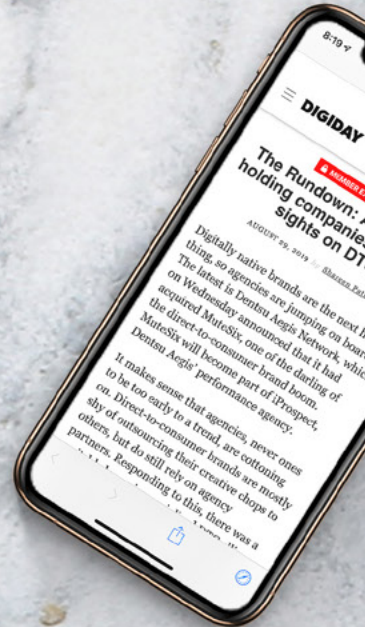
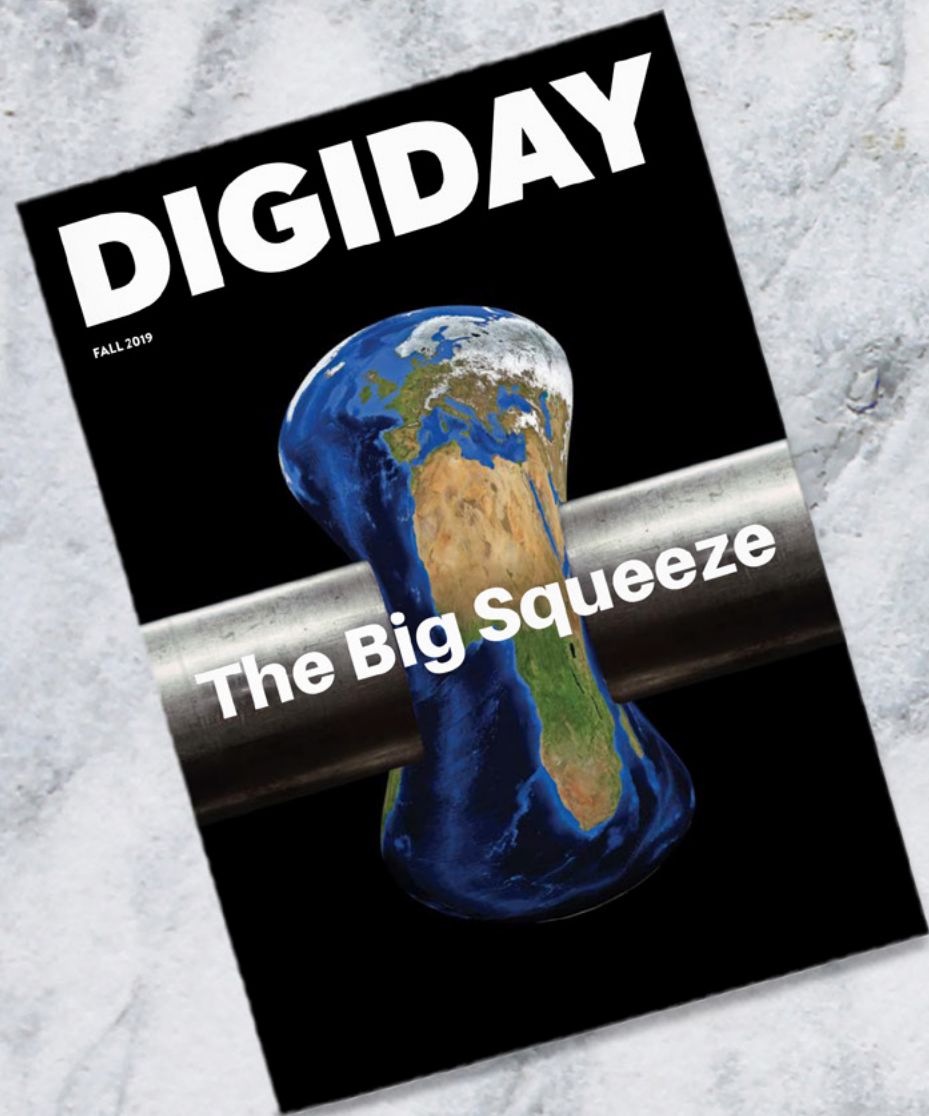


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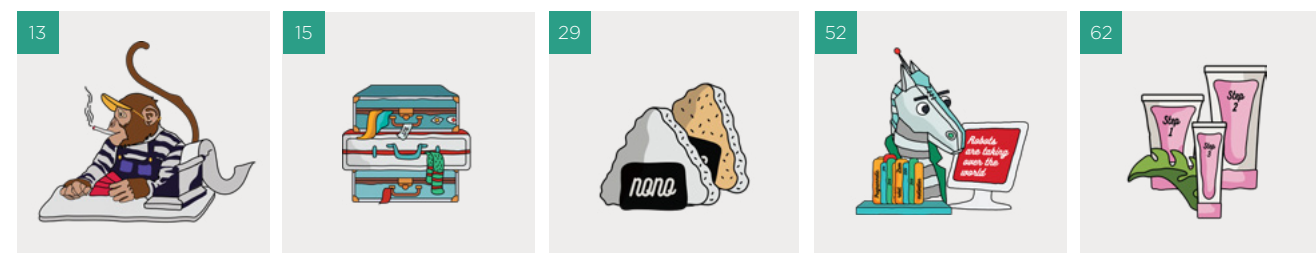


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The World of Work

By Shareen Pathak



Business models across all industries are shifting. Talk to any executive about their challenges, the conversation will quickly turn to people -- finding them, keeping them, motivating them. Our latest issue focuses on modern work through the lens of people, culture, automation, spaces and balance.

In people, Kristina Monllos delves into life after #MeToo rollicked every industry. She explores what life now looks like for people inside advertising agencies, how #MeToo has in some cases turned into a punchline for a very bad joke, and how it's changing interpersonal dynamics. Kristina also explored the lives of foreign-born talent inside ad agencies, and how visa dynamics have created a limbo for these workers, hearing in their own words what it's like to feel trapped.

We also explore Slack, and how this instant messaging platform is transforming how workers are organizing inside digital media companies. And as the retail industry undergoes its own shift and stores occupy a new function, Anna Hensel examines the death of the salaried retail job.

At the same time, in the Culture section, we take a critical look at what it really means to be a company founded by women -- and how it doesn't necessarily result in a more "inclusive" culture.

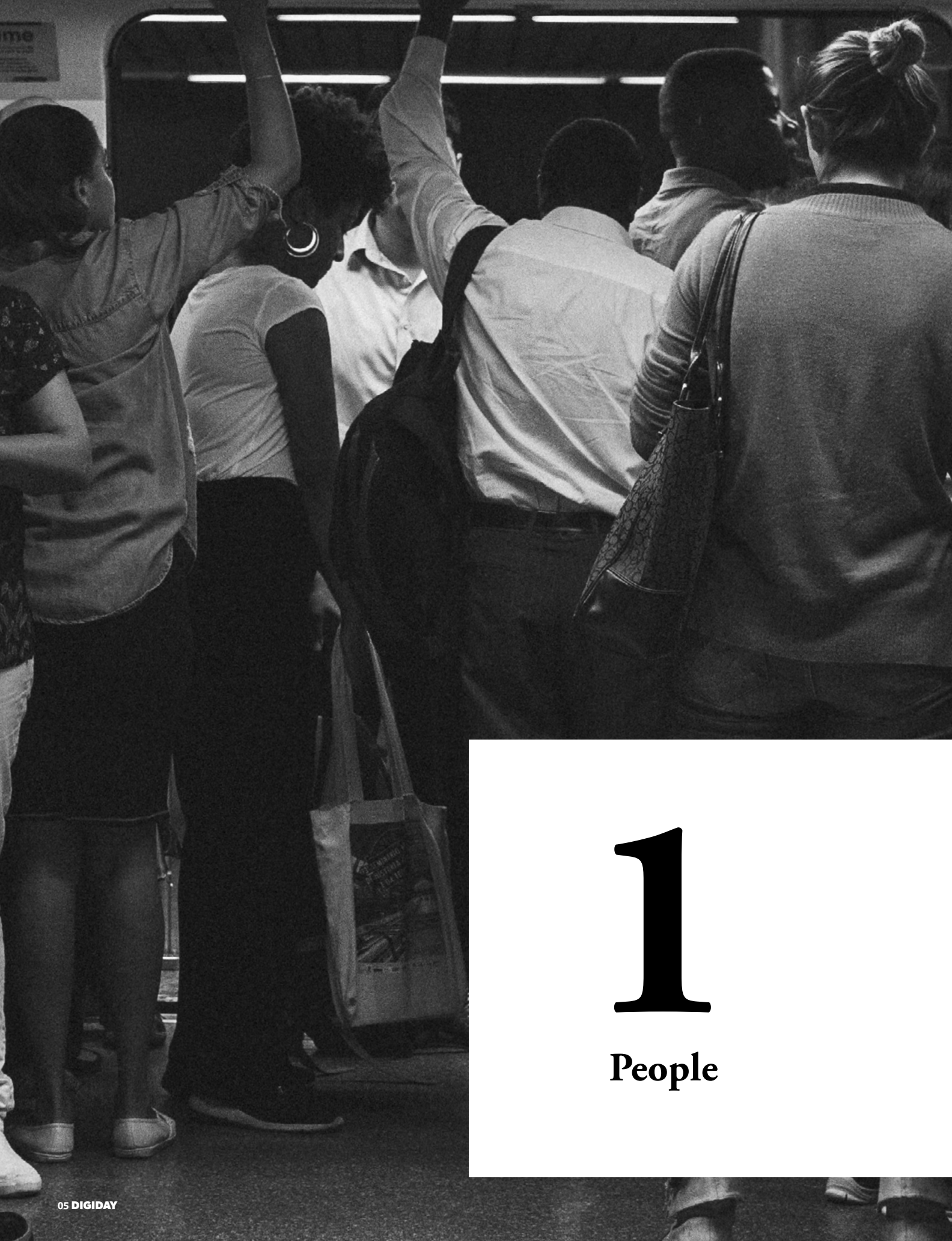
We also dive into work perks, the future of workwear and showcased some original research on work culture inside media and marketing. I also took a look at the weaponization of workplace banter and gossip, thanks to a generation that sees their work lives and personal lives becoming more blurred, and how companies are figuring out how to stay ahead of harmful gossip.

For spaces, we examine the future of the office space, while Jill Manoff put together a scorecard looking at some of the newest co-working spaces and how they stack up.

We also report on the future of automation in advertising, and in our Balance section, why Sundays have become the sacred, work-free zone, as workers attempt to set boundaries.

The nature of work is changing. These changes are driven by technology, yes, but also a new generations of workers who are rejecting old norms and instead seeking a life of balance and meaning. The workplace is also changing, in many cases physically. The lines between work and regular life have blurred for a generation, but now companies need to transform themselves to cater to a new set of expectations. ▣

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Sexual Exclusion

Inside agencies, men and women still struggle to deal with the fall out of #MeToo. **By Kristina Monllos**

Sarah (not her real name), a female copywriter at a creative agency describes work life post-#MeToo as “gendered.”

In the two-and-a-half years since the movement transformed businesses and conversations around harassment all over the world, Sarah says she’s only had female clients; the art directors that she’s partnered with are female; that she hasn’t once been asked to lunch or drinks by her male colleagues and that the men she’d like to mentor her will barely answer her questions in the hallway, let alone spend any time with her. Post-#MeToo, Sarah says she’s missing out on opportunities because she’s female.

“I feel like it has shifted from sexual misconduct to sexual exclusion,” says Sarah. “The reason [women at agencies] are still feeling uncomfortable is that we’re still being judged for our gender -- just in an entirely different way.”

In the years since #MeToo, alleged bad actors like former Droga5 CCO Ted Royer, Innocean CCO Eric Springer and Publicis Seattle CCO Andrew Christeau, among others, across the industry have been publicly outed and ousted, advocacy groups like Times Up Advertising have been created and ad agencies have routinely said that they want to root out sexual harassment. But inside agencies the day-to-day mood is still unsettled as some agency employees say that men and women don’t trust each other, that agencies don’t trust men and women to be alone together, that some women feel like they’re being excluded and that some men are now regularly cracking jokes about #MeToo.

Post-#MeToo, employees say agency culture is deeply fractured, that it feels like there’s an open wound and not enough time has been dedicated to healing that divide. Most agree that while agencies have publicly advocated to dig deep and fix their internal cultures that it’s more lip service than action. “Sometimes it feels like we’re trying to market our way out of a problem with no intention of actually wanting to fix it,” says a female ECD at Mcgarrybowen.

“It doesn’t feel like a cohesive environment right now,” says a female copywriter at a creative agency. “People from top to bottom are rethinking their entire personalities at work. The message we were trying to send was, ‘Don’t be shitty, don’t touch people at work and don’t use your power to influence people.’ It’s trickled down to this everyday weirdness. Treat me like I’m your copywriter, not your priest.”

The specific cultural issues vary by agency. Post-#MeToo, some employees believe that there’s now a lack of trust between genders, that men are less likely to mentor women or close the door when alone with a woman out of fear of being called out. Some agency employees say that there’s a constant heightened awareness now around what you say and how that could be perceived and that there’s a sense that no one is comfortable being themselves at work. Others say that whether out of fear, defense or just to be snarky, men in the ad world are now routinely cracking jokes and turning #MeToo into a punchline. Overall, multiple agency employees interviewed for this piece—all of whom asked for anonymity—agreed that agency culture hasn’t altogether changed for the better and that there’s a new sense of discomfort among the genders.

Agencies weren’t alone in being changed by #MeToo. The movement is part of a national conversation that’s had an impact in nearly every sector from entertainment to politics to technology, among others, all of which are grappling with its long-term effects. One of those effects is that men are generally less likely to mentor women. This past May, Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg and Procter & Gamble chief brand officer Marc Pritchard co-wrote a piece for Fortune calling for men who refuse to mentor women to rethink their behavior and make a more deliberate effort to support women.

“I’ve heard this first-hand—male leaders telling me they avoid one-on-ones with female members of staff, or that they always ensure there is someone else in the meeting,” says Simon

1

People



Fenwick, 4A's evp of talent, equity and inclusion. "I find this absurd and disturbing. That says two things about you: Either you've done something you're afraid you might repeat, or you think you'll do something you shouldn't. Either way, that's unacceptable."

For Sarah, #MeToo changed who she works with and what she works on as the agency now groups men and women in teams by gender rather than personality. "You see these shifts, you see clients that are female getting female teams and the clients that are male getting male teams," she says. "It's also become less integrated like, 'The guys will take the broadcast and the girls will take the social.' There's not a lot of mingling. It's feeling very baby blue on the right and baby pink on the left. It's very much a Sadie Hawkins agency right now."

It's not only having an impact on who she works with and how she does that work—she said agencies are wary of men

and women traveling together so agencies typically only send men when there's travel required to be on set for production—but it's also changed the social dynamics of agency life. "I've never in the entire time since #MeToo been asked to go to lunch with a man or a group of guys," says the copywriter. "Before, it was 'Let's go grab drinks after work.' I get along with guys and I always have. Now, it's kind of like, 'You're still a girl' and I can't grab a drink with male coworkers anymore."

Recently, jokes about #MeToo inside agencies have cropped up and that hasn't helped the fractured culture, according to three female agency employees. "It's almost become a punchline," says the ECD. "If someone made a comment about my male partner's clothing they'd be like, 'Oh be careful, #HeToo.' Some of my male colleagues have tried to reduce it to a joke."

"Men have this sense of being accused, they're like, 'I'm not like that,'" says

a senior art director at a creative agency. "There are little sarcastic jokes that are meant to be funny but are on the defense like, 'Oh, it's just the two of you in that conference room? Be careful!' The casualness and the snarkiness that now exists between men and women, and among both groups separately, makes it feel like there's this unresolved issue."

"The mood is still uncomfortable and made worse by people who are using humor to deflect the seriousness of the issues that #MeToo addresses," says a woman at a media agency. "What #MeToo has done is show the men who are actively trying to be allies and those who think everything is a joke."

Some of the women said that it's not as if they are humorless or can't take a joke but that the jokes are a symptom of the gendered divide in agencies post-#MeToo. "It's like we went and talked about it,

addressed that it's an issue but never had the deeper conversations," says the senior art director. "Everyone has thoughts and feelings but there's no way to properly articulate them so there's a bit of a subtle hostility."

When asked about whether or not culture has changed within agencies men interviewed said that they are certainly more aware of what they say and tend to choose their words more carefully but deferred to women to make the call about whether or not the culture has changed. "[I'm] definitely more aware," says a male senior copywriter that is now working client-side, adding that he didn't realize sexual harassment was happening within agencies until female co-workers started sharing stories with him after #MeToo. "I understand where I might've held a faulty POV when I thought the way I was [acting] was fine."

When asked about agency culture post-#MeToo, agency leaders and industry groups like the 4A's said they believe that significant change is happening within agencies—with initiatives like bias training and more women in leadership positions making an impact—but that change may be harder to feel day-to-day. "We are more acutely aware and sensitive to how our approach and behavior towards others, especially direct reports, can impact people," says Carl Fremont, CEO of Quigley-Simpson. "Company-wide mandatory training on what constitutes inappropriate behavior and its impact has been a positive outcome in the post-#MeToo era."

"It's a fair observation there is a long way to go," says TBWA president Nancy Reyes. "That's probably because we are fighting a patriarchal system that has existed for as long as we can remember and it is so pervasive it's often difficult to feel progress ... it's going to get more uncomfortable before it gets better."

But even if it will get worse the answer isn't to pair agency employees by gender or have men avoid mentoring women out of fear, says Fremont. "By separating teams by gender we do not get the best thinking and are condoning bad behavior rather than establishing the manner in which we build respect and trust among co-workers."

