



SSN's KEY 20

Meet the Executives Shaping the Future of Direct Selling

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JULY-AUGUST 2024

US Supreme Court Overturns Chevron Doctrine, Ushering in New Era of Regulatory Interpretation



Direct selling legal experts discuss implications in recent webinar

In a landmark decision on June 28, 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court, in the consolidated cases of *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo* and *Relentless Inc. v. Department of Commerce*, overturned the Chevron Doctrine, fundamentally altering the judicial landscape for administrative law. The 6-3 decision broke on party lines, with the three Democrat Justices dissenting.

The decision mandates that courts exercise their independent judgment in determining whether federal agencies, such as the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), have acted within their statutory authority, thus ending four decades of judicial deference to federal agencies when an existing statute is ambiguous.

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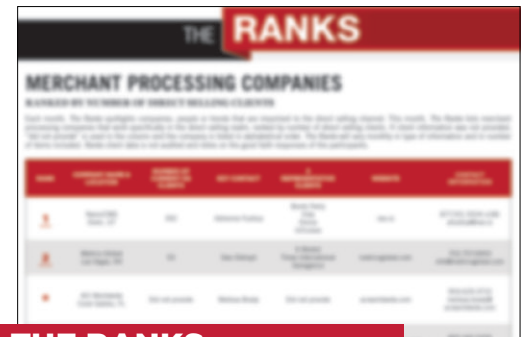
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TARA SCHOTT JOINS SOCIAL SELLING NEWS!



We are delighted to announce that **Tara Schott** has joined *Social Selling News* as our new Sales Director.

With a career spanning over two decades, Tara brings a wealth of experience in the direct sales industry, particularly in the health and beauty sector.

Tara's journey in sales began in the 1990s, and since then, she has honed her skills working with various direct sales organizations. Her expertise in understanding how to make her clients successful and her knack for leveraging social media make her an invaluable addition to our team.

Based in the Louisville, Kentucky, area, Tara balances her professional life with her role as a devoted wife and mother of three children. When she's not driving sales strategies, you might find her unwinding with a captivating book. We are confident that Tara's extensive background and passion for direct selling will contribute significantly to the growth and success of *Social Selling News*.

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Tara Schott as she embarks on this new chapter with our organization.

You can reach her at tara@socialsellingnews.com



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Spotlight on the Visionaries Shaping Our Channel

Hello friends!

Innovation and progress in direct selling emerge from various sources. Some executives stand out for their rigorous market research, shedding light on industry dynamics. Others make their mark by boldly implementing new strategies and technologies. Certain leaders excel at building networks and fostering collaborations that drive industry-wide growth.

Whether in supplier or company C-Suite roles, these individuals push our channel forward. They challenge conventional thinking, adapt to changing consumer behaviors, and navigate complex regulatory landscapes. Their efforts often lead to fresh practices and set new benchmarks, influencing the direction of direct selling as a whole.

To celebrate these achievements, I'm excited to introduce our first-ever "The Key 20: Most Influential Executives in Direct Sales" list. This special edition of *SSN* recognizes and honors those who are actively defining the future of our direct selling industry. In reading these profiles, I hope that you are as inspired and energized as we were in compiling them.

In addition to this exciting content, I'm pleased to share that we've enhanced your access to our wealth of industry knowledge. Our newly revamped website now features improved functionality, including an archive of previous issues available to all subscribers. This means you can easily research past topics and trends at your convenience.

If you're new to socialsellingnews.com, I invite you to register on the site to unlock these valuable resources. For our existing subscribers, please take a moment to log in and update your preferences. This ensures you'll continue to receive breaking news and content most relevant to your specific interests in direct selling.

As always, we are committed to providing you with the tools and insights you need to thrive in this ever-evolving industry.

Here's to learning from the best and applying those lessons to build an even stronger direct selling channel.

Warmly,



DAVID BLAND

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Historical Context of the Chevron Doctrine

The Chevron Doctrine, established by the Supreme Court in 1984 in *Chevron U.S.A. Inc. v. Natural Resources Defense Council Inc.*, required courts to defer to a federal agency’s reasonable interpretation of ambiguous laws. This principle was grounded in the belief that agencies possess specialized expertise in their respective fields, better positioning them to fill in legislative gaps. However, the recent ruling emphasizes that it is the role of the courts, not agencies, to resolve ambiguities in statutory language.

The cases at the heart of this decision involved the National Marine Fisheries Service’s interpretation of federal regulations. The controversy arose over a 2020 rule requiring vessel owners to bear the costs of on-board monitors. Lower courts had upheld this requirement under Chevron deference. However, the Supreme Court’s review concluded that the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) requires courts to independently interpret all relevant questions of law, even those involving ambiguous statutes.

Implications for Federal Agencies and Regulations

Chief Justice John Roberts, writing for the majority, asserted that the APA mandates judicial independence in statutory interpretation, thereby eliminating the Chevron presumption. However, Roberts also acknowledged that agency expertise could still inform judicial decisions, particularly in areas involving technical matters, through the less stringent Skidmore deference (*Skidmore v. Swift & Co.*, 323 U.S. 134, 140 (1944)). Under Skidmore, an agency’s interpretation may be considered persuasive depending on its thoroughness, consistency, and validity.

The immediate impact of this ruling is expected to be an increase in legal challenges to federal agency regulations. The ruling specifically addresses non-final cases and future lawsuits, potentially leading to significant shifts in how regulations are enforced and interpreted across various industries.

Heightened Scrutiny for FTC Actions

The Court’s decision to overturn the Chevron Doctrine is poised to significantly impact the

[This decision] is not a slam dunk when fighting against the agency (FTC). It puts you on more level footing, but you still have to go in front of a judge.

— Brian Bennett, Senior VP of Government Affairs & Policy, Direct Selling Association (DSA)

FTC and its regulatory authority. The FTC, responsible for enforcing broad mandates against the notoriously ambiguous “unfair or deceptive business practices,” may now face increased legal challenges to its rules and interpretations.

Under the previous Chevron framework, courts often deferred to the FTC’s expertise in interpreting ambiguous statutory language. However, without this deference, courts will scrutinize the FTC’s regulations more rigorously, potentially invalidating rules deemed overreaching or not clearly supported by statutory authority. This shift could lead to greater regulatory uncertainty and necessitate more precise legislative guidance to uphold the FTC’s enforcement actions, particularly those involving new and evolving market practices.

Webinar Insights: Industry Perspectives on Chevron

During a recent *Social Selling News* webinar discussing the Supreme Court’s decision, Linda Goldstein, a partner at Baker and Hostetler, and Brian Bennett, senior vice president of government affairs and policy at the Direct Selling Association (DSA), shared their insights. These direct selling legal experts emphasized the significant shift this ruling represents for the FTC and other regulatory agencies.

Goldstein highlighted that the FTC, which has long operated with considerable leeway in interpreting ambiguous statutes, will now face a stricter judicial review.

“In many enforcement actions, it really was as though the Federal Trade Commission wasn’t

the plaintiff; They were kind of the judge and the jury,” Goldstein stated. This new requirement for courts to independently interpret laws diminishes the FTC’s previously broad authority and may curtail some of its more aggressive regulatory actions.

Goldstein further noted, “The big impact of that from FTC or other agencies is that they will no longer get the benefit of the doubt in cases, which they’ve really relied on.”

This shift in judicial review will likely lead to increased litigation as companies challenge FTC interpretations that previously benefited from Chevron deference.

Goldstein also raised an important point about the potential shift in the FTC’s litigation strategy. “In many cases, they come in with little to no evidence of harm or deception. And the companies being challenged always have the burden of producing evidence to counter what the FTC is saying,” she explained. The decision may now compel the FTC to bolster its evidentiary basis in future litigation to withstand judicial scrutiny, but this will only become evident over a series of cases.

Legislative and Regulatory Impacts in Washington

Bennett provided insights into the broader implications for Washington, D.C. He noted that the decision was met with enthusiasm by many trade associations and lobbyists, particularly those aligned with conservative viewpoints.

“The news returns power to the people, so to speak,” Bennett remarked, highlighting the

sentiment that agency decisions should reflect the will of elected representatives rather than unelected regulatory staff. This shift is expected to increase the influence of amicus briefs and trade associations in shaping legal interpretations and regulatory frameworks.

Bennett also discussed potential changes in legislative practices, including a renewed focus on the reauthorization of federal agencies.

“We could see a lot more kind of reauthorization to the agencies,” he explained, referring to a process that has not been common practice for decades. This reauthorization could involve updating the statutory authority of agencies like the FTC to ensure their regulations align more closely with congressional intent. Additionally, Bennett noted an anticipated increase in oversight hearings, such as the upcoming budget hearing for the FTC, which will now carry more weight in scrutinizing agency actions.

