

Cos is a Founding Partner of our London-based partner, which was named ANA Creative B2B Agency of the Year 2020. He began his career in business development, supporting the growth of several pioneering digital and mobile agencies where he won and led digital production accounts for some of the UK's leading advertising agencies, including AMV BBDO and BBH.

Cos is on a mission to make B2B marketing more effective, more human and more creative. He is a strategic partner to some of the world's most recognised B2B brands including Volvo, Logitech, Kaspersky and EY, helping their communications live up to our mantra of 'Make it memorable'.



## THE 7 STRENGTHS OF STONE: TEST SERIES

CLIENT: ROCKWOOL

In a highly commoditised market, ROCKWOOL needed to improve brand competitiveness by raising awareness and understanding of their product differentiators, 'The 7 Strengths of Stone'.

We created a James Bond-style 'test lab' in the ROCKWOOL Innovation Factory, casting the Head of R&D as the 'Q' character who would conduct a series of extreme product tests that would entertain with a light touch of wry Scandinavian humour. As well as generating 1.8m social page engagements, the average time spent onsite after viewing one of the films increased by 400%. So, the films not only entertained, but also created genuine product interest – delivering 11,641 MQLs in just the first three months.

# INNOVATING CONTENT DELIVERY

Businesses and marketing departments might be facing budget cuts during 2021, but marketing technology is not an area that will be widely affected since businesses of all types and sizes have found themselves in the position of having to move large portions of their operation online.

In many industries, marketing and sales processes and practices have had to be reformed. Also, purchasing has gone online, and businesses and consumers alike have become even more demanding in terms of seamless digital customer experiences. Companies have accelerated their digital communications strategy and marketing technology has suddenly become a ubiquitous need.

In 2021, operations will continue leaning into digital engagement, digital transformation and digital customer experience. And that's where martech and marketing automation thrive. There will be an ever-renewing spring of opportunities for businesses to make their marketing better, since technology is continually improving their ability to deliver content in ways that are more interactive, immersive and impactful.

Will there be in-person events in 2021? Maybe, but certainly not at the scale we are used to. Marketing technology will need to do much of the heavy lifting when companies and brands focus on building relationships via interactivity.

Bringing people together through interactive virtual events and with the help of digital tools will be an ongoing trend even after 2021. People are now used to collaborating and working together in distributed settings and they are not willing to give up the remote work and digital communication options easily. Thanks to the fact that the world is becoming more digital fast, the amount of marketing data will be insane in the near future. This requires standardised and well-structured data gathering, governance, privacy and visualisation solutions – all provided by martech solutions.

Investing in and adopting marketing technology tools will benefit businesses long term. Our role is to help the companies to fine tune their new processes, integrations and tools so that their lead flow to sales is smooth and steady.

Martech is a market worth around \$121.5 billion worldwide. This industry will remain rich and diverse even if the marketing industry in general is facing occasional hits.



## JANI AALTONEN HEAD OF MARTECH OPERATIONS

Jani is an experienced marketing automation and marketing technology specialist, with over 10 years of experience in digital marketing industries, the last six with the latest enterprise-level MA & martech platforms.

His expertise ranges from top-level digital ecosystem and integration planning to hands-on marketing automation system operation and implementation. With his engineer training and web developer background, combined with experience in international martech projects, Jani has consulting and implementation abilities that are truly based on best practices.

## A SHIFT FROM TRADITIONAL TO DIGITAL CLIENT: OUTOKUMPU

Outokumpu's goal is to be the global leader in stainless steel by being customer-oriented and efficient. We convinced the client to take advantage of new marketing technologies, services and channels and shift the focus from traditional to digital marketing that was tailored and targeted to customer needs.

Based on clear objectives, we implemented and managed a marketing automation programme, along with other long-term campaigns aimed at finding new leads. Creative concepts, content and ads were tailored to address selected buyers for two different grades of steel across a wide geographic audience. This award-winning campaign exceeded its initial objectives and the results achieved were consistently above industry averages.

# SUSTAINABLE THINKING

Prospect and customer connection is where marketing and communication tyres hit the road. Connection in all form and format, social to business, has been suspended in a surreal state for more than a year. Face-to-face meetings, trade shows and networking sessions – the most critical tools for customer connections and engagements – are obsolete for the foreseeable future. We are in an uncharted territory of 'omnidigital' now. The pandemic hasn't introduced the digital transformation of communication channels for B2B marketers, but expedited the process.

It will take a long time to go back to 'normal', if that is at all possible. Meanwhile, the digital connection channels will spread their wings beyond webinars and newsletters and try to find a sustainable form. This will widen the gap between the winners and losers in B2B marketing – as the checklist-based, activity-driven marketing will not only become obsolete, but impossible. If we look at the complete buying cycle of a B2B procurement, as presented by Gartner – it can be divided into six specific jobs to be done. The trigger can be initiated by aspirational reasons or regulatory changes, or a macroeconomic impact, like the situation we are facing today.

Then each prospect needs to go through four different stages – problem identification, solution exploration, requirements building, and supplier selection. Throughout each stage, they need to validate their assumptions, fine-tune the requirements and, most importantly, create consensus. Although it looks straightforward, the actual process is more iterative and nuanced.

That is especially the case now – when most companies are following a rule-of-thumb 'wait and see'. Looping back, taking a step forward followed by three steps backward is a common scenario. That's the reason the old workflow of handing over the lead from marketing to sales – after nurturing them to become sales qualified lead – is no longer feasible. In the new regular, marketing and sales can't rely on a linear sequential process – it should be a parallel process.