Women and men within agencies say they are putting their faith in the younger generation entering the workforce now to truly change agency culture, as they are more likely to speak up, call out bad behavior and advocate for the kind of work environment they want. "The hope is in the younger generations," says the ECD. "I don't think they're going to take it anymore. The old guard has gotten by and maneuvered the system. That said, men always say that [things will be different] when they have daughters. We don't have time for them all to have daughters." ▣

HR Confessions

As the agency business rapidly changes, a human resources manager tells us how difficult it's gotten to keep up. **By Kristina Monllos**

The swift evolution of the advertising business over the past decade has presented abundant challenges for agencies' human resources teams. As many agencies juggle more project work (instead of ongoing assignments) and even compete on bids with in-house agencies, human resources managers are charged with attracting and retaining the right type of talent to do the work. Digiday spoke with an independent agency's HR manager about the pressures she faces in trying to luring top professionals to her agency. Since she also oversees her agency's operations, she finds the budgetary stresses immense. This conversation has been edited and condensed.

Is it harder to get people to work at an agency now?

It is. People have more choices now because they can go in-house or freelance, especially if [someone is] a really great copywriter, art director or designer. People want to stay freelance because they don't want to deal with the bullshit of office politics and the revolving doors of agency life. Money, employees and new work rolls in like waves on a beach, and then money, employees and that work roll out. It creates an unstable environment for people, especially as they get older.

How does that affect your job?

From an HR perspective, it's difficult to manage. People want to keep a healthy work-life balance in this world. So trying to retain the talent we have and recognize that they are people first — they're not automatons — is important.

Also, we're not just competing with other agencies for talent anymore; we're competing with client-side and freelance [operations], too. That said, I totally get why people don't want to work at agencies anymore.

Why do you say that?

I have a daughter who just graduated, and I told her to go do something else. It's too unstable. There's no business model. No one has this industry figured out, and if they say they do, they're lying to you and to themselves. The days of having a bunch of [agency-of-record assignments], nice fat expense accounts — those are all gone. Now, maybe you have two [agency-of-record assignments], and if you lose one you're screwed. You have rounds of layoffs. From where I sit, it's always balancing out the amount of bodies we have [and trying to] keep them [on staff, being] competitive on pay and benefits [and dealing with] clients that slash our budgets.

Was there a certain point when agency life became so unstable, you wouldn't suggest it?

Probably a year ago. To be perfectly honest, [my daughter] doesn't have the personality to be in advertising. I really believe that one day they'll find a mutant gene and find that everyone who stays in advertising has that mutant gene. It's a high-risk, high-reward industry, and you have to have a high tolerance level. It's been shifting so much, and it's not done shifting. No one knows what this industry will look like in a year. I just feel like we're on a seesaw waiting for somebody to jump off.

How do you attract talent when the business is so unstable?

It does take me longer to find the talent that we want. That pool of [talented individuals whom we find desirable] seems to be getting smaller and smaller. I hired someone recently who was weighing going with us or going [to the] client side because she was tired of the agency hustle. I do have to try to woo people over to give us a chance. We put people first here, and that's what I tell everyone — that you won't just be [part of] a revolving-door [situation]. But we have had layoffs in the past and those are awful. It's awful to know who's going to get laid off beforehand.

Don't all agencies say they put their people first?

I've worked at other agencies that don't put people first, and I never want to do that again. I'd rather be driving an Uber than be that person and be in that position to lay rounds of people off. It weighs on me. The hardest part of my job is knowing everything and having to balance it. Like if we lose a client or a piece of work, the first place I go to is, "Are we going to have to lose a body?" I don't look at our people as numbers on a spreadsheet. They're people with mortgages, rents and kids.

Does the shift to project work make it harder to staff?

It's about being consistent with the size of the staff. Work comes in waves. Right now we're crazy busy. Then there's going to be a lull. We do use a lot of freelancers; we offset [the gaps in staffing] with a lot of freelancers when things get busy.

Other than the changing nature of the business, what's the hardest part about being in HR?

You deal with a lot of personalities. Sometimes I feel like a therapist. It's hard to take everyone's energy all day long, and I can't go talk to anyone about it. That would just betray confidences. That's probably the hardest part of working in an agency. I do have a group of HR friends, and we all bitch to each other.

But I think hearing people's problems is my most important function here, even if it is emotionally exhausting. I'd rather they feel free to come in here and barf it up in my office than act out on the floor. We take it all so personally, but 99% of the time it has nothing to do with us. Always assume best intentions. It's not always about us. ▣



Slow Death

When big-box chains cut back, a manager is often among the first to be purged. **By Anna Hensel**

When Toys R Us closed all of its stores for good in June 2018, Maryjane Williams, an assistant manager at one of its Texas stores, swore that she was done with the retail industry.

Like many retail workers, she had not been able to properly celebrate Thanksgiving with her family in 20 years, thanks to Black Friday requirements. And Williams says her schedule was made even more demanding by the fact that she was one of the few salaried managers at her store. If an hourly employee missed a shift, she was responsible to cover for the person.

"When I became an assistant manager, I just kind of lost track of time," Williams says.

"If you walk up to the front of the store and see there's a line, you can't just walk out."

When retailers seek to cut costs, salaried store employees can be the first ones to get the ax. Among those who do remain, many of them say that their job is becoming harder and the hours more unpredictable, according to five current or former salaried managers Digiday spoke with.

"You can PR talk the hell out of cutting salaried positions as bloat and whatever, and a lot of your hourly [employees] aren't really going to complain too much because it wasn't them," says a full-time, hourly department supervisor at a Lowe's store in the Midwest who wished to not be named.

Madelyn Garcia, a former manager for a Toys R Us store in Florida, says it used to have a minimum of four to five salaried managers before the company went through a leveraged buyout in 2005. By the time her store closed in 2018, she was the only one left. She now is a leader for the retail workers advocacy group United for Respect.

"You go from opening the building, to counting the money, to running to the back to unload shipments of merchandise," Garcia recalls about her days working as the store's sole salaried employee. "You are running back and forth constantly" — if the cashier needs something or the customer.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the retail industry has lost more than 31,000 jobs in the past year, according to the Department of Labor. Struggling brick-and-mortar chains are either closing stores or going out of business entirely. But even

salaried workers at profitable retailers can't be sure their positions are safe. Today's big-box chains have to constantly find new ways to shave costs so they can set aside more money for remodeling stores, fulfilling online orders and raising wages for the employees who remain.

In May, Walmart announced that it was testing a new staff structure that would result in fewer salaried managers per store — but increased pay for its remaining hourly and salaried employees.

Walmart has not yet decided if the new staffing plan will apply to all of its stores but a recent company statement notes that "more than 75% of our store management teams started as hourly associates, and more than 60% of our workforce is full-time," and adds, "We are proud to have promoted 265,000 people last year to jobs of greater responsibility and higher pay."

The store management team at a big-box retailer typically consists of a salaried store manager and perhaps some co-managers, along with other salaried employees who each oversee a different area like the electronics or grocery department. At Walmart, this adds up to 13 to 15 salaried employees at a supercenter with 300 to 400 workers in total, a former employee estimates.

By shedding one salaried manager, who might make \$48,000 to \$75,000 a year, the chain could employ two or three additional hourly employees for 30 hours a week. (That's not taking into account the cost of health insurance and other benefits for salaried employees.)

But a retailer can't completely shed all of its salaried managers because these staffers are the ones who can pick up extra work without being paid overtime. And that's the biggest pain point for many salaried managers. They can never predict when that extra work will arrive, and any cuts to the salaried manager team increases the odds that they'll have to stay late to cover for a missing employee.

"There would be times where someone called [to take time] off, and so even though I came in at noon and I was scheduled until 10 p.m., I would end up staying there until 5 or 6 a.m., until the morning person came in," says a former Walmart assistant manager in Pennsylvania. He recently took a job at a smaller retail chain, where he hopes to find a better work-life balance since

he doesn't oversee as large of a store. He, too, did not wish to be named.

"You are seeing a lot of the salaried managers [who] are being overworked for companies like Target, Walmart and Lowe's looking for smaller box jobs, and they are getting filled up quick," he says.

The Lowe's department supervisor sees a similar strain being placed on salaried assistant managers at his store. A recent job opening for a merchandising assistant store manager at a Lowe's in New York City describes that the job "requires morning, afternoon and evening availability any day of the week," even though the employee is generally scheduled to work only 48 hours over that stretch. (Lowe's did not respond to a request for comment).

This department supervisor formerly worked for Lowe's as an assistant store manager before losing that job in a round of layoffs in 2017. He estimates that during this period of layoffs, Lowe's cut about one to three assistant managers at each store.

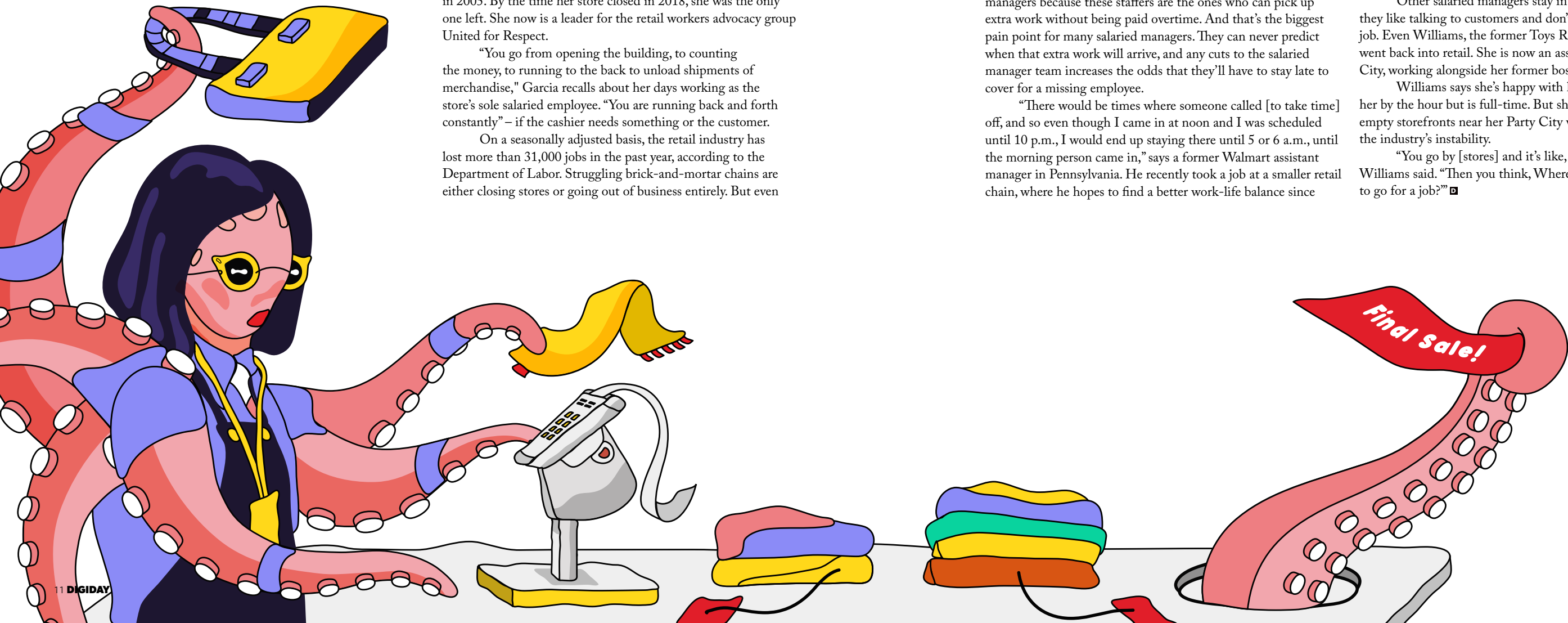
He eventually returned to the company as a department supervisor because Lowe's still paid him more as an hourly employee compared to other area retailers.

"I'm absolutely terrified," he says, when asked if he's still happy working in retail. He foresees additional job cuts in the industry, as retailers seek to automate more in-store tasks. He has explored switching careers, he says, noting, however, that "a lot of the skills that retail offers are really not as transferable as people would like you to believe." And he can't afford to return to school.

Other salaried managers stay in the retail business because they like talking to customers and don't like the idea of an office job. Even Williams, the former Toys R Us assistant manager, went back into retail. She is now an assistant manager for Party City, working alongside her former boss at Toys R Us.

Williams says she's happy with her current job, which pays her by the hour but is full-time. But she only has to look at the empty storefronts near her Party City worksite to be reminded of the industry's instability.

"You go by [stores] and it's like, 'closing sale, closing sale,'" Williams said. "Then you think, Where are all these people going to go for a job?" ■





Reporters Wanted

Local news teams need to experiment to find fresh business models. But they need to find local reporters first. **By Max Willens**

In the months following Donald Trump's presidential election, many media companies decided they needed to do a better job covering heartland districts where voters had contributed to Trump's surprise victory. Vox advertised a "distressed communities" reporting position. A squadron of Huffington Post reporters embarked on a yearlong listening tour, roaming the country in a bus.

But the blind spot that national publications discovered in their reporting about smaller communities across America turned out to be a symptom of a much larger problem. After years of print advertising's revenue shrinking, budget cutting by private equity managers and Google and Facebook changing their priorities, local news operations are in crisis.

For the most part, this is an economic issue: Small publishers, serving small communities with small advertising budgets, can no longer survive by using their current business models for producing news.

But an enormous problem is the lack of reporters and digital talent needed to cover these communities. Young people continue to gravitate toward big cities. And without enough people to create news products whose consumption can be monetized in a new way, fresh experiments are scarce. But such explorations are needed, if managers are to figure out what a reconfigured iteration of local news production could look like. Without open-minded people being willing to test new business models or product strategies, the prospects for news companies might become grimmer.

"You look at a lot of the places that are true news deserts; there's just not a lot of journalism talent there," says Mandy Jenkins, gm of the Compass Experiment. "They don't have a long history of news." Her Google-funded, McClatchy-guided project plans to launch 10 different "local news labs" in small and medium-sized cities over the next year.

The dearth of talent, Jenkins says, has played a role in her team's decision to not launch labs in some cities.

"It's not sensible for us to go somewhere where there's literally nothing," Jenkins says, explaining that where communities are experiencing a news desertification, the few qualified people available tend to either leave their area or just walk away from media jobs.

Thus, the lack of local talent creates a chicken-or-the-egg problem for those communities. Local news operations might need to experiment with new business models, ones focused less on print advertising and more on producing different kinds of information and services for readers, according to Karen Rundlet, a director of the Knight Foundation's journalism program.

"The economics have to be there," she says. "The higher-paying jobs — the jobs, period — are concentrated in big cities."

But examples of new, local successes are few and far between. For every VT Digger, whose one-person newsroom evolved into the largest independent journalism source in Vermont, old newspapers are collapsing, consolidating or rotting into irrelevance for their readers.

That, in turn, discourages some reporters or entrepreneurs from trying to even envision new sustainable ways to fill the local news vacuum.

"I don't think we've proved it out, especially at the local and regional level," says Chris Krewson, the executive director of LION Pubs, a nonprofit that guides several local, independent news publishers.

Yet some of the very people who are trying out new things say that producing local digital news is doable. Don Day, the sole proprietor of BoiseDev, says he sees a lot of reasons for optimism. His bootstrapped one-person digital operation grew over 18 months into the largest source of business news in Boise, Idaho.

"If the content is right and the approach is correct, you can do it," says Day, an Edward R. Murrow Award winner

and John S. Knight Fellow who previously produced digital news for KTVB. "I've had to unlearn a lot of old, bad legacy-media habits, to have more conversations with people who aren't just story sources."

Day has a busy schedule. Monday through Thursday, he reports three original stories daily. On Friday, he syndicates one story licensed from a local print publication, in exchange for providing that outlet with a curated selection of BoiseDev content. Day also uses Friday to catch up on ad sales and customer service issues that arise with his paid membership program.

"That was a big, scary thing," Day says, recalling his creation of the paid membership program a year ago. Memberships cost \$100 per year. "Sometimes I step back and I go, 'Holy crap, 500 people are paying for this content!'"

As digital outlets like BoiseDev grow stronger, observers hope that his financial success will prompt more people to try what he's doing.

"What we can do is create the conditions for news as a good small business," Krewson says. "If we do, more people will start more things." ■



Visa Limbo

Under the Trump administration, uncertainty and wait times for foreign-born talent.

As told to Kristina Monllos

U.S.-based advertising agencies have long depended on international talent.

Doing so has required those agencies to sponsor visas and wait for approvals from the Department of Homeland Security, a process that has only become more arduous under the Trump administration. Now, as the difficulty and complexity of getting a visa has increased, with longer wait times and more scrutiny, some of the international agency talent in the U.S. say they are more uncertain about their future in the country and less likely to switch jobs as their ability to live in the U.S. is tied to their visa and employment status. Below we hear from three international agency employees—all of whom spoke to Digiday on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation with their visas—about visa struggles and how the current climate could make agency employees feel trapped.

Media agency employee with a family in the U.S.

When you change jobs—aside from the notice period and everything else—there are a lot of issues. You have to resign from work and leave the country, so you have a bigger gap window of an uninsured period with health care because you're out of the market. Even though I'm happy where I am, it does weigh on my mind when I talk to people [about potential opportunities]. There is a subconscious feeling of needing to put up with things [where I am] because it's so hard [to transfer my visa]. My previous agency discussed that. They said, "If you

leave, you know that we have a right to cancel your visa." You're powerless in that situation. Everything is in the agency's favor with the visa. And a lot of agencies tie minimum commitments to hiring someone with a visa.

Recruitment is also more involved. If someone from an agency reaches out to you that's the best outcome because you can deal with all these things up front. They can say it's a problem—it's probably discriminatory but you have to live with it because of the nature of your work visa. The one that's really painful is if you're actively trying to get out and you're looking at sites to apply. If you look at some employment forms, they'll ask you if you need to be sponsored like that and if you tick that box you'll get eliminated straight away because a lot of companies will have a non-sponsorship position.

Overall, there's a heightened sense of risk when you're here with a family than as an individual. [If you change jobs and have to switch your visa] you have to pull your kid out of school and you don't know where you are going to school them in the interim. I don't have a home in my home market anymore to go back to [while waiting for a new visa]. That unpredictability is not pleasant. If you're staying at your same job it's a lot easier to deal with the visa and the renewal process. Honestly, I don't think I could handle the stress of changing jobs purely based on the visa issues. The alternative is that you can take the view of some members of the population, which is if you're not happy you can just leave. I'm not enslaved to my agency.