Potential for Increased Litigation and Regulatory Uncertainty

The Supreme Court’s decision is likely to lead to a surge in legal challenges against federal regulations, fostering an environment of regulatory uncertainty. Companies and trade associations will likely leverage this new judicial scrutiny to contest agency interpretations that they find unfavorable. Goldstein pointed out that while this change may limit some regulatory overreach, it also necessitates more precise legislative guidance to ensure clear and consistent regulatory practices.

Bennett added that while the ruling is a positive step towards balancing power, it does not guarantee easy victories for companies challenging regulations. “It’s not a slam dunk fighting against the agency. It puts you on more

level footing, but you still have to go in front of a judge,” he noted.

Bennett also highlighted potential impacts on specific regulatory areas, such as independent contractor status. He noted that ongoing litigation, such as the Department of Labor’s independent contractor rule, could be influenced by the Supreme Court’s decision. “This could play into it... because that is a very broad interpretive rule that they have,” Bennett said, suggesting that the decision could lead to more immediate impacts in such cases.

Broader Impact on Federal Regulations and Industry Practices

Goldstein emphasized that the ruling could encourage the FTC and other agencies to pursue more rulemaking to get a more specific reading of statutes, although these rules would be more vulnerable to legal challenges.

“They may try more rulemaking... but those rules are going to be much more vulnerable to attack,” Goldstein explained. She highlighted a recent district court decision that cited the Loper case, indicating that the FTC lacked authority for certain rulemakings, which could constrain the agency’s future regulatory actions.

Bennett echoed this sentiment, noting that while the ruling is an important step, it does not fundamentally change the compliance landscape for companies. “The standards haven’t changed at all, in terms of what you should be doing from a compliance standpoint,” he said, emphasizing that companies must continue to adhere to high standards to avoid regulatory scrutiny.

Goldstein further emphasized that the compliance landscape remains fundamentally

the same despite the ruling. She suggested that while the FTC might need to bolster its evidentiary basis in future cases, the fundamental compliance requirements for companies remain unchanged.

Compliance Recommendations for Companies

When asked about direct selling compliance strategies in light of the Supreme Court’s decision, Bennett emphasized the need for companies to engage their leadership teams on the importance of compliance.

“I think this is just one more example of why the C-suite should be behind you and be your advocate and support you on these issues,” Bennett advised.

He stressed that while the day-to-day operations might not change immediately, it is crucial to ensure that company leaders understand and support compliance efforts. “Get as many eyes on this in your company as possible,” he recommended, underscoring the importance of internal advocacy and education.

State-Level Enforcement

A key point discussed in the webinar was the regulatory environment and the role of state attorneys general and the Department of Justice (DOJ). Goldstein noted that despite the limitations on federal agencies like the FTC, state attorneys general and the DOJ remain active in regulatory enforcement.

“When the FTC is less active, you see the state agencies ramp up,” Goldstein observed. This dynamic ensures that regulatory oversight persists, albeit through different channels. Companies must remain vigilant in their compliance efforts, understanding that state-level enforcement can be just as rigorous as federal oversight. This further underscores the importance of maintaining high compliance standards to mitigate the risk of regulatory actions from multiple fronts.

“
The big impact of that from FTC or other agencies is that they will no longer get the benefit of the doubt.
”

— Linda Goldstein, Partner, Baker & Hostetler LLP

SSN



David Bland is the publisher of Social Selling News.

Herbalife Profits Slide Amid Restructure; Peers Also Struggle

A turbulent Q1 2024 sees major direct sellers grappling with diverse global challenges

By Dave Rauf



Herbalife

Herbalife's continued efforts to restructure and transform the company negatively impacted its profitability in the first quarter of 2024.

The MLM giant reported first-quarter profit was down 17%.

Herbalife announced its restructuring initiative in March, saying it "intends to implement actions throughout 2024 to streamline its employee structure" in an attempt to enhance leadership and productivity.

And when the company reported earnings it added a restructuring goal to "bring leadership closer to its markets and accelerate productivity."

The reorganization incurred \$60 million of pre-tax expenses, primarily related to severance costs. Herbalife expects a "majority of all actions related to this program to be completed by the end of June this year."

"The work we have been undertaking during the

reorganization has been aimed at designing the most efficient and optimized organization for top-line growth and financial performance efficiency," CEO Michael Johnson said during a recent earnings call.

Herbalife has not said how many jobs it expects to eliminate in the restructuring program.

But the company projects its restructuring program will create \$40 million in annual cost savings in 2024 and \$80 million in annual cost savings by the beginning of next year.

Meanwhile, first-quarter sales results were generally mixed across the company's major markets.

Sales in the quarter were flat at \$1.3 billion. That includes a roughly 11% decline in North America.

But Asia Pacific, the company's largest market, was up 4%. And China, a major market that has proven difficult for Herbalife in recent years, was up 11% to \$75 million, the second consecutive quarter of double-digit growth.

Herbalife says it is forecasting 2024 total sales in the range of flat to up to a 5% increase year over year.



We listen in on the public company earnings calls and read the transcripts so you don't have to. Check back each quarter for our review with insights and takeaways for your own business.

Distributor Growth

During the earnings call with analysts, Herbalife executives lauded recent successful efforts to boost new distributor numbers.

The company said that for the first time since April 2020 it saw year-over-year growth in all of its global regions in terms of new distributors. Herbalife said the new distributor count is up 22% globally.

That uptick, executives said, was due to a program aimed at driving increased sales and recruitment globally.



USANA

An uptick in USANA's China business helped counter underperforming sales in most of the company's other global regions, as profit tumbled during the first quarter.

USANA reported \$228 million in sales, down 8% year-over-year, and \$16.5 million in profit, a decline of 10% during the quarter.

Q1 Numbers

- **Total Sales:** \$1.3 billion, flat
- **Profit:** \$24.3 million, down 17%
- **North America Sales:** \$265.8 million, down 11%
- **Europe and the Middle East Sales:** \$277 million, up 4%
- **Latin America Sales:** \$214 million, up 2%
- **Asia Pacific Sales:** \$431 million, up 4%
- **China Sales:** \$75 million, up 11%

CEO Jim Brown told analysts during a recent earnings call that sales were “softer” than expected outside of mainland China and failed to meet internal expectations.



Nature's Sunshine

Sales in the Americas and Europe declined by 12% to \$43 million. In its Asia Pacific market, sales dipped 7% year over year.

The lone bright spot: China, where sales improved by 3% compared to the quarter a year ago, and the company's active customer count increased by 15%.

Brown called the company's performance in China “strong,” and partially the product of a sales promotion designed to reward its distributors.

To counter weak sales, Brown said USANA is planning to offer market-specific incentives throughout 2024 to “help stimulate sales and customer growth.”

USANA expects full-year earnings revenue in the range of \$850 million to \$920 million.

Q1 Numbers

- **Total Sales:** \$228 million, down 8%
- **Profit:** \$16.5 million, down 10%
- **Asia Pacific Sales:** \$285 million, down 7%
- **China Sales:** \$128 million, up 3%
- **Americas and Europe Sales:** \$43 million, down 12%

India Market Fully Operational

USANA also noted that the first quarter was the first full quarter of operation in India.

The company announced its plans to expand into India last year, increasing its global footprint to 25 markets. The launch followed several years of research to prepare for expansion into the country.

The nutritional and personal-care products maker reported profit of \$2.3 million during the first quarter, and is expecting sales to continue improving throughout the year.

First-quarter sales totaled \$111 million, up 2%. The small increase was driven by improved sales in North America and Europe, which were up year over year at 5% and 4%, respectively.

Sales were \$108 million for the quarter, down 2%. The decline was largely driven by sales drop-offs in China and North America. Digital sales also increased in the quarter by 33%, while Nature's Sunshine said customer growth jumped by 34%.

Moving forward, inflation and unfavorable foreign currency exchange rates are expected to continue impacting gross margins, despite the company's improvement initiatives.

In Asia, the company's largest market, sales were flat in the first quarter, and foreign exchange rates created a \$2.5 million headwind.

Sales in China declined 13% due to what CEO Terrence Moorehead described as a “weak economic environment,” impacting overall performance in the Asia Pacific region.

Nature's Sunshine is forecasting growth between 3% and 9% for the year.

Q1 Numbers

- **Total Sales:** \$111 million, up 2%
- **Profit:** \$2.3 million
- **Asia Sales:** \$46.2 million, flat

- **Europe Sales:** \$22.2 million, up 4%
- **North America Sales:** \$36.5 million, up 5%
- **Latin America Sales:** \$5.9 million, down 4%



Nu Skin

Nu Skin reported a loss of \$533,000 in the first quarter, as the company navigates the challenges of a business transformation.

The Utah-based seller of skincare and nutritional products reported double-digit sales declines in all of its major global regions, but said first-quarter results were in line with expectations and maintained its full-year financial outlook.

CEO Ryan Napierski said customers in Europe and Africa responded well during the quarter to the company's line of weight-management products, and there were several positive trends in a handful of markets in the company's Southeast Asia region.