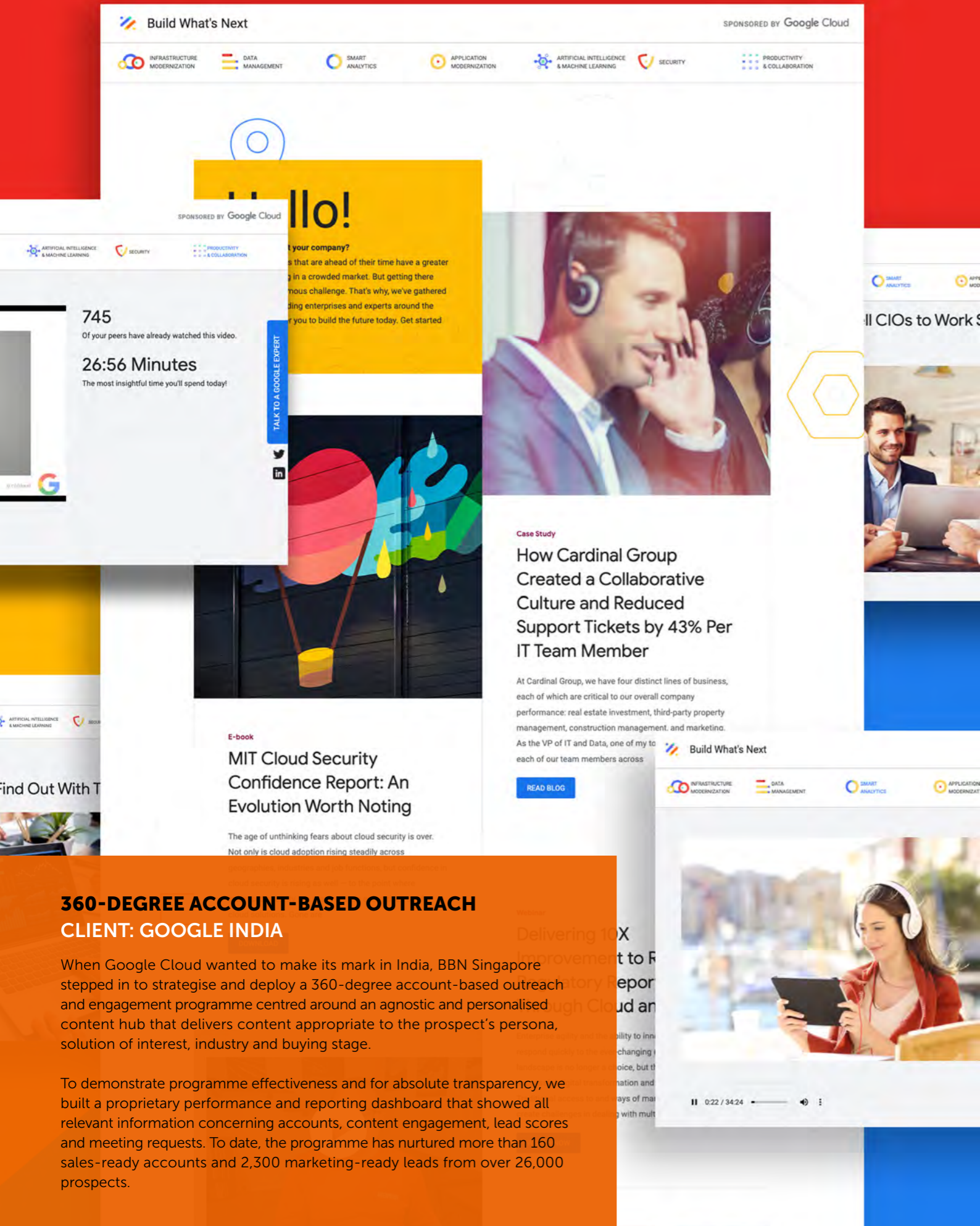
To say that is easy is an understatement. The reality is riddled with departmental silos and organisational politics – but we need to break down the wall between the two departments to survive. There is no other choice.



**ANOL BHATTACHARYA**  
CEO

Anol is an experienced B2B marketing consultant for IT and telco clients, including Cisco Systems Inc and Lenovo DCG.

He is a regular columnist on the topic of B2B marketing in various print and online newspapers, such as Business Times, Marketing Interactive and Asia One. Anol has been a keynote speaker at some of the marketing industry's major conferences across the world, including BMA (Chicago), Click Asia Summit (Mumbai), AdTech (Singapore), SES (Hong Kong, Singapore) and eConsultancy Workshops.



## 360-DEGREE ACCOUNT-BASED OUTREACH CLIENT: GOOGLE INDIA

When Google Cloud wanted to make its mark in India, BBN Singapore stepped in to strategise and deploy a 360-degree account-based outreach and engagement programme centred around an agnostic and personalised content hub that delivers content appropriate to the prospect's persona, solution of interest, industry and buying stage.

To demonstrate programme effectiveness and for absolute transparency, we built a proprietary performance and reporting dashboard that showed all relevant information concerning accounts, content engagement, lead scores and meeting requests. To date, the programme has nurtured more than 160 sales-ready accounts and 2,300 marketing-ready leads from over 26,000 prospects.

Case Study  
**Case Study: How Texas' Largest Grocery Chain**

# FEEDING DEMAND

Despite the ongoing disruptions that started in 2020, we feel cautiously optimistic about a return to stability for food production system and agriculture as a whole in 2021.

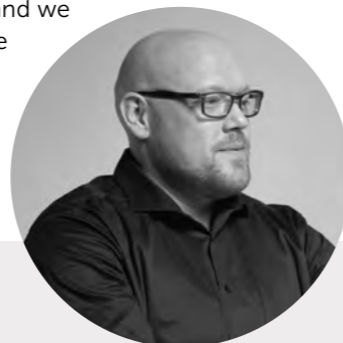
Based on our own analysis of the most influential voices in our industry, the two topics that most forcefully impacted the food and agriculture continuum in 2020 involve hunger and workers. Hunger relief organisation Feeding America reported more than 50 million people (including 17 million children) in the US experienced food insecurity at some point in 2020, levels far higher than just a year earlier. In the restaurant industry alone, more than 110,000 operations are closed permanently or long-term according to the National Restaurant Association, contributing to some of the highest unemployment figures our country has seen since the Great Depression. It would seem that the clearest opportunity to return food production to prior levels involve mitigating food insecurity and addressing issues with the workers so critical to our food supply.

Efforts at all segments of food production – farms, food processing, retail/foodservice channels – to reduce joblessness are critical to our success. In the United States, measures passed by the federal government will introduce another installment of low-interest loans and paycheck protection to businesses impacted by the pandemic, giving hope that many can continue to limp by. Food producers are advocating for their workers to get priority for vaccinations, which will hopefully make their way into processing facilities which were so severely hindered with worker illnesses in the spring.

Regarding hunger, our industry is in a unique position to mitigate food insecurity, with many members of the supply chain stepping up to fill voids and help food banks straining to meet demand. Notably, BBN USA client and global animal health leader Zoetis partnered with food banks and pantries across the US to provide sorely needed fresh dairy, meat and poultry products. In addition, Zoetis provided monetary support and much needed cold-storage units to better equip food pantries. Other leaders, including Dunkin Brands, The American Egg Board, and Kellogg Company donated millions in dollars, time and products.