A lot of people that I know who were on visas at agencies in the U.S. have left as of late. The current administration is giving a lot of agencies pause on what they do and making a lot of people think about having a back-up. I know people who are asking if themselves if the uncertainty and stress are worth it.

A copywriter who recently changed jobs.

Recently, I accepted a position at an agency in the U.S. I'm working with their lawyers to sort out the visa. I feel like I should be working at a stronger agency but, unfortunately, given how this year has played out in terms of places I've talked to, this one agency was the only viable option for me. I had to weigh taking it or holding out and keeping looking for something in the U.S.

I was job hunting and talked to a bunch of really great creative shops. One that I really wanted to work at told me the visa is a really big hurdle for them because I'm mid-level and that they weren't sure if it was worth it to sponsor someone who isn't super senior. There's no right time to bring up the visa. We typically don't bring it up until after the interview and when there's a follow up. There's a sense that you'll wow them so much in the interview that they'll want to hire you even if you have the visa. Most people wait.

I'm not entirely comfortable with the contract I signed with this agency but it is what it is. In terms of payback, if I leave within the first year I have to pay back 100% of the lawyer fees for the visa. The second year, it's still paying back 50%. So it traps me for one year. I've talked to some people who've said that if you get a visa transfer to a different agency and they give you a signing bonus it can cover some of the cost of paying them back. Still, there is a bit of a lockdown feeling with the first year. The biggest thing is to not have the mindset and feel trapped even if that's the case. It's not good to have that mentality for your health or your work. For me at least, it's about doing a great job and making the most of the opportunities.

I've talked to multiple people and recruiters are telling me that it's harder to get approval now. Timelines are getting extended, it's taking longer and there's more scrutiny. [Overall, the immigration and visa approval process] completely messes with how agencies are today with project-work. No one is anticipating work

needs eight months in advance so it's hard to get those timelines to mesh with each other. Visas just don't jibe well with flexible work models or project-work.

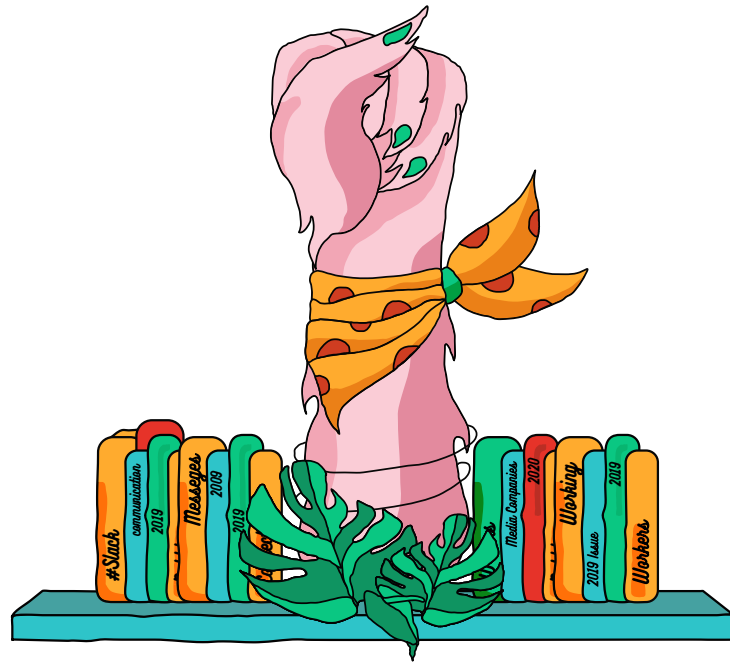
Content strategist who will probably leave the U.S. next year.

I've been at [this agency] for a few years and now I'm nearing the end of my visa. There are agencies that will support you and many that don't. How stuck you are depends on the visa that you have. I'm on a STEM OPT visa, which is an extension of the student visa. While on OPT, you can freelance and work part-time. There's a lot of freedom in the first year and there are two other years that you can stay. After that first year, there are a lot of restrictions and no one tells you about them. After the first year, you cannot freelance, you're not allowed to accept any outside money and you have to work full-time. The feeling of being stuck extends across several different levels.

When I accepted my current job, realistically with my visa, I knew I'd be here for a little over a year-and-a-half. Because of that I shut down the idea of having any other job while in the U.S. That's not a bad thing, necessarily. But I've also encountered a lot of prejudice from companies because of the visa status. I was offered a senior writing position at an ad agency and I made it all the way to the final round. I did the writing test, I met with the entire team, I made it all the way through and they told me they wanted me. Only when I was at the offer stage—and they knew about my visa status—did the recruiter say that they [wouldn't hire me because of my visa status].

The recruiters are so unaware of the nuances of the actual visa that it's unfair for me to learn at the final stage. From my perspective, I didn't understand why a huge advertising agency wouldn't be enrolled in that program. A lot of people working in the U.S. are under the H1-B or the O-1, which is the talent visa. Because of that, you're supposed to stay at your current company and that's where a lot of the pressures come from. The new employer won't want to go through the entire proceedings just to take a bet on someone who could be replaced by domestic talent. I've been with companies who value me but there's always the side eye that comes from being someone who needs paperwork even if I'm doing the paperwork myself. ■





Slacktivism

The messaging app has become a connective tissue that has facilitated organizing at media companies. **By Max Willens**

Last summer during an especially contentious stretch of negotiations between management and labor at Group Nine Media's Thrillist, the unionized employees opted for a work stoppage. Managers, aiming to show they were equally serious, decided to take their own countermeasures. So they locked Thrillist's writers out of Slack.

The managers also froze writers' email accounts as well; the kerfuffle lasted only a couple hours. But this work stoppage, which Vox referred to as the first known work stoppage at a digital media startup, underscored a crucial point: As messaging apps like Slack have become central to modern workplaces, they have also become essential tools in organizing efforts at digital media companies.

As consolidation has swept through the media industry, Slack has supplanted email and phone calls as an important tool for coordinating bargaining efforts and disseminating updates on planned organizing efforts. It has also become a forum where employees have opened up to one another and shared their fears about their futures within the digital media industry, which has been pounded by layoffs.

"It kind of became a forum for socializing but also talking about the media industry as a whole," says Eillie Anzilotti, who was one of the first people

to join an alternate Slack that workers used to organize a union at Fast Company in 2018.

Newsrooms have been among the first workplaces to widely adopt Slack, with publishers ranging from Quartz to The New York Times starting to use it in 2015. And today, Slack's tools are part of most media workers' daily routines, while the platform's gifs, emoji and other extensions have made Slack conversations into a kind of lingua franca.

Since then, media workers have opted to create private Slack workspaces, separate from the employer-run ones, where they can communicate without being surveilled. These private workspaces have frequently served as forums where organizing efforts have sprouted. In Fast Company's case, a small group of employees created a private Slack channel to discuss their concerns after their editor-in-chief was fired in 2017. The topic of organizing first emerged there about a month later.

Beyond serving a channel where people can figure out who's interested in an organizing effort, Slack has helped forge deeper bonds among the people involved, enabling workers to speak more candidly with one another, in a way that company-run channels do not readily allow, according to several sources who declined to speak on the record.

The Tech Workers Coalition, which has helped lead organizing efforts at different companies in Silicon Valley, says it does not recommend that workers use Slack to organize themselves because the platform is not secure.

But for some people, their comfort with the channel might outweigh the risks of using it.

Members of the Freelance Solidarity Project, a division of the National Writers Union, are currently deciding on a messaging service that they can use to communicate with one another. Slack is one possible tool the group is considering among several, including Discord, says Clio Chang, a member of the project's organizing committee.

"If you have a lot of people on a channel talking about things that are pertinent, bonds are formed, no matter what," Chang says. "And for freelancers, that's an important aspect of what we're trying to do because it's an isolating way to work." ▣

Red Flags

How 5 advertising managers figure out whom to not hire. **By Kristina Monllos**

Hiring the right candidate has always been a challenge. But agencies are now competing for talent at a time when unemployment is low — and they are strapped for cash, grappling with extended payment windows and companies offering project work or taking marketing in-house. Sussing out who

might be the best fit for a job depends a lot on the in-person interview. Digiday caught up with agency executives to find out their interview red flags — the signs of who's not right to hire.

'Jumpers'

My biggest red flags [are] related to how "jumpers" annotate their accomplishments on resumes. While I acknowledge that it's natural in our industry to hop around, there are red flags in a candidates' resume where they make claims to launching departments or growing businesses — all in less than a year. I believe it takes six months at least to get comfortable in any new job. So when I see candidates boasting solving or building something in such a short time, my alarm bells go off. — Gila Wilensky, Essence's svp and head of media activation:

Low risk-taking

When we recruit, we think in terms of "casting" versus filling a specific role, the intention being that just as when casting a play, you have to look at how the individual fits in with the other players as well as the overall narrative. In our case that narrative is about leading change versus following it. So a red flag for us is someone who seems to be married to a linear, obvious path, [who] isn't comfortable with taking informed risks, or who doesn't demonstrate interest about the broader economic and cultural issues that influence our clients' business. — Stacy DeRiso, PHD's U.S. COO

There is no 'I' in team

I ask each candidate, "What's the best use of your time and talent at an agency like ours?" Most of the time, upon being asked that question, candidates will pause and say something along the lines of "Wow, no one has ever asked me that." And then they will proceed to give a clear, thoughtful and true answer of how their specific talents could help us here, based on the research they've done. If a candidate launches into a prebaked, work-life history, I can tell right away they aren't very nimble thinkers. If a candidate is an "I"-driven storyteller when it comes to relaying successes, it's a pretty safe bet that collaborating ain't their strong suit, which is a deal breaker in a creative-first agency. The candidates who don't ask real-time (versus preplanned) questions let me know they are likely too rigid to be happy and successful in an environment as fast and iterative as ours. — Sue Gillan, OKRP's chief talent officer

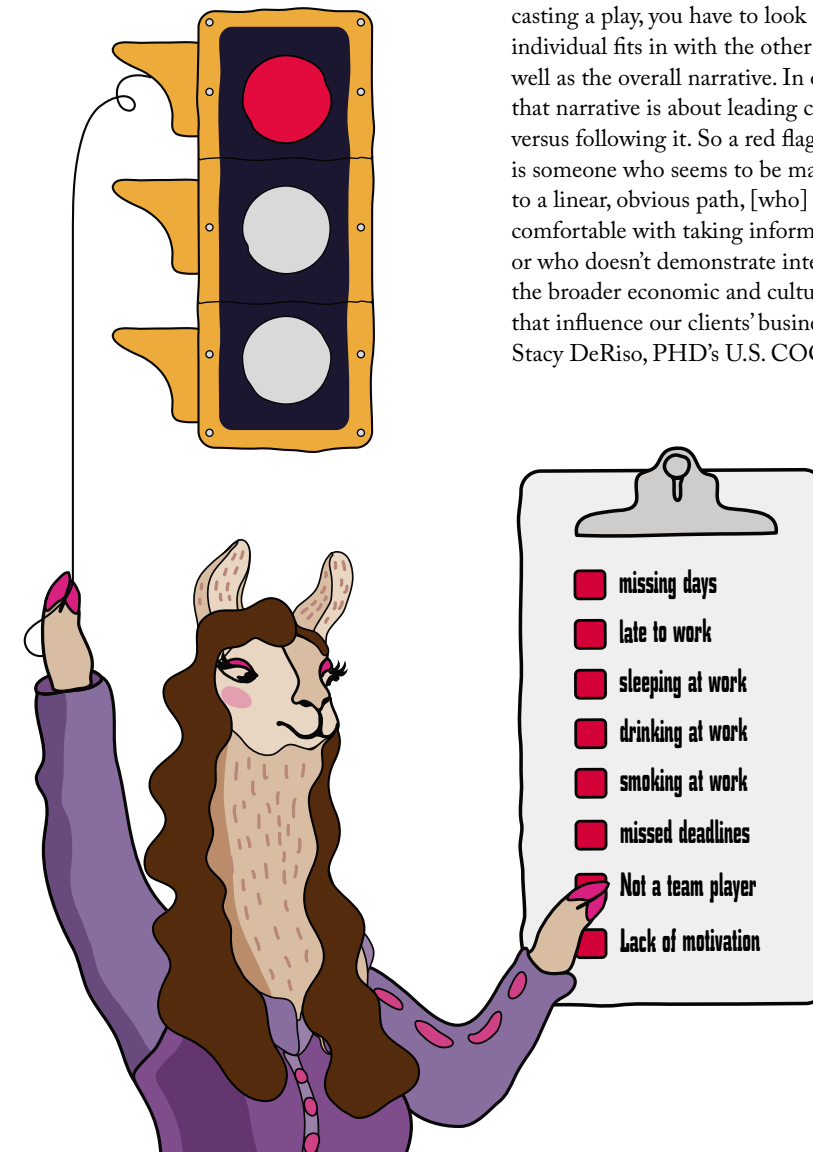
Lack of curiosity

Here's my big interviewing "red flag": I learn more about a candidate by listening to what they don't say, as opposed to what they do say. My biggest red flag is [a] lack of curiosity in our agency and their career pathway. I love it when candidates ask me a ton of questions about the agency, [its] culture, the work and what their career pathway would look like at DNA. I look for candidates [who] are curious, humble and hungry to build on their careers. — Charlene Short, director of talent and culture for DNA in Seattle

Evidence and hard data

The older I get, the more disloyal I am to my instincts. What I mean by that is that it's not just about enjoying someone's company and liking their resume. Evidence and hard data are key. I heard a speaker recently note that before hiring someone, it would be really valuable to see the candidate's reviews by Uber drivers, for example. I love that idea. In an interview you want to challenge and probe to see what's behind the words on a resume and make sure that the individual's experiences match expectations. Of course, we look for some signs of the things we as a company hold dear — honesty, integrity, fairness, creativity, general open-mindedness and an interest ... in the world.

— Joe Kelly, IPG's svp of talent. ▣



Chemistry Lessons

How these co-founders discovered their counterparts. **By Danny Parisi**



Alex Waldman, right, and Polina Veksler, founders, Universal Standard

One popular image of a cofounder is that of a creative type — someone who designs a product, dreams up branding and serves as the face of the company. Then there's the business type — the person who works behind the scenes and handles the financials and any acquisition deals. But for every brand, there's a unique story. Here's the magic behind how four real-life cofounders met and today share their duties.

UNIVERSAL STANDARD

Alex Waldman recalls one New York evening and the Fifth Avenue crisis that prompted her and her friend Polina Veksler to cofound their New York-based women's fashion brand Universal Standard in 2015.

"There was a moment when she was going to an event but I wasn't because I didn't have anything to wear," Waldman says. "I told her there wasn't a single store on Fifth Avenue that had clothing for me. I took her to some of the stores and showed her. From there, that's where the whole idea for the company really developed."

They consider their differences in professional training to be a source of strength.

Waldman had creative experience, first working as a fashion journalist and then as a marketer. Veksler had toiled in the finance and private equity world, managing accounts in Russia, Kenya and the U.S.

Today the two like to joke that Veksler is a human Excel spreadsheet while Waldman is a walking Photoshop whiz. As creative director, Waldman designs everything related to their products, leaving most of the financial decisions to Veksler, who serves as the company's CEO.

"It's an arrangement that works great for us," Waldman says.

DAGNE DOVER

When Melissa Mash and Deepa Gandhi decided to launch their New York-based direct-to-consumer handbag company Dagne Dover in 2012, they knew they needed to find someone to handle the creative side of the business. The

two had met socially years ago through a mutual friend. While they had prior fashion industry experience — Gandhi as a merchandise planner at Club Monaco and Mash as a senior account executive at Coach — they didn't personally know any designer types. That's why Mash searched online, only to learn about Jessy Dover. She is now Dagne Dover's third cofounder.

"For Jessy, I looked on the Parsons [School of Design] website," Mash recalls. "At the time you could just search and find people's resumes."

She explains, "I searched for people with handbag design [experience] and asked them [about making] something like Longchamp meets Louis Vuitton sleekness. Only Jessy could really do that and she was a perfect fit."

In the early days when trio represented the only three employees, they worked directly with one another. Their roles were not clearly defined; they multitasked. These days the company has partnerships with Apple and Nordstrom and has begun exploring setting up a physical retail presence, drawing on the progress of a New York pop-up opened in June 2018. The cofounders now meet less frequently to deliberate over joint decisions.

"When it was just the three of us, we had to overthink every little thing to make sure we didn't mess anything up," Mash says. "But now, we don't make every decision together."

Adds Mash: "We each have our strengths. We talk, of course. But for financial stuff, Deepa takes over, and for creative stuff, Jessy does."

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY

Gihan Amarasiriwardena bluntly rejects the notion of a "business guy" and a "creative guy."

While students at MIT, he and Aman Advani had independently tried to develop a good startup idea. A professor connected the two after separately receiving an idea for a clothing company from each engineer. Within a year, the two were collaborating on prototypes; they launched the company in Boston as Ministry of Supply in 2012.

Instead of splitting their duties into "creative" and "business" slots, Amarasiriwardena relies on a different metaphor to describe their division of labor.

"We both have kind of similar backgrounds; we're both interested in product and marketing," he says. "But I came across this idea of the maker and the manager. The manager works in half-hour sprints, solving all these little problems and getting things done," he explains. "The maker sinks three or four hours into getting deep into a larger problem or product."

"For us, I'm more the maker, and Aman is the manager," Amarasiriwardena says. "It's a little different than how other people describe their work style. But I've found that that's the best way for us."

DIA&CO

Lydia Gilbert and Nadia Boujarwah met while carpooling to an outlet mall. They became fast friends as they attended business school and then decided to cofound plus-size fashion retailer Dia&Co in 2015. The company's name draws on the last three letters of their first names.

The business school chums bonded over their shared fascination with the way that the definitions of beauty and style were changing; this informed their early conceptions of their company. Working at their New York headquarters early on, Boujarwah says, they easily plunged into their preferred areas of expertise, giving their partner permission to handle what she felt most confident about.