Nu Skin is in the midst of a sprawling transformation announced in 2023 intended to allow the company to accelerate growth as the MLM business continues to adapt to changes in the business due to technology and social media.

Called “Nu Vision 2025,” the company has launched a series of IoT-connected beauty devices and has said its smart beauty device segment is expected to be a key part of Nu Skin's product personalization strategy. As part of its transformation, Nu Skin has also beefed up

its digital efforts, enhancing its e-commerce platform and launching new apps for customers and affiliates.

Nu Skin expects full-year revenue in the range of \$1.73 billion to \$1.87 billion.

The Numbers

- **Loss:** \$533,000
- **Total Sales:** \$417 million, down 13%
- **Americas Sales:** \$75 million, down 26%
- **Europe and Africa Sales:** \$42.2 million, down 11%
- **China Sales:** \$61 million, down 10%
- **Southeast Asia/Pacific Sales:** \$60 million, down 11%

Nu Skin's Next International Market

Nu Skin is planning to launch in India, a territory that Napierski referred to on the earnings call with analysts as “one of the fastest-growing direct selling markets in the world.”

Napierski said he expects Nu Skin to officially enter the India market in 2025 with a “digital-first approach that is more agile and will enable us to scale more quickly throughout the market.”



Dave Rauf is a *Social Selling News* Contributor.

Neora Fights the FTC & Wins ... with the help of *FieldWatch*

The Compliance Department uses a program named FieldWatch, an Internet-wide monitoring service that constantly searches the Internet, including social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, for terms relating to Neora's products and brand.⁷¹ FieldWatch will identify potential violations for the Compliance Department to review; if a violation is discovered, FieldWatch will send at least two notices to the BP, including by text message, requesting that the violation be removed.⁷² If the BP fails to remove the violative claim after the second notice, the violation is escalated and flagged "Neora Review," which will result in the Compliance Department personally reaching out to the BP and the BP's upline to resolve the violation, and delete the improper claim.⁷³ In addition to FieldWatch, the Compliance Department will do manual Internet searches to try to find and resolve violations.⁷⁴ The record contains numerous examples of the Compliance Department communicating with BPs to address noncompliant posts and representations since at least 2013.⁷⁵ Neora also tracks repeat offenders; although Neora typically gives a BP an opportunity to correct noncompliant behavior, a BP is eligible for suspension or termination for repeated violations of the P&Ps.⁷⁶

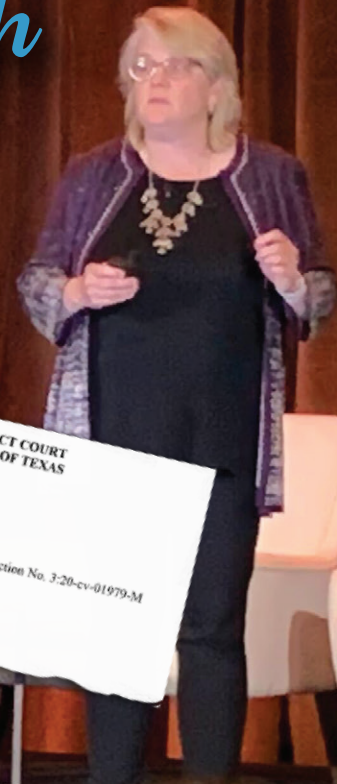


NEORA

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
DALLAS DIVISION

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION,
Plaintiff,
v.
NEORA LLC, et al.,
Defendants.

Civil Action No. 3-20-cv-01979-M



SAFEGUARDING NEORA & THE INDUSTRY!

Neora's win over the FTC on September 28, 2023, was a landmark decision for the direct selling industry. And while there were many factors and reasons that allowed Neora to come out on top of this arduous court battle, we are proud to say that **FieldWatch**™ and its ability to provide effective compliance monitoring played an important part in the decision. Don't leave yourself vulnerable ... join Neora and many of the world's finest direct sellers who use **FieldWatch** to protect their businesses from risk.

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MOMENTUM FACTOR
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Leveraging Behavior Modeling and Data Platforms to Drive Business Growth

By Ben Dixon, Guest Contributor

What a year 2024 has shown to be.

The social selling space and the markets around it have grown noisy with fierce competition for consumers' eyes and attention.

Consumers today have more choices than ever, and your ability to remove friction from your sales process for social sellers is more crucial than ever.

NaXum's last article in 2022 highlighted the power of deepening your sales pipeline data.

Those findings, in summary, found that most companies fall short of their ability to compete in a meaningful way because the technology and systems they use to measure their social selling promoters' behaviors track the transactional data like sales, enrollments, cancellations, and subscriptions.

However, they fail to measure accurate leading indicators (like webinars viewed, videos viewed, samples consumed, face-to-face meetings) and the predictive actions that created the leading indicators (phone calls made, text messages sent, and social media content shared).

When companies only focus on transactional data, the best outcome they can hope for is to hit the "benchmarks" of the industry like their peers, who are doing the same thing.

The exciting finding was that if teams expanded their vision to measure their entire sales pipeline—using the newest third-generation technology in the referral marketing space—from the first interaction with the social seller to the sale, they would see opportunities to remove waste and optimize. From industry benchmarks, even a 20% optimization across the sales process would double an organization's revenue per active social seller.

With the opportunity to measure the pipeline still in mind, what strategic initiatives can a social selling organization take to make a difference in 2024?

1) Build Programs That Model Appropriate Behavior

One of the simplest ways to measure member behavior is to provide technology, such as back office systems, marketing tools, or mobile apps.

Regardless of which provider you choose to move forward with, the key is to structure your systems and tools to "feel like" an experienced (and compliant) social seller sitting next to the newest person on the team, suggesting what to do next.

By having your technology prompt members with appropriate content when connecting with a contact, sharing on social media, or following up with a prospective customer, you're modeling appropriate behavior and removing friction from the process.

By providing platforms that suggest content to members, you can harvest insights on which messaging works and which does not.

2) Turn Your Training Into Predictive Actions

Just as you would traditionally use training videos and compliance software to build relationships with your social sellers and give them a path to run on, the focus in deploying tools that model appropriate behavior is to take what your training programs would have suggested and build tools that "suggest" to social sellers how to post the way you desire.

Let's say you have a specific training module on how to share a story compliantly on social media, and you can create a library with examples of compliant content that other members can model their content after.

A side benefit we've witnessed from clients who have created these compliant social media libraries is that we've seen success with social sellers simply downloading the compliant videos on their devices and filming reaction videos to the compliant content to share on social networks. The benefit has been that each video

is unique to the algorithms. The end content traditionally remains compliant since the member is just reacting with facial expressions to your compliant content.

3) Measure The Results With A Regular Cadence

Now that you've implemented platforms that give you data across your entire sales pipeline, you must create a cadence for taking action based on the data these platforms reveal.

We've seen that the cadence with which a company reviews and adjusts its predictive data directly influences its ability to optimize and grow.

Today, you may run your business with a monthly promotion and two "seasons" of content around your national training events.

Once you deploy a platform to measure the entire pipeline data, the key is to insert a bi-monthly review to remove waste in your messaging sequences and social content that is feeding your core campaigns.

In the end, you'll not only convert more sales but also know which types of content and promotions to invest in and which ones to skip, all based on your own members' natural behaviors.

In summary, each leader has the opportunity to be extraordinary. To win in today's market, the decision comes down to doing the actual work to provide platforms that add real value to social sellers' lives. Companies can then get accurate data on their behaviors and apply what is learned to continue to optimize and remove waste for each stakeholder involved.

SSN



Ben Dixon is the CEO of NaXum.



IN THE DYNAMIC WORLD OF DIRECT SELLING,

certain leaders stand out not just for the impact they make within their own companies but for their broader influence in shaping the trajectory and reach of this global business channel. This special edition of *SSN* celebrates **THE KEY 20: MOST INFLUENTIAL EXECUTIVES IN DIRECT SALES**, recognizing those individuals and teams who transcend their current positions to positively shape the direct selling channel at large. These visionaries have driven the enhancement and mainstreaming of direct selling in a rapidly changing consumer market. Their strategic insights and dedication to the channel have transformed direct selling, ushering in modern practices with new ways of thinking.

THE KEY 20 Criteria:

INDUSTRY IMPACT

Demonstrated significant influence on the direct selling industry as a whole, not just within their own company.

INNOVATION

Introduced groundbreaking ideas, technologies, or business models that have advanced the direct selling channel.

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Championed ethical practices and regulatory compliance, setting high standards for the industry.

GLOBAL REACH

Played a key role in expanding the international presence and market penetration of direct selling.

SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Promoted sustainable business practices and contributed to social responsibility initiatives within the direct selling industry.

THE KEY 20

In the following pages, we highlight the contributions and the profound impact **THE KEY 20** have made on direct selling's evolution. *The executives on these pages are listed in alphabetical order. Organizations or groups recognized collectively are listed at the end.*

Alfredo Bala and Landen Fredrick

For groundbreaking integration of affiliate marketing into traditional direct selling business models.

