



**Earnings Calls Summarize Difficult 2022**

Major companies see positive signs for 2023

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# FTC Commissioner Wilson Announces Plans to Resign in Fiery Rebuke to Chairwoman Khan’s Leadership

Wilson’s departure will leave Republicans without a voice on the Commission until the seat is filled

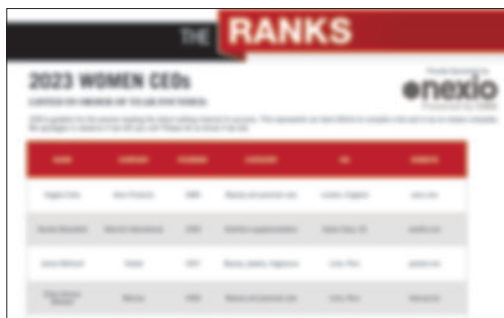


On Feb. 14, the Federal Trade Commission’s lone Republican Commissioner, Christine Wilson, announced in a blistering *Wall Street Journal* op-ed that her resignation was imminent due to her belief that Commission Chair Lina Khan has been abusing her power.

Nominated to the FTC in 2018 by President Trump, Commissioner Wilson is an antitrust lawyer who has penned several dissenting statements to push back on Khan’s ambitious agenda, including the Commission’s November 2022 Policy Statement that more broadly construes “Unfair Methods of Competition.” The FTC had also presented a rulemaking proposal in January 2023 to ban virtually all noncompete contracts.

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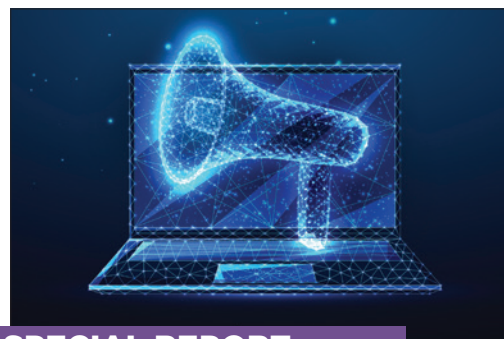


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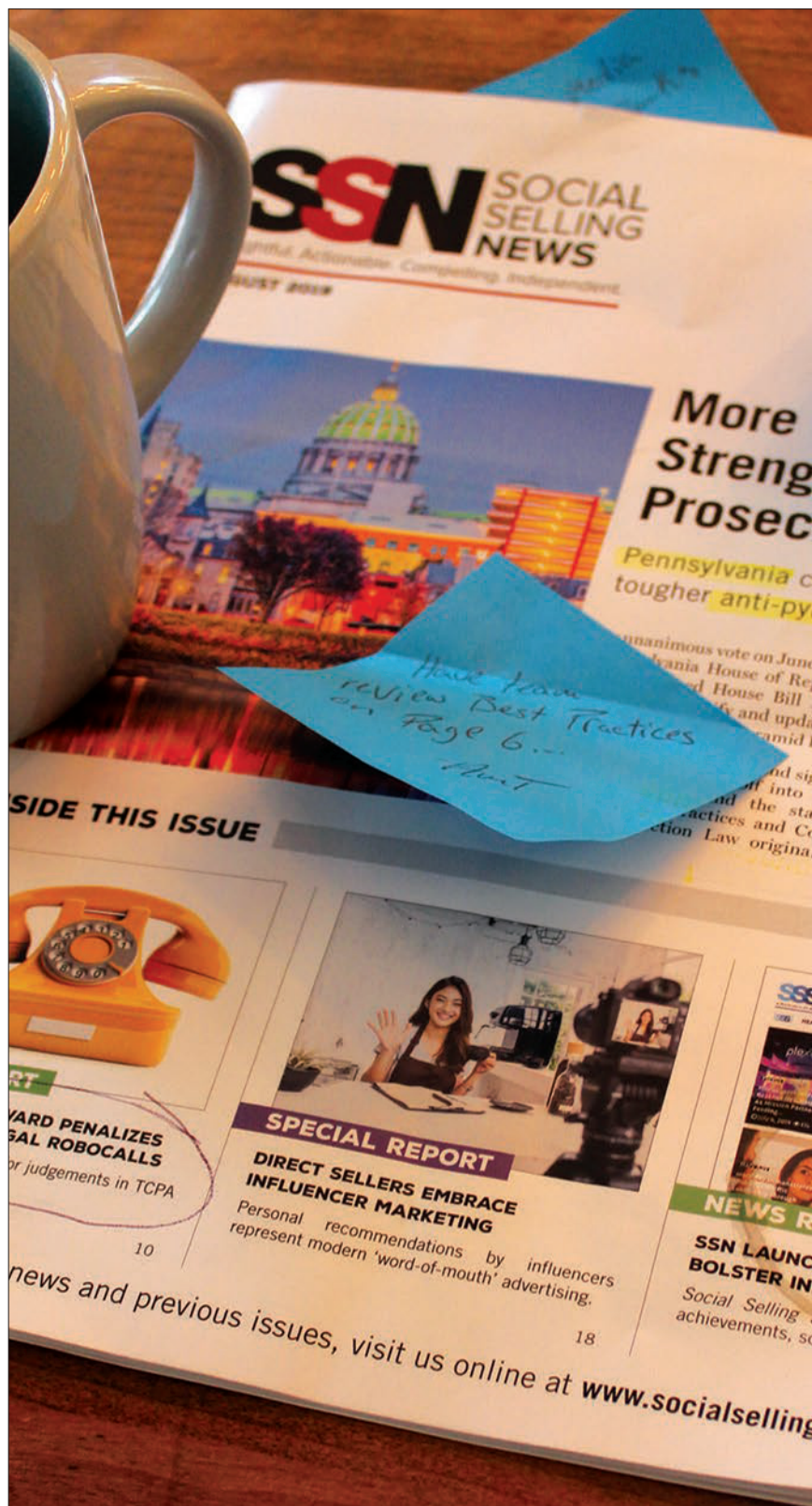
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**PUBLISHER'S NOTE**

## Integrating the Power of AI with the Power of Personal Connection

Direct sellers incorporate virtual tools to improve the person-to-person experience

Hello friends!

Remember the early days of the internet? I sure do. The beeps and chirps associated with "logging on" through a phone line will be forever ingrained in my memory. I recall the amazement, and also the confusion, as I tried to navigate the world wide web for the first time during my freshman year of college.

I also recall the realization that I was participating in something that would change... everything. The frustrations of slow connection speeds and rudimentary browsing options were balanced by the excitement of being able to glimpse the vast potential for this new technology.

Fast forward 32 years and I find myself having deja vu. This time, that "new" technology is artificial intelligence. The term was actually coined in 1956 in the early days of computer science. However, with the advances in computer processing speeds and the advent of virtual

reality and the Metaverse, millions of people across the world are now getting their first look at this new kind of digital revolution.

As I spoke with direct selling company leaders and suppliers over the past few years, I have been fascinated by the ways in which AI is being used to increase back-office efficiency and productivity, improve the customer experience and better equip the field with innovative training and selling tools.

As with any advance, there are challenges that come with it. The AI of the 21st century is requiring a thorough examination of the legal and ethical consequences of the use of this technology, especially in the realm of business and marketing and its impacts on privacy, security and finance. Lawmakers and regulators, in both the U.S. and Europe, are actively pursuing new laws and regs to govern the use of AI by businesses and entrepreneurs.

The greatest strength of direct selling will always be the human elements and the personal connections that come with the buying experience. I am eager to see how our channel will take advantage of the remarkable tools of artificial intelligence to innovate, market and educate, all the while preserving the tangible, real-life connections that set us apart.

I am always astounded when I am reminded that the span of time between the first flight by the Wright brothers and humans landing on the moon was just 66 years. Imagine the digital tools and capabilities we will have 66 years from now.

Warmly and virtually yours,



DAVID BLAND

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## COVER STORY ▶▶

### FTC COMMISSIONER PLANS TO RESIGN, CONTINUED FROM 1

#### Wilson Torches Chair Khan's 'Abuses' in 'Noisy Exit'

Coming four months after the resignation of her Republican colleague, Commissioner Noah Phillips, Wilson echoed Phillips' frustration with Khan's enforcement priorities. However, Phillips' departure was low-key and amiable compared to Wilson's self-described "noisy exit."

"Since Ms. Khan's confirmation in 2021, my staff and I have spent countless hours seeking to uncover her abuses of government power," Wilson penned in the *WSJ* opinion piece. "That task has become increasingly difficult as she has consolidated power within the Office of the Chairman, breaking decades of bipartisan precedent and undermining the commission structure that Congress wrote into law."

Commissioner Wilson called Chairwoman Khan's ethics into question for failing to recuse herself from the FTC's challenge to Meta's acquisition of a virtual reality gaming company after Khan previously voiced her opinion that Meta should be prohibited from acquiring any new companies. Khan wrote a report on the subject when she was a congressional staffer.

Wilson also questioned the ethics of Khan's allies—Commissioners Rebecca Slaughter and Alvaro Bedoya—after they heavily redacted Wilson's dissenting statement on the Meta acquisition case.

"Commission opinions commonly use redactions to prevent disclosure of confidential business information, but my opinion contained no such information. The redactions served no purpose but to protect Ms. Khan from embarrassment," wrote Wilson.

While Wilson conceded that "elections have consequences," she stated that her objection to Khan's leadership goes beyond policy differences. Wilson called the Chairwoman's honesty and integrity into question and suggested that the annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey results convey a drastic drop in the rank and file's respect for FTC leadership.

In 2020, 87% of FTC survey respondents believed that their senior leaders "maintain high standards of honesty and integrity." Commissioner Wilson stated that this figure currently stands at 49%.

"Many FTC staffers agree with Ms. Khan on antitrust policy, so these survey results don't necessarily reflect disagreement with her ends,"

Wilson stated. "Instead, the data convey the staffers' discomfort with her means, which involve dishonesty and subterfuge to pursue her agenda."

Wilson concluded the *WSJ* op-ed by categorizing her statements as following her own advice that she would give to her clients when they found themselves in legally questionable situations.