"We do gravitate toward different things," Boujarwah says. "Lydia has always gravitated toward the operational parts of the business, and I've always loved the brand merchandising and community side of things. We divide and conquer."

Both women say their close friendship has been key to having a good working relationship.

"I think about this all the time," Boujarwah says. "What you hear so often when starting a business is, don't start one with friends or family. But I can't imagine starting a business with somebody who I didn't have this personal trust and relationship with. I think we have a stronger relationship now after working together than we did before." ■



2

Culture

Gossip 2.0

Technology is weaponizing gossip. Here's how agencies are handling this.

By Shareen Pathak



As he does every weekday morning, an agency executive opened up the professional networking app Fishbowl one Wednesday in March and idly ran through some anonymous threads. He froze when he saw on some threads a mention of his agency citing its purported loss of a major account and planning layoffs. The exec knew this account was not true. But the rumor had seemingly taken on a life of its own: On the app as well as the company's Slack threads, everyone was discussing this. "We had managers try to dispel the rumors, but in some ways it was almost too late," he recalls. "It took on a life of its own."

Gossip has probably always existed in the workplace. Researchers say it can serve as a glue to cement relationships and bring a jolt of energy to normally drab life in offices. Research by psychology professor Frank McAndrew at Knox College has

suggested that gossip possibly evolved as a part of natural selection. His theory: Knowing more about people means someone can figure out whether to trust them. And the people one chooses to share more with are those more trusted. Never mind that gossip isn't always completely accurate.

But the proverbial water cooler in recent years has been replaced by Slack, Gchat and other instant messaging tools. With the workplace ever more connected, productivity tools have been weaponized as unofficial company news services.

"We look at gossip as a form of sentiment," says an agency CEO who declined to speak on the record. "There are now more places where the chat materializes. There's Slack and Fishbowl and the comments section on blogs and Twitter. We're in a culture of venting."

This culture of venting is also driven by another, more difficult to pin down force: the very ways people are working today. People are spending more time at work. For individuals who are just entering the workforce, the lines between “work” and “not work” are blurred. Work friends are also regular friends. That means that work-life discussions are also discussions between friends. This can be good for workplace bonding but potentially problematic if it leads to the rapid spread of misinformation.

Agencies have been doing more to detect and respond to problematic “gossip.” TBWA/Chiat/Day has purchased IBM’s Social Pulse software so as to monitor public channels and posts for potential red flags or specific sentiments. The Martin Agency uses a feedback survey tool called TinyPoll to ask employees quick anonymous questions to identify what exactly workers are concerned about. At another agency, its communications and PR teams peruse the app Fishbowl, as part of the morning routine.

A PR lead at one indie agency caught misinformation about her organization and used it to get ahead of the nonstory. “We are all forced in all ways to care more about what people are saying,” says the agency’s CEO. “One of the corollaries to everyone gets a trophy is everyone gets a voice.”

Agency executives say it makes sense to try to be on the alert. One advertising employee says her coworkers leaked gossip to outlets like the now-defunct blog Agency Spy when “they felt like agency leadership wasn’t being transparent.” She adds, “It was a way to force leaders to address things, and it worked.”

According to Fishbowl founder Matt Sunbulli, “Gossip travels differently in siloed channels like IM or Slack than [on] open networks where people know leadership is reading” comments.

Sunbulli says he has witnessed agencies’ reaching out for information after reading certain comments on Fishbowl. “I won’t disagree that gossip is being weaponized,” he allows.

With this as the new reality, advertising companies like The Martin Agency of Richmond, Virginia, are sharpening their focus on transparency and trust, says talent head Tina Chamberlain. The idea is that if they can get ahead of potential situations by being truthful, they can avoid gossip.

And things have shifted quite a bit at Chamberlain’s agency, where about two years ago the longtime creative chief Joe Alexander departed after alleged sexual harassment claims surfaced. When Kristen Cavallo became the new CEO, the agency put its “values” front and center, says Jacklyn Ruelle, who is Chamberlain’s partner in this effort.

“The agency is a brand, and the people are part of the brand,” says Ruelle, The Martin Agency’s director in charge of cultural impact. “Our values have to be focused on candor. Gossip happens every day, but the key now is to be on the front foot,” she observes. “If we’re open and honest about what is going on, then that mitigates [against material from] closed channels popping up on Slack. That can prevent instances of trivial gossip.”

Says TBWA CEO Rob Schwartz: “It goes back to the movie ‘Player.’” He adds, “All rumors are true.” □

“We are all forced in all ways to care more about what people are saying. One of the corollaries to everyone gets a trophy is everyone gets a voice.”



Photo Courtesy Lola

The Future Is Female (Founded)

Lola workshops its caring, inclusive culture at its women-led startup. **By Katie Richards**

Inside Lola’s Manhattan office, boxes of tampons and pads are casually strewn across virtually every surface, while text about the company’s personal lubricant product adorns the walls. A cotton plant greets visitors in the lobby — a nod to the company’s focus on offering subscribers 100% organic cotton tampons and sanitary pads (certified by Cotton Inc.), along with sexual wellness products.

In some workplaces, a public display of sanitary pads — not to mention daily conversations about sexual health — might be unwelcome, even taboo. But Lola’s leaders treat such matters as routine, part of what arises at a company where employees focus on various aspects of a woman’s life related to periods and sexual wellness.

“We’re a female-founded company that is focused on operating in a very intimate and stigmatized category — reproductive health,” says Lola cofounder Alex Friedman. “We have a certain level of understanding and empathy for [consumers]

and we hold that same standard for how we build, manage and operate our business and team. We want employees to feel ... this inclusivity every day they come to work.”

Implementing such practices can be challenging, though. Several relatively new women-founded companies like Lola with products marketed to women have opened their doors at a time when being exclusionary in any way could result in a business being “canceled” by consumers or called out on social media.

In 2017, Thinx cofounder and CEO Miki Agrawal exited her company in the wake of the airing of an explosive complaint of sexual harassment. Thinx makes what it calls “period underwear,” undergarments designed to absorb menstrual blood.

These types of scenarios at growing DTC companies are not uncommon. Earlier this month, Away CEO Steph Korey stepped down from her role after a report from The Verge called Korey out for building a culture of bullying at the DTC luggage company. Employees spoke of working long hours with no overtime pay

and having limitations put on their paid time off as the team at Away looked to grow the business quickly. Snippets of Korey's conversations were published in the investigation via screenshots from chat app Slack, showing Korey critiquing employees and withholding paid time off. Korey has since been replaced by Lululemon's Stuart Haselden.

The Wing experienced blowback for allowing only women inside its co-working space; in March 2018 the New York City Commission on Human Rights opened an investigation of the company, cofounded by Audrey Gelman and Lauren Kassan. (The Wing has since changed its policies.)

"There is a very fine line between having values as a company that represents an underserved demographic and then using it as a mechanism to get women to

buy more things," says Polly Rodriguez, CEO of sexual wellness company Unbound.

And direct-to-consumer bra company ThirdLove was called out after a September 2019 Vox article cited complaints that its workplace was male dominated, allegedly underpaid employees and encouraged bullying; social media commentators jumped all over this since the company (cofounded by Heidi Zak and her husband David Spector) leans heavily on inclusive marketing, showcasing women of diverse backgrounds and sizes.

"When these company values and internal policies don't align with employees, it needs to be discussed," says Ali Kriegsman, cofounder and chief operating officer of multi-brand retailer Bulletin. "But often, the public approach[es] these



by Sarah LaFleur, implemented a 12-week paid parental leave policy in 2014. And after a new CEO, Maria Molland, joined Thinx in 2018, she instituted a parental leave policy with 12 paid weeks; she later expanded this to 16, with an optional, additional unpaid transition month. For these new women-founded companies, robust child care policies are table stakes.

These days Lola's founders sit down with parents before they take their leave to discuss how in touch with the company they want to be — if they desire total silence or weekly, even daily updates.

And Lola tries to ensure that its workplaces are family friendly, inviting employees' kids to social gatherings like Halloween costume contests. At Lola, inclusivity also means making sure new moms have access to spacious and comfortable rooms for pumping breast milk. The lactation room is as large as some of its conference rooms. "We want it to feel like a second home," Friedman says.

Friedman says she wants all employees, not just parents, to feel free to take advantage of the company's flexible work schedule. Employees can work from home or negotiate flexible hours to fit their needs, Friedman says, noting, however, that managers must be sure people do their jobs.

▣



instances and assumes that the company has been malicious or deceiving in their marketing. That's definitely possible, but building a business and growing fast is really complex."

Growing pains

After they launched Lola in 2015, Friedman and cofounder Jordana Kier wanted to rapidly expand its operations, bringing in large amounts of venture capital. Indeed, Lola raised \$24 million in Series B funding in 2018, after three other infusions totaling \$11.2 million.

Friedman says she and Kier desired Lola to be a growing business organization yet one that would reflect a caring attitude toward employees. Initially, though, Lola lacked a parental leave policy. In March 2017 after Friedman shared with Kier the news that she was pregnant, the two co-CEOs sat down to write Lola's parental leave policy. Friedman was the first employee to use it; subsequently Kier relied on the policy, followed by Friedman again.

Today Lola has 40 employees. About 10% of them are now expecting a child, Friedman says. Lola's current parental leave policy provides all new parents (mothers, fathers and adoptive parents) 12 weeks of paid leave. The Family and Medical Leave Act guarantees certain employees 12 weeks of unpaid leave.

Some direct-to-consumer startups, like many other companies, are now trying to offer above and beyond that. Women's clothing company M.M.LaFleur, founded





Digital Nomads

3 adventurers share what it's like to work remotely while traveling the world

By Deanna Ting

Roaming the globe while working is becoming increasingly popular. A 2019 MBO Partners report found 7.3 million Americans had identified themselves as remote workers who travel, many more than the 4.8 million cited in the 2018 report. For people with media and marketing jobs, new technology makes this lifestyle feasible. But is being a digital nomad really as glamorous as it seems? Three such workers share their experiences.

In 2018 Matt Oney, a digital marketer for a San Francisco startup, traveled with the help of Remote Year, a company that arranges accommodations and group trip itineraries for digital nomads. He even received a promotion that year. He now is a full-time remote employee who lives in San Diego.

I had a full PowerPoint presentation

to present to my HR department and our CEO [on how it would work] from their perspective. Most [employers] think, Why would you ever want to incur this risk of sending an employee on a yearlong vacation? Time zones are a very real thing we had to tackle — and transparency. I set up weekly updates and meetings.

In some other industries, digital nomadism won't fly. You need to be there in person; Slack is not enough. You can't get your job done from a cafe.

One time in Cape Town, my work hours were from 12 noon to 9 p.m., so I woke up early and went to the ocean and swam with seals for a few hours, then worked a full day.

I was the youngest person in my program at age 25, but one of my best buddies was in his 50s. Exploring the world is for anybody. We had couples, singles, freelancers, full-time workers. There's no age that you can't do this.

Consultant Rebecca Stone worked full-time last year as a research analyst for a business-to-business media company while traveling abroad with the aid of Remote Year.

I once took a long weekend to go sailing and a manager said to me, "What is going on vacation to someone who works remotely?" I wanted to die a little bit. Letting your work justify your behavior is a constant battle in a world that doesn't believe in working remote.

[Yet] I'm way more productive when I'm not in the office. You just have to be self-motivated. I actually wrote the same number of research reports that my colleague did.

It's hard not to be in the room [at the main office because] sometimes you miss the context of something that gets said.

Because you're exposed to a wide variety of ways of working and knowledge sharing, you're not just meeting cool people, but you're also learning about different industries. I learned about graphic design from a Swedish friend, film writing from a guy from LA.

You are your own worst enemy when you're in a foreign country. You're going to want to go to everything — every museum, attraction, restaurant. But you can't lose sight of the fact that you're also focused on your career.

Freelance journalist Jennifer Dienst also owns Row33 Travel Co. In 2016 she launched her nomadic lifestyle by participating in Remote Year's program but left it after three months. She says she felt unsafe and dissatisfied with

its operations. Yet she continued to travel on her own for more than a year and now works remotely, taking periodic trips.

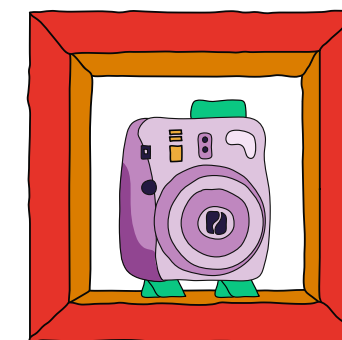
I was a bit nervous about being completely on my own, but once I started I realized I could do it. You can [locate] different coworking sites and use Nomad List and Facebook groups to find people so you don't feel completely lost.

It can be lonelier than you think. Some people [imagine] it's going to be one long party and you will constantly meet people ... like when you travel for fun. [But] it takes time to build a community. That can be challenging ... not to mention living in a new place where you don't speak the language or the culture is very different from your own.

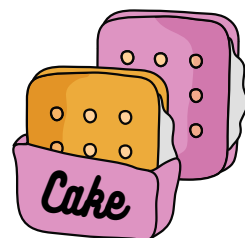
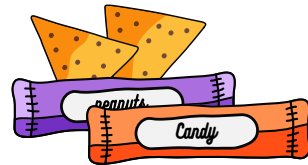
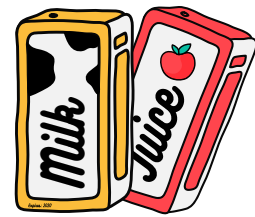
Even after I left Remote Year, I still loved the idea of having a community ... so I often traveled to places where my friends were. You still need some sort of base to stay healthy and happy while you're balancing working and living in a new place.

I was a woman traveling alone, but there are a zillion other women doing this, too. There are things you have to think about that men don't, but I've had fantastic experiences. It may not be a permanent solution ... but depending on your goals it can be incredibly valuable. So why not give it a try?

(Remote Year COO Sam Pessin tells Digiday that from 2015 to 2017, his company's programs sometimes fell short in the quality of accommodations or internet service provided. After investor funding arrived in late 2016, Remote Year's customer feedback scores "have gotten a lot better and since then they've continued to stabilize and increase a little bit over time," he says, adding that participants also receive an International SOS subscription to address safety concerns.) □



“ Letting your work justify your behavior is a constant battle in a world that doesn't believe in working remote. ”



The ROI of Snacks

How companies track the impact of free snacks and other employee perks. **By Jack Marshall**

In the fall of 2018, rumors flew among employees of online publisher Mic.com. The avocados in the office were getting progressively “sadder,” the snack shipments were getting smaller and less frequent and the coffee had been switched out for a cheap brand that tasted terrible. That could only mean one thing: layoffs were coming. “People definitely noticed when the snack supplies were running low,” one former Mic.com staffer said, adding that many staffers took it as a sign of “impending doom”.

That November the company laid off most of its staff, and announced a sale to Bustle Digital Group.

Free food, snacks and beverages are now a staple at many media and marketing-related companies. Their prevalence has even become something of an economic indicator of the health of the sector: If the flow of chips and fruit-flavored seltzer starts to slow, brace for a downturn.

But for companies picking up the tab for food, drinks and other convenience perks, justifying such expenses has typically been more of an art than a science. Conventional wisdom says catering, massage services and the like might help retain staffers and boost employee engagement and collaboration. But employers have no clear-cut metrics for assessing this.

As companies of all stripes aim to become more data driven and efficient, however, such blind spots are being examined more closely. And with the cost

of food, drinks and other perks continuing to grow, so do attempts to quantify their impact.

“The short answer is that it’s very difficult to measure specifics,” says Michael Wesson, a specialist in human resources analytics and a business professor at Auburn University. “It’s just never going to be a company is spending X amount on food and is going to get Y back.”

While it might not be possible to track the impact of something as granular as potato chips, companies are increasingly setting up frameworks to measure how their overall benefits and perks package might influence significant business metrics.

Perks such as free food, drinks and yoga classes are now ingredients in the complicated calculus of many companies in assessing how to aid their efforts to improve recruitment success, bolster employee engagement and happiness — and mitigate employee turnover. Such efforts are often far easier to assign a dollar value to, and improvements to a company’s bottom line are attractive to an employer.

“Some companies are happy to just take a leap of faith” with the perks they offer, “but companies with good HR analytics programs know exactly how much turnover costs them [and] are comfortable investing in ways to limit it as a result,” Wesson says.

As a result, the areas where employers have made the largest investment increases tend to be closely related to employee happiness or associated with health and

wellness initiatives. This includes efforts designed to keep employees comfortable in the office and ultimately spending less time outside it due to sickness or a lack of engagement.

According to the Society for Human Resource Management, the percentage of U.S. companies offering free snacks to employees rose from 20% in 2016 to 32% in 2018. Among organizations that increased their benefit spending in 2018, 44% also enhanced their investment in health and wellness-related offerings.

Investing in such programs is hardly inexpensive, though. While the cost of individual perks may seem small on a one-time basis, they do add up over time. For smaller companies such expenses can represent yet another cost to consider if they are wrestling with how to meet payroll expenses each month. And for large, established companies, offering a range of perks to tens of thousands of employees amounts to a significant investment.

Google, for example, now employs nearly 100,000 staffers worldwide and offers the majority of them as much as three free meals a day through its 200 on-site cafes and restaurants. Its main New York City office alone features seven different themed cafes as well as smaller kitchens and snack bars scattered about.

A company spokesperson declined to comment on specific metrics Google tracks related to its catering program or other perks but says the provided food is intended to help drive “big innovative thinking, collaboration, and productivity among employees.”

Some companies now consider offering free food not just a chance to foster positive employee sentiment but almost a requirement. In an economy where competition for talent is fierce, many media, marketing and technology businesses decide they have little choice but to try to compete with the offerings of competitors. That may not translate into offering three catered meals a day. But in major technology and media hubs like New York many companies deem it important to have a story of their own to sell beyond their provision of a salary, health care and perhaps a 401(k).