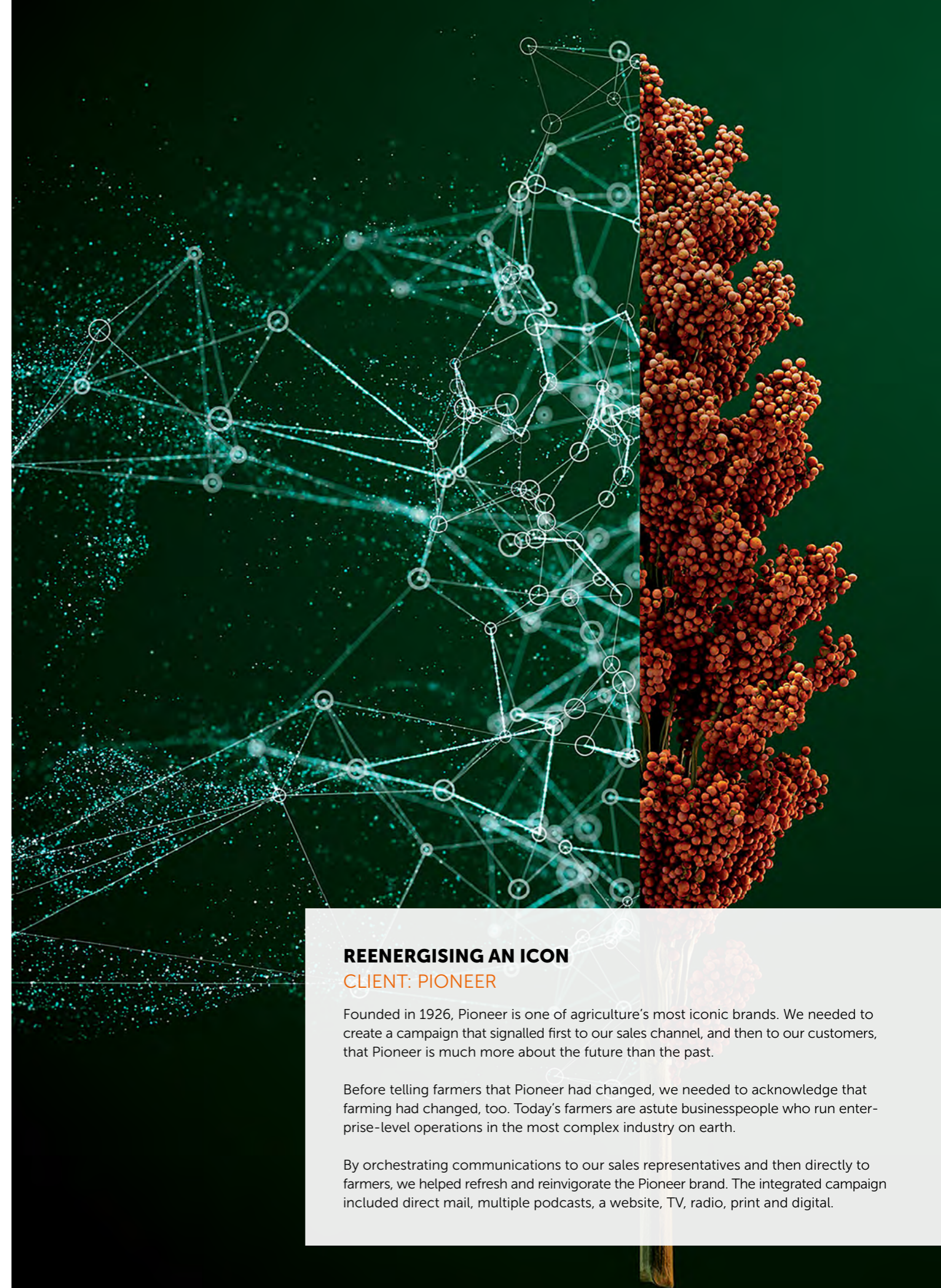
A new administration always brings a wave of optimism and caution. Having industry groups expressing bipartisan eagerness to work with the new administration and further vaccination should help smooth rough issues like labor relations and international trade. The challenges of 2020 accelerated innovation everywhere in the food supply chain, from fields to processing to delivery channels, ensuring shelves remain stocked.

As an industry, we have a responsibility and the ability to address critical issues and we are confident we will. With the increased attention on sustainability throughout the system, we see better days on the horizon.



## DAVID JORDAN CHIEF GROWTH OFFICER

David Jordan leads BBN USA's Business Consultancy Group. He's passionate about agriculture, from his rural upbringing in Illinois to an account and strategic career rooted in agricultural business. David has held roles at Zoetis/Pfizer Animal Health; a start-up helping farmers maximise yield potential; and River Valley Farm managing the genetics program. As Chief Growth Officer at the No. 1 AgriMarketing agency, David is focused on unlocking business potential.



## REENERGING AN ICON

### CLIENT: PIONEER

Founded in 1926, Pioneer is one of agriculture's most iconic brands. We needed to create a campaign that signalled first to our sales channel, and then to our customers, that Pioneer is much more about the future than the past.

Before telling farmers that Pioneer had changed, we needed to acknowledge that farming had changed, too. Today's farmers are astute businesspeople who run enterprise-level operations in the most complex industry on earth.

By orchestrating communications to our sales representatives and then directly to farmers, we helped refresh and reinvigorate the Pioneer brand. The integrated campaign included direct mail, multiple podcasts, a website, TV, radio, print and digital.






## PERFORM, INNOVATE, DELIVER

### CLIENT: SMART TECHNOLOGIES

Schools are struggling to make hybrid education work with millions of remote students learning from home worldwide. Smart Technologies is a global vendor of interactive displays and learning software for education. While schools started lockdowns, the company faced the challenge to capture market share in target markets increasing sales pipeline.

We developed a social ABM strategy for Smart Technologies that spans 10 countries and six languages in EMEA. It has generated over 1,000 MQLs in six months. Our digital team blended the best-performing mix of social channels, combining LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram, amongst others, to target specific school districts. More than 70 percent of the leads have been accepted by sales. In that time, lead quality increased while CPAs dropped steadily across social media platforms.

# LOOKING BEYOND YOUR INDUSTRY

A decade from now, a combination of technologies will take important strides forward. Many IT industry players will need to adopt new strategies to face the multiple challenges ahead. The big cloud vendors are gaining market share over legacy and traditional hardware and software vendors. While software as a service (SaaS) vendors represent 75 percent of all software revenues, according to McKinsey & Company, other vendors will need to demonstrate more value than ever. To succeed in this new environment, tech companies will have to reposition themselves as digital and subscription innovators, shifting their marketing strategies quickly. Such transformation will also impact how they address their audiences. Three quarters of senior leaders involved in technology-buying decisions are not in IT, according to Gartner. To identify and reach such numbers of decision makers, IT vendors will need to combine the sharpest B2B strategies: branding, creativity and new digital skills for lead generation.

Many B2B marketing managers are considering testing B2C tactics in B2B markets due to dramatic changes in corporate buyer behaviour. While many B2C tactics – social advertising, emotive branding, mobile marketing, even gaming! – are similar to those used in B2B markets, communication channels are different. Leveraging them effectively is a critical success factor in reaching B2B decision makers, who are now scattered in different roles within organisations. IT vendors should look beyond their industry to address corporate customer needs more holistically. To stay relevant, especially in a new environment that has altered client behaviour, it's essential to keep on top of upcoming global marketing trends.