"Although serving as an FTC commissioner has been the highest honor of my professional career, I must follow my own advice and resign in the face of continuing lawlessness," said Wilson. "Consider this my noisy exit."

#### US Chamber Calls for Congressional Hearings

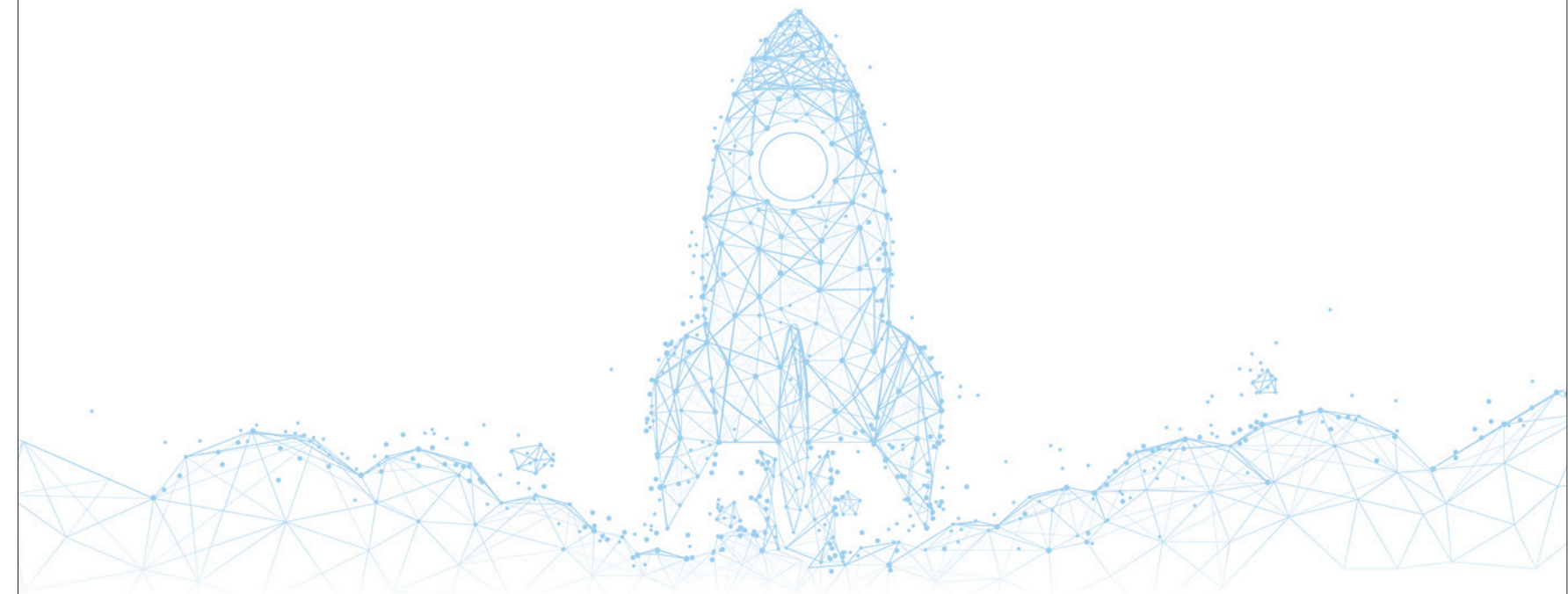
Two days after Commissioner Wilson's statement, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Senior Vice President of International Regulatory Affairs and Antitrust, Sean Heather, called for Congressional oversight action to reign in the Commission.

This statement comes one month after U.S. Chamber President and CEO Suzanne P. Clark's *WSJ* op-ed accusing the FTC of "making

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FTC COMMISSIONER PLANS TO RESIGN, CONTINUED FROM 7

an illegal power grab banning noncompete agreements in employment contracts.”

On Feb. 16, the Chamber sent a letter to Members of four House and Senate Committees asking Congress to forgo granting any further rulemaking or enforcement for the Commission “until it conducts a thorough investigation and oversight and puts forward reasonable guardrails around agency activity.”

The Chamber’s letter called out the Commission’s questionable use of unpaid experts and consultants to perform governmental functions, as reported by the FTC’s Office of Inspector General, stating it put the agency at legal and reputational risk. Heather’s letter also questioned the Commission’s use of “zombie votes” that allowed departed Commissioner Rohit Chopra’s votes to be counted on certain issues after he had departed the agency.

**End of the Consumer Welfare Standard**

The U.S. Chamber’s letter to Congress echoed the alarms previously raised by Commissioner

Wilson in regard to Chairwoman Khan’s moves to end the agency’s use of the consumer welfare standard in matters of antitrust enforcement.

The consumer welfare standard, one of the FTC’s guiding principles for over four decades, evaluates whether a business practice is likely to harm consumers through anti-competitive practices. The standard essentially provides that if a consumer is not harmed, then the Commission does not act.

“Beginning in June 2021, the Khan FTC upended decades-long, bipartisan practice by consolidating power to the Chair in Magnuson-Moss Rulemakings in consumer protection matters and ending its application of the consumer welfare standard in competition matters,” stated the U.S. Chamber in its letter. “These actions set the stage for the Commission to make end runs around congressional intent in both rulemakings and enforcement.”

Critics of the consumer welfare standard charge that it focuses too narrowly on price while ignoring other factors beneficial to consumers, such as the impact on small businesses, innovation and broader societal concerns.

**White House Considers Virginia Solicitor General for Commissioner Seat**

Bloomberg News reported on Feb. 17 that the Biden Administration was eyeing Republican Andrew Ferguson for one of the two empty seats at the Commissioner’s table. Law dictates that no more than three members of the same party can serve as FTC Commissioners.

Ferguson, Virginia’s Solicitor General since 2021, is a former aide to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and was recommended for the Commissioner seat by the Kentucky Senator. Commissioner Wilson has not yet set a date for her resignation.

SSN



David Bland is the publisher of Social Selling News.

**DSA Submits Comments on FTC’s Business Opportunity Rule ANPR**

By SSN Staff

On Jan. 31, The Direct Selling Association (DSA) filed public comments on the Federal Trade Commission’s Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) on the Business Opportunity Rule (BOR). The ANPR was released in November 2022, at which time the Commission asked the public to comment on the broadening of the rule and also on the effectiveness of the current BOR.

Established in 2012, the BOR sets guidelines for those selling a business opportunity to ensure that potential buyers receive the information required to make an informed decision. The rule prohibits sellers from making deceptive claims about the

opportunity and mandates key disclosures to be provided via a disclosure document, including identifying information about the seller, information and substantiation of the seller’s earnings claims, documentation of any legal actions against the seller, the cancellation and refund policy, and a list of purchasers from the previous three years.

The disclosure document must be provided to the prospective buyer seven days before a contract is signed, and would, according to the DSA, “impose undue burdens on direct sellers.”

In the 11-page letter, the DSA urged the Commission to finalize its ongoing

earnings claims rulemaking before updating the BOR. The Association also reminded the FTC that the Direct Selling Self-Regulatory Council (DSSRC) was created after the current BOR was finalized, and that this self-regulation provides for even more consumer protections that the Commission seeks to establish through the seven-day waiting period.

While direct sellers are not exempted from the current BOR, the FTC chose not to categorically include sellers of network marketing opportunities within the scope of the final rule after it received over 17,000 public comments in 2011—the overwhelming majority of which urged the Commission not to

include legitimate direct selling companies in the rule.

The DSA’s public comment, signed by Association President Joseph N. Mariano, urged the Commission to not broadly cover direct sellers if the rule is expanded.

“DSA hopes the FTC keeps the scope of the BOR narrowly tailored to not broadly cover direct sellers,” the comment letter states. “Rather than revisiting placing burdensome requirements on businesses that have been previously considered, the Commission should refer to its prior discussions on and defer to its previous decisions on this issue.”

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# Public Companies Share Year-End Quarterly Earnings

CEOs confident that improvements of key metrics will reverse the losses of 2022

By Dave Rauf



## Herbalife

Herbalife boosted profits by 42% in the fourth quarter, as the company's key business metrics stabilized and it leveraged a significant reduction in expenses during the final three months of 2022.

The direct selling giant beat analyst expectations for the quarter, and its new CEO, the returning Michael Johnson, said a plan has been put in place to return to growth in the "near term."

The seller of supplements and weight-loss products reported total fourth-quarter sales were down 10.4% to \$1.2 billion. That includes a 9% slide in North America sales.

However, the company's cost of sales fell 10% to \$265.6 million, and selling, general, and administrative expenses dropped by nearly 15% during the quarter. Both savings helped bolster net income for the three-month period.

For the full year, profit was down 28% to \$321 million.

Herbalife officials had warned that profit for the year would be lower than 2021, which saw the company set a full-year record for sales.

"There's no way to get around that we are disappointed in our performance for fiscal 2022 and our last quarter," Johnson told analysts during an earnings call.

"Here's my promise. Our sales will grow, and our results will improve," he added.

Herbalife named Johnson, who was previously CEO until 2020, as the chairman and chief executive following the sudden departure of John Agwunobi in late October 2022. Johnson has now served in the unusual combo role of Agwunobi's predecessor and successor.

Part of the plan to get back to growth, Johnson said, includes Herbalife focusing on content innovation and growing its product portfolio, transforming from a supplement seller to a "health and wellness company." That means "new products, new services, coaching, and wellness evaluations available through our distributor platform for our customers," he said.

Herbalife said it also can not provide guidance for 2023 at this time, "given the rapidly shifting macroeconomic sentiment and

backdrop, as well as increased volatility in the market."

The company added that trends showing key business metrics were stabilizing during the third and fourth quarters of last year are expected to continue into the first quarter of 2023, but said not to expect a return to growth during the first quarter of 2023.

"What we're suggesting," said Chief Financial Officer Alex Amezcua, "is that the first quarter probably has seeds planted for that return to growth."