“For whatever reason, the reality is it’s expected now,” says a founder of a small Manhattan digital marketing agency,

which offers employees free snacks at the office in addition to monthly happy hours at a local bar. “We can’t compete with chefs and yoga in the office, but for us it’s about making a gesture,” he adds.

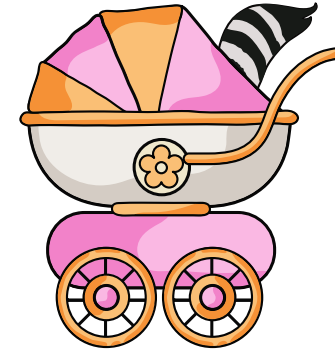
And some media employees admit that company perks are now something they weigh when evaluating potential new roles and employers. As cultural attitudes shift about work, wellness and work-life balance, many individuals now consider convenience perks a meaningful part of their compensation.

“I obviously wouldn’t say it’s a major reason I joined the company, but things like free meals are an attractive part of the overall package,” says one Google ad sales staffer. She does not credit the policy with directly influencing collaboration or business outcomes but

says she believes eating with coworkers helps foster closer office relationships.

But companies serving up such perks should be aware that employees start to consider them as part of their compensation, according to Wesson. Once a business begins to offer something, it’s nearly impossible to remove it without employees feeling they are taking a pay cut. The downsides of removing perks almost always outweigh the upsides of introducing them in the first place, he notes.

And Wesson advises employers with a sticky financial situation, “Maybe it’s better to be the company that removed the snacks than to be seen as the company that didn’t do everything it could to avoid laying people off.” ■



Egg freezing and fertility treatments

A few years ago, some technology and media companies started paying for fertility treatments. Now companies including Apple, Facebook and Spotify help employees cover the cost of oocyte cryopreservation and other fertility procedures.



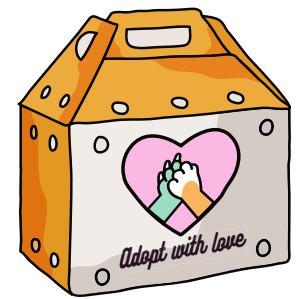
In-office wellness services

As employees’ concern for wellness, self-care and work-life balance rises, companies have in years rushed to provide staffers related perks. Chair massages and yoga classes have gained traction; The Penny Hoarder now offers employees twice daily meditation sessions.



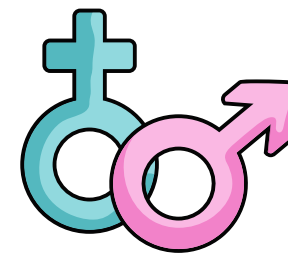
Subscriptions and memberships

Companies are offering employees paid subscription services, ranging from news and music services to personal and professional development sites like Masterclass. Others employers, such as PayPal and Box, are providing access to paid online communities such as Chairman Mom, a private social network for working women.



Pet adoption leave

Sometimes dubbed “pawternity” leave, paid time off is granted to employees who adopt rescue animals by companies including customer data platform provider mParticle. “I want to make sure that people who work here feel like they have a good work-life balance. If we can find people who are passionate about animals and animal welfare — and they’re also passionate about technology, we should hopefully be at the very top of their list,” says mParticle CEO Michael Katz.

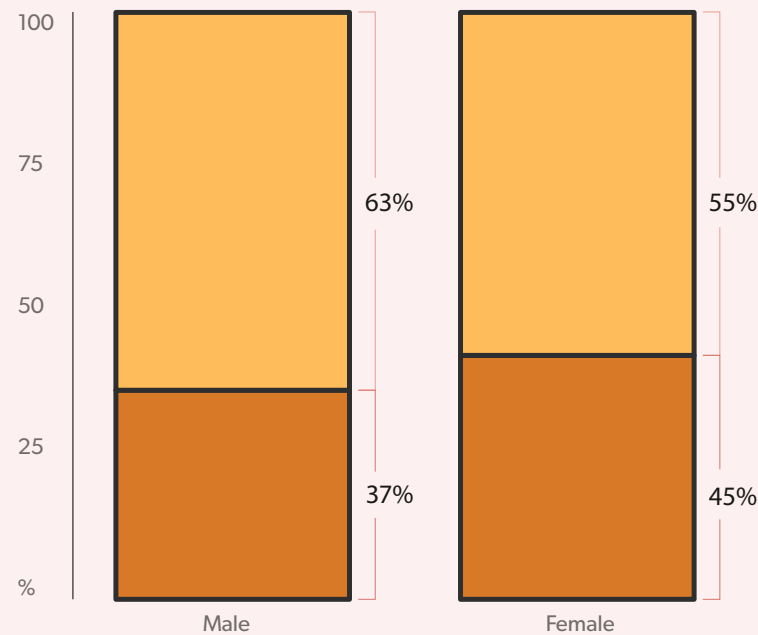


Gender transition assistance

Many insurance policies do not cover gender transition procedures. As a result, employee communication software company Jellyvision began offering its employees financial assistance for gender transition this year.

Do you believe you’re fairly compensated for your work?

■ Yes ■ No



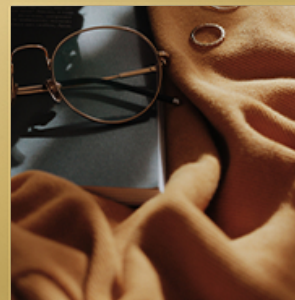
Sample: 203 publisher executives surveyed by Digiday, November 2019.



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First Impressions

4 Gen Zers report on their plunge into the workforce

As told to **Kayleigh Barber**

Ready or not, Gen Z is arriving in the workplace—and don't think they're just like millennials. 50% to 72% of Gen Zers want to pursue a side hustle or work for themselves, according to Robert Delcampo, Ph.D., professor of management and organizational behavior at the University of New Mexico.

"This group is the ultimate self-educators," noting that he has personally observed some instances of Gen Zers exhibiting a "self-motivating, self-starting nature," he says.

Digiday spoke to four Gen Zers; here are their initial impressions of the world of work.

Reed Nowels, 23, is a visual designer at digital marketing agency Huge in Detroit, Michigan. She currently works on creative projects for Fiat Chrysler Automobiles Jeep and Ram brands, but she's been driven by her entrepreneurial spirit since she was a kid.

"I was 11 at the height of the

recession. As a child, I was not capable of doing anything to help out my family, but I was aware of money being tight and the stress of that. I knew that I couldn't support my family, but I could make money on the side so I can go to the movies. So I started a business making websites for friends and family.

I taught myself to code using HTML when I was 10 while I was trying to perfect my MySpace page. I got really into web design. Then I transferred that knowledge to Yahoo GeoCities and I made my mom's friend a website for her car washing service. I would charge \$20 a pop. Every job I've had stems from a want to be independent and not be a burden.

In the short term, I'd love to try out different things in-house that go beyond my current role and my managers have been good about letting me do that. Ultimately, though, I am inspired by brands like Warby Parker and Away and I'd love to work at a start-up. I think it

was Jen Rubio of Away [who] said that working for a startup was an alternative of getting an MBA and that's an intriguing thought. I'd love to work for a startup."

Max Debczak, 23, is a studio coordinator at Huge in Brooklyn, New York where he assists and schedules all motion designers, illustrators and editors across the company's 13 global offices. And while he's the only person at his company who does this, job security is always on his mind.

"I went to the School of Visual Arts in New York for computer animation and originally, I wanted to work at a bigger movie studio, like Pixar or Dreamworks. But I realized I didn't like the creative side and gravitated more towards the production side of the business. So during my senior year, I reached out to anyone in the field to get as much advice as possible.

I started my first job at a studio the day after graduation. It was a super fast hiring process and it was the only job interview I had at the time. The main

reason for taking the first job was that I was starting to live in New York City for the first time on my own and the idea of not having any income was definitely stressful. But it was a starting point and I got to learn while making money in the process.

Then I was laid off after six or seven months. I started my second job search and interviewed at 10 or so places in a month, ultimately landing at Huge. I definitely think about job security a lot. I know that my work is very necessary and I'm the only person who does my job here. But at my last job, I felt secure and necessary too. If a company isn't doing well, the first thing to go is its employees. It's not a valid fear, but I think about it constantly."

Maggie Kreienberg, 22, is a digital producer and social media assistant at Brides.com in Manhattan, New York. While she is currently in a contracted position, being able to write every day made the tradeoff of a salary and benefits worth it.

"During my senior year, I started applying to any jobs in communications. I've always wanted to work for a magazine in New York, but since they're mainly going digital now, I didn't know if that

would be a possibility. It's so competitive.

My first job offer was for a communications job at a small firm in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania but it wasn't exactly in line with what I wanted to do, so I turned it down. It gave me confidence that I could find a job in the field I wanted, though.

I'm a contractor, so I'm full time but I'm paid hourly. I recently got my six-month contract extended. I don't get paid that well, but I think it's right in the mix for what someone should get paid for my type of work. I typically file one to two stories a day and that's pretty much a dream scenario for my first job.

When this opportunity presented itself I couldn't pass it up, even though I'm not making as much as I could've made outside of the industry. I hope to move up within the next six months to a year, but if that's not the case, I'll start the job search all over again."

Carlina Scalf, 22, is a marketing associate at workplace consultancy Tier1 Performance. While her current job is rooted in the business-side of communications, she is optimistic that she can find ways to incorporate her love of creative writing and journalism into her career.

"I was attracted to Tier1 because it seemed more stable than the other places I was applying to. And I especially think that kind of job appealed to me right now because a lot of the writing that I was doing in college felt like it could be more based in freelance. I like journalism a lot, but it felt a little less clear or stable and I was less willing to take that risk to go full force into the industry.

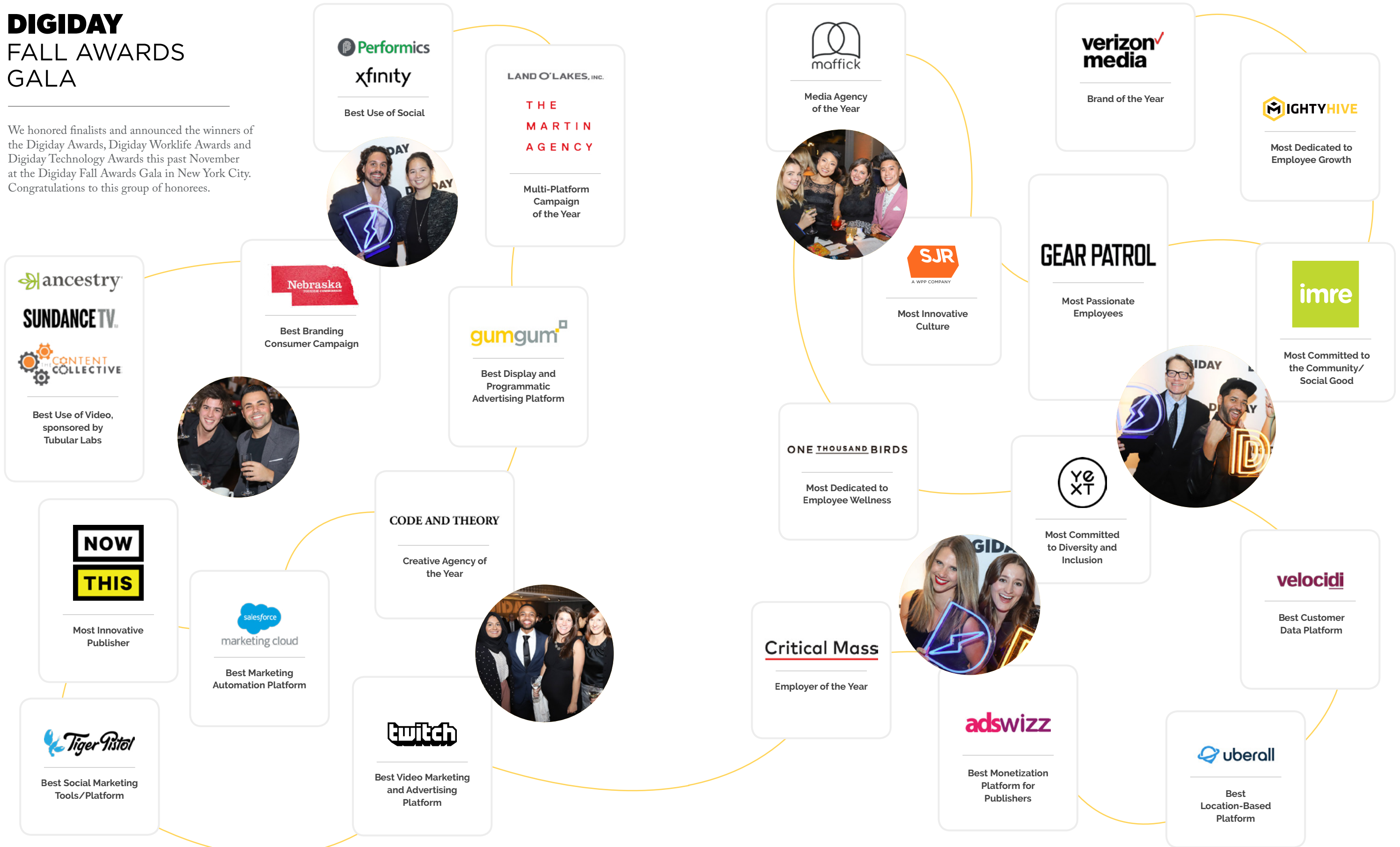
As a creative, though, the side hustle is so prevalent and I'm starting to think about how that fits with my career. There's a mentality that you can always do both—have your nine to five and then pursue creative things on the side. In the next phase of my career, I want to look at how some of my creative stuff can fit in with my full-time job.

I think my side hustle would be in the vein of running a website or content platform where I was writing and maybe eventually other people would write too. Or I like the idea of doing some freelance writing work." □



DIGIDAY FALL AWARDS GALA

We honored finalists and announced the winners of the Digiday Awards, Digiday Worklife Awards and Digiday Technology Awards this past November at the Digiday Fall Awards Gala in New York City. Congratulations to this group of honorees.



What's Trending

The workplace is changing. We spoke to workplace experts and advertising employees to find out what 2020 will bring.

By Shareen Pathak

1

Not working is the new working



There is a movement against the entrenched mechanism of work. Whether it's because millennials and Gen Z think differently about what work is, as well as more research and knowledge about the effects overwork has on mental health, one shift is that "not working" has taken hold. Josh Cohen, a clinical psychologist who also wrote a book called "Not Working," says that more people are realizing there is, as the adage goes, more to life than work, and finding room during the workday to actively zone out — and "aimlessly drift."

2

Crying at work is OK



Some of the same forces, says Cohen, are also leading to movements like bringing your "whole self" to the office, popularized by author Mike Robbins. Work used to be about work, but as people spend more time in the office, they're also bringing everything from their likes, dislikes, hobbies, opinions and more. Some of that also means bringing emotions — hitherto thought of as the one thing you keep away from the office environs — into the workplace. Crying at work is no longer seen as a weakness, but as something natural. "Crying at work is OK, because laughter at work is also OK," said one ad agency employee.

3

Mental health at work



"Last week, someone on my team asked me why I was taking time off for a day. I told them it was because I had to see my therapist," says Omer Nisar of Digitas. "If I normalize it, it gets normalized." Mental health and burnout are now more openly discussed — and diagnosed. As company executives become more open about it, so too does talking about anxiety caused by work — and figuring out how to fix it. "Being part of a workplace and being vulnerable is OK," says Rabia.

4

Salaries become transparent



Google sheets with people's job titles, locations and salaries across industries, from media to ad agencies to retail, are just one way one of the last workplace taboos — discussing salaries — has been broken. Pay secrecy, research shows, can be used to mask inequities by gender or race — finding out how much people are making in your level can help guide salary negotiations and ensure people ask for the right range. Pay secrecy is getting outlawed in many states — it already is illegal to retaliate against employees who discuss compensation for those with contracts with the federal government. "If you look at content like Refinery29's Money Diaries, you can really see how people are more comfortable discussing what they make, and how they spend it," says TBWA's Rabia.



5

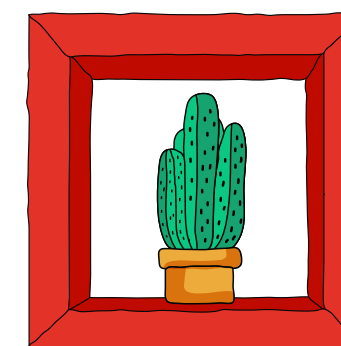
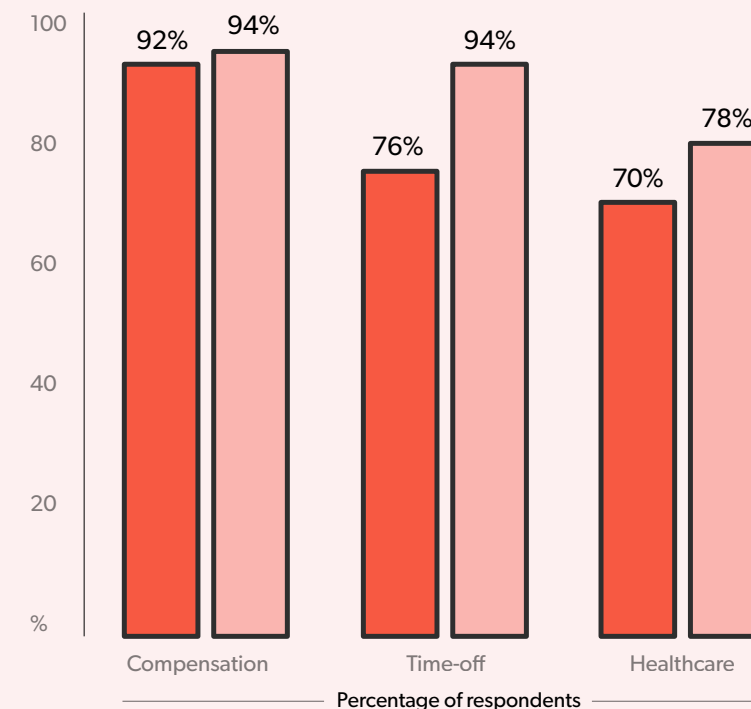
Side hustles

Generation Z sees work differently from their antecedents. Careers and work are important, but thanks to growing up during the golden age of influencer marketing and battered with entrepreneurial examples around them, many are starting "work" earlier and doing more than one job at a time. The Open University in 2017 found that 95% of this generation wants to start their own business — compared to 47% of millennials. And 53% of Gen Z don't plan to rely on only their job as their sole income source. Rabia says this brings a new meaning to what "work" is: 75% of Gen Z wants to be doing multiple roles within one org, her research has found. "They want change and they want it constantly."