Necessity is indeed the mother of invention, but even more so for marketers. What remains to be seen is how we will use lessons learned to become better versions of what we were.



## PEDRO GULLÉN

### CO-FOUNDER

Pedro is an expert managing international sales and marketing programmes for global IT vendors. With an entrepreneurial spirit oriented to achieve results, he is focused on developing new business models and valued added services bringing new ways of doing B2B marketing to clients. He has over 20 years of experience in marketing, sales and business management, and worked for companies like IBM, Google and Telefonica in Europe.

# WHERE SHOULD WE FOCUS OUR ENERGY?

The fortunes of the energy industry in recent years have been so volatile, it's extremely difficult to predict with any degree of certainty what the next 12 months will bring. Looking beyond that is even more challenging. However, there are some broad trends that we may see. In the oil sector, historic fears of supply exhaustion have been offset by the vast potential offered by US tight oil, while OPEC attempts to manage member production quotas. Today, for the first time, concerns are more focused on long-term demand rather than supply as consumers consider alternative and renewable energy sources for power and transport.

The rapid decline in travel in 2020 exacerbated oil's long-term challenges. While prices have started to rise again and confidence is returning, it is unlikely they will reach pre-pandemic levels until the end of 2021 at the earliest. By contrast, the global drive towards renewable energy adoption will continue to increase. Around the world, governments are incorporating green initiatives into economic stimulus packages. Some two thirds of the world's economy by GDP has now committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2060.

Growing urbanisation and concerns about air pollution and congestion are creating greater demand from consumers for countries to adopt multi modal mobility solutions, where conventional fuels such as gasoline and diesel are joined by renewable electric powered vehicles. However, while renewable energy will continue to dominate the headlines in 2021, oil's days are far from over. Demand may be in decline, but existing production levels are declining faster. There are concerns that a lack of investment today in developing supplies will lead to a significant shortfall in the next 20 years. Oil and gas will continue to be an important part of the global energy mix, with several trillions of dollars of new investment required in future.

For established oil and gas companies, the above presents a trilemma. Should they continue to serve their existing markets exclusively and seek best in class status? Should they explore new geographies with their current offering? Or should they adapt and move into new verticals such as offshore wind? The time is right for them to review their business proposition. Whichever direction they take, there will continue to be a high demand for energy in all its forms. And that will create a world of opportunity for marketing companies supporting energy clients in telling their new story.



**ANDREW BRADSHAW**  
HEAD OF ENERGY INSIGHT

Andrew has provided trusted comms support to the energy industry for almost 20 years as a member of our PR team and Head of Energy Insight. He has worked with every sector in the oil and gas industry, from seismic surveys to refineries, and has helped companies of all sizes – from supermajors to start ups – all over the world. He is increasingly working in the renewables sector as his passion for energy expands across the entire spectrum.



## ENGINEERING A NEW STRATEGY CLIENT: SANDVIK

Historically, Sandvik relied on tradeshows and events in their sales and marketing plans. The new challenge was to develop a digital plan to replace the event-led strategy. Communications with customers needed to take a different form, and an email marketing platform – taking the team from three separate platforms to a single programme – was implemented.

We worked with the Sandvik marcomms team – who are also based in different parts of the world – to introduce a webinar series to enable ongoing opportunities to interact with new and existing contacts, and increased content production to improve SEO around the product offering.

We quickly pivoted Sandvik's marketing strategy to focus on digital marketing and lead generation. The results of the campaign exceeded initial expectations, resulting in 615 new contacts, an average email open rate of 45% and click-through rate of 25%.

## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT FAST HEARTBEAT

Click here to learn more about **Tachycardia** and Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators

VISIT THE WEBSITE

DOWNLOAD BROCHURE

WATCH VIDEO



# MARKETING AT THE HEART OF HEALTHY B2B RELATIONSHIPS

Global Healthcare companies continue to be under pressure to serve a growing and aging population while budgets are under pressure.

There are increasing numbers of people worldwide with chronic, long-term conditions (including over 450 million people suffering from mental disorders). Patients and their families are taking more interest in treatment options and looking for information that can inform their choices and reassure themselves and their families.

It is our strong belief that companies, more than ever, must focus on 'value-based healthcare solutions' to deliver the best results for patients. Communicating these patient-first messages to healthcare providers provides an interesting challenge. As part of this, it's important to invest in preventative and wellbeing solutions alongside the traditional treatment models and start to help communicate these benefits directly to patient.

The last year has, of course, been unusually challenging, with extra pressures resulting in many elective treatments being postponed. It has also had a huge impact on the morale of key healthcare workers. We have seen how misleading, inconsistent and often mis-timed communications have hindered rather than helped. We can learn a lot from how various messaging has been received and use this to adapt our strategies going forward.

We will also need to support clients with the growing challenges unequal access brings while continuing to innovate with virtual health solutions leveraging digital technologies. These shifts in mindset will often require internal change management and alignment, which agencies can help to lead.



### RICH THOMAS MANAGING DIRECTOR

Rich comes from a medical family (both his brothers are doctors) and he has a degree in cellular biology from the University of Durham.

He has worked extensively with many of the world's leading healthcare companies in Europe, Asia and the US. Rich has personally provided marketing consultancy and support for clients including Medtronic, Abbott, Ferring, Nestle Health Science, Hitachi Medical Systems, West Pharma, Dentsply Sirona and Align Technology.

## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HEART FAILURE?

Click here to learn more about **Heart Failure** and Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy

VISIT THE WEBSITE

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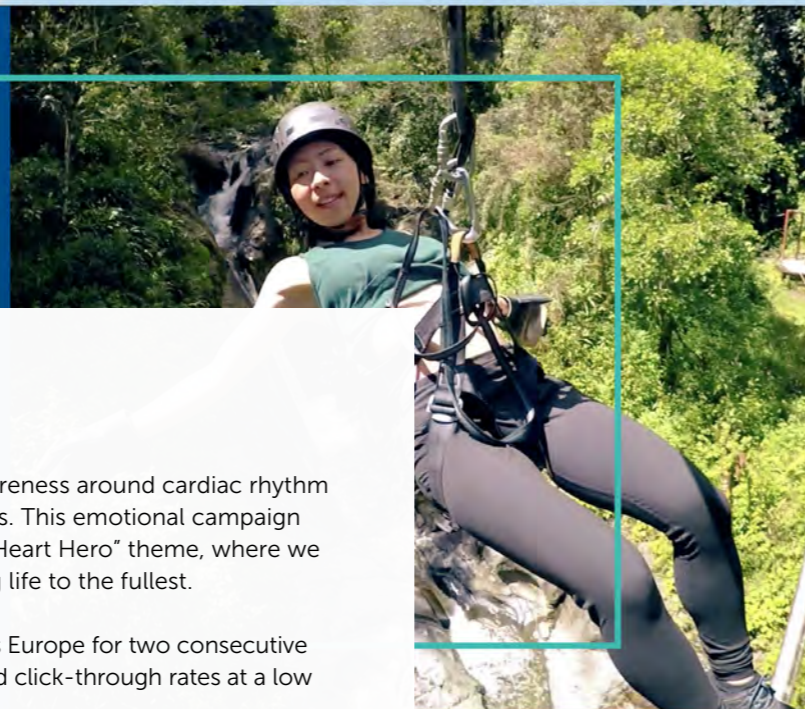
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HEART FAILURE?  
Click here to learn more about **Heart Failure** and Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy

VISIT THE WEBSITE

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## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT UNEXPLAINED FAINTING?