## The Numbers

- **2022 Total Profit:** \$321.3 million, down 28%
- **2022 Total Sales:** \$5.2 billion, down 10%
- **4Q Profit:** \$54.4 million, up 42%
- **4Q Sales:** \$1.2 billion, down 10%

## Regions

- **2022 North America:** \$1.2 billion, down 12%
- **4Q North America:** \$275 million, down 9%
- **2022 Europe and the Middle East:** \$1.1 billion, down 19%
- **4Q Europe and the Middle East:** \$246.8 million, down 15%
- **2022 South and Central America:** \$786 million, down 4%

- **4Q South and Central America:** \$191 million, up 3%
- **2022 Asia Pacific:** \$1.7 billion, up 6%
- **4Q Asia Pacific:** \$397 million, flat
- **2022 China:** \$391 million, down 38%
- **4Q China:** \$71 million, down 45%

## In-Person Events Set To Play Key Role in 2023

During the call with analysts, Johnson also highlighted the company's push to host more in-person events, a strategy that company officials expect to yield more sales.

So far in 2023, Herbalife has hosted 170 distributor events around the world, allowing the company to reach 175 distributors with new training and face-to-face engagement.

Johnson said he expected "energy and engagement being generated at our in-person events will translate into improving metrics in 2023."

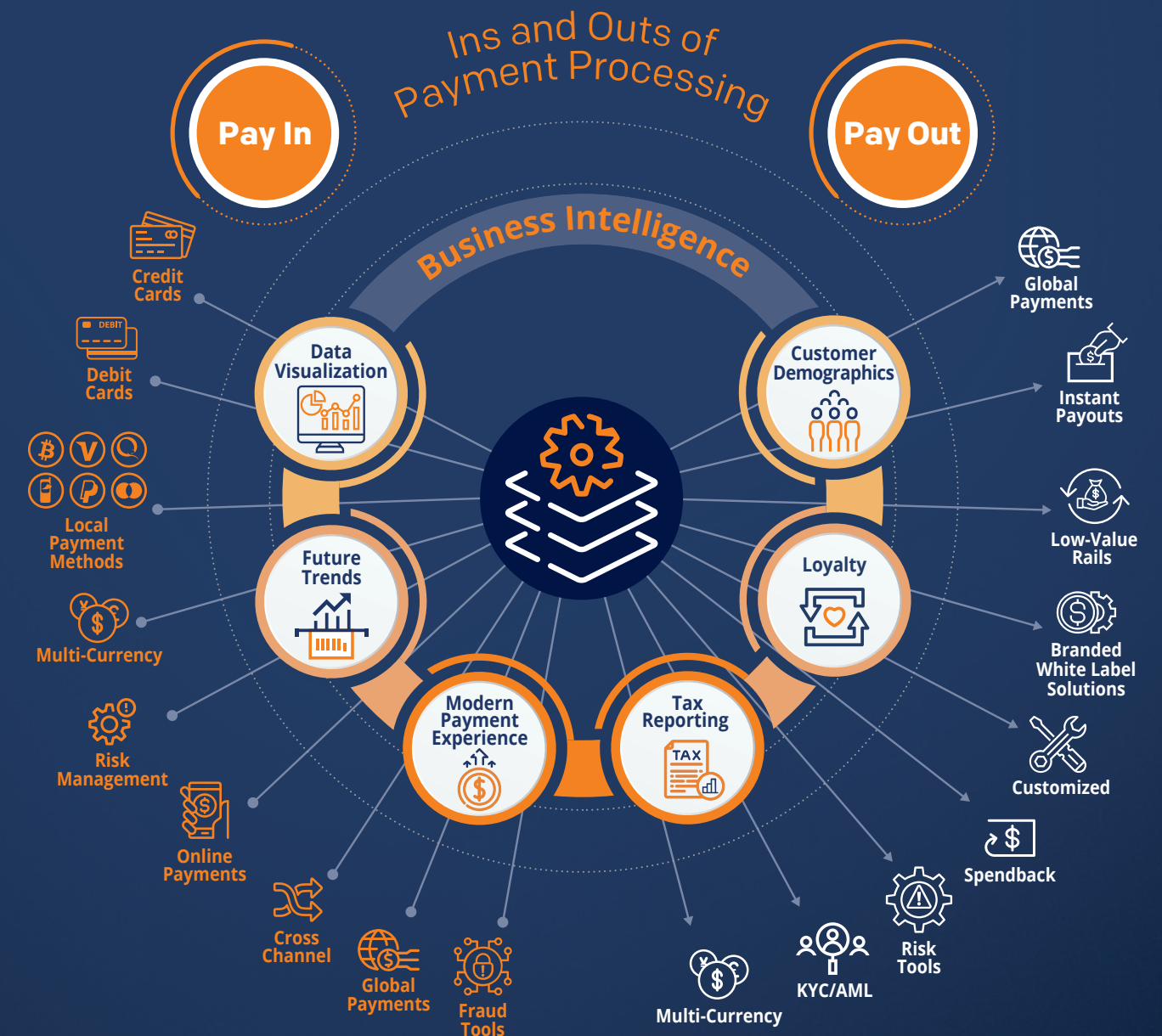
## New Vision From New CEO

Johnson also touched on his plans to steer Herbalife back to growth after a challenging 2022. The focus, he said, will be on products and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



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**PUBLIC COMPANIES SHARE, CONTINUED FROM 10**

content, along with a \$400 million digital transformation that's currently ongoing.

But he added that the company has to "get more in tune with the times" as it shifts from a "weight-loss company" to becoming a "high-performance nutrition company."

"We're going to even take it further and deeper and wider with our verticals," Johnson said, "and we'll use our digital platform to enhance all that."



**USANA**

USANA Health Sciences reported profit of \$12.8 million in the fourth quarter, as sales and revenue dipped in the final three months of the year amid the continually evolving COVID-19 landscape in parts of Asia.

Overall, the company said it made \$69.4 million profit in 2022 on sales of \$999 million, both double-digit declines compared to a year ago.

CEO Kevin Guest said last year presented a challenging environment for not just USANA, but the direct selling industry as a whole.

"We remained focused on executing our long-term growth strategy," Guest told analysts during a recent earnings call.

Several key Asia markets were negatively impacted during the fourth quarter by restrictions related to COVID-19, Guest said. That includes parts of Southeast Asia such as the Philippines and Malaysia, in particular.

But in China, the government's decision to lift its Zero COVID policy late in 2022 helped drive an increase in sales and customer activity for USANA in its single biggest market, said Guest.

"While we are encouraged by this increase in demand, it is still too early to forecast long-term consumer demand in this critical market, particularly given the seasonality we experienced during the Chinese New Year holiday, which recently ended," Guest said. "We anticipate that we will begin to see a more normalized operating environment in China during 2023 and remain confident in our long-term growth opportunity in this key market."

Even as sales and profit dropped compared to 2021, Guest said USANA made progress in several areas that position the company for "future growth," including making advances in digital commerce initiatives, new market expansion, finalizing two acquisitions, and the launch of an affiliate program in select markets.

"Notwithstanding the challenges we have seen in China and many of our other markets," Guest said, "USANA's business has remained financially and operationally strong and is strategically positioned for future growth."

USANA said it expects full-year sales in the range of \$850 million to \$950 million.

**The Numbers**

- **2022 Total Sales:** \$999 million, down 16%
- **2022 Total Profit:** \$69.4 million, down 40%
- **4Q Sales:** \$228 million, down 15%
- **4Q Profit:** \$12.8 million, down 37%

**Regions**

- **4Q Asia Pacific sales:** \$183 million, down 6%
- **4Q China sales:** \$118 million, down 10%
- **4Q Americas and Europe sales:** \$45 million, down 11%

**2023 Market Expansion**

During the call with analysts, USANA President Jim Brown briefly touched on the company's plans to enter a new international market later this year. Without naming the market, Brown said USANA is currently looking at the fourth quarter of 2023 to launch, noting that the company has been preparing for that over the past year and half.

"When we do this, you have to go in and register, and find the right people to run the market. We have been very successful, excited about the talent that we brought on for that market," he said. "So ... it won't have a huge impact on this year, so we will look at a bigger impact in '24, but that creates excitement through the field."



**Nu Skin**

Nu Skin beat Wall Street estimates for the fourth quarter, netting a profit of \$57 million after reporting a loss in the same period a year earlier.

For the quarter, the Utah-based seller of skin care and nutritional products posted sales of \$522 million, a year-over-year decrease of 22%, as revenue tumbled in most global regions. The exceptions: the



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U.S., where sales increased by 4%, and Japan and Hong Kong, where revenue was up 2% on a constant-currency basis.

A variety of macroeconomic factors—including COVID-19, foreign exchange rates, inflation and supply chain issues—affected the company globally throughout 2022, said CEO Ryan Napierski. And while the macro-environment remains uncertain, Nu Skin is expecting it to "improve throughout the year."

"We remain well positioned to capitalize on enormous landscape shifts that are transforming the beauty and wellness industries around personalization, social commerce and the gig economy," Napierski told analysts during a recent earnings call.

The company reported 2022 full-year profit of \$104.8 million on \$2.07 billion sales, both double-digit declines from a year earlier.

The biggest year-over-year decline in Nu Skin's business stemmed from strict COVID measures in China,

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 14**

People are our Purpose



**JONI ROGERS-KANTE  
SENEGENCE**

**REAL PEOPLE. REAL STORIES.**

Joni Rogers-Kante credits her commitment to consistency, devotion to family, and abiding faith to achieving success as a business and family woman. Joni has paved a path toward a life of abundance, and she devotes her life to empower others to find theirs, too.

For Joni, her company Senegence stands for more than its cutting-edge and highly desirable beauty products. Its cause-driven purpose is to promote more women

in business and care for communities in need through its nonprofit. Not only has Joni built a rewarding global business, she is also changing lives closer to home. Joni passionately protects rights of independent entrepreneurs in the direct selling industry and works to improve the economic lifeblood in her homestate of Oklahoma.

Joni believes accomplishment is unique for everyone, and we are all here with our own important purpose. She says a fulfilling life

is made with the four E's: *Earn, Evaluate, Evolve, and Explore*. And when we value and respect each other, we will all move forward together.