Alfredo Bala and Landen Fredrick, the former and current CEO of **Mannatech**, respectively, have made a significant mark on the direct selling industry by pioneering a groundbreaking hybrid model that integrates affiliate marketing with traditional direct sales strategies. This innovative approach is intended to expand opportunities for distributors and enhance customer engagement, paving the way for a potential adjacent model within the industry.



Alfredo Bala



Landen Fredrick

While the long-term success of this hybrid model remains to be seen, Mannatech continues to lead the charge under Fredrick's guidance. The company has embraced progressive digital marketing techniques, ensuring its competitiveness and expanding its global presence. This bold experimentation and willingness to adapt to the evolving landscape demonstrate Mannatech's commitment to innovation and its role in shaping the future of direct selling.

Magnus Brännström

For pioneering efforts to integrate sustainability and ethical supply chain practices into direct selling.



Magnus Brännström

Magnus Brännström, former CEO and President of **Oriflame Cosmetics**, has been a pioneering force in the move towards greener practices within the direct selling industry. Under his leadership, Oriflame has committed to sustainability and ethical sourcing, implementing extensive environmental initiatives that have set a benchmark for the industry.

Brännström's vision has driven Oriflame to reduce its carbon footprint, invest in renewable energy, and ensure that its products are environmentally friendly. His dedication to green practices has not only enhanced Oriflame's reputation but has also inspired other companies in the direct selling sector to adopt more sustainable and responsible business practices.



Heather Chastain

Heather Chastain

For her innovative integration of digital technologies and fostering compliance within the direct selling industry.

Heather Chastain, founder and CEO of **Bridgehead Collective**, has advanced the direct selling channel through digital strategies and innovative approaches

in a legacy industry. Known for driving strategic growth, she has recently been instrumental in developing robust compliance strategies and fostering a culture of integrity within the industry.

Chastain has focused on integrating digital technologies, thus enhancing efficiency and engagement for her direct

selling company clients. Her work with Bridgehead Collective has guided organizations through market complexities, contributing to the overall advancement of direct selling. Additionally, her dedication to nurturing collaboration and knowledge sharing has empowered industry leaders to adopt best practices and drive continuous improvement.

Brett Duncan

For his contributions to modernizing direct sales marketing practices.

Brett Duncan, co-founder of **Strategic Choice Partners**, is a thought leader in the direct selling industry, known for pioneering innovative marketing and business development strategies. By blending digital and traditional marketing techniques, Duncan has helped companies expand their reach and effectively engage with their audiences.



Brett Duncan

His focus on data-driven decision-making has enabled direct selling companies to adapt to market trends and consumer behaviors, driving growth and engagement. Duncan's development of multi-channel marketing strategies has also increased the effectiveness of direct selling efforts, ensuring companies can communicate their value propositions clearly and compellingly.

A respected educator and speaker, Duncan regularly shares his insights at industry conferences and through various publications. His ability to translate complex concepts into actionable strategies has empowered many direct selling professionals to enhance their business practices.

John Fleming

For his research into aligning direct sales with the emerging gig economy.

John Fleming, a distinguished figure in the channel, has sparked important conversations about direct selling throughout his extensive career as a corporate executive, magazine publisher, and thought leader. In recent years, the DSA Hall of Fame inductee has focused on researching the gig economy and network marketing's place in it, partnering with leading academics and industry experts to provide insights into its evolving landscape and implications for direct selling. Fleming highlights how direct selling can compete with other types of gig work by offering better income stability, career advancement opportunities, and stronger community support networks.

Fleming's work has shaped strategic decisions for companies looking to integrate gig economy principles, while advocating for leveraging digital platforms and technology. Through his publications and speaking engagements, he educates industry leaders on direct selling's place within the broader gig economy, demonstrating how the industry can thrive alongside other gig work models.



John Fleming

Jonathan Gilliam

For his thought leadership around issues of compliance and empowering direct sales companies to meet regulatory expectations.



Jonathan Gilliam

Jonathan Gilliam has emerged as a leading voice in the direct selling industry, championing compliance and risk mitigation in the digital age. Over the past decade, his firm's innovative technology has revolutionized field compliance, empowering companies to navigate the ever-evolving regulatory landscape. Gilliam's advocacy for robust compliance and legal departments within the C-Suite has further elevated industry standards and promoted transparency.

His expertise has been instrumental in defending several direct sellers in high-profile legal battles with the Federal Trade Commission, including Vemma and Neora. His contributions extend beyond legal defense, as he actively shapes industry discourse through speaking engagements at conferences like the DSA Annual Meeting and through the founding of the Direct Selling Leadership & Compliance Summit. Additionally, Gilliam's published works have provided valuable insights into leveraging new media and social platforms for direct selling success.

Kevin Guest

For his leadership in modernizing the direct selling industry and advocating for regulatory engagement.

Kevin Guest, a driving force in the direct selling industry, has championed modernization and regulatory engagement throughout his extensive career. As former chairman of the Direct Selling Association (DSA) and current executive chairman of **USANA Health Sciences** and chairman of the Direct Selling Education Foundation (DSEF), Guest has spearheaded strategic initiatives that have

propelled the industry into the digital age. His advocacy for search engine optimization and the adoption of modern marketing techniques has transformed the direct selling landscape, making it more accessible and inclusive.

Guest's unwavering commitment to regulatory compliance has set a new standard for the industry. He has consistently emphasized the importance of active engagement in the regulatory process, advocating for increased knowledge and adherence to relevant laws. By fostering a more informed and compliant industry, Guest has strengthened its credibility and ensured its long-term sustainability.



Kevin Guest

Stuart Johnson

For his influential role in connecting industry leaders and fostering continuous conversation about improving the industry.

Stuart Johnson is founder of **SUCCESS Partners**, *Direct Selling News*, and Direct Selling University. He has been a key influencer in the direct selling industry for over three decades and is one of the originators of the modern duplicated tools business, which he started when his company was first known as VideoPlus. He has since relayed those systems into digital success in mobile apps and other field-facing solutions.



Stuart Johnson

Known for his vision and skill at connecting people, Johnson has played an important role in shaping the channel by leveraging media, publishing, and technology to drive growth and engagement across the industry.

Blake Mallen

For his thought leadership on direct selling's adoption of artificial intelligence.

Blake Mallen, president of **Prüvit**, has emerged as a thought leader in the direct selling industry, championing the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI). His consistent focus on innovation and the practical applications of AI has positioned him as a leading voice in the field.



Blake Mallen

Mallen actively shares his expertise through regular presentations at industry events, seminars, webinars, and conferences. He educates direct sellers on how AI can revolutionize customer relationship management, personalize marketing strategies, and enhance sales forecasting. By equipping direct sellers with the tools and knowledge to leverage AI, Mallen empowers them to streamline operations, make data-driven decisions, and stay competitive in an ever-evolving marketplace.

Terry LaCore

For his innovative vertical support network to manage and grow direct sellers.

Terry LaCore, founder and CEO of **LaCore Enterprises**, has been a quiet player in influencing the direct selling channel over the past decade. Known for his entrepreneurial spirit and innovative strategies, LaCore has built a diverse portfolio of successful companies that have significantly impacted the industry's landscape.

LaCore's expertise lies in his ability to identify market opportunities and develop effective business models that drive growth and profitability. His company specializes in providing support to direct selling businesses, including product development, marketing, logistics and compliance services. This holistic approach has enabled several of his companies to scale efficiently and achieve sustained success.



Terry LaCore

Danny Lee

For his bold strides in modernizing direct selling practices.



Danny Lee

Danny Lee, incoming chairman of the Direct Selling Association (DSA) and CEO of **4Life Research**, has made bold strides in modernizing direct selling practices. Lee's forward-thinking approach includes the adoption of analytics driven by artificial intelligence to better understand and respond to market trends, setting a new standard for data-driven decision-making in the industry.

Lee has also been a strong advocate for sustainability, integrating eco-friendly practices into 4Life's operations and product development. His commitment to ethical practices and regulatory compliance has reinforced the company's reputation for integrity. As he steps into the role of DSA chairman, Lee's innovative mindset and dedication to transparency promise to drive the association forward, fostering an environment of collaboration and growth within the direct selling community.

Joseph Mariano

For his role in advocating for favorable policy and compliance regulation within the direct selling industry.

Joseph Mariano, as president of the **Direct Selling Association (DSA)**, has skillfully navigated the organization through significant shifts in both the marketing and regulatory landscape in recent years. Under his leadership, the DSA has actively engaged with policymakers, advocating for fair business practices and consumer protection laws that support the direct selling industry. Mariano has played a crucial role in shaping discussions on key legislative matters and providing feedback on proposed regulations. His strategic guidance has also been instrumental in the DSA's involvement in important court cases, including the recent Neora case, ensuring the interests of the direct selling industry are well-represented in the legal arena.