### WORLD HEART DAY CLIENT: MEDTRONIC

We created a campaign for World Heart Day to promote awareness around cardiac rhythm and heart failure conditions and the available device therapies. This emotional campaign promoted knowledge of these conditions by focusing on a "Heart Hero" theme, where we linked common symptoms to the feelings you get from living life to the fullest.

The campaign was rolled out in nine languages and ran across Europe for two consecutive years. The client achieved its best-ever levels of awareness and click-through rates at a low cost per click.

## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HEART PALPITATIONS?



# ENGINEERING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Covid or no Covid, manufacturing and engineering are in a constant change process. Take the automotive industry, for example: in addition to Industry 4.0, E-mobility, climate targets, regulations and changes in the buyers' behaviour are forcing players to transform themselves – fast. That affects their suppliers too, who have to find new markets to reduce their dependence on this sector.

The first effect of this is that we are likely to see more consulting-oriented services as opposed to pure hardware (engineering technology, components, 2nd/3rd tier products). This is also powered by the ability to use data and track usage of such hardware in its specific application. Data generated is used to identify weaknesses in product design, potential efficiency gaps or just to optimise overhauling and maintenance. Covid has accelerated these trends by further establishing digital channels to build a culture that is willing to collaborate better, innovate faster and to compete with companies from formerly different fields.

A second effect is that it propels employer branding from a HR-related topic to a C-Level one, because having the best brains on board to make that change happen is a factor for survival. This goes far beyond just recruitment, which has been a common focus for employer branding, but takes a much more holistic viewpoint: how to not just find these people, but increase their commitment and motivation to work for your company? Is your organisation truly credible in what it promises as its culture and purpose as opposed to what employees experience in their daily work situations? With the transparency of employee satisfaction in social channels and employer rating portals, this cannot be neglected any more.

How will the long-term future of the industry be affected by Covid-19? We can imagine scenarios where many of the smaller (hidden) champions are growing to big corporations through M&A processes. In other scenarios, there might be an even more fragmented landscape of service providers, where it is not important who is delivering hardware, but one where companies are competing about the best options to attach their system to others. And in either scenario, the role of corporate culture and employer value will keep growing when upcoming demographic changes limit talent pools further.



**CAROLA HECKER**  
CLIENT SERVICE DIRECTOR

Carola Hecker, Client Service Director and BBN Executive Board member, has expanded her B2B expertise continuously since joining BBN Germany over 20 years ago. Within the world's third-largest economy, engineering and manufacturing play key roles, accounting for around 24 percent of the nation's gross value added (GVA). It's no surprise that among our clients you'll find key brands such as CLAAS, ebm-papst, John Deere, Lohmann, Lorch, MANN+HUMMEL, SEW, Wacker Neuson and W.L. Gore.



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the engineer's choice

**GreenIntelligence.**  
*Making  
Engineers Happy.*



## VENTILATION AND DRIVE TECHNOLOGY THAT MAKES PEOPLE HAPPY!

CLIENT: EBM PAPST

ebm-papst, a world leader for fans and drives, wanted to find the perfect positioning for its future in this ever-changing world. That meant strategically aligning products, organisation and staff, but also brand and communication – which, as the company's agency partner for over 15 years, we have worked alongside it to achieve.

The result: ebm-papst bundles products, services and competencies into a new competence brand called "GreenIntelligence": a promise to its B2B customers, including highly connected systems, powerful applications, efficient processes and satisfied end customers. All of this creatively expressed with the new 'happy engineers campaign', which conveys the customer benefits quickly and strikingly.

# THEIR NEW STORY HAS BEEN OURS FOR YEARS

**TODAY, INTERNATIONAL CLIENTS STILL NEED AN AGENCY WITH A GLOBAL FOOTPRINT. BUT THEY'RE ALSO LOOKING FOR SPEED AND GREAT MARKETING IDEAS.**

BBN agencies are built on the entrepreneurial spirit of their founders and senior agency executives. Leaders who put the client and the quality of their work first.

With over 61 international offices, BBN is a global B2B powerhouse that puts flexibility and agility at the heart of its approach.

Our matrix structure provides delivery teams that consist of in-depth industry experience, technical and creative expertise and extensive geographic coverage, giving clients access to the best talent. Together, we are adept at responding to clients' challenges – providing insightful, effective strategies that are carefully tailored to the regions in which they operate. This unparalleled access to a variety of highly specialised skill sets is critically important in delivering end-to-end solutions and results that connect with all target audiences, wherever and whenever required, while giving our clients a one-agency experience.



# DIVERSITY IN OUR DNA

Our global partnership represents 32 countries and over 1,000 B2B practitioners committed to supporting client marketing needs and sales goals. Our diversity combines multiple-location agency strengths with a common approach, and we celebrate each other's differences by embracing the diversity that characterises BBN – whether by gathering together online or in-person events or working together on joint client projects. Our diversity of ideas and thoughts became even more important in 2020 as it allowed us to learn and grow together and deliver out-of-the-box solutions to new challenges.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Diversity and inclusion are being interwoven into our environments and cultures – as BBN and as individual agencies. This is a journey of personal and corporate importance and, as human beings, it is the way to a better world. As the world's number one B2B agency, BBN's objective is to show the world that we truly embrace and thrive on differences – for the sake of our employees, our clients and our communities. BBN and partner agencies commit to equal employment regardless of race, colour, ancestry, religion, sex, gender identity, national origin, sexual orientation, age, citizenship, marital status or disability. Our differences are among our greatest strengths and we draw on the uniqueness of each individual, what we've experienced and how we think to deliver global communications that not only move businesses forward, but evolve our relationships and respect for each other.

## DIVERSITY AS A DIFFERENTIATOR

BBN encourages agency-wide respect for employees as individuals, with different cultures, values and faiths. Our people enjoy working in an inclusive, appreciative environment as much as they enjoy having the ability to tap into the products and service disciplines of both their peers and our industry-leading experts.

We believe the diversity BBN embraces so wholeheartedly serves to enhance our creative, strategic, digital and relationship offerings. This alchemy drives a results-driven approach like no other. It's something our clients have come to recognise as the very thing that separates us from our competitors.