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**PUBLIC COMPANIES SHARE, CONTINUED FROM 12**

with the company estimating a \$208 million revenue shortfall stemming from disappointing sales in that country, Napierski said.

While China has lifted COVID restrictions, opening up in recent weeks, there has also been a surge of infections, according to Nu Skin. The company expected conditions in its second largest market to remain difficult throughout at least the first half of 2023, and it is estimating sales in the country will be down this year by anywhere from 23% to 35%.

Aside from China, Nu Skin executives told analysts they see opportunities for growth in each of their segments in 2023.

The company said it expects revenue in the range of \$450 million to \$490 million for the fiscal first quarter.

**The Numbers**

- **2022 Total Profit:** \$104.8 million, down 29%
- **2022 Total Sales:** \$2.07 billion, down 18%
- **4Q Sales:** \$522 million, down 22%
- **4Q Profit:** 57.2 million

**By Region**

- **2022 Americas/Pacific Sales:** \$508.5 million, down 7%
- **2022 Europe and Middle East Sales:** \$204.2 million, down 28%
- **2022 China Sales:** \$303.6 million, down 37%
- **4Q Americas Sales:** \$129 million, down 10%
- **4Q Europe and Middle East Sales:** \$55.3 million, down 19%
- **4Q China Sales:** \$74 million, down 43%

**Smart Beauty Devices to Receive 'Big Push' in 2023**

Nu Skin launched its first IoT-connected beauty device last year, and the company has big ambitions for the line of products moving forward.

The smart device segment is a key part of Nu Skin's product personalization strategy, offering customized treatment options, intelligent coaching and skincare routine tracking. The devices are intended to be coupled with the company's consumer-facing app that offers product personalization, providing Nu Skin with valuable customer data about product usage.

As Napierski summed it up in the call with analysts: "We will now be able to capture additional insights like usage patterns and habits to integrate with the customers' state of skincare needs and goals, and we'll get all of that data in real time."

During that call, Nu Skin Chief Financial Officer Mark Lawrence said smart beauty devices are "our big push this next year."

Nu Skin plans to grow sales of its line of IoT-connected beauty products — dubbed "iO devices"—to about 15% of the company's total revenue in 2023. The goal is for those smart beauty devices to make up 30% of the company's overall sales by 2025.

But Napierski noted there's still a long way to go, as the company's first smart device launched just months ago in the fourth quarter of 2022. It accounted for less than 5% of total revenue last year.

"The importance of iO devices," he said, "are the systems that are attached to that and the integration of those systems across our broader portfolio."



**LifeVantage**

Riding robust sales from a new liquid collagen product,

LifeVantage reported second-quarter revenue of \$53.7 million, up 3% compared to the same time a year ago.

The sales increase during the most recent three-month period marked the company's first year-over-year revenue jump in 10 quarters, said President and CEO Steve Fife. On a constant-currency basis, revenue increased by 7.4%.

"We are very pleased with our latest results, including a return to top line growth in the second quarter, but recognize it is still early in our transformation journey," Fife told analysts during a recent earnings call.

The Utah-based supplements and skincare products company reported a second-quarter loss of \$1.1 million, after it had reported a profit in the same period a year earlier.

Halfway through fiscal 2023, revenue totaled \$105.4 million, which is flat compared to the same period a year ago.

A key driver in LifeVantage's revenue increase during the second quarter was the U.S. market. Revenue generated by domestic market sales increased by 15.4%, and Fife said the company is "encouraged by recent trends in several other key markets."

LifeVantage's liquid collagen—launched last June—largely propelled those U.S. sales increases, and Fife said the product "remains a top performer and contributor to the U.S. revenue gains."

During the call with analysts, Fife highlighted LifeVantage's plans to continue expanding marketplaces for its liquid collagen product. That includes launching in Japan, Australia and New Zealand in March.

Additionally, he said the company has fixed supply chain issues for its

liquid collagen product, after orders exceeded projected demand in its first full quarter of sales last year, which had created a "significant backlog."

"The breadth of the demand for our unique collagen product bodes well for future quarters as well as our overall product strategy," he said.

For 2023, LifeVantage has already launched three new products, and starting March 1, the company is planning to introduce a revamped e-commerce platform. The company also announced a strategic transformation, dubbed "LV360," earlier this year that Fife described in the earnings call as "designed to forge a new, more modern chapter in our company."

LifeVantage expects full-year revenue in the range of \$202 million to \$212 million for 2023.

**The Numbers**

- **2Q Profit:** Loss of \$1.1 million
- **2Q Sales:** \$53.7 million, up 3%

**By Region**

- **2Q Americas Sales:** \$39.7 million, up 14%
- **2Q Asia/Pacific and Europe Sales:** \$13.9 million, down 20%

SSN



Dave Rauf is a Social Selling News Contributor.



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# Digital Marketing's Baseline for Growth

Learn best practices for optimizing growth online

By Jenna Lang Warford

Creating a strong strategy to support distributors in the digital marketing and commerce realm is top of mind for channel executives.

Digital has surpassed “look what we are providing for our field” and entered the realm of “this is the minimum, executing well is required.”

Scott Kramer, CEO of MultiBrain, clarifies this by saying, “Executive teams need to understand that digital touches every aspect of the business. This isn’t just a function of sales or IT. Best practice is making sure that digital, digital intelligence, and aptitude are in all departments: sales and marketing, training, sales development, and of course, technology.”

Kevin Raulston, founder and CEO of **Global Direct Partners**, suggests, “The best strategy is to be inventive, be open and don’t wait on the sidelines. Because if you’re not working on these solutions, you’ll probably be left behind.”

A key component to accomplishing a company’s goals with digital strategy, according to **PM International** General Manager of Sales for U.S. and Canada Gordon Hester, is having team members who understand the dynamics of the channel’s sales field.

“Marketing people that do not know how to sell or do not understand our business model can create a lot of challenges with a traditional

“Marketing people that do not know how to sell or do not understand our business model can create a lot of challenges with a traditional understanding, because they have transactional mindsets and we’re a people-centric business.”

— Gordon Hester, General Manager of Sales for U.S. and Canada, PM International

understanding, because they have transactional mindsets and we’re a people-centric business,” Hester says. “Their strategies and their insights are generally off base because they don’t understand the business model and how it works.

“So I tend to look for people who have some understanding of how to sell and some understanding of our industry, although they can be taught if they’re willing to learn,” he says. “It’s crucial because the distributors are in the trenches, and it’s our job to support them.” Digital marketing strategies must address the core values of direct selling, which include relationships and community.

“When people come in and they don’t understand the mindset of the distributor and the most likely distributor response, it can destroy a company in a matter of months, 60 days. Not six months—60 days,” Hester says.

Dana Fortune, **4Life Research’s** vice president of marketing and sales initiatives, identified key areas of digital marketing that needed specific strategists so the company could help distributors flourish.

“I identified areas of digital marketing that needed to be strengthened. We now have an Influencer Strategist, SEO Strategist, Analytic Strategist, and an Email Marketing Strategist. We’ve come a long way, and I’m thankful our executive team understood the need and supported the initiative.”

### Meta and the Metaverse

Fortune, who began her career at 4Life in digital marketing, believes the current trajectory of the digital world, including the Metaverse, is both thrilling and intimidating.

“I believe it’s an opportunity to showcase our products like never before. Attending an event via streaming is really only the beginning. When people become immersed in the Metaverse, it’s a world away from the norm. It’s interactive, a literal out-of-body experience.

“Of course, it needs to be compelling enough for them to stay in the virtual reality. So the aim will be the same for direct selling events and for direct selling when it comes to shopping experiences.

“Being interactive in a virtual experience allows us to have the best of both worlds,” she says. “You can stay at home, but you can be around others in the Metaverse. That’s what I’m focusing on when it comes to the future of digital marketing. But it remains important to have basic strategies

like SEO, keywords, blogs and social media nailed down before beginning to explore other things like the Metaverse.”

While Meta is the Mark Zuckerberg-led conglomerate that owns more than 90 companies—most prominently Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Oculus VR—the Metaverse is a current and future virtual world where Meta and companies such as Google and Microsoft are building spaces within. It’s a place where people work, shop, learn and interact with each other from the comfort of their couches in the physical world.

Ostensibly, one can be connected to the world through portals to a 3D virtual realm that’s palpable—like real life, only bigger and better. Some envision digital facsimiles of ourselves, called avatars, moving freely from one experience to another,

taking our identities and our money with us.

### Creating and Connecting Communities

This matters to direct selling companies because it redefines digital success by opening new avenues to interact, create community, transact sales and connect sales field teams.

Raulston believes that one key to digital success could be engaging with team members and prospective customers within established platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok then moving these relationships into centralized communication hubs.

“In Europe, a lot of the companies are leading their whole teams on WhatsApp groups, not Facebook. You could also do that with a project management

“The idea that Facebook is going away is nonsense. Meta and its last earnings call was as strong as ever.”

— Scott Kramer, CEO and Chief Brain, MultiBrain

communication kind of tool like Slack. In Asia, WeChat is popular,” Raulston says.

“While it’s not cheap, you can also move communication onto white-label platforms owned by companies or sales field leaders,” he says.