Joseph Mariano

Peter Marinello

For his leadership of industry self-regulation and best practices around field compliance.



Peter Marinello

Peter Marinello, director of the **Direct Selling Self-Regulatory Council (DSSRC)**, has been a pivotal figure in recent years in promoting ethical practices and consumer protection within the direct selling industry. With an extensive background in self-regulation and advertising standards, Marinello has dedicated his career to ensuring that companies adhere to the highest levels of integrity and transparency.

At the DSSRC, Marinello has spearheaded initiatives that focus on monitoring and addressing misleading claims and deceptive marketing practices. His efforts have been instrumental in establishing guidelines that protect consumers and uphold the credibility of the direct selling industry. Through his leadership, the DSSRC has become a vital resource for companies seeking to navigate the complex regulatory landscape and maintain compliance with industry standards.

Wayne Moorehead

For his contributions to the channel conversations around digital transformation and leadership.



Wayne Moorehead

Wayne Moorehead, a respected marketing strategist, has become a leading voice in direct selling through his podcast series, "Direct Approach." Leveraging the power of podcasts, Moorehead has cultivated a loyal audience of industry professionals. His thought-provoking and insightful content offers deep dives into critical trends, best practices, and innovative strategies that are essential for success in today's evolving direct selling landscape.

Through his engaging interviews with industry leaders and experts, Moorehead has facilitated valuable discussions on a range of topics, from digital transformation and brand building to ethical practices and leadership. His ability to distill complex concepts into actionable insights has empowered direct selling professionals to stay ahead of market trends and implement effective strategies within their organizations.

Jesse Reese McKinney

For her cutting-edge foray into social selling marketing strategies.



Jesse Reese McKinney

Jesse Reese McKinney, CEO and co-founder of **Red Aspen**, has pioneered innovative approaches that have impacted the direct selling industry. Under her leadership, Red Aspen has combined social selling with digital marketing strategies, setting the company apart. McKinney introduced a dynamic sales model leveraging social media platforms to engage customers and empower brand ambassadors, highlighting the potential for modernizing traditional sales methods.

A notable innovation by McKinney is the development of the company's own robust e-commerce infrastructure that integrates seamlessly with social selling. This system allows Red Aspen's brand ambassadors to efficiently manage their businesses online, providing a user-friendly experience for both sellers and customers. Additionally, McKinney's use of data analytics to drive decision-making and personalize marketing efforts has helped the company stay aligned with market trends and consumer preferences.

Jeff Olson and Deborah Heisz

For their vigorous defense of the channel against regulatory attack.

Jeff Olson, founder and CEO of **Neora**, and Deborah Heisz, Co-CEO, have significantly impacted the direct selling industry through fearless leadership amid extremely challenging circumstances. Their pivotal roles in defending Neora against the FTC's false accusations of operating as a pyramid scheme set a crucial precedent for the industry.

As an author and thought leader, Olson has shaped the conversation around new media and social media's potential for direct selling. His emphasis on compliance has inspired higher standards within the industry.

Heisz has driven Neora's growth by embracing innovative strategies and advanced marketing techniques, ensuring competitiveness in the modern marketplace. Heisz played a critical role in the daily management of Neora's defense, tirelessly working on the case throughout its duration. Her dedication to transparency and ethical business practices was crucial in demonstrating Neora's legitimacy and commitment to regulatory compliance.

Together, Olson and Heisz's leadership in the face of the existential threat to their company has played a major role in defending the channel, while promoting a culture of integrity, innovation, and expansion.



Jeff Olson



Deborah Heisz

Colt Passey

For promoting synergism in the channel by bringing people and companies together.

Colt Passey, a ubiquitous presence at direct selling industry events, is renowned for his ability to foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing within the channel. As CEO of **Gobi Insights**, he has consistently championed symbiotic relationships between individuals and companies, leading to increased cooperation and innovation. Passey's founding of the annual Direct Sales Golf Scramble Tournament demonstrates his commitment to bringing together executives from diverse and often competing direct selling companies, promoting camaraderie and networking opportunities.

Passey's dedicated service as the primary supplier representative at the Direct Selling Association Executive Committee has ensured that the voices and concerns of vendors are heard and addressed. His tireless efforts in this role have strengthened the relationship between suppliers and the DSA, fostering a more inclusive and collaborative environment within the direct selling industry.



Colt Passey

Leaders of the DSEF

For advancing the direct selling industry through recent impactful market research and educational initiatives.

The directors of the Direct Selling Education Foundation (DSEF), composed of academic leaders and industry experts, have recently made significant strides in enhancing the direct selling industry through their dedication to education and research. Their latest study, the *2024 Economic Impact Report*, provides crucial insights into consumer behavior, market trends, and the economic contributions of direct selling, guiding strategic decisions and industry practices.



The DSEF directors have also launched new educational programs, integrating direct selling principles into university curricula, organizing contemporary workshops, and developing updated resources to promote ethical business practices and entrepreneurship. These recent initiatives have educated thousands of students and industry professionals, reinforcing the credibility and sustainability of the industry.



Jason Matheny



Robert Cavitt



Gary Fitzgerald



Sean Smith

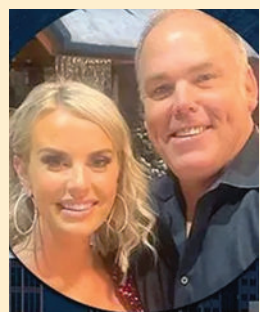
Architects of the Modern Backoffice – Jason Matheny, Robert Cavitt, Gary Fitzgerald, Sean Smith

For their role in leading technological innovation in the channel.

Several direct selling software suppliers have made significant strides in advancing their solutions to meet the growing demands of the industry. **Hussle**, under the leadership of Jason Matheny, has integrated advanced AI and behavior-driven tasks into its products, enhancing decision-making processes for direct sellers. Robert Cavitt of **Jenkon** has spearheaded the development of tools specifically designed for live shopping, social selling, and affiliate marketing in the direct selling space. **Exigo**, led by Gary Fitzgerald, is expanding globally to meet the increasing demand for enhanced operational efficiency among direct selling companies. Notably, **InfoTrax** CEO Sean Smith has recently partnered with BigCommerce to offer state-of-the-art e-commerce solutions to the direct selling industry.

These advancements represent significant progress in addressing the unique needs of the direct selling channel and enhancing the overall customer and distributor experience.

Justin and Whitney Rose



Justin and Whitney Rose

For expanding the channel's reach to new audiences using mainstream and social media.

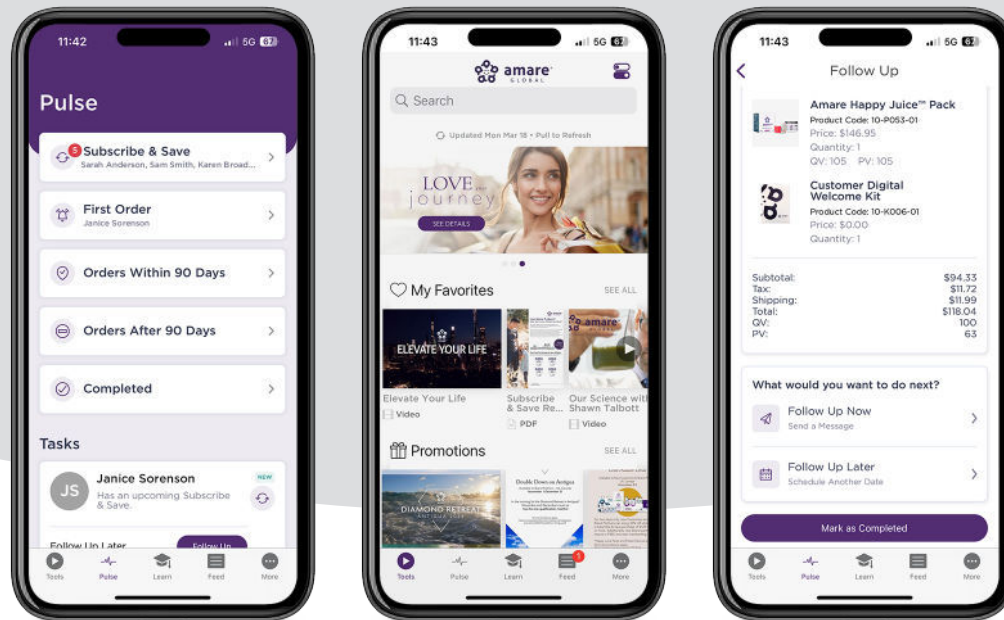
Justin and Whitney Rose, leveraging Whitney's celebrity status from the reality TV show "Real Housewives of Salt Lake City," have become trailblazers in expanding direct selling's reach to new audiences. Their innovative approach combines the power of social media influencers with traditional e-commerce, redefining the direct selling landscape.