We strongly believe that as a multinational and multi-cultural group, being open-minded, diverse and inclusive is an integral part of who we are. We want to offer all employees, customers, prospects and partners a respectful, appreciative working environment where everyone feels welcome and valued. And of course, we want to proudly show our diversity to the world!

## DIVERSITY AS A DRIVER FOR GROWTH IN 2020

The year 2020 brought massive change, and with that arose new challenges and opportunities. But despite the negative impacts, it also opened doors to a more diverse dialogue. With virtual communication becoming increasingly important, it's easier to connect with customers and partners around the globe. It's also easier to work alongside colleagues from different countries and backgrounds and benefit from shared ideas and insights. With diverse perspectives and experiences united, finding an out-of-the-box solution that makes a real difference becomes more certain.

Despite greater physical distancing, 2020 brought many of us closer together – fostering exchange, shared learnings and understanding for one another. Again, diversity has proven a key advantage for success – which we at BBN strive to strengthen for our future as a global organisation!

**"AWARENESS OF THE BUSINESS CASE FOR INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY IS ON THE RISE. (...) COMPANIES HAVE INCREASINGLY BEGUN TO REGARD INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY AS A SOURCE OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE, AND SPECIFICALLY AS A KEY ENABLER OF GROWTH."**  
– MCKINSEY AND COMPANY



**MARTA DE LEÓN**  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
(BBN MEXICO)

Although the pandemic has forced us to face many work and personal challenges, far from limiting our communication, remote work has helped us think far beyond physical barriers and take advantage of the advances of the digital age.

Today, colleagues and clients who are in other countries feel as close as those we used to have sitting next to us, which has allowed us to work in a more integrated way. Now, more than ever, we can experience the richness of ignoring geographical barriers to open our minds to new ideas and ways of thinking. This global difficulty is making all of us stronger by reminding us that we are a small part of a whole. We are all in this together!



**DEBBIE HO**  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
(BBN SINGAPORE)

Due to the size and international nature of a country like Singapore, the team here has always been working with clients and colleagues based elsewhere. So, when physical work arrangements had to change, the biggest effect on us was the redundancy of travel time, which we appreciated.

Working at home does pose its own challenges – housework is a distraction! – but I also see that we are working more flexibly. There is a sense of understanding, among clients and colleagues, that this is a really challenging time, so there is a need to continuously identify ways to work more effectively and innovatively across the board.

Whether it's updating a client's marketing plans for the year, or finding cost-effective solutions to communicate to customers, the term "no one size fits all" never rings truer.



**LARISSA PITZER**  
STRATEGIC PLANNER (BBN GERMANY)

2020 was an unparalleled year – with new terms like 'physical distancing' and 'flattening the curve' entering our daily vocabulary. The year was a catalyst for change in our markets, for our customers, and of course for ourselves. In these turbulent times, how can we stay on strategic track with our brand and communication, adjust to the new normal and keep all stakeholders on board through new ways of collaborating? To find creative, fresh solutions to these challenges, we need diverse thoughts and insights more than ever. Staying strongly connected despite being physically apart and bringing our ideas together is what enables us to find solutions that really make a difference.

To support our customers in navigating their transformation processes, we have established new forms of collaboration, for example by developing ideas and strategies together in online workshops.

This learning process was enriched by sharing best practices with our BBN brand and strategy colleagues across the globe.

2020 showed us once again the diversity of thoughts and ideas we share within BBN can only broaden our thinking and create new opportunities for learning and growth. And whatever the future might bring, as long as we stand together, I am convinced we will master the journey ahead of us!



**ANIL KHAIRA**  
DIGITAL STRATEGIST (BBN SINGAPORE)

2020 did not feel like something we were unprepared for. After all, we rarely work on campaigns where only team members from one of our offices across Asia Pacific are involved. The complexities of getting our ideas across virtually so others could build on them wasn't something that was completely new to us. Our experience with other teams not only laid the foundation for virtual collaboration, but also provided us with the chance to understand and accommodate different work cultures.

We have been forced to be a little more creative in our ideation to achieve results. With webinars being every organisation's go-to for content delivery, we kept thinking out of the box to ensure our clients' webinars were more appealing, both in the topics and in how they were presented. The same can be said of outreach channels. Content sharing on channels such as LinkedIn skyrocketed in mid-2020 and to generate results without over-the-top spending, we incorporated functions such as paid promotions, organic content sharing and Sales Navigator into focused campaigns to take advantage of the increased engagement the platform was experiencing.

Diversity has never been a problem for us. After all, I live in country that is 70 percent Chinese but has a Malay National Anthem and where the most commonly spoken language is Singlish (Colloquial Singapore English, which is a mixture of words originating from English, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil and Cantonese). Meanwhile, I'm typing this while sitting at a desk where my colleague on the right is from Indonesia, while the colleague on my left is from Malaysia.



**GIULIA SIMONI**  
ACCOUNT MANAGER (BBN SWITZERLAND)

Switzerland has been widely exposed to the pandemic. We had to adapt to the measures issued by the government and we worked hard to keep our clients up to date as best we could. Not being able to meet our clients face to face has been a radical change for us. We are used to being in close human contact with them on a regular basis.

During the pandemic, we have offered our clients remote-working solutions, such as online/virtual conferences, internal communications services for Covid-19 comms and preventive branding ideas for their offices (while we were moving offices...). The result? We got closer to them than ever. In these months where everyone was apart, we have sometimes felt that we got to know our clients even better than we did before.

The team here is very diverse and reflects our international client base: six different nationalities and we speak 10 languages! It's hard not to get mixed up sometimes. We celebrate diversity not only in the office, but also in empathising with our clients.



**BARBORA SITTOVÁ**  
COPYWRITER (BBN CZECH REPUBLIC)

Various things happen in our lives and no-one asks whether now is the right time and whether we are ready for any change. Therefore, when the pandemic peaked in our country last year, there was no choice but to adapt. The first thing we did was to help create a campaign to explain to children what a coronavirus is and how to act. We participated in the promotion of a picture story called How to Defeat Corona Dragon. We also recruited new colleagues remotely, without a single personal contact – an experience unheard of for us. As a copywriter, I still had a lot of work to do, but my focus shifted towards online from print and billboards. Personally, I am grateful for the perks of the modern age and that I could continue to be in touch with colleagues at BBN and clients, and I would dare to say that this situation connected us more. Despite working from home, we still wanted to remain close, so we called each other every day. It's not easy to talk to everyone in the office every day, but over a distance, communication has been much more intensive!



**JUSTIN LIESENER**  
ACCOUNT SUPERVISOR (BBN USA)

In October 2019, we kicked off a strategic plan to increase and retain the diversity of thought, experience and background of our talent base, while actively creating a culture of belonging. Little did we know how much we would come to rely on that plan as we navigated 2020! As we adjusted to the pandemic, our nine-person Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Council, backed by our executive sponsors, sprang into action. Amid heightened national conversations around racial injustice, we supported employees' desires to reflect and get involved by conducting a six-week agency-wide empathy training, facilitating vulnerable team-level conversations about race, and bringing in a speaker to talk to us about being better allies – all virtually.

To further our mission, we established a public commitment to Learn More, Listen Harder, Change Faster and Give More. We shared resources with our colleagues to help us gain new perspectives on a range of topics, and we donated our time, talents and money to 19 organisations in our community and beyond. Through all this, we partnered with colleagues around the world to help create D&I programmes that all BBN agencies can benefit from. And we're just getting started.

# MODUS OPERANDI

## COMMITMENT DRIVES BBN'S GROWTH

Every one of BBN's partner shareholders pledges to understand, support and commit to BBN's vision, strategy and charter, and the individuals within the partner agencies contribute to the development of the organisation through their committed actions.

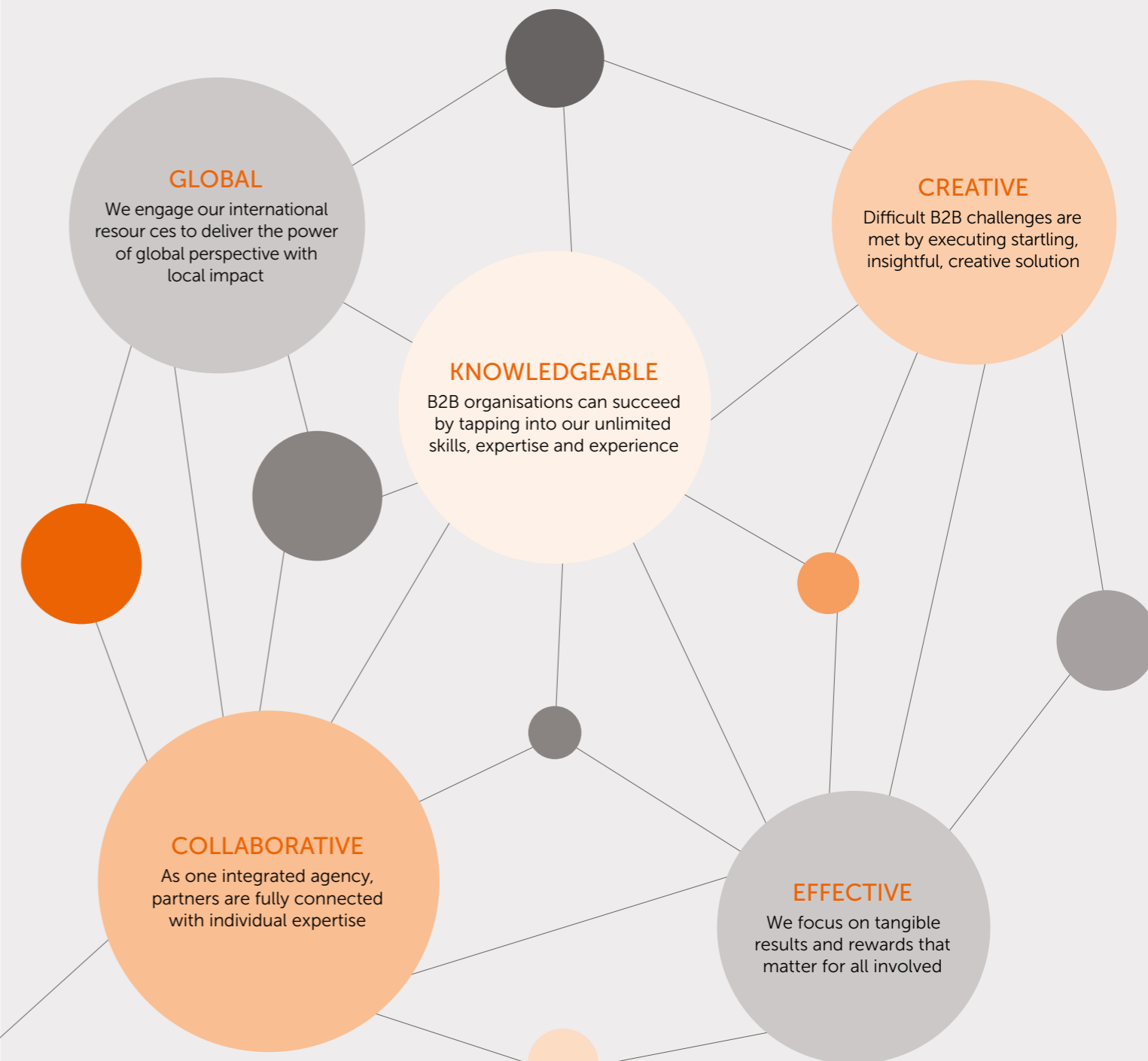
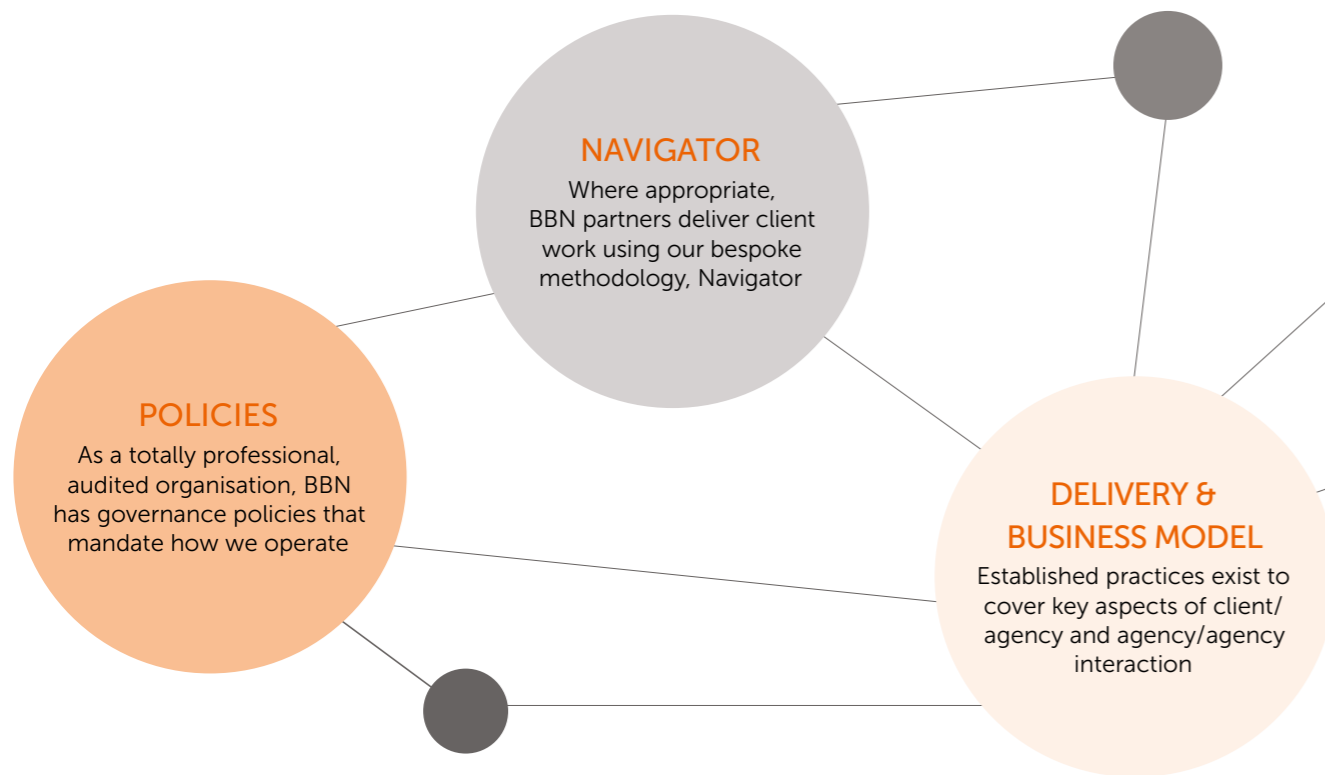
Regional representatives from our partners continually work to identify and deliver business development opportunities, investing resources as necessary and implementing BBN's global portfolio locally.