### Don’t Buy the Hype; Facebook Isn’t Dying

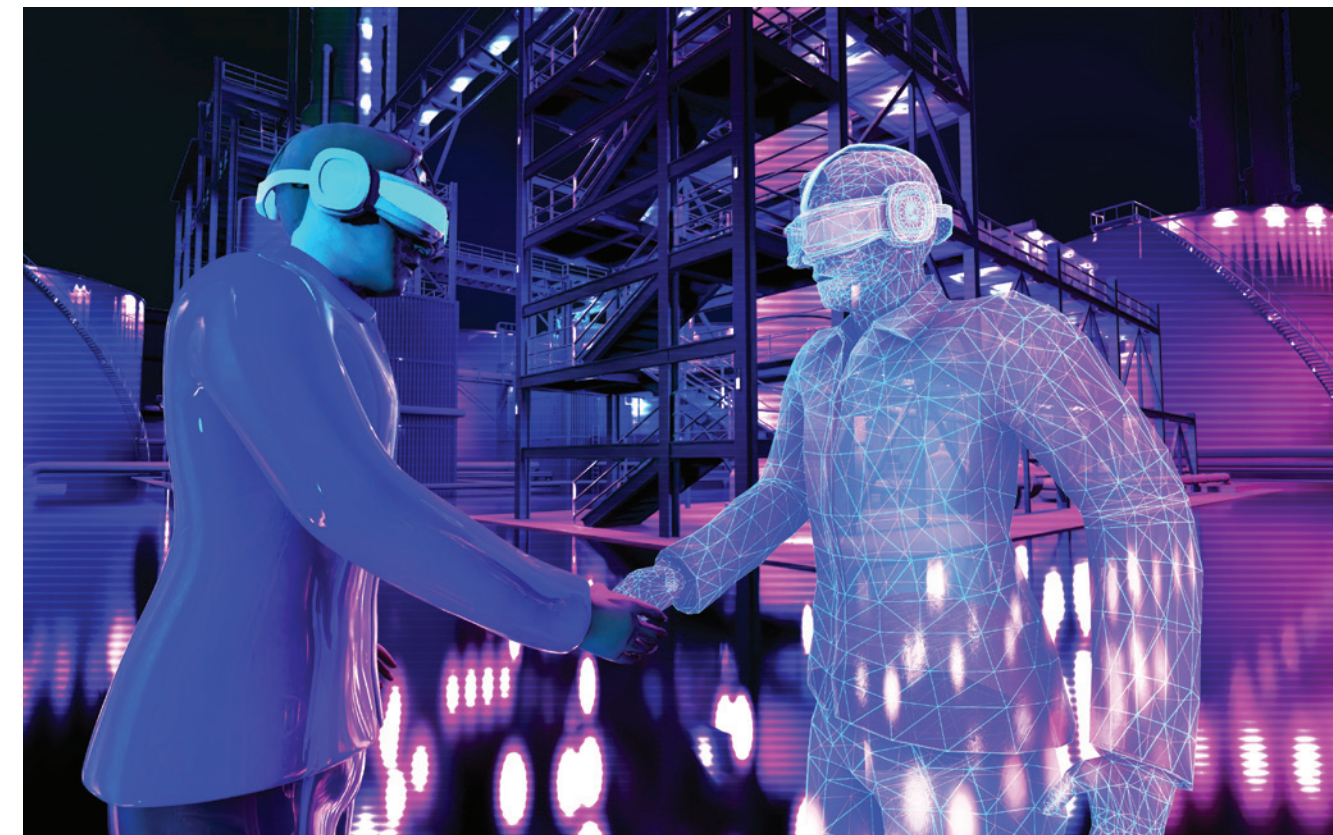
“Social media has kind of split in half over the last year with one side being a passive, entertaining experience,” Kramer says.

“TikTok and Reels are passive versus the true aspect of social media that’s most important for the direct selling channel, which is creating influencers and actually building community. Instagram is great for watching reels to be entertained, educated or enlightened. But people aren’t having conversations there. People aren’t building community there.

“Zuckerberg just announced new broadcast tools, which are just one-way chats basically to give a one-to-many message. Which still isn’t the interactive side,” he says.

“People will still go to Facebook when they want to get in touch with the people they care about and love the most, for interaction.

“The idea that Facebook is going away is nonsense. Meta and its



CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

DIGITAL MARKETING'S BASELINE, CONTINUED FROM 17

last earnings call was as strong as ever," Kramer adds. "While it has been chasing the TikTok trend, you still see that when it comes to community and actually being social you're doing it on Facebook. Facebook Connect is still integrated into over 80% of websites."

In terms of social commerce, Fortune says she leans toward Facebook declining. "There has already been a pivot in terms of e-commerce and social commerce on Facebook. They got rid of their live shopping feature last year, in an effort to focus on reels."

But for connection and community, she says, "Facebook remains a valuable place for direct sellers to showcase their lifestyle and maintain relationships and build communities."

"As companies, we look at these new social media platforms, like Be Reel and TikTok and gravitate towards them," she adds.

"But it's important to note that most of our company's main demographics are still on these Meta-powered platforms like Facebook. So it's key to be present on these newer platforms, of course, but also to maintain a strong content strategy for Facebook as well. Finding that happy medium is where you're going to see success in terms of

the older platforms and the newer platforms."

Kramer notes that Meta owns three of the top five social networks but more importantly, "it has the biggest audience and the biggest penetration across all demographics. You're going to start seeing smaller social networks, the creation of smaller communities that are more trustworthy and where you feel safer."

"You'll see Facebook and even Meta create community areas on Instagram, create groups in different areas where you can once again cocoon kind of into a smaller community."

**Back to the Basics, but Better**

Meta will continue to thrive because Facebook offers what TikTok doesn't yet offer. "In one word, it offers *community*," Fortune says. "It offers a wide potential for direct sellers to really find their niche and then hone in on that specific niche and market their products within their community where it's a safe environment."

"The trends of 2024 digital marketing, or just marketing in general, say that we need to be focused on community," she says. "Who does community better than direct selling? I think

that if we kind of dial back and stop looking at these new shiny platforms, and say, 'Hey, you know what, Facebook is still really great for community,' that's what 2024 is going to be big on. Let's do what direct sellers do best and help the sales field when it comes to capitalizing on these Facebook groups and showcasing their lifestyles on their own profiles." This, she adds, includes training on the basics.

**The Future of Virtual Selling and Virtual Commerce**

Fortune and Kramer agree that the key to sales field success is establishing authentic, relatable content and avoiding "sales-y" posts.

"It's crucial to take your followers throughout your day and experiences with you, all while sprinkling in how you and your followers can use the company's products on a daily basis," Fortune says.

"This eliminates the need to make claims on social media. Using curiosity to generate interaction can also be an effective approach, as well as demonstrating how and why products are convenient."

"Allowing followers to reach out to the distributor enables them to offer a link with a discount, and helps make the relationship more valuable," she says.

"It's perfect because there's no compliance involved, there's no being sales. The individuals who are seeing success on social media now and for the foreseeable future have cracked the code with utilizing attraction marketing. And it's really refreshing to see sales come through on these digital platforms by using that strategy."

**Creating the Strongest Strategy for Digital Marketing**

The strongest strategy for digital marketing seems to be a mix of platforms. "I think the new strategy is using tools like Reels and then when it's time to really connect with them, you do that over on Facebook or the platform that's gaining traction, WhatsApp," Kramer says.

"All over the world, younger demos are creating their own smaller communities; smaller, dare I say, than chat rooms. Everything's cocooning into these smaller communities or subsets of communities for chats and conversations."

"The biggest mistakes direct selling companies make with social selling is applying traditional marketing methods that are more rooted in commercials," he continues.

"These commercials or ad types of content go against community standards on social networks. So there's a conflict, and probably that's why so much content gets flagged and removed."

The problem is throughout the industry, but there's a particular situation with party plan distributors, he says. "When using Facebook groups for parties and regurgitating the same content over and over, sometimes doing 20 party groups at a time, it's going to be considered a bot or spam

**"I think affiliate marketing, rather than influencers clearly paid to rep a product, is here to stay. And that should excite us."**  
 — Dana Fortune, Vice President of Marketing and Sales Initiatives, 4Life Research

that doesn't belong on social." He suggests training the field to tell their story, rather than post ads.

**The Future**

Fortune believes what we know about Gen Z will continue to impact trends. "I think there will be a big shift in the way that we purchase from influencers; Gen Z wants realness; not the inauthentic #sponsored."

"So I think affiliate marketing, rather than influencers clearly paid to rep a product, is here to stay. And that should excite us. Because now more than ever direct sellers and direct selling companies have the opportunity to talk about our products in a non-intimidating way that doesn't scream 'direct selling!' so it isn't off-putting to this younger generation."

Statistically, Gen Z doesn't necessarily associate direct selling with the stigma previous generations may have, Fortune says.

"This creates a huge opportunity to market to this younger generation, and I think that that will be what we focus the next half a decade on; looking at what really resonates with this younger

generation and taking a deeper dive into the Metaverse.

"Fifty-eight percent of the U.S. viewers said that they were interested in watching major sporting events such as the Super Bowl in a virtual stadium in the Metaverse with about a quarter of the viewers wanting interactive features during the big game," she adds.

"In terms of social selling and e-commerce, there will be more interactive virtual experiences where consumers can get their hands on a product in the Metaverse and test it out that way. I'm excited to see that happen down the line; it truly keeps us on our toes."

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Jenna Lang Warford is a Social Selling News Contributor.



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**"The best strategy is to be inventive, be open and don't wait on the sidelines. Because if you're not working on these solutions, you'll probably be left behind."**  
 — Kevin Raulston, CEO, Global Direct Partners

# DIGITAL MARKETING CHEAT SHEET

## What You Need to Know When Talking to Your Social Media Team



### Influencers: By The Numbers

“Back in the Day” (5 years ago) Influencers were people who had hundreds of thousands of followers. Now, there are a variety of terms used to indicate a specific type of Influencer, and the biggest results don’t necessarily come from the Influencer with the most followers, but from the Influencers that engage their audience in ways perceived as authentic and can drive specific audiences to a specific product. An Influencer with 5,000 loyal, faithful, dog-loving followers may be able to generate more pet-product sales than an Influencer with 1 million followers who have diverse interests.

- ▶ Nano Influencers: 1,000 – 10, 000 Followers
- ▶ Micro Influencers: 10,000 – 100,000 Followers
- ▶ Mid-Tier Influencers: 100,000 – 500,000 Followers
- ▶ Macro Influencers: 500,000 – 1 Million Followers
- ▶ Mega Influencers: 1 Million+ Followers

### Don’t Buy The Hype

“Facebook is dead. Long live Insta... TikTok... Be Reel...”  
Community remains the most important aspect of Direct Sellers, and Facebook remains the best place to build community.