Through their company, **Wild Rose Beauty**, the Roses have successfully transitioned their existing e-commerce business into a direct selling model, demonstrating the industry's adaptability in the digital age.

Their strategic use of influencer marketing and social media platforms has unlocked untapped markets, resonating with a new generation of consumers.

The Roses have embraced a female-led management team and integrated educational digital courses alongside their consumable products, empowering their customers with knowledge and resources. Their entrepreneurial spirit and savvy marketing strategies have not only propelled their own business but have also served as a model for innovation within the direct selling industry.

Drive Activity. Grow Revenue.



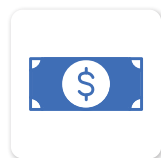
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Crafting Success: The Science Behind Advanced Formulation in Direct Selling

Harnessing values, impact and research in supplement development

By Jenna Lang Warford

Driving excitement isn't sustainable—driving passion is.

Within the direct selling channel, there are three key ways to fuel passion: values, impact and finances. Each of the three will have its adherents; a combination of at least two of the three can accelerate success. Field members who identify with all three of these drivers within your company will take the lead in recruiting, selling and retention.

Supplements, which can address all three passion drivers, are a direct selling channel sweet spot and offer an intricate puzzle for executives to solve.



With a desire to make a profound difference in therapeutics, Dr. Miller left academia for the natural products industry and began to leverage his bio-medical research discoveries, so formulation processes are a particular passion of his. He has created formulations for several direct selling companies, including **AdvoCare**, **Proceller8**, **Zurvita**, and now **Bella Grace Global**, and he is passionate about effective formulation processes.

“Firstly, one must keep abreast of scientific publications across numerous areas,” Miller says. “To do this we review, on a daily basis, the latest scientific publications.”

Formulation Options

There are several options when choosing supplements that field members love, share and are loyal to.

Although rates and agreements vary, the options, in order of least to most expensive, are:

- Purchasing a white label product with a trending ingredient
- Customizing an existing white label product with a “hero” ingredient
- Contracting a formulation company or scientist
- Employing a full-time scientist to formulate

Formulation Processes and Priorities

Empirical data aside, formulation processes vary and can be a

matter of the philosophy of the individual scientist. Barrie Tan, Ph.D., a formulator who is founder and president of American River Nutrition, has focused on his passion of “making the unknown known” and discovering the benefits of the annatto plant and other lipid-soluble ingredients.

American River Nutrition, with him at the helm leading other scientists, has formulated for legacy companies such as **Nutriline/Amway**, **Kyani** and **Integrus Wellness**, as well as others that have confidential contracts.

“For me the formulation process has three components, and it begins when I ask the hard questions,” Dr. Tan says. “It is not so much a process as it is me. It is hardwired in my DNA to make the unknowns known. The next component shouldn't be a surprise—the three Rs: research, research and research. I have four

to six scientists that work with me in our in-house lab. They do the research.”

Tan's final component reveals the most about how personal the process is for him: He believes that his love for the plant kingdom and the time he spends exploring and analyzing to learn its secrets is a spiritual component of the process. Part of that, he says, is figuring out the plant's smell, its chemistry, and then doing a lot of lab analysis.

When it comes to the formulation process, linking advancing science with product innovations demands a multi-layered approach, according to Mark Miller, Ph.D., chief innovation officer at **Bella Grace Global**. “Multi-layered” also aptly describes his career. Miller was a medical school professor for three decades, tenured in both basic and clinical sciences (cardiovascular, pharmacology and pediatrics).

The insights gleaned, he says, are often useful for mechanisms of action and occasionally provide insight for marketing. Networking with ingredient companies, and keeping tabs on formulation industry awards—of which he is a long-standing judge—establishes a position of strength in evaluating ingredient innovations and supporting science.

Dan Gubler, Ph.D., who has worked with other direct sales companies and is now chief scientific officer of **Three**, offers an excellent analogy regarding formulation. “Right now in the supplement industry we're all using the same molecules,” he says.

“And if we're all using the same molecules, then how are we really different from another company? If that's what you're doing, you're really not. But when you discover new molecules and you bring new

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

CRAFTING SUCCESS, CONTINUED FROM 19

building blocks to the table, it's like as kids when you are playing Legos together. If you all have the same Lego pieces, the mountain of creativity is about the same. But if you have the cool castle set or the spaceship set, and your friend doesn't, you're able to make the really unique stuff."

To that end, Dr. Gubler developed a specific process to identify and incorporate cutting-edge scientific discoveries into product development. "There are Three Pillars to the process: exploration, curation and absorption," he says. "There are 600,000 species of plants on the earth, and less than 5% of them have been studied for their bioactive molecules. So as a natural products chemist, I've traveled around the world doing research expeditions, studying molecules from plants.

"After the exploration, we take the molecules that we've discovered along with other molecules that are known in the industry, and we curate them kind of like a Michelin-star chef would, in a unique manner," Gubler says.

"And then the third pillar: absorption. The most powerful molecule on the planet is of no use unless it's absorbed. Curcumin's a great example. A great molecule, with great properties, but not soluble in

the body because it's hydrophobic—meaning it's afraid of water. And that's a problem because the body's 60% water. Alone, the body sweeps curcumin out and it doesn't get into the cells. So we use many different cellular absorption technologies to ensure that the new molecules we've discovered in our curated formulations then actually get into the cell. Exploration, curation, and absorption: I believe this is a unique process in the industry."

Technology and Formulation

Miller is enthusiastic about the impact technology has made on formulation. "[Because of technology], options for delivery systems continue to expand," he says.

"Gummies are an example, where it has morphed from vitamins for kids into products for all age groups. We chose the gel format for Bella Grace's flagship product, the Elixir, because

it allows us to effectively manage large ingredient volumes. The gel format also allows us a more effective means to blend diverse ingredients with potentially conflicting physico-chemical characteristics. As for marketing, the gel formulation is a product that is easy to share, a critical feature in social selling."

Miller notes that technology also plays a role on the ingredient side. "Astaxanthin is normally an oil, or lipid-based biochemical, making it a challenge for drinks, gels and regular capsules. Advanced technology to convert it into a water-soluble form greatly expands its application in product development.

"Similarly, advances in bioavailability have led to enhanced marketing, as ingredients can be delivered in a smaller physical volume whilst still achieving meaningful blood levels," he adds. "Curcumin from turmeric is a great example of that. Normally the bioavailability of curcuminoids is abysmally low but by using phytosomes or liposomes as 'Trojan Horse' approaches, one can greatly enhance absorption."

Gubler observes that supplement customers have grown significantly more sophisticated over the past five years, demanding higher quality and more advanced products. This shift coincides with rapid technological advancements, particularly in the field of epigenetics.

With 20,000 genes controlling millions of chemical reactions in the body, these genes regulate critical systems such as circulation, gut health, bone health, joint health, and lung health. Understanding and

leveraging these genetic "switches" has become increasingly important for meeting the evolving needs and expectations of consumers, he says.

Technology has allowed a greater understanding of the epigenome, which is how genes are expressed in real time.

He continues, "So the epigenome can be influenced by poor diet, lack of sleep, lack of exercise, stress, anxiety, pollution, even social interactions. One thing we're studying and working on at Three is supplements that can regulate the epigenome and have shown that these can do this by proof of principle clinical study. I'm grateful for forward-thinking business people that realize that you really do need clinical studies."

Collaborative Efforts

Another factor the direct selling channel benefits from in formulation is collaboration of its scientists (employees, contract and otherwise) with the broader scientific community.

Tan specifically pursues continued connection and collaboration with scientists with whom he already has established relationships because he trusts their acumen, scholarship, and research and development skills. "Some are lifelong professional relationships," he says. "I met some of them when they were graduate students who later became professors. I have collaborated with the University of Massachusetts, Purdue University, Texas Tech University, Georgia State University, University of Wisconsin, and University of Missouri, Kansas City, among others."

For me the formulation process has three components, and it begins when I ask the hard questions.

— Dr. Barrie Tan, Founder and President, American River Nutrition

Consumers now demand more validation, credibility, and third-party support; companies that adapt to these needs and communicate complex science effectively will lead the industry.

— Dr. Mark Miller, Chief Innovation Officer, Bella Grace Global

He continues, “Another collaboration we do is with the U.S. government’s AFRRI, the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute, because one of the primary ingredients we use protects people from radiation damage. These collaborations occur because of the unique expertise that either we or they naturally can provide.”

Bella Grace Global also is enthusiastic about the network Miller collaborates with, grown from his professorship at three U.S. medical schools, contract formulation, manufacturing colleagues and his relationships throughout his tenure in network marketing.

Tan adds that some collaborations can help you become more fruitful on a tighter timeline. “Sometimes we need research to be done faster. So we work with contract research organizations, ‘CROs.’ We might fund in-depth research to prove nutritional benefits and for the scientific veracity,” he says.

“Particularly useful is our university collaborations. They’re most fruitful because of the decades of professional association. I’ve watched their research, their publication and their study, how they do this in depth, and in so doing that gives me the most fruitful return because they were asked ‘the deep question,’ and they don’t have to start from square one because I’ve known them all these years.”

Miller values his long-term partnership with AstaReal, a global leader in the astaxanthin industry. With 36 years of experience, AstaReal has conducted over 70 clinical trials and numerous preclinical research studies on natural astaxanthin—an antioxidant—highlighting its immense biological significance.

This extensive scientific support makes AstaReal a crucial collaborator for Bella Grace, he says. Before his current role at Bella

“**In the last five years, the customer in the supplement industry has become a lot more sophisticated and demands more.**”
— Dr. Dan Gubler, Chief Scientific Officer, Three

Grace, Miller served as AstaReal’s Global Ambassador, where he lectured worldwide on the health benefits of astaxanthin.

Overcoming Regulatory Challenges

Regulatory challenges are endemic to the direct sales channel, and formulating is no exception.

International regulations can mean adjusting formulas to achieve compliance in certain regions or markets. Miller says Bella Grace faced that situation when they expanded into Australia in early 2024.

“Our Weight Management product BellaTrim contains the branded ingredient ChromaxO (chromium picolinate) that is approved for use at 200mcg in the USA but only 50 mcg in Australia. For product registration (which is required in Australia) we needed to reformulate for that country’s specific needs. Whilst cumbersome, expensive and demanding, these reformulation efforts are part of business when managing a global audience.”

The adage “It’s a relationship business” extends to compliance as well, according to Gubler. Navigating regulatory requirements involves building a collaborative relationship with regulatory agencies to ensure the technology is utilized in a compliant manner.

This process often involves a back-and-forth exchange, negotiating until a balance is struck that

adheres to regulations while maintaining the uniqueness and power of the technology. This approach enables companies to secure patents and create exclusive, unique formulations.

Consumer Insight and Feedback

Unfortunately, Tan says, no matter what consumer trends might be, you cannot force a nutrient to work just because the market calls for it. “A company will ask, ‘Can you just try to make it this way?’” he says. “If I bluff my way, I probably would be able to get that done, but that is just not me. So I have to say, ‘I’m sorry, I don’t have data to show that. That market would be fantastic, but this just won’t work.’”

Tan has seen three trends driven by consumer feedback that are strong right now. “I think consumer demand is highest in cardiovascular health, healthy aging, and addressing inflammation and oxidation.”

Direct Selling’s Biggest Opportunities in Formulating

For Tan, the opportunities and challenges are those that are universal to the direct selling channel. “I see the biggest challenge is the message: to communicate what the ingredient or product does in the simplest manner. And I see the story as the biggest opportunity.”

Having worked within the direct sales space for decades now, Tan knows that there’s a huge risk in credibility and in Federal Trade Commission compliance with

having representatives try to communicate in-depth science verbally or on social media. That has to be shared through synopsis of studies—and having representatives instead share a clear and simple story.

Miller highlights that the primary challenge for direct selling companies is incorporating solid science into their products due to a lack of skilled personnel with credible scientific and medical experience. This gap has led to a market filled with ineffective “Me Too” products, he says. Miller emphasizes that understanding the core biomedical problem is essential for developing meaningful solutions.

Historically, direct selling companies have excelled in promotion, leadership development, and marketing. However, with consumers now demanding more validation, credibility, and third-party support, companies must adapt by effectively communicating complex science in an understandable way. By doing so, they can innovate and distinguish their products, leading to stronger customer retention and industry leadership.

SSN



Jenna Lang Warford is a Social Selling News Contributor.

Relevant For
Your Next
Products

Tapping
Into Current
Trends



CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Top Supplement Searches, Summer 2024

- Mushroom Coffee (up 1,143% in 5 years)
- Mushroom Gummies (up 1,011% in 2 years)
- Collagen Gummies (up 540% in 5 years)
- Sleep Gummies (up 288% in 5 years)
- Chocolate Collagen (up 135% in 5 years)
- Marine Collagen (133% in 5 years)
- Turmeric Coffee (up 78% in last 2 years)

“Unnoticeable” Supplements

- These are supplements embedded in products used in everyday routines
- Shopping is frequent & multi-tasked (micro-moments)
- *Harvard Business School* reports Sustainable products have 5.6 times higher average sales growth
- 5% of U.S. adults have a vegetarian or vegan diet
- Coffee consumption rising
 - 67% of American adults had coffee in the past day.
 - 75% of American adults had coffee in the past week.
 - 57% of Americans had specialty coffee.



CONSUMER SPENDING

Consumers expect multiple payment options

40% Are purpose-driven (want products aligned with their values)

71% Indicated “traceability” is very important & are willing to pay a premium

77% Interested in “environmentally sustainable & responsible” food

71% Shop in “micro-moments” (shopping while doing something else)

41% Are value-driven (want good value for money)






57% Willing to change purchasing habits to reduce negative environmental impact

1+ in 3 Say those shopping micro-moments happen weekly, multiple times daily





CONSUMERS' TOP MOTIVATORS FOR EATING PLAN/DIET

-  **47%** Losing Weight
-  **40%** Feeling Better/More Energy
-  **39%** Improving Physical Appearance
-  **37%** Protecting Long-Term Health
-  **36%** Preventing Weight Gain

Top Diet/Eating Plan Trends

- Intermittent Fasting
- Clean Eating
- Ketogenic/High Fat
- Low Carb
- Plant-based

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MERCHANT PROCESSING COMPANIES

RANKED BY NUMBER OF DIRECT SELLING CLIENTS

Each month, *The Ranks* spotlights companies, people or trends that are important to the direct selling channel. This month, *The Ranks* lists merchant processing companies that work specifically in the direct selling realm, ranked by number of current direct selling clients. If client information was not provided, "did not provide" is used in the column and the company is listed in alphabetical order. *The Ranks* will vary monthly in type of information and in number of items included. *Ranks* client data is not audited and relies on the good faith responses of the participants.

RANK	COMPANY NAME & LOCATION	NUMBER OF CURRENT DS CLIENTS	KEY CONTACT	3 REPRESENTATIVE CLIENTS	WEBSITE	CONTACT INFORMATION
<u>1</u>	Nexio/CMS Orem, UT	392	Adrienne Fusitua	Bomb Party Vida Divina inCruises	nex.io	877.551.5504 x186 afusitua@nex.io
<u>2</u>	Metrics Global Las Vegas, NV	50	Dee Oldroyd	It Works! Three International Senegence	metricsglobal.com	702.757.6900 info@metricsglobal.com
*	ACI Worldwide Coral Gables, FL	Did not provide	Melissa Brady	Did not provide	aciworldwide.com	904.629.3710 melissa.brady@ aciworldwide.com
*	Global Payroll Gateway Newport Beach, CA	Did not provide	Sales	Did not provide	globalpayrollgateway.com	855.342.5474 sales@gpgway.com
*	MassPay Las Vegas, NV	Did not provide	Sales	Did not provide	masspay.io	sales@masspay.io
*	Nuvei Phoenix, AZ	Did not provide	Scott Fitzpatrick	Did not provide	nuvei.com	866.296.0443 sfitzpatrick@nuvei.com
*	Paymenture Lindon, UT	Did not provide	Sales	Did not provide	paymenture.com	800.308.9762 info@paymenture.com
*	Propay Lindon, UT	Did not provide	Sales	Did not provide	propay.com	801.341.5643 sales@propay.com

People on the Move



ASMA ISHAQ, AMARE GLOBAL

Asma Ishaq has been named CEO of **Amare Global**. Ishaq brings over 24 years of extensive leadership and R&D experience in direct selling, having co-founded **Jusuru**, a health and wellness co-founded company, in 2009. It was later acquired by **Modere**, where she went on to serve as CEO for more than seven years.



NEVENA SREBREVA, PAMPERED CHEF

Pampered Chef has named **Nevena Srebreva** as CEO. Srebreva previously served as chief field and international officer since joining the company in 2020. With 25 years of experience, she led the company's expansion in Europe. Before Pampered Chef, Srebreva was head of sales at **Vorwerk** and guided sales training at **Avon**.



WENDY FORSYTHE, EXP REALTY

EXp Realty has hired **Wendy Forsythe** as chief marketing officer. Forsythe brings over 20 years of real estate experience, including in executive leadership roles at Compass, Fathom and HomeSmart Intl. She will now oversee all aspects of eXp Realty's marketing strategy, including brand management, advertising and digital marketing.



ASHLEY HOWER, PLEXUS

Plexus Worldwide has appointed **Ashley Hower** as chief marketing officer. Hower has nearly 20 years' experience in global marketing and brand management with previous roles at global companies, such as **Forever Living Products**. She will now lead Plexus' strategic marketing initiatives, including brand awareness and customer engagement.