Within specialised task teams, our partners contribute to BBN's development by applying their technical expertise to assess and continually improve best practices and the tools used to deliver results for our clients.

Our Executive Board is accountable for corporate governance, budgets, vision and strategy setting, and our product/service portfolio. The Board is supported by a full-time director-level team, which ensures the strategy is implemented and finances are managed appropriately. This team is also responsible for the marketing and brand management of BBN, partner recruitment, learning and development, and sales enablement.

## OUR APPROACH

We have several formally agreed tools, methodologies and practices that are central to our aims to enable consistency and constancy in delivery, whether with clients or amongst our partner agencies. These include:



## OUR VALUES

Whilst acknowledging that partner agencies have their own values, when representing BBN, all our colleagues respect and uphold the organisation's values:

### TRUST

We know that the conversation is the relationship, and we build trust by getting to know each other and honouring our promises

### INSPIRATION

We inspire change through systematic knowledge creation and sharing and we know that the more we know and share, the more there is to BBN

### FUN

We're serious about what we do, realising that everything is relative. We're creative people who do what we do best when having fun doing it



# Other departments boost you for your marketing leads.

Over 60 international offices and 1,200 B2B experts that know your battles are ready to help you smash down internal barriers and shatter the misguided expectations of anyone who foolishly questions you or your marketing capabilities.

Start making that difference. Partner with the right resources. Visit [www.bbn-international.com](http://www.bbn-international.com)



## STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

	Year 2019 – 2020	Year 2018 – 2019
Total sales	\$187,469,924	\$171,915,400
Gross income	\$95,713,811	\$114,471,114
EBITDA	\$7,987,443	\$7,115,303
% of total sales derived from B2B	87.56%	93 %
Number of equity partners	21	21
Current employees	1,150	1,126
Nationalities	45	45
Number of offices	61	43
Number of countries	32	29
Number of clients	500+	300+
B2B sectors covered	23	23

### 35

#### LANGUAGES SPOKEN

- Arabic
- Malay
- Belgian
- Danish
- Dutch
- English
- Estonian
- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Indian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Mandarin
- Moroccan
- Nepalese
- Norwegian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Russian
- Slovak
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Swedish
- Swiss
- Tagalog
- Tamil
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- US English
- Vietnamese
- Chinese
- Korean

### 500+

#### NUMBER OF CLIENTS



### 25%

#### INCREASE IN OFFICE LOCATIONS



# WHERE YOU'LL FIND US

## AMERICA

### BADER RUTTER

1433 N Water Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
USA  
[www.baderrutter.com](http://www.baderrutter.com)

### HEXAGROUP

3411 Mount Vernon  
Houston, TX 77006  
USA  
[www.hexagroup.com](http://www.hexagroup.com)

## APAC

### BUSINESS BRAINZ

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Business Brainz Building  
Kathmandu – 29  
Nepal  
[www.businessbrainz.com](http://www.businessbrainz.com)

### CELERITAS SOLUTIONS

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Business Avenue  
Main Shahrah-e-Faisal  
Karachi, Pakistan  
[www.celeritas-solutions.com](http://www.celeritas-solutions.com)

### MARKET LOGIC

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Miami, FL 33172  
USA  
[www.mymarketlogic.com](http://www.mymarketlogic.com)

### TAG ENTERPRISE

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Suite 260, Toronto, Ontario, L4J 0A7  
Canada  
[www.tagagency.ca](http://www.tagagency.ca)

### GETIT

6 UBI Road 1 #06-07  
Wintech Center,  
408726 Singapore  
Singapore  
[www.getit.marketing](http://www.getit.marketing)

### GREEN HAT

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Hawthorn, Melbourne,  
VIC 3122  
Australia  
[www.green-hat.com.au](http://www.green-hat.com.au)

## EMEA

### A+M

Nybrogatan 39  
114 39 Stockholm  
Sweden  
[www.aplusm.se](http://www.aplusm.se)

### COMCORP

255 boulevard Pereire  
75017 Paris  
France  
[www.comcorp.fr](http://www.comcorp.fr)

### CONTENTPLUS

Muranyi u. 13a  
1221 Budapest  
Hungary  
[www.contentplus.hu](http://www.contentplus.hu)

### FIFTH RING

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Aberdeen, AB10 1TH  
Scotland UK  
[www.fiftring.com](http://www.fiftring.com)

### HANGLANGERS

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9000 GENT  
Belgium  
[www.handlangers.com](http://www.handlangers.com)

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Brno, 612 00  
Czech Republic  
[www.marco.eu](http://www.marco.eu)

### REFERRO

Schijfstraat 24  
5061 KB Oisterwijk  
Netherlands  
[www.referro.nl](http://www.referro.nl)

### THE COLLECTIVE

2203-05 Mazaya Business Avenue  
Dubai  
United Arab Emirates  
[www.teamcollective.com](http://www.teamcollective.com)

### THE MARKETING HUB

Avenida de la Industria nº 4  
Alcobendas, Madrid  
Spain  
[www.the-marketinghub.com/en](http://www.the-marketinghub.com/en)

### TRUE

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104 Oxford Street  
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[www.trueagency.com](http://www.trueagency.com)

### WOB AG

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68519 Viernheim  
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[www.wob.ag](http://www.wob.ag)