“But Gen Z is on TikTok!”

Are they building relationships there? Or are they entertaining, educating and making single transactions there?

Traditional retailers looking for great product placement and transactions where they can garner repeat business for a brand may do well on TikTok. But currently a distributor looking to build a relationship with a customer just won’t get the ongoing relationships without community.

### Everyone Is Talking About Meta

Meta owns 91 companies; including three of the top five social networks. It has the biggest audience and the biggest penetration across all demographics.

Meta Platforms include:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- WhatsApp

Other social networks:

- ▶ TikTok is owned by the Chinese conglomerate, ByteDance.
- ▶ Twitter, Inc.’s majority shareholder is Elon Musk.
- ▶ Snapchat’s majority shareholders are Evan Spiegel & Bobby Murphy

### Help Distributors Win on Social Media

Have a digital expert on the following corporate teams:

- Sales & Marketing
- Training
- Business Development
- Technology

Help distributors with basic social media skills:

- Supply content calendars or strategies; exact duplication works against them.
- Provide highly customizable content (Canva provides great customization).
- Teach them how to engage on social media.
- Teach them how NOT to engage on social media.
- Share tutorials on creating community in the virtual world.
- Have instructions and checklists on social media basics (i.e., personal pages should connect to business pages/groups).
- Provide instruction for developing reels, stories, etc.

### Warning

- ▶ The Pandemic helped improve the direct selling channel’s reputation. Don’t allow poor training on social media connection to diminish it.
- ▶ 46% of Americans would welcome contact from direct sellers regarding business opportunities on social media.\*
- ▶ 67% of American consumers like personalized service direct sellers provide.\*

\*DSA 2020 Consumer Survey



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THE

# RANKS

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## 2023 WOMEN CEOs

LISTED IN ORDER OF YEAR FOUNDED.

SSN is grateful for the women leading the direct selling channel to success. This represents our best efforts to compile a list and is by no means complete. We apologize in advance if we left you out! Please let us know if we did.

NAME	COMPANY	FOUNDED	CATEGORY	HQ	WEBSITE
Angela Cretu	Avon Products	1886	Beauty and personal care	London, England	avon.com
Kendra Brassfield	NeoLife International	1958	Nutrition supplementation	Santa Clara, CA	neolife.com
Janine Belmont	Yanbal	1967	Beauty, jewelry, fragrances	Lima, Peru	yanbal.com
Érika Herrero Bettarel	Belcorp	1968	Beauty and personal care	Lima, Peru	belcorp.biz
Asma Ishaq	Modere	1992 / 2015	Home and personal care	Springville, UT	modere.com
Mary Young	Young Living	1993	Health and wellness	Lehi, UT	youngliving.com
Jill Blashack Strahan	Tastefully Simple	1995	Specialty food items	Alexandria, MN	tastefullysimple.com
Angela Loehr Chrysler	Team National	1997	Membership savings	Davie, FL	teamnationalusa.com
Amelia Warren	Epicure	1997	Food	North Saanich, BC	epicure.com/en-us
Malou Caluza	QNet	1998	Wellness, personal, home	Hong Kong	qnet.net
Joni Rogers-Kante	SeneGence	1999	Beauty and personal care	Foothill Ranch, CA	seneweb.senegence.com

# THE RANKS

NAME	COMPANY	FOUNDED	CATEGORY	HQ	WEBSITE
Nancy Bogart	Jordan Essentials	2000	Skin care and personal care	Nixa, MO	jordanessentials.com
Sharron Walsh	Isagenix International	2002	Personal care and wellness	Gilbert, AZ	isagenix.com
Camelle Kent	Thirty-One Gifts	2003	Handbags and jewelry	Columbus, OH	mythirtyone.com
Heidi Thompson	Scentsy	2003	Home and personal care	Meridian, ID	scentsy.com
Patty Percy	SimplyFun	2004	Educational games	Bellevue, WA	simplyfun.com
Britney Vickery	Initials Inc.	2005	Handbags and home products	Clarksville, GA	initials-inc.com
Jessica Herrin	Stella & Dot	2006	Jewelry, personal care, beauty	San Bruno, CA	stelladot.com
Chrissy Weems	Think Goodness Brand Collective	2010	Jewelry, Beauty, Wellness	Gilbert, AZ	thinkgoodness.com
Deborah K. Heisz	Neora	2011	Personal care and wellness	Dallas, TX	neora.com
Kristin Hubbard	Younique	2012	Beauty and personal care	Lehi, UT	yuniqueproducts.com

NAME	COMPANY	FOUNDED	CATEGORY	HQ	WEBSITE
Cara Brook	Seint	2013	Beauty	St George, UT	seintofficial.com
Michele Gay	LimeLife	2014	Beauty and skin care	Long Island City, NY	limelifebyalcone.com
Gina Smith & Karen Green	Style Dots	2014	Jewelry	Rockford, MI	styledotshome.com
Jesse Reese McKinney	Red Aspen	2017	Beauty and personal care	Meridian, ID	redaspenlove.com
Sarah Shadonix	Scout & Cellar	2017	Wine and spirits	Farmers Branch, TX	scoutandcellar.com
Melissa Thompson	Bellame	2018	Beauty	Fort Worth, TX	bellame.com
Lori Bush	Solvasa	2019	Beauty	San Francisco, CA	solvasalife.com
Laura Hunter	tori belle cosmetics	2019	Beauty	Woodinville, WA	toribellecosmetics.com
Meredith Bilbro	Bella Grace Global	2022	Wellness and Beauty	Tampa, FL	bellagraceglobal.com



I am really enjoying the content in **Social Selling News**, it's relevant, not too salesy and frankly a breath of fresh air in an industry that feels like it is in the dark ages at times.



– **Jim Nutt**  
Director I.T.  
SimplyFun, LLC



I rely on **Social Selling News** to continually update me regarding critical issues facing our industry. **I appreciate their in-depth research** and open, honest, and direct approach, especially with respect to difficult problems and trends that affect direct selling companies.



– **Jeff Stroud**  
Chief Visionary Officer  
Somnvie

# GETTING REAL

## with LifeVantage's Steve Fife

Steve Fife likes to exceed expectations. And that might be putting it mildly. Fife brings over three decades and a lot of financial leadership experience to LifeVantage where he uses big-picture strategic thinking and an in-the-weeds work ethic to create a healthy financial organization by focusing on delivering a growth strategy while creating value for customers, shareholders, and employees.

Fife is passionate about bringing affordable, science-based products to market as well as seeing companies reach their potential. Before joining LifeVantage, he served as Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer at Evidera, Inc., a private equity-sponsored professional services firm that provides outcomes research, market access, data analytics and epidemiology services to pharmaceutical companies. Prior to that, he worked as Chief Financial Officer for several publicly traded companies, including Active Power Inc. and LECG. In addition, he served in several senior financial roles for Gilead Sciences, Amkor Technologies and JDS Uniphase. In other words, he's been doing this for a while, and he enjoys it. Fife is a Certified Public Accountant (inactive) in the State of California and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Brigham Young University.



**SSN: Tell us about your journey to LifeVantage.**

My background is in accounting and finance. Coming from the San Francisco Bay area, most of my experience has primarily been with publicly traded tech companies. I've been with a number of publicly traded companies—always on the business and finance side of the equation, focusing on driving value where I could.

I've never shied away from a challenge if I felt like it was within our control and that I could influence it. What I think is much more difficult for companies to be successful with is more on the revenue side, the demand for the product—is it positioned well? What are the market opportunities? And so my career has really been spent with companies that have had some kind of internal challenges and yet have great product differentiation and revenue opportunities. That was the case here. What I saw with LifeVantage when I joined six years ago, both from its product portfolio as well as its geographic footprint and market penetration was that there was a tremendous opportunity for growth.

So that's what attracted me. I've been fairly industry-agnostic my whole career. I've been with semiconductor companies, biotech companies and consulting companies. One of my skills has been coming in and understanding business drivers regardless of the industry and trying to leverage those in a way that drives results.

**SSN: You recently led a relaunch of the LifeVantage business plan, including a new consultant compensation plan and customer loyalty program. What sparked your decision to move forward with these changes?**

A lot of companies in this space experience some fairly rapid and significant growth when they launch, and that was the case with LifeVantage. We grew from \$0 to \$200 million in four years. For the last several years, we've had ups and downs, but nothing that could sustain any meaningful growth. The good news for LifeVantage is that over this time we developed extremely loyal customers and distributors that have stayed with us during a period of plateauing. I think that speaks volumes about our culture and our products. But I believe that we had gotten into a trap of trying to address larger issues with short-term solutions. Looking at our compensation plan from the highest level, which on a number of fronts has some very, very positive areas, I believed there were also some holes or gaps.

For years the company tried to plug those holes through incentives and promotions. What we saw were very short-term successes, but nothing that provided sustainable growth. So, when I was asked two years ago to step in as the CEO,

we had some pretty candid conversations as an executive team and with our board and asked, "Is this the company we want to be?" It turned out that no one wanted to be with a company that just aspired to maintain the status quo. So, we started an initiative that internally we refer to as LV360. And really what that means to me and to the team is that we picked up all of the stones. When we walked into this about a year ago, it was with a view that we needed to address some of these shortcomings in our compensation plan, but it became apparent really quickly that it wasn't just a compensation plan overhaul that was needed for us to grow the company.

Thus, with LV360, we've addressed several aspects of our business. First and foremost, we went through a "mission, vision, values" process in terms of who we really wanted to be and to establish a guidepost for that. We then looked at our product strategy and put some fairly significant guardrails in place in terms of what criteria was needed for both new and existing products. This strategy led us to the launch of a unique collagen product in June that has been wildly successful for us.

And we've continued to build upon that success. We launched three new products at an event that we called "Rock the Rhythm" which,

again, builds upon this product strategy. So the keys have been product strategy and a focus on compensation, of how we incentivize and pay our distributors. Historically, we have called our business partners "distributors," and we've changed that. We've now pivoted and are referring to them as "consultants." The reality is in today's network marketing world—social selling world—they're not distributing products. They're consulting, advising, and selling products to customers. And so that name is significant in my mind in terms of how we think about our business now.