How important are the following factors to your day-to-day satisfaction at work?

Male
Female

Sample: 195 publishers Source: Digiday November 2019 Publisher Culture Survey





The End of Workwear

Clothes are just clothes, as work becomes a 24/7 pursuit. **By Jill Manoff**

So much for lengthy deliberations over desk-to-dinner attire.

As technology has led to work's evolution from a 9-to-5 commitment to an always-on mentality, so, too, has the clothing people put on. Workwear has evolved so employees can simply travel without a costume change from their job to their leisure pursuit, home office to company headquarters, the airplane to a planning meeting. The idea of a separate work wardrobe is falling by the wayside, as the demand for styles with ready-for-anything versatility rises.

"The shift reflects the new way of doing business," says Ray Li, founder and CEO of 3-year-old custom workwear company Sene. "You need clothes that can work in a bunch of different settings. They make you feel put together, but they also travel well."

In other words, comfort is key but not at the expense of style. To answer demand, fashion companies are increasingly producing pieces with classic silhouettes, of nonrestrictive materials that are suitable to wear to the gym.

Among Sene's best-selling styles is its FlexTech suit made with athleisure fabric from a mill also used by Lululemon. Women's workwear brand M.M.LaFleur's top-selling pants for the past four years have been its Foster style, described by founder and CEO Sarah LaFleur as "yoga



pants for work." Argent, with a tagline of "workwear, redefined," has incorporated elastic waistbands into many of its pieces and recently launched a tracksuit; it sources fabric from Swiss textile manufacturer Schoeller Textil AG, which works with athletic wear companies including Under Armour. And Walmart-owned Bonobos, best known for its men's work pants, is increasingly using performance fabrics.

"The vast majority of our offering is now stretch garments," says Micky Onvural, Bonobos' CEO.

In step with the rise of streamlined, wear-everywhere clothing is Americans' growing obsession with a simplified, Marie Kondo-inspired lifestyle. At the same time, consumers are shifting their budgets from things to experiences. Spending on fashion is falling out of fashion.

Trends in workwear throughout history have reflected the socioeconomic climate of the times. In the 1980s, women used power suits to signal their new economic power and establish authority in the traditionally male-dominated workplace. In the 1990s, Silicon Valley startups dictated style: Other workplaces took their cue from the booming tech companies, which set their dress codes to attract young talent as they aimed to disrupt the status quo. By that decade's end, 95% of the U.S. businesses surveyed by the Society for Human Resource Management had established a regular casual day — typically Friday — compared with 24% in 1992.

The notion of a work uniform lingered, reinterpreted with Mark Zuckerberg's gray T-shirt and Steve Jobs' black turtleneck as blueprints for other men wishing to save time when selecting their attire. In 2012 Barack Obama told Vanity Fair, "I wear only gray or blue suits. I'm trying to pare down decisions."

But the tech world set a double standard, in that women who adopted the popular, casual look of hoodies and sneakers were not taken seriously, says Sali Christeson, founder and CEO of Argent. And though the suit has long served men as a no-brainer dress-to-impress option, that style whether worn today by a man or a woman sends the wrong message, Li says.

"Corporate isn't trendy; the people who are now respected don't fit the stereotype of being corporate," Li says. "They tend to break the rules, and they have range: They have their feet in content, and they're also in tech, but they're not hard-core tech,

and they're also in media."

Declares Li: "People who just wear a suit aren't seen as having that versatility."

The idea of providing a capsule work collection or uniform still seems to resonate with consumers, but rather than its being casual or formal, the garments are pegged somewhere in the middle. M.M.LaFleur recently updated its signature Bento Box offering, of mix-and-match styles said to compose a complete work wardrobe, to a version titled Omakase; that's Japanese for "I'll leave it up to you." Shoppers can now select from a variety of themed capsules, from a polished "Power Player" option to a travel-focused "Frequent Flyer" set. Other women's fashion brands embracing work-ready capsule collections include Misha Nonoo and Wardrobe NYC.

For women, the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements have also informed workwear choices. And women are now using their clothes to find comfort and assert control, says LaFleur. She referred to comfort as M.M.LaFleur's top trend, based on strong demand for its styles made of an ultrasoft Italian fabric, which she says feel like "adult Snuggies." What's more, women are again striving to show men who's boss through their attire.

"There's a feeling of 'I've had enough, and I don't have to hide anymore. I'm going to show up, and I'm going to own the room,'" says LaFleur. "They're wearing more vibrant color, and they're being more bold."

Christeson also says she's seen an upsurge in women's embrace of color: "Women have more awareness that it's an uneven playing field and they have to fight harder, and being informed is leading to more confidence," she says. "They're aware that how they show up and what they wear matters, and they're using style to reinforce who they are in the workplace. It's an extension of their personal brand."

LaFleur points to the fact that fashion tends to be flashier when the stock market is rallying, so women wearing athleisure suits in a look-at-me color could be a temporary trend during an up market.

But all those interviewed agree, the comfy-making components once restricted to casual wear will stick — for Friday and every other day. ▣

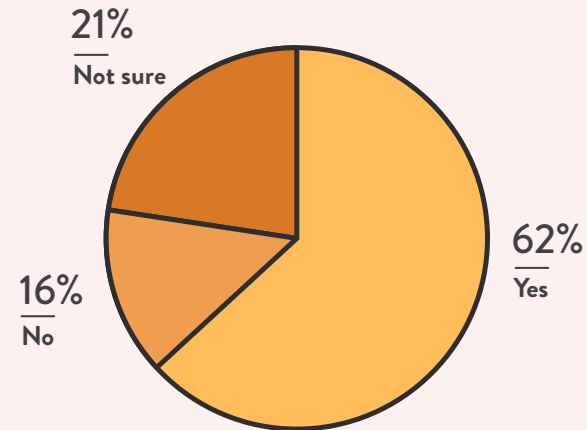
By the Numbers

We surveyed agency and media employees to ask them about the realities of work. Here's a snapshot of the results.

The majority of agency employees believe their jobs are secure.

Do you think your job is secure?

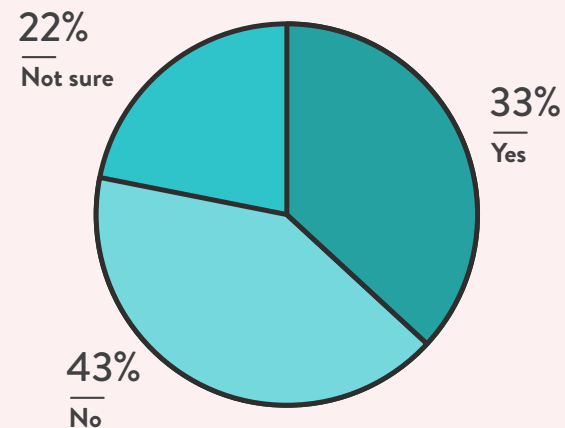
Source: 148 agency employees surveyed by Digiday, November 2019



A third of all agency employees say they're worried about their mental health at work.

Are you worried about your mental health at work?

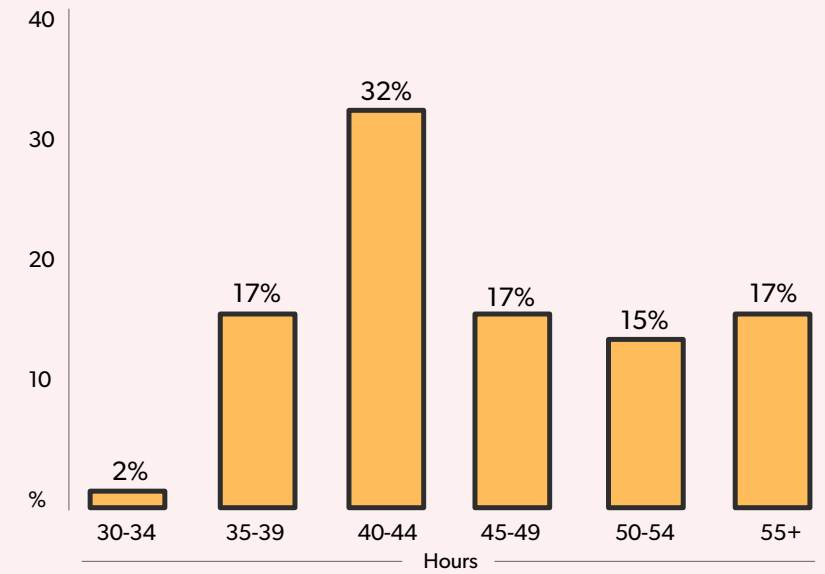
Source: 148 agency employees surveyed by Digiday, November 2019



Most publishing employees work under 44 hours a week.

How many hours per week do you work?

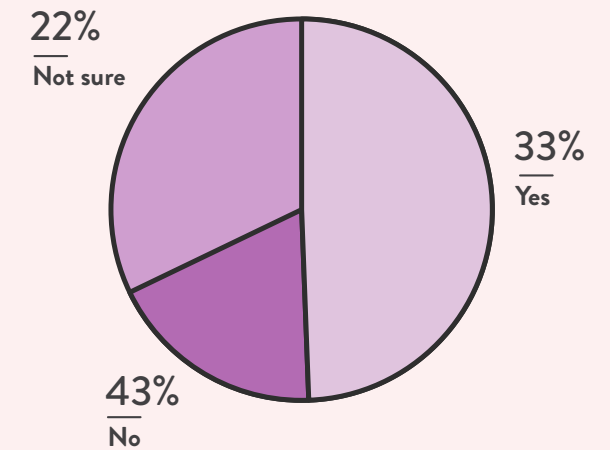
Sample: 195 publishers
Source: Digiday November 2019
Publisher Culture Survey



Almost half of all publishing employees say their job is secure.

Do you think your job is secure?

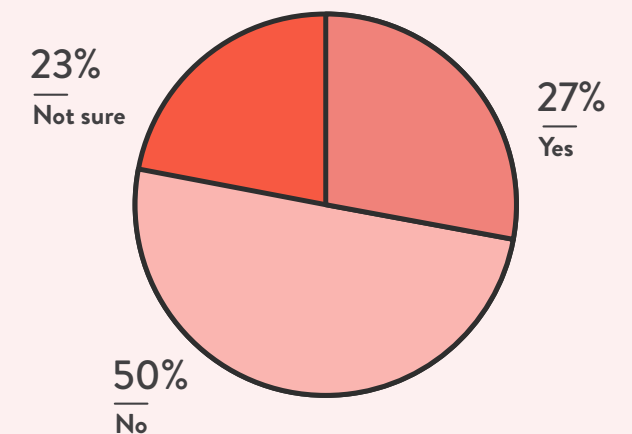
Source: 192 publishing employees surveyed by Digiday, November 2019



A quarter of all publishing employees say they're worried about their mental health at work.

Are you worried about your mental health at work?

Source: 195 publishing employees surveyed by Digiday, November 2019





You Can't Work With Us

A number of ultra-exclusive shared workspaces touting themselves as gathering spots and community hubs have sprung up. Here's how they stack up. **By Jill Manoff**



Photo Courtesy Chief

3 Spaces

The Wing

Self-described as: "A network of work and community spaces designed for women of all definitions"

Funding: Raised \$118 million in five rounds, with 24 investors including actress Kerry Washington

Locations: 13

Annual membership: \$2,350 annually, \$215 monthly

Waitlist: 35,000 in the U.S.

Member criteria: Must show their commitment to The Wing's mission, according to the company. As of early 2019, following a discrimination lawsuit, men can become members.

Application process: An online application that, notably, does not include a prompt to upload a photo

If you're lucky, you'll see: Fashion designer Rebecca Minkoff and VC "celebrities" like

Soraya Darabi, said a member

Dress code: "Very AYR and Mansur Gavriel, with a splash of Khaite and select designer items. No LV logo bags here -- think understated luxury," said the member

Order: The Notorious RBG cocktail, made from vodka, orange, lime, sage simple syrup and cranberry

Amenities: An in-house cafe, a beauty room, showers, and a pump room

What people are actually doing vs. working: Select high-profile meetings occur during the day. Evenings are when most of the powerhouse women come out, usually to attend one of the programmed events.

Insiders know: It gets loud and crowded, and the private rooms get filled fast. But it has the best vanity and bathroom of all the clubs. "There are great products for skin and hair, and room to relax and get prepped to go out."



Photo Courtesy Neuehouse

NeueHouse

Self-described as: “The private workspace and cultural home for creators, innovators and thought-leaders”

Funding: Raised \$78 million in four rounds from investors including Barry Diller and Diane von Furstenberg

Locations: 3 (1 in NYC, 2 in Los Angeles)

Annual membership: \$900/month for a non-permanent desk in a communal workspace to \$4,500/month for an enclosed office

Waitlist: All locations, number undisclosed
Member criteria: “NeueHouse seeks members who are changing the world or the way we see it,” said a company spokesperson.

Application process: Your photo is required, a committee approves.

If you're lucky, you'll see: Members Salman Rushdie and Freida Pinto

Dress code: No gym clothes allowed

Order: Cauliflower pizza or an Impossible Burger ... if you dare (see below).

Amenities: Eleven, a floor for high-tier members, offers dedicated concierge services and a wellness room for relaxation.

What people are actually doing vs.

working: Attending classes and events, from a morning yoga session to a live Highsnobiety podcast

Insiders know: The food is bad.

Chief

Self-described as: “A private network focused on investing in and supporting female leaders.”

Funding: \$25 million in two rounds

Locations: 1 in NYC's Tribeca, with “a few” to come in early 2020 including one in NYC's Flatiron neighborhood, said Chief co-founder Carolyn Childers

Annual membership: \$5,400/year for vps, \$7,800 for C-suite members

Waitlist: 7,000

Member criteria: Women executives vp-level or above

Application process: Must report the number of people and the size of the budget you manage and what you're looking to get out of a Chief membership. The latter meant to weed out those looking to abuse the access to executives.

If you're lucky, you'll see: Amal Clooney, Tina Fey and Whoopi Goldberg have spoken at events. Also, search LinkedIn -- hundreds of women have added their membership to their profiles.

Dress code: None, “to allow women to kick up their heels and come as they are,” said Childers

Order: N/A, but the Flatiron location will have two bars

Amenities: A green room for featured panelists, a mothers' room and a lounge space

What people are actually doing vs.

working: Meeting with executive coaches about monthly, in groups of 8-10 members

Insiders know: It's in a residential building and hard to find. And a member said, so far,

Chief's kept its integrity: “I have seen other groups that start off strong sell out, and the value of the community falls quickly.”

Soho House

Self-described as: “A global private members' club for people in the creative industries”

Funding: Raised \$610 million over four rounds

Locations: 27 worldwide, 8 in the U.S.

Annual membership: \$3,300 for all-access, \$2,160 for local location only; members under age 27 pay half

Waitlist: 36,000 names globally

Member criteria: “We aim to assemble communities of members that have something in common -- namely, a creative soul,” according to the website.

Application process: Requires letters of recommendation from existing members, personal photo

If you're lucky, you'll see: Member Justin Timberlake

Dress code: Casual, no suits to foster a non-corporate atmosphere

Order: A Cleanse “elixir” or an \$18 Dirty Burger from the Club Menu

Amenities: Cowshed spa, offering cryotherapy and laser treatments, hotel “bedrooms”

What people are actually doing vs.

working: Attending meetings, sipping cocktails or attending programmed events like film screenings

Insiders know: Photography is forbidden, calls are restricted to certain areas

Spring Place

Self-described as: “Workplaces and social spaces to build community, foster creativity, and spring new ways of creatively connecting”

Funding: Funded by founders and co-chairmen Alessandro Cajrati Crivelli and Francesco Costa

Locations: 2 (NYC and LA)

Annual membership: Starts at \$3,000/year, top-tier members pay \$14,400/year and get a dedicated desk

Waitlist: Yes, number undisclosed

Member criteria: “Startups and entrepreneurs in creative and innovative fields,” according to a spokesperson

Application process: An online form, requiring social handles and a photo
If you're lucky, you'll see: A supermodel; in NYC, umbrella building Spring Studios is an official NYFW venue

Dress code: Business casual attire enforced; no sandals, men's shorts or activewear

Order: Sliders and mini crab cakes served by James Beard-nominated chefs

Amenities: A concierge offers members childcare, pet walking, appointment booking and personal shopping

What people are actually doing vs.

working: Shopping. Retailers like Luisa Via Roma regularly host pop-ups in-house

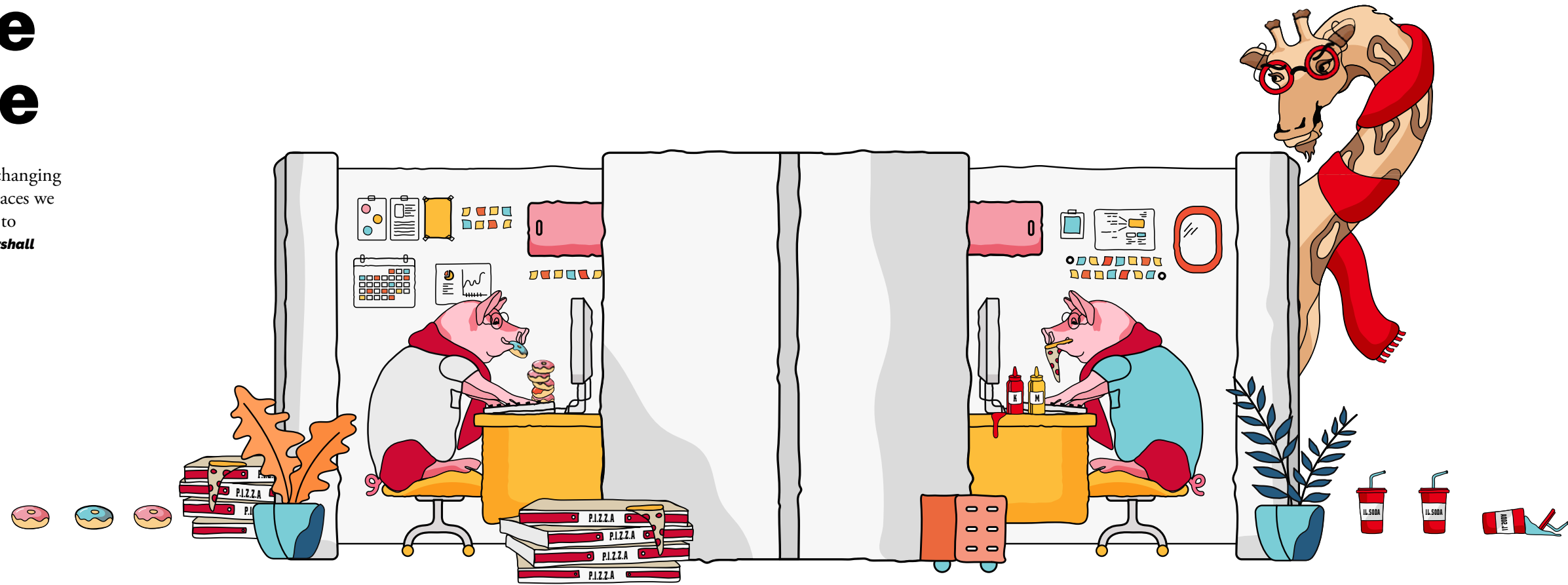
Insiders know: The rooftop sundeck offers some of the best views in Manhattan.