LEADERSHIP UPDATES, EXP REALTY

EXp Realty has appointed:
Kendall Bonner, VP of industry relations;
Amy Weaver, SVP of U.S. growth;
Frank Panunto, **Russ Laggan**,
and **Tony King**, regional VPs of growth;
Susan McClain, VP of agent success;
Sean Murphy, SVP of commercial growth;
and **Nadia Habib**, SVP of Canada growth.



RAFAEL FERNÁNDEZ, 4LIFE

Rafael Fernández, **4Life Research's** regional vice president of Europe, has been appointed vice president of the **Spanish Association of Direct Selling Companies (AVD)**, a nonprofit supporting direct sellers in Europe's Spanish markets. Fernández has 35 years of experience and joined 4Life in 2008 as an international general manager.



CHRISTINA HELWIG, ADVOCARE

AdvoCare International has appointed **Christina Helwig** as the first woman to serve as CEO in company history. Previously leading marketing as chief marketing officer, Helwig joined AdvoCare in 2013 and has advanced at the company, most recently helping guide its shift from multi-level marketing to direct-to-consumer.



DANNY LEE, 4LIFE

4Life Research President and CEO **Danny Lee** has been nominated and approved to serve as chairman of the **U.S. Direct Selling Association (DSA)** for a second consecutive term. After a unanimous vote, Lee will now continue to represent the collective interests of more than 125 member companies in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

People on the Move



JIM M. SINGER, MONAT

Jim M. Singer has joined **MONAT Global Corp.** as vice president of research, innovation and microbiology of B&R Products Inc., the company's manufacturing facility in Florida. Over 30 years Singer has led research and development for beauty brands such as L'Oréal and Voyant Beauty. He also has been granted 117 patents.

TEAM EXPANSION, ONEHOPE

Winemaker **Philippe Melka** and partner **Rob Mondavi Jr.** have joined **ONEHOPE's** winemaking team to collaborate with its lead winemaker Isadora Frias. Additional new management team members are **Angelique Ball**, who will be general manager of the winery, and **DaMarcus Wells-Buckner**, who will be assistant general manager.

ONE HOPE



SHANE WARE, PARTNER.CO

Partner.Co has hired **Shane Ware** as chief financial officer. As a licensed CPA, Ware has over 20 years of financial experience, primarily with **Modere**, where he served in the CFO capacity for nearly seven years. At **Partner.Co**, he will lead its financial strategy, working to unify global financial systems and processes.



ROB CARNEY, TRANSAMERICA

Transamerica, the parent company of direct seller **World Financial Group (WFG)**, has hired **Rob Carney** as chief distribution officer for its individual solutions division. Carney has over 30 years' experience in financial sales. He will now guide the distribution strategy for **Transamerica's** life, annuities and mutual funds.



DIEGO GAXIOLA, BEFRA

BeFra, formerly known as **Betterware de México**, has added **Diego Gaxiola** to its board of directors as an independent director. Gaxiola has served as global chief financial officer for baking company **Grupo Bimbo** since 2017. With over 20 years of experience in the food industry, he was previously CFO of **Alsea**.



TARA SCHOTT, SOCIAL SELLING NEWS

Tara Schott has joined **Social Selling News** as sales director. With a career spanning over 20 years, Schott has a wealth of experience in direct sales, particularly in the health and beauty sector. Her journey in sales began in the 1990s, and since then, she has honed her skills working with various direct sales organizations.

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WHAT'S NEW ▶▶

Rodan + Fields Shifts to an Affiliate Business Model

Rodan + Fields has announced it is transitioning from direct selling “to unlock growth and reach new customers.” Beginning Sept. 1, the company will no longer operate under a multilevel-marketing structure and instead focus on streamlining the customer and consultant experience. Consultants will now operate under an affiliate program, which is only available to existing consultants. They will also continue to receive increased commissions on customer sales and product discounts. However, the recruitment and commissions that consultants receive through product sales by those recruited will not be a component of R+F’s model any longer, thus simplifying the consultant experience. To reinforce the new model, Rodan + Fields will look to traditional channels and social media in order to market and advertise products in addition to the consultants’ efforts. Rodan + Fields was founded by dermatologists Dr. Katie Rodan and Dr. Kathy Fields in 2000. After temporary ownership by Estée Lauder Companies Inc., the doctors bought back the company and relaunched it in 2008 with a direct selling model.

Prüvit Ownership Returns to Founders

Prüvit Founders Brian Underwood, Chris Harding and Terry LaCore have reacquired the company for \$107 million. The founders stated that the “decision underscores their commitment to Prüvit’s foundational principles” with a renewed focus on its “roots” and “core values.” Resetting to the fundamentals that the company was built on,” the founders are looking to bolster Prüvit’s market position while improving its innovation capabilities and providing better customer value. These efforts would go toward reestablishing the brand’s standing as an industry leader with the founders “setting the stage for a legacy that will thrive for years to come,” according to Co-Founder LaCore. The LaCore ecosystem will also continue to support the company, offering its capabilities, expertise and capital. Prüvit was founded in 2015 and is the maker of a ketone supplement drink.

DSEF Report Finds US Economy Receives \$111.4 Billion Benefit from Direct Selling

The **Direct Selling Education Foundation (DSEF)** has shared results from its 2024 Economic Impact Report, showing a benefit from direct selling activity on the U.S. economy. Based on data pulled from 2022, the study was conducted by Professor Robert A Peterson, the John T. Stuart III Centennial Chair in Business Administration at the McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin. Research revealed that the direct selling industry provided an estimated impact of \$111.4 billion to the U.S. economy in 2022, which was an increase of 34% from \$83.1 billion in 2016. Included in the 2022 impact was \$40.5 billion from the direct retail sales generated by direct selling. Indirectly, \$31 billion came from upstream or supply chain, and \$39.9 billion was induced from downstream or household purchases. Direct selling also contributed \$15.5 billion in tax revenue to federal, state and local governments, compared to \$4.9 billion in 2016, an increase of 46%.

Zinzino Plans to Acquire Zurvita

Zinzino has signed a letter of intent with the shareholders of **Zurvita Inc.** to acquire 100% of the U.S. company’s shares. Sweden-based Zinzino has agreed to pay approximately \$16.5 million for Zurvita, of which \$5 million will be newly issued Zinzino shares. It will finance the acquisition with its own cash flow and existing liquidity. Zinzino specializes in test-based, personalized nutrition and scientific skincare and looks to the acquisition as part of its strategic plan for global growth. Expanding into North America with this purchase means Zinzino will also acquire access to Zurvita’s distribution network in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. In recent years, Zinzino has already made several acquisitions to build on its sustainable growth plan, including purchasing **VMA Life** in 2020, **Enhazz** in 2022, and the assets of **Xelliss** in 2024, as well as establishing a strategic partnership with **ACN**. Zinzino intends to sign a final acquisition agreement for Zurvita during the third quarter of 2024.

California Supreme Court Upholds Gig Worker Law

The California Supreme Court unanimously ruled on July 24 that app-based ride-hailing and delivery services can continue classifying their drivers as independent contractors. The decision upholds Proposition 22, a 2020 voter-approved law backed by companies like Uber and Lyft. The ruling ends a years-long legal battle between labor unions and tech companies over worker classification in the state. While Uber called it “a victory” for drivers, labor groups vowed to continue fighting for job protections and benefits. The decision allows gig economy companies to maintain their current business models in California without providing employees full benefits.

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.

EXIGO.....	02	MOMENTUM FACTOR.....	10,23	JENKON.....	31
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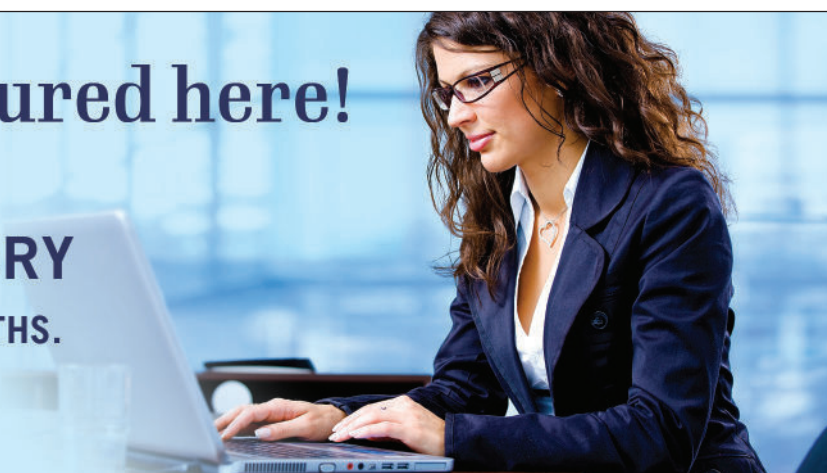
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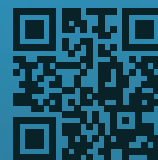
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