LV360 was created holistically, and March 1 is another important milestone with several other initiatives going live. LV360 really accelerated very quickly from, "Gee, we need to change a few things around our compensation plan," to us taking a much broader approach to the business.

**SSN: After the channel's pandemic boom, many companies began to plateau and many have seen declines in sales. In response, several direct sellers have explored avenues that have been resisted in the past—affiliate marketing, retail**

**partnerships and influencers. What are your thoughts on these secondary marketing strategies, and is it something that should be embraced by the channel?**

I think they need to be more than embraced—they need to be addressed and adopted. Our compensation plan and business focus were established 13 years ago when the company made the decision to leave a retail model for direct selling. Previously, you could buy our flagship product at GNC, The Vitamin Shop and others. But it wasn't getting the traction that the company needed. We brought in advisors—and this obviously predates me—and the ultimate conclusion was that the direct selling channel, the network marketing channel, would allow the company to tell its story in a certain way. LifeVantage then developed a compensation plan that I think, 13 years ago, was spot on to address those business builders in this channel.

If you just think about the evolution, not just in our space, but of the consumer buying patterns over the last 13 years, I'd argue that they've accelerated and changed during the COVID period. Although it was a great compensation plan for 13 years, it didn't address today's consumers. So we planted a seed just over a year ago with our consultant base. Our vision was to become

an "AND" company. And by "AND," I wanted to make sure we could meet people who were passionate about LifeVantage products AND people who were passionate about a business opportunity—meet them where they are from a personal standpoint or from a capability standpoint. I wanted to be able to appeal to people who wanted to sell products and make \$500, \$1,000 or \$2,000 a month, whatever it was.

And that really became a rallying cry for our organization. Rather than creating two separate camps or groups within the company, we

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 28**

## GETTING REAL, CONTINUED FROM 27

started a year ago trying to unify and put in place the things that were beneficial to both of those personas through promotions and behaviors. So today, with the launch of our “Evolve” compensation plan, we remind ourselves that if we’re not evolving we are becoming, and we would continue to become irrelevant in a world that is changing.

We are thrilled with this compensation plan because it accomplishes the goals that we set over a year ago by appealing to customer gatherers—people who want to sell products and can make a reasonable commission comparable to affiliate marketers—and also to social sellers. They can make a reasonable income by selling products, but they can also build organizations with this new compensation plan. My goal wasn’t to swing a pendulum to one side or the other too far, but to find an opportunity, a plan, that could be embraced by everyone and provide an avenue regardless of what appeals to you.

**SSN: What are the keys to staying under the regulatory radar and building a consultant base that “does it right?”**

I’m a principle-based person. You teach correct principles, and then, hopefully, people will govern themselves. However, I think transparency is huge at every level and at every touchpoint. We have a phenomenal marketing/branding team that I think understands the guardrails of the environment we are in, and we are focused

on staying within and not even touching those guardrails. We want to be compliant.

This extends to our product roadmap and our product strategy of being able to develop products that are demonstrable, that are science-based, and that have a story that can be told without having to make significant form function claims.

I believe that the notion of a commitment to customers is critical to that, as well as a commitment to compliance monitoring. However, I think even more important than the monitoring aspect is the continual training. We have a number of training activities that are led by our compliance group. There are monthly trainings for consultants where we discuss how to compliantly talk about our products and income opportunities.

**SSN: What are the challenges that direct selling executives need to focus on over the next 5 to 10 years?**

I think that this industry is going to continue to evolve at an accelerated pace. Identifying that now and identifying what your company can do to work with existing leaders in helping bring them along in the transition is key. One of the things that I’m most proud about in terms of this last year and LV360 is how we integrated feedback from several different field leaders, our internal leadership team, and candidly, also our board of directors. We’ve got a phenomenal

board of directors. But to bring together and create a common vision was critical to the success that we’ve had so far, and it’s a continued success that I know we’re going to realize. So, bringing people along is critical.

I also think technology is going to continue to play a massive role in the evolution of this industry. If we’re not providing customers with convenient experiences that are comparable to what they’re getting elsewhere outside of the industry, they’re going to migrate away from us. We need to recognize that and ensure we’re at or above benchmark experiences for our customers. Our communication in terms of who we are, what we’re doing, and our value proposition has to continue to strengthen and become crystal clear because consumer options will continue to grow. And so the question of why direct selling, why LifeVantage, has to be much more clear to attract and retain consumers. Change is going to be our constant. Making sure the executive team is comfortable with that and also making sure our field is comfortable with change is important because I think it’s going to continue to accelerate at a pace that we’ve got to be prepared for.

**SSN: You mentioned that you were brought on by LifeVantage at a point when they were trying to get to the next level. If I’m an executive of a company that’s trying to scale, what advice do you have for me?**

I’d say first and foremost, whatever you’re thinking needs to happen within your company, think bigger. I mentioned that when we started this, we knew we had a lot of things that we needed to fix; but the center, the bullseye, was a compensation plan enhancement. While that was a central element of it, we learned that there were a lot of other things that we really needed to address as well.

I was with a group of distributors a few months ago when we started to roll out our Evolve Compensation Plan. One of them talked about vision and dreams, and I love the way she described it. She said, “If your vision is crystal clear, you’re not dreaming big enough.” There needs to be some uncertainty on the fringe, some cloud, some ambiguity and some fuzziness on the edges. If there’s not, you’re not dreaming big enough.

**SSN**

Steve Fife was interviewed by David Bland on behalf of *Social Selling News*.



## Nikken to Close Business in Europe

**Nikken**, a direct seller of health and wellness products founded in Japan in 1975, will close its operations in Europe, effective March 31. The company pointed to stressors within the current economic climate and the increasingly high cost of manufacturing as well as supply chain shortages as the causes of the closure. According to Nikken President and CEO Luis Kasuga, the company is “proud to have been a part of the European economy for more than two decades” as well as appreciates the “loyalty and support” of consultants. While there will be disruptions from the closing of business, the company said it will work to make the change as smooth as possible for consultants and customers. Nikken is a global company with an inclusive, equitable and collaborative trading system. The spirit of entrepreneurship at Nikken is inspired by the 5 Pillars of Wellness. These pillars promote a balanced lifestyle through Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, Healthy Family, Healthy Society and Healthy Finances.

## Arbonne Recertifies as B Corp

**Arbonne International** has met the highest standards of social and environmental impact and received B Corporation recertification. With an overall score of 119.9 on the B Impact Assessment, the brand exceeds the median score of 50.9 by businesses that complete the assessment. The beauty and wellness company has been certified as a B Corp since 2019 and is required by B Lab to complete a rigorous recertification process every three years to maintain that status. Pursuing an “aggressive sustainability strategy,” the company had targeted reducing energy consumption by 20% by 2025, compared to 2019. But already, through 2021, the company has reduced its worldwide electricity consumption by 32.5% and worldwide natural gas consumption by 30%. Arbonne had also set a 20% reduction goal for water consumption by 2025 and achieved a reduction of 48% through 2021. To reduce Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 50% by 2025, so far, the brand has achieved a 29% reduction by converting all of its sites to renewable energy processes.

## MONAT Starts Operations in New Zealand

**MONAT Global** has officially started operations in New Zealand as part of its ongoing global expansion. The company launched in Australia in 2021 and with steady requests to move into New Zealand, a pre-launch was initiated in October 2022. The brand was soon enrolling Market Partners, VIP customers and retail customers in the new market. According to MONAT President Stuart MacMillan, the company is looking forward to sharing its “culture of family, service and gratitude to New Zealand.” MONAT Global is an international healthy aging hair care, skin care and wellness brand founded to help people everywhere enjoy beautiful, healthy, fulfilling lives through exceptional, naturally based products. Founded in 2014 and headquartered in Miami, Florida, MONAT now has a presence in nine international markets, including the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Poland, Spain and Lithuania.

## In Memoriam: Andy Horner, Premier Designs Founder

**Andrew J. Horner**, founder of Premier Designs, died Jan. 21 at age 98. He was surrounded by family at the time of his passing. Horner was born in Belfast, Ireland, in 1924 and emigrated with his family to Canada in 1930. He joined the Royal Canadian Navy in 1943 and married his high school sweetheart, Joan Taylor. In 1950, the couple moved to Dallas, Texas, where Horner earned a degree in business in 1996 at Southern Methodist University. Though he served as manager for large corporations, he later joined direct seller Home Interiors and Gifts, where he worked for 17 years. In 1985, after early retirement, Horner and wife Joan founded direct sales jewelry company Premier Designs “to Honor God and Serve Others.” He served as CSO, chief servant officer. Premier Designs went on to become a multimillion-dollar business. Horner was preceded in death by his wife of 65 years, Joan Horner, and is survived by his second wife, Sarah Hemingway Horner; five children; 14 grandchildren; and 31 great-grandchildren.

## Hinode Group to Open in Additional Markets

Brazil-based **Hinode Group** announced during its international convention in Rio de Janeiro that plans will continue for international expansion, which will be completed in 2023. Part of this expansion will include Uruguay, Portugal and the United States. According to Eduardo Frayha, Hinode Group CSO, the company wishes to pursue the Latin markets within these areas, especially seeing potential for growth in the U.S. These new markets will add to the company’s presence in Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Mexico as well as its 2021 move into Chile and Paraguay. In a previous announcement, the company had stated a goal of being present in 30 countries by 2030 and shared its efforts to combine its national and international brands. The company was founded in 1988 with a mission “to offer people the opportunity to change their lives.” Its products include fragrance, bath and body, makeup, skincare, and men’s personal care.