Photo Courtesy Soho House

Office Space

The nature of work is changing faster than ever. The spaces we work in must be ready to change too. **By Jack Marshall**



The past 20 years has seen the spaces in which work happens change drastically, particularly for companies in media, marketing and technology.

Since the early 2000s, offices have been seen by many companies as an expression of their identities. Technology companies installed slides to traverse floors and breakout spaces made from reclaimed cable cars to inspire creativity; agencies used giant art installations as desks as a way to demonstrate their creativity and ingenuity to clients, and digital media companies distanced themselves from stodgy “legacy media” with warehouse spaces and rooftop gardens.

But as the nature of work changes quicker than ever, and as cultural attitudes center more heavily around themes such as work-life balance, inclusivity, wellness and sustainability, approaches to workplace design are evolving rapidly too. Many companies are now focused less on the messages their offices send, and more on the type of practical environments they create for their employees. And of

course, the continued acceleration of technological change is driving these shifts quicker than ever.

Adaptability and flexibility

As a result, experts say progressive workplace design is now focused squarely on adaptability. Companies that have the luxury of designing their own office spaces are no longer doing so for needs they have today, but are instead attempting to create spaces that are ready to adapt to technologies, job functions and business models that may not yet exist. This dynamic is particularly pronounced in the fluid industries of media and technology.

“You have to design for change.

The world of work is changing, people are changing, clients are changing, our clients’ clients are changing. We work hard to make architecture that’s nimble to support that. It’s also just the sustainable thing to do,” says Colin Macgadie, chief creative officer at consultancy BDG Architecture and Design.

Workers themselves crave more flexibility, too. They perform best, they say, when a variety of spaces are available to them. But there’s no one-size fits all. According to Capital One’s latest annual Work Environment Survey, 85% of employees say a flexible design is important to them, and 77% of respondents said they perform better at work when they have flexible spaces available. Millennials also place more emphasis on it than older generations.

For companies, flexibility is about more than just flexible desk arrangements, breakout areas and collaboration spaces, however. Rather, it’s about creating spaces that can not only serve multiple purposes, but can be easily reconfigured. At a practical level that often means simple changes like less drywall, and more non-fixed furniture that can easily be rearranged.

The good news is this approach can also save money. Simple advances in technology such as wifi and long-life batteries mean that employees are now

mobile then ever, so limiting them to desks, cubicles and “pods” is not only unnecessarily restrictive, but potentially uneconomical when teams and job functions are shifting so rapidly.

Measurement and analytics

But as in most areas of business, data and analytics are rapidly working their ways into workspace design, too. Concepts such as flexibility and adaptability are meaningless without the understanding of how spaces are being used and how they can be better optimized. And, of course, investors, boards and shareholders are increasingly calling for data to back up spending decisions.

As a result, definitions of workplace utilization are evolving, as are the methods through which they’re tracked. Sensors and other intelligent building technologies are now often used to measure how buildings and spaces are being used, and everything from movement to rises in temperature are often being tracked.

But according to Macgadie,

companies are becoming more sophisticated with how they think about that data. Rather than simply looking at real estate utilisation and the number of bodies that can be safely be squeezed into a certain square footage, they’re increasingly attempting to tie use of space to more tangible business outcomes and metrics.

“It’s becoming less about efficiency and more about effectiveness. It’s not about density, it’s about whether a space performing a certain task really well. If the output from that space can be quantified and is exceedingly high then that space is really effective,” Macgadie says.

Wellness takes centerstage

Health and wellness is another trend that’s rapidly working its way into the workplace. Companies are rapidly introducing perks and policies designed to keep employees happy and healthy during working hours, but that’s seeping into office design as well. Access to natural light is suddenly at a premium,

for example, and companies say they’re increasingly looking to provide environments that promote movement and activity.

“The trend has rapidly moved up the agenda, and clients want to deliver a healthy environment that benefits their staff. Nobody ever designs workplaces to be bad for people’s health, but when people are selecting a job it’s increasingly something they take into consideration,” Macgadie said.

The features that employees say they’d most like to see include on-site gyms and workout areas, dedicated rest and relaxation spaces, access to outdoor areas, plants and natural light and healthy snacks, according to Capital One’s survey.

Meanwhile, companies are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their ability to tie features such as these to their overall performance. Human resource analytics programs are increasingly showing that investments in these areas might actually help them reduce costs associated with employee turnover, burnout, and disengagement. ▣



4

Automation

The Great Sucking Sound

While automation threatens to displace millions of jobs in agencies, it's poised to create millions more. **By Seb Joseph**

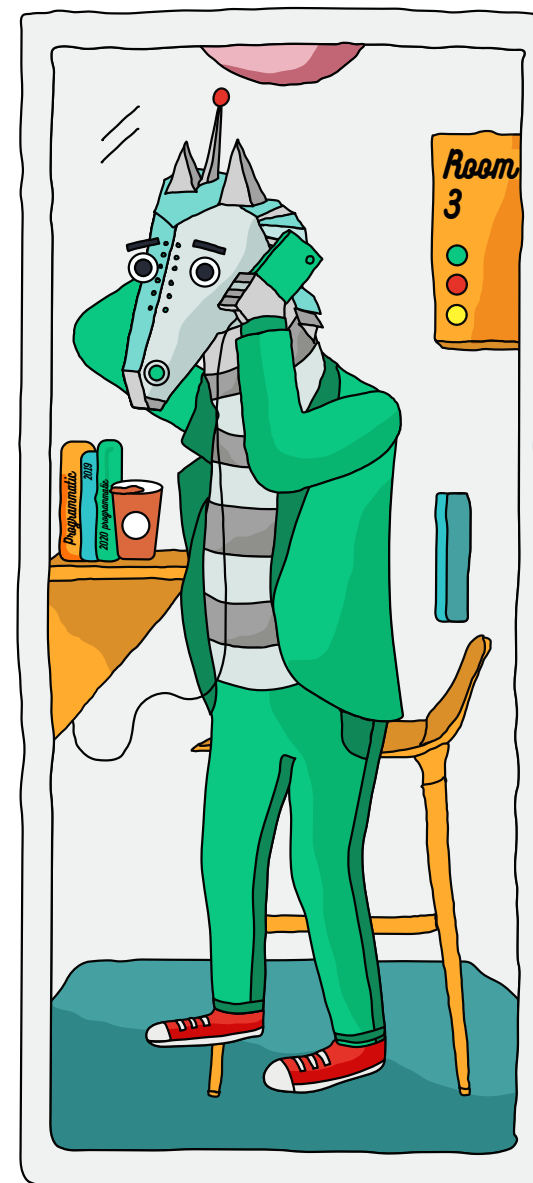
Unplug the router, cut the power cord, code the algorithm. Automation and artificial intelligence are becoming better at doing the jobs of advertising execs. The days of sealing ad deals by phone, emailed insertion orders and the occasional liquid lunch are no more.

While industry folks have deliberated the man-versus-machine question, automation in the form of programmatic advertising has upended the media buying process, changing many of the jobs required to run a campaign. Machines are simply better and faster when it comes to gathering insights, testing ads, learning what works and optimizing the result. But the dirty secret of programmatic advertising is that it still requires an awful lot of people.

"The promise of automation has led to more people needed to do more complex things but that's because of the existing general infrastructure for campaign management that revolves around spreadsheets, notebooks and Post-it notes," says Adam Ray, CEO of independent media agency 59A.

This is a story that's largely played out across the global economy. While many preached doomsday scenarios for automation obliterating work, unemployment rates in most advanced economies are at historic lows. Economies tend to adapt to technological change and for every job lost to automation, a new one is often created, albeit sometimes requiring different skills.

This is broadly the story taking



place in ad buying. By taking away the easy parts of running campaigns, automation has made the harder parts of an ad buyer's job even harder. Dated campaign reporting methods still seem to be the norm rather than the exception, despite the automation of the media buying process. Half of the campaign reports assembled by programmatic advertising traders from November 2018 to January 2019 were created manually, according to 60% of the 93 respondents surveyed by ad tech company CtrlShift. Just because a job can be automated does not mean this will happen. A cacophony of economic and organizational factors within agencies has restricted the spread of automation to all parts of campaign management.

Tighter constraints on a campaign, whether its visibility, brand safety or the potential for fraud, mean more work; each one of those variables requires a report; such reporting is often submitted on a weekly basis, Faulkner says. Once fully automated, Mindshare's campaign reporting will be available to agency execs from a dashboard that collates how the ads are performing in real time. Rather than spending all their time aggregating

information from different sources, the agency's traders can sift through the data and more quickly react to it.

"Automation hasn't made the operational process of running campaigns any easier," says Alexis Faulkner, who heads Mindshare's performance division Fast in the U.K. In fact, her team is spending a considerable amount of time these days making sure campaigns meet advertisers' specific needs. When advertisers want to be sure that a particular client has the best possible chance to see its ad paired with a news story from a trusted site and not one about a contentious topic, those conditions are often manually entered, Faulkner says.

As inefficient as these processes can be for agencies, when algorithms and software platforms work in harmony, the results can be lucrative. Mindshare's sister agency Essence has built its own campaign management platform Olive, which the company claims can outperform the effectiveness of human media buying decisions 40%, while lowering costs 35%. And the success of this platform appears to not have cost jobs. Essence is currently advertising on



LinkedIn 93 jobs (including trader and data scientist positions), with 70% of the openings focused in some way on buying media or managing the technology that does so.

"It's important to acknowledge that a lot of roles in programmatic have changed, but if anything there are more of them now, not less," says Amir Malik, an Accenture Interactive digital marketing expert. "The way that these roles develop in the next couple of years will be really important. As with any automation technology, its role should be clear — to enhance the role of the human, not to replace it outright."

Fewer people with arts and humanities skills are being recruited in favor of individuals with science, technology, engineering and mathematics knowledge, says Richard Dance, the chief digital officer at Publicis Media agencies Blue 499 and Spark Foundry. "We're looking for a blend of high emotional intelligence and strong analytical skills," he says.

As the programmatic advertising matures, agency recruiters are trying to keep pace. After all, it's one thing for

a trader to trust that an algorithm has good data but another to just let it do all the work. Gone are the days of trusting mysterious algorithms. Consequently, automation is reshaping agency workforces. And it will transform 80% of the jobs within agencies by 2030, Forrester has predicted, with agency execs starting to see the beginnings of this transformation next year. Account executive and project manager roles will begin to merge, per Forrester. But this transformation won't come without sacrifice. Roles linked to skills in production, project management, account management, strategy and creative tasks will have many of their responsibilities automated via workflow platforms and automated media and creative technologies, according to Forrester.

"Traditionally, we would've employed people who were good with clients and whose job it was to book inventory," Faulkner says. "Now, we need technical people. We need specialists who understand how to run campaigns on different platforms. The problem is, clients want generalists who can talk across all their marketing." ■



Photo Courtesy Jake Ratner, ratnercreative.com

Surreal Cuisine

Why investors and entrepreneurs are intrigued by the new dining model of ghost kitchens. **By Cale Guthrie Weissman**

An aura of mystery has entered modern dining and may have informed preparation of your Seamless meal. A new genre of restaurants has entered the vernacular. It dispenses with all things at the front of the house and essentially relies on cheaper real estate and offloaded labor to achieve better profit margins.

The pitch goes thus: Many people — especially city dwellers — frequently order meals that are delivered from their favorite restaurants. One report from the National Restaurant Association claims that 60% of consumers’

"restaurant occasions" now occur off premises, meaning food procured via delivery, or bought at takeout or drive-through establishments. And investors are salivating over the data about the prospects for a new type of food establishment. Dubbed "ghost kitchens," they are unused, cheap spaces retrofitted into culinary assembly lines. No tables, waitstaff, hosts or bussers hover here. There's only kitchens, many of them, receiving digital orders, preparing meals and then placing them in disposable containers for couriers to dispatch to those ordering the food.

Ghost kitchens have been lauded as the new model to make restaurants more profitable. Travis Kalanick, the founder of Uber, is aiming to upend the culinary business with his new business CloudKitchens.

After all, his transportation business redefined taxi economics by seemingly offloading employer responsibilities. Cloudkitchens scouts for low-priced properties near metropolises, builds kitchens and then leases them out. Kalanick has offered little information about his new company, but

CloudKitchens has reportedly raised as much as \$400 million in venture capital.

Kalanick is one of several entrepreneurs who see dollar signs in this reimagining of the restaurant industry. Others include Kitchen United, Reef Technologies and Zuul Kitchens. While all incorporate the general concept of building commissary kitchens to rent to delivery-only businesses, some of the business model details differ. CloudKitchens, for example, appears to have its own restaurants selling meals exclusively through delivery apps. Zuul is catering to already-prominent fast casual establishments like Sweetgreen seeking growth while bearing lower costs.

According Zuul cofounder and CEO Corey Manicone, the biggest issue city restaurants face is the cost of real estate. "Gone are the days where you can open up 15 brick-and-mortars across New York City," he says. "The future of the market is going to be one or two flagships." He bases his business thesis on

data. Delivery services generate as much as half of the revenue for fast-casual and quick-service restaurant establishments, he claims: "The signs are leaning toward delivery being a massive component of the restaurant ecosystem."

Manicone's past business history may also inform his current ambitions. His father rose through the ranks of a Colorado IHOP and eventually owned his own franchise. Then he decided to open up his own bar and grill, which proved less successful and was shuttered while Corey was in college. "I told myself that eating at an establishment was going to be the extent of my [restaurant] involvement," Manicone says. What killed his father's business was quite simple: Running restaurants can be expensive. They require high rents, low-margin products and lots of labor. The figures differ by region, costs and demand, but most restaurants have a profit margin in the low- to mid-single digits.

Founders and investors doubling down on the ghost kitchen phenomenon claim they are simply tapping into a growing consumer demand for dining services. But another important element is part of the equation: labor. A food business that serves its customers exclusively off premises need not rely on front-of-house employees, including waiters and bartenders. "It's really just the food prep, the sous chefs and chefs," says University of California, Santa Cruz sociology professor Chris Benner.

Thus, the business model for ghost kitchens relies heavily on lower-paid positions while outsourcing or dispensing with some expensive ones. "The food system is where the dominant number of low-paid jobs are in our economy," Benner says. From his perspective, "the only living-wage jobs in restaurants [are] in [the] front of the house and bartending." Chefs are perhaps the only traditionally non- low-wage position that remain in the ghost kitchen schema.

The other part of the ghost kitchen calculus involves demand. Analysts consider food delivery to be on the precipice of explosive growth. L.E.K. Consulting, for example, forecasts restaurant delivery sales to grow 300% faster than on-premises sales over the next three years. This shift has yet to be fully realized, however, and many analysts likely overemphasize urban locales and certain types of establishments. "For most restaurants," Benner says, "the delivery portion is single digits of their total revenue."

And brand recognition remains important. "The vast majority of home delivery of prepared meals is from restaurants that customers already know," he says. Businesses like GhostKitchens — relying on new restaurant entrants renting out hidden spaces and marketing themselves — are betting on consumers being comfortable about ordering from establishments they have never visited.

The trend is still in its infancy, but change is afoot. For Manicone, Zuul is perhaps a circuitous mea culpa for his father's restaurant failure. The cutthroat, low-margin business didn't work for his dad, and he's discovered another way in. Manicone doesn't philosophize too deeply: "Me and Zuul are trying to skate where the puck is going to be," he says. ■



Photo Courtesy Jake Ratner, ratnercreative.com



Robot Attack

Why journalism professor Nicholas Diakopoulos doesn't fear the automation of newsrooms..

By Deanna Ting

The idea of journalists being replaced by bots seems downright terrifying. But Nicholas Diakopoulos wants people to stop worrying.

In a new book, "Automating the News: How Algorithms Are Rewriting the Media," he argues that far from destroying jobs in journalism, artificial intelligence appears to be creating them.

Digiday caught up with Diakopoulos, who oversees Northwestern University's Computational Journalism Lab, to gain his perspective on how AI will affect journalism and more generally the media world in the years ahead. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

First things first. Will AI take away journalism jobs?

One of the early things about AI in the newsroom is that everyone was worried it would take away jobs. That really wasn't what I found in my research. It's estimated that only 15% of a reporter's job and 9% of an editor's job could be automated using technology.

We're not talking about entire jobs going away. We're talking about tasks, things that a person might do over the course of a day being done by algorithms instead: recording, listening and responding; negotiations with sources; pushing back. AI can't do any of those things.

AI can often augment the work that journalists do. It can make people more efficient. It can enhance the quality of journalism processes.

We should think about the hybridization of journalism and automation. We should not be so afraid of jobs going away as much as jobs changing, new roles and new tasks emerging. And more [often] than not, what I found in my research is that AI creates new types of work.

What will these jobs look like?

Take the Associated Press' automated writing program. Its systems create new tasks where people have to configure systems and add parameters and knowledge bases. They have to [compile] data sets and write templates. It's a distinct activity from the normal writing process that journalists would have.

These new types of tasks are more data oriented but also editorial in nature.

[They] might not look like today's journalism jobs, but they're not purely technical jobs. They're hybrid jobs.

How much hybridization will this involve? That is, how much of the work will be automated and handled by AI and to what degree will the tasks be handled by humans?

We're still sorting that out. Hopefully these jobs will be human centered to enable work that human journalists need to get done, and it can take a lot of forms.

With automated writing systems, journalists need to write with what I refer to as an "alien word processor," which allows for inserting data and logic. That's a different type of writing that requires journalists to learn to write or think in a slightly different way. To do that kind of template writing, organizations might look for journalists who have an affinity for data or writing in more abstract ways.

I could probably teach a whole class on this: What will Writing 101 look like for automated writing? We will see more automated writing systems; the BBC will cover the upcoming elections using semiautomation, for instance.

There's also this notion of editorially informed automation, taking core journalistic values and thinking about how we incorporate those values into the algorithm and into automation. An example of this would be a public-service recommender algorithm for a news feed that curates content. AI is a new medium in which journalists can express and inject their editorial values through code that they invent.

What are some other ways we'll see more automation in journalism?

One thing we're researching in the lab is whether we can personalize article content itself. Can we adapt writing to the reader's location or preferences? Can we organize facts in a different way to appeal to different kinds of people? We're exploring some different applications of that.

The New York Times blog said that its editors pick sections of the homepage to be personalized and localized. Based on where you are visiting, it might chance the selection of editors' picks they show you. They saw a 55% boost in click-through rate when they did that.

My own opinion is that as organizations like the Times adopt more of those approaches that we typically associate with Google, Facebook and Apple, there's a really interesting opportunity for having an algorithm curate content differently for different people and there are opportunities to build tools so editors can make better informed decisions about content. ▣

“AI can often augment the work that journalists do. It can make people more efficient.”

GOOD VIBES ONLY

5 Balance

Scandinavian Living

Workplace offerings include paternal leave inducements, cabin retreats and perks for one-person households. **By Lucinda Southern**

Nations across Scandinavia are known for their progressive social policies, generous parental leave programs and publicly funded health care. They also offer some of the best employee benefits packages in the world. Sweden provides a two-year shared parental leave allowance. Meanwhile companies in Norway grant certain employees country vacation cabins for their use during the summer months. Could this be why the region regularly earns high scores on the United Nations' World Happiness Report? Here, three denizens of the region explain local secrets to maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

Laila Dahlen, Schibsted Media Group's chief product officer in Oslo, Norway

"For me, it was a life choice to move back to Norway. I would have had less time to spend with my daughter if I continued to live and work in the U.K.

The Scandinavian model is based on mutual trust and flexibility. Men are really encouraged and expected to take their part of the parental leave: 15 weeks of the total leave [of 46 weeks in Norway] are reserved for the father.

In a workplace like Schibsted, both the company and colleagues understand and respect that people need to have their family life sorted out. This means that we

often know quite a bit about our colleagues' families. For instance, on a Sunday in December, employees' children are invited to the office to make holiday decorations together.

The most important message is that to have this work-life balance does not affect your career in a negative way. Rather, it's seen as necessary for all of us to contribute our best at work."

Linnéa Falsen, human resources partner for Pernod Ricard in Sweden

"In order for us to get ambitious people, we need to offer great benefits. Here, people work to live rather than live to work; it is a culture. They want to leave at 5 p.m. to get to their families. I leave at 3:30 p.m. some days.

In all aspects we need to be flexible. Previously benefits we offered were more favorable for people with young families. So in January 2019 we introduced benefits more suited to one-person households, like increasing the sum for keep-fit activities, subway tickets, movie tickets, massages, grocery delivery and home construction — while people with families get child care services and study buddies. We've tried to incorporate both.

The flexible system hasn't been live for a whole year yet but in a survey across

61 organizations [carried out by benefits tech platform company Benify], our employees are 31.3% more satisfied with their benefits offering compared to the average."

Oyulf Hjertenes, director of Schibsted Coast in Bergen, Norway

"There are leaders who say that they can't take leave. I hate to break it to you; it's an illusion.

A lot of leaders, men and women, myself included, are appointed and promoted just before [taking] parental leave. This makes way for people coming up. It's a great way of developing competencies, developing people and making a more robust company that can take on changes more easily. Someone staying in the same position for 10 years is too rigid [of a practice]. This is the modern way of doing things.

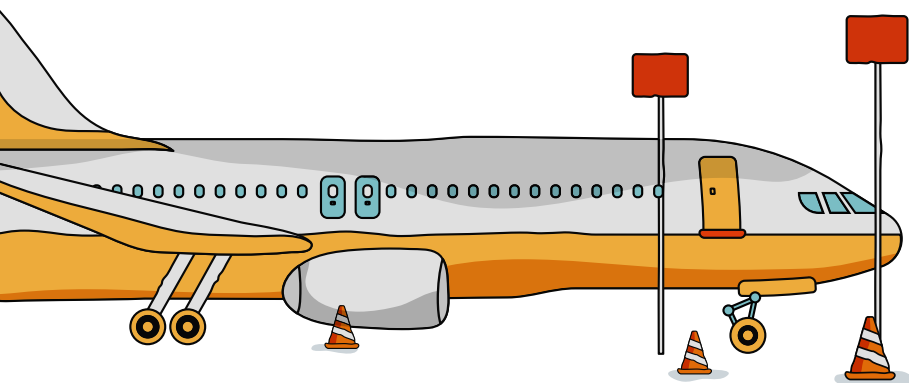
For the generation coming up now, the work-life balance and purpose of what we are doing is important for our teams.

In parts of Europe longer leave is difficult [to provide] because of the financial situation. But Germany, France, the U.K., everywhere needs talent. And this [could be] a way [in such countries] of making it attractive." □



Extreme Flying

How Wendy Clark stays sane while on a plane every week. **By Kristina Monllos**



Each week, Wendy Clark is typically on the road for four days. As the global president and CEO of DDB, Clark's job is based in New York but she lives in Atlanta. To avoid uprooting her family after moving from Coca Cola to DDB in 2016, Clark configured a travel schedule that allowed her to move to the agency and maintain her home base.

"I do what I call extreme flying, which means there's not a 6 a.m. or red eye flight that I haven't been on at some point," said Clark. "I usually say my office is in the sky."

The global role, which Clark assumed in February 2018, has her traveling even more frequently and, as to be expected, all over the globe. While it's unclear how many miles she has traveled in the last year, Clark calculated that she's flown over 2 million miles total on Delta, her primary airline. To understand how to manage that kind of travel — and get tips on how to maintain it while staying sane — Digiday caught up with Clark.

Sleep math is a must

I'm focused on maximizing my time at home and time away, so I have to do the math on sleep. I don't have an adjustment day. I typically land, take a shower and go to a meeting. I have to be mentally and physically ready. Therefore, I have always

done the math on what time zone I'm going to, when I will next get to sleep on the time zone and how many hours I've got to be sharp and awake, not just awake. I do my sleep math where it's like, OK, I can sleep on the first flight but I cannot on the second flight because I've got to be really tired by the time I land.

Hotels will probably open their gym for a traveler — even at 2 a.m.

A whole day on two or three hours of sleep that can be tough. The remedy for that for me is exercise. If you go to the gym right when you get to the hotel and exercise it gives your body added energy. The proxy for sleep, if you can't sleep, is exercise. I am well known for getting off a plane and going to a gym. You don't do vigorous exercise but breaking a sweat and doing some cardio is really helpful. I have asked hotels to open gyms because I'm awake at three in the morning. People should know hotels will open a gym for you.

Road warriors will quickly figure out where the Wi-Fi gaps are

Wi-Fi is important. These flights are long and you can use them to catch up. Every now and then I'll get texts like, "I see you landed," because 60 emails go out. I was on

a flight with some colleagues and up near the Arctic Circle the Wi-Fi always goes out. A colleague came up and he's like, "Is your Wi-Fi working?" I looked at the map, "I was like it doesn't work up here." I can tell you the gaps and blackouts in the global Wi-Fi coverage. I plan around them.

Pre-empt the delays that come from checking a bag on an aircraft

I am violently against checking a bag. Some way, somehow get that stuff in one bag. The trick is using the same shoes because shoes taking up the most room. I'm an advocate of the OGIO suitcase. It's designed well for you if your goal was never to check.

On the plane, dress for maximum comfort

During the summer months I always wear flip flops on a plane and I dress for maximum comfort. I don't always look like the CEO of the global network. I'm in jeans, flip flops and my hair in a clip. I don't wear makeup because it's only going to crust on your face for 12 hours. Be really low maintenance and be dressed for comfort. You can take a shower on the other end.

Book a hotel that's within walking distance of the office

While an absolutely fabulous hotel might be on the opposite side of town, I'm the person who wants to be walking distance to the office. I'm not there for myself. I'm there for the team and to do business.

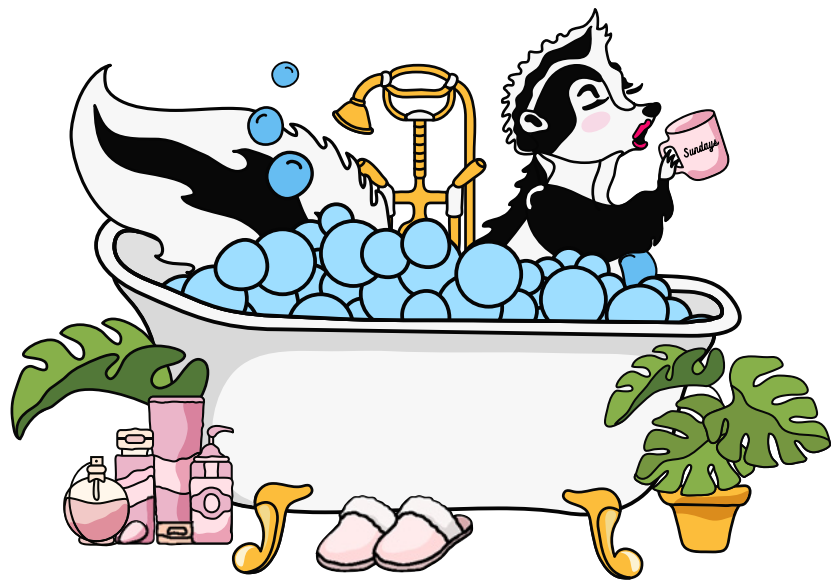
Parents should own how much they travel

When my kids were younger, there would be moments when I would be leaving and we'd have tears or "Mommy don't leave." Every part of you wants to say, "I don't want to leave." But you shouldn't say that because then you've like given a nine-year-old a dilemma to figure out. You're leaving but you said you don't want to and they don't have the mental processing to figure out why you can say that and still go. So the one thing I did was say, "Mommy is excited about going." You have to own it.

Don't be afraid of turbulence

The reason I'm not afraid of turbulence is I have quite a Zen feeling about it — there's absolutely nothing you can do at that point. If the plane is going down, the plane is going down. You panicking, grabbing stuff, hyperventilating is only going to mean that the end of your life was not as peaceful as you might want it to be. ▣





Sacred Sundays

Workers are increasingly taking to Instagram to announce they're closed on Sunday. **By Jill Manoff**

Today's workforce is claiming Sunday as a sacred, work-free zone.

The workweek is no longer largely confined to a person's hours in the office. The widespread desire to set boundaries on work in the name of reserving "me time" has led to the rise of #SelfcareSunday, a hashtag-driven trend popularized by Instagrammers ranging from Kourtney Kardashian to Michelle Obama.

"There's no longer a natural shutoff point," says Ashley Merrill, CEO of luxury sleepwear company Lunya, which includes in its collection a Restore set that include pajamas, a sleep mask and a candle. "Our cellphones follow us everywhere. Everything is at our fingertips, and you could be communicating with people from work all the time." She adds, "It's created a

whole shift and conversation about balance that we never had to have before. You have to actively create moments, days for yourself to unwind because the hustle never stops."

The reason Sunday has become the important wind-down day is because workers use Saturday as a buffer day, to ease out of being in work mode, Merrill asserts.

Emily Parr, founder of HolliFrog Skincare, says she dedicates her Sundays to self-care, which for her includes taking back-to-back workout classes, walking her dog in New York City's Central Park and ordering in (versus cooking a meal).

"The #SelfcareSunday movement came from the fact that everyone is trying to slow down a bit on Sunday — and because of that, they actually have the time to do that face mask," says Parr.

Merrill echoes this theme, saying the impulse for Sunday-for-me routines stemmed from people becoming more purposeful about the ways they spend their free time.

"Now you can do so much at home: You can order your dinner from Postmates; you can watch Netflix," Merrill says. "You get time back when you do things at home, rather than go out. More people are choosing to spend it feeling like their best self," she adds.

Marianna Hewitt, cofounder of vegan skin-care company Summer Fridays, says she takes time for self-care on Sundays to ensure that she will be prepared for what Monday brings.

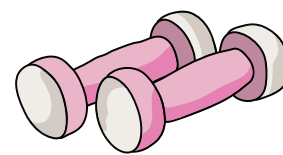
"If I don't take that time off, I don't feel rested, and I don't feel motivated or excited to start work up again," Hewitt says. "I have work mode and I have time-off [zone], and giving myself boundaries and balance has made Sunday not too scary anymore," she says, citing another popular hashtag, #SundayScaries. She named her Summer Fridays brand, launched in early 2018, after the wonderful feeling of claiming some personal time off, Hewitt explains.

And Hewitt's skin-care company isn't the only one piggybacking on the #SelfcareSunday trend. Influencer marketing platform provider Tribe Dynamics detected that the hashtag is driving an increase in earned media value for the top 50 skin-care brands. (EMV measures comments and likes about a brand on third-party social media content.) In the first 10 months of 2019, these 50 brands' total EMV associated with #SelfcareSunday was 81% higher than for all of 2018.

Some people started documenting their self-care routines when, after pricey juice bars and boutique gyms multiplied, wellness became a status symbol, Parr says. But she questions whether all the images tagged with #SelfcareSunday represent authentic self-care routines.

"Flaunting your wellness on social media has become a very cool thing," Parr says. "People love to show a picture with their trainer; they love to snap their smoothie. 'Self-care' has become synonymous with providing trendy [social media] content."

But for Parr, "When I'm practicing self-care, I'm not documenting it or taking the time to style a perfect picture," she says. "I'm just present." □



#SelfcareSunday

6 ways

Successful people in several industries break down their Sunday routines. **By Jill Manoff**

"I'm a creature of habit, and my days are very regimented — with the exception of Sundays. It's the day [when] I sleep in, ignore the gym and avoid making plans. I sometimes read manuscripts, but I try to avoid email. Really, it would probably be easier to put a hashtag on my routines Monday through Saturday. Sunday is just ... wide open, which I suppose is its own form of self-care." —Will Welch, editor-in-chief of GQ in New York City

"I slow down and spend time with my family. I do a morning workout at [Physique 57 and then] some leisurely errands, making time to stroll down a new street or stop into a bookstore. I purposefully do not take taxis. I take a nap and catch up on decadent sleep, and I make dinner. I also commit to an hour of letting my mind wander, daydreaming, reading, being creative. I put away my phone, to-do lists, obligations and unanswered texts, and do nothing but just be." —Leslie Russo, evp of IMG's fashion events group in New York City

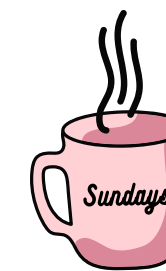
"My Sunday usually starts with a workout at Tracy Anderson Method. When I get home, I make myself a smoothie and prep my meals for the week. Then I like to gua sha my face, which is a bit of an indulgence because it takes a long time. I apply oil on my face and do the massage while watching my favorite guilty-pleasure TV shows. Then finally, I go to the most amazing no-frills massage place in New York City called Okuyama. I work out a lot and need a super strong massage, and Michael has the magic touch." —model Hilary Rhoda of New York City

"My favorite way to start the day is by hitting the streets on my bike. I love riding my bike down by the water and jumping in the ocean. There is something about jumping in a cold ocean that leaves you feeling so refreshed and alive. Then I love to lose my phone for a few hours to lay out by a pool or in my hammock, and read one of the hundreds of books I've

been trying to finish. Growing up, I never took time to just rest, and I still sometimes feel weird about 'relaxing' because I like to get shit done. But I've learned that I really do need to just relax sometimes. Disconnecting from technology helps me recharge a bit." —Kesha, performance artist in Los Angeles

"Every Sunday, I go to the gym in the morning and get a haircut in the afternoon. And then I do the laundry, which I actually love doing. It's a good excuse to stay at home, plus there's something about house chores that I find to be relaxing." —Thakoon Panichgul, founder and designer of Thakoon in New York City

"Winding down and relaxing on Sunday is not only much anticipated but necessary to clear and reset my mind and be ready for the new week ahead. I like to begin by putting on a favorite playlist, lighting candles and cooking an early dinner for my family, before I embark on my own Sunday night self-care routine: I place ... a few rose quartz crystals into the bath to give the vibrations of love and self-acceptance, then I dim the bathroom lights, burn palo santo to clear the space and play some calming music — anything by Krishna Das or Snatam Kaur. Next is a five-minute facial massage and then a sleeping mask. Finally, I have a cup of chamomile or calming night tea and do a chakra-clearing meditation in preparation for a good night's sleep." —Miranda Kerr, founder and CEO of Kora Organics in Los Angeles. □



Making Short Work (Of It)

More people are talking about the Four-Day Workweek