## Herbalife Launches New Casa in Mongolia

The **Herbalife Nutrition Foundation (HNF)**, Herbalife’s charitable arm, has launched its first Casa in Mongolia by partnering with the Veloo Foundation and donating \$15,000 to help the nonprofit’s “Children of the Peak” Kindergarten. The funds will go toward upgrading kitchen equipment and creating a comfortable environment with healthy food for the children, who live in a remote area. Donations will increase in the future, according to HNF. Dorjpalam N., Veloo Foundation’s executive director, said that this area of the country has a low standard of living, where many children have no firewood during the winter, no food, and are left at home alone during the day. That was the reason the organization built its first kindergarten in the location. According to Herbalife, chronic malnutrition in early life is linked to reduced schooling, poorer cognitive skills, lower earnings and a higher likelihood of living in poverty. The Casa Herbalife Nutrition program was established in 1998 to bring children healthy meals and nutrition education through partnerships with existing charities around the world.

## Partner.Co Premier with Multiple Well-Known Brands

The newly formed **Partner.Co** announced its official launch with a global kickoff on Feb. 11. The entity is made up of multiple well-known industry brands—**ARIIX**, **LIMU**, **Morinda** and **Zennoa**, among others—and resulted from the recent acquisition of Neways assets by DIP Financing LLC, led by John R. Wadsworth. According to Partner.Co, the combined companies form a cohesive partnership that celebrates their diverse backgrounds and offers multiple product categories, including home care, beauty, cosmetics, health and wellness, nutrition, weight management, and sports performance. Already, Partner.Co has a license to operate in China as well as has a presence in the U.S., Canada, Latin America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa, and the Middle East. Darren Zobrist leads the company as CEO. Zobrist is a Wharton graduate and business executive with experience as an investor on Wall Street. Wadsworth serves as chief brand partner officer. He brings more than two decades of experience as a direct sales distributor with an international sales team.

CONTINUED ON 24

# People on the Move



**SHERYL ADKINS-GREEN, MARY KAY**  
**Mary Kay Inc.** has appointed **Sheryl Adkins-Green** as chief experience officer. Adkins-Green will support Independent Beauty Consultants through an integrated customer experience. She has been with Mary Kay since 2009, previously serving as chief marketing officer. She will continue to lead Global Brand Experience and the in-house creative agency.



**PEGGIE PELOSI, EXP WORLD HOLDINGS**  
**Peggie Pelosi** has joined **eXp World Holdings Inc.**'s board of directors. Pelosi is the founding partner and strategic advisor at Orenda Social Purpose. Prior to her career and academic work in corporate social responsibility and sustainability, she served in management for **USANA Health Sciences** and is still a member of its board.



**JIM BROWN, USANA**  
 Following **USANA Health Sciences'** succession plan, President **Jim Brown** will be named CEO. Kevin Guest, current CEO and board chairman, will transition to executive chairman on July 1. Brown joined USANA in 2006 as vice president of operations. He went on to serve as chief production officer and later chief operating officer.



**ALINA LÓPEZ DELGADO, AVON**  
**Avon** has promoted **Alina López Delgado** to head of marketing to lead its team in Argentina and Uruguay. Delgado has over 20 years of experience with luxury and mass consumer brands in cosmetics and personal care. She joined Avon in 2014, where updated the direct sales business in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.



**JASON BORNÉ, JEUNESSE GLOBAL**  
**LACORE**, which recently acquired **Jeunesse Global**, has appointed **Jason Borné** as CEO of the new addition. Borné has an 18-year working relationship with **LACORE** Founder Terry LaCore and has spent over 30 years in networking marketing focused on leadership development, sales and training. He will work alongside the Distributor Advisory Group.



**YANINA TOMASSINI, AVON**  
**Yanina Tomassini** has been named head of e-commerce and digital at **Avon** Argentina and Uruguay. Tomassini joined Avon in 2020 to lead the expansion of the digital business model for consultants. She has a degree in business administration and extensive experience in leading and developing new digital business models.



**DEMONT RAINGE, JEUNESSE GLOBAL**  
**LACORE** has promoted **Demont Rainge** to COO of **Jeunesse Global**. Rainge had previously served as vice president of global supply chain at Jeunesse. He has more than 20 years of experience in operational control, logistics management and supply chain, having spent the majority of that time with **SIEMENS**.



**FLORENCIA YANUZZIO, AVON**  
**Avon** has appointed **Florencia Yanuzzio** as its new head of integrated communications for Argentina and Uruguay. There she will lead the brand and product communication strategy, including paid and proprietary media and communication for customers and distributors. The creative teams over the Avon catalog recently moved under her responsibility.



**JENIFER GRACE, JEUNESSE GLOBAL**  
**Jenifer Grace**, a long-time legal advisor to **LACORE**, has joined the **Jeunesse** Board of Managers. Grace started working full-time for **LACORE** in 2010 and serves as chief operations officer and chief legal officer for **LaCore Enterprises**. She has also been chief legal officer for **bHIP Global** for over 12 years.



**NAO LAU, 4LIFE**  
**Nao Lau** has been promoted to vice president, global markets at **4Life Research**. Lau started as a customer service agent at **4Life** in 2005. He has since taken on international roles with increased responsibility, culminating with serving as general manager of Colombia. Now, he will oversee Colombia and all of Central America.



**RYAN WOOD, 4LIFE**  
**4Life Research** has hired **Ryan Wood** as chief financial officer. Wood comes to **4Life** from **Helo Corp**. Before that he spent 15 years with **Nu Skin** in executive leadership, compensation plans, financial investment, planning, management, and execution. He has a diverse skill set, including strategic development, global operations, and cash flow forecasting.



**DAVE CAUSER, SOUTHWESTERN**  
**Dave Causer**, president of **Global Educational Concepts**, has also become president of **Southwestern Advantage (SWA)** following the retirement of Dan Moore. Causer has been with **Southwestern Family of Companies** for over 50 years. He participated in the **SWA** student sales program in 1971 and made his career with the company.



**DOUG HAWS, 4LIFE**  
**4Life Research** has named **Doug Haws** as vice president, information technologies solutions architect. Haws has spent 15 years with **4Life**, having joined as a help desk technician. In this new role, he will be responsible for designing and implementing technology solutions as well as guiding his technology team.



**LORI GONZALES, LUMINEX**  
**Lori Gonzales** has joined **Luminex** as CEO. With over 25 years of experience in consumer products, Gonzales previously served as CEO of **Twinstar Home**. Before that, she spent almost 20 years at **Jarden**. Gonzales' background includes strategy development, P&L management, consumer intelligence and marketing, and product development, among others.

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### Mary Kay Hosts Female STEAM Leaders for Youth Summit

Mary Kay Inc. welcomed 25 young women from the Dallas area to learn about the different aspects of science, technology, engineering, the arts and math (STEAM) as it relates to the company's manufacturing processes. The students from Irma Lerma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School spent part of the day at Mary Kay's R&D Center in Lewisville, Texas, touring the state-of-the-art facility and later listened to a panel of female experts in the STEAM field discuss upstream innovation, product formulation, information technology, product research, portfolio and strategy planning, and process development. Following that, the students engaged in a mentoring lunch where they had the opportunity to discuss different career paths for women in STEAM, their aspirations, and how companies and individuals alike can better encourage and prepare young women for careers in STEAM. The students' school is part of Young Women's Preparatory Network (YWPN), a nonprofit that partners with public school districts throughout Texas to operate the largest network of all-girl, public, college preparatory schools in the country.

### Natural Health Trends Sees Small Sequential Increase in Q4 Revenue

Natural Health Trends Corp. (NHTC—NASDAQ) released fourth quarter 2022 results with revenue of \$12.5 million, which was an increase of 7% over the third quarter of 2022 but a 22% decline from the same quarter a year ago. The company saw another sequential quarterly improvement with an operating income of \$43,000 during the fourth quarter, compared to an operating loss of \$145,000 in the third quarter of 2022, but this number is still a significant drop from the operating income of \$487,000 in the same quarter of 2021. For full-year 2022, Natural Health Trends saw revenue of \$49.1 million, a drop of 18% from \$60 million in 2021. Net income was \$313,000, compared to \$1.1 million the prior year. Net cash provided by operating activities reached \$938,000 in Q4 of 2022, and total cash and cash equivalents were \$69.7 million. According to Chris Sharng, president of Natural Health Trends Corp., amid the COVID-19 restrictions in China, the company focused on "diligently controlling costs and exercising discipline in marketing and product mix."

### SimplyFun Moves to Affiliate Model

SimplyFun, a direct seller of educational games and puzzles, announced a transition from its existing direct sales model to an affiliate model for those wanting to join in sharing recommendations while getting compensation for selling the games online. The new program, which went into effect Feb. 1, comes with zero fees and offers 10% commission on purchases made through a personalized link shared on social media and to friends and family. There are also bonuses of up to 25% based on total monthly sales and the number of qualifying affiliates in a person's group. SimplyFun is further strengthening its market outreach through e-commerce techniques and digital tools to better provide for consumers. To improve interaction with parents, teachers, and families, the company's new platform will streamline the checkout process for customers, offer a more user-friendly mobile experience, and enhance its site search capabilities. Founded in 2004, SimplyFun's mission has always been to help children at all stages to develop their gifts and talents using the power of play.

### Zurvita Zeal for Meals Program Marks 559,000 Meals Provided

Zurvita has reached a significant milestone through its Zeal for Meals Program, a philanthropic undertaking that helps provide food, shelter, and medical help to those in need all over the world. Since the pandemic, Zurvita has set out to provide 1 million meals to communities facing hunger. To date, the company has already provided more than 559,000 meals and counting. Through the sale of its Zeal for Life all-in-one nutritional drink mix, Zurvita is donating three meals to families in need for every canister sold; and one meal is donated for every box of Zeal+ sold. Funds go directly to nonprofit SERV International, which is on the ground in these areas of need. In Northern Kenya, where many are suffering from severe malnutrition, Zeal for Meals has provided 30,000 meals in one area as well as medical outreach to more than 320 individuals whose village is too far from medical services. SERV has also deployed assistance and gained partnerships with local churches at the Hungary/Ukraine border to provide food, support and resources to refugees fleeing conflict.

## THE SUPPORTERS ►►

### MEET OUR PARTNERS

Below is a listing of all of the suppliers who placed display advertising in this month's issue. We are grateful for their participation and support in bringing news and information to the social selling channel.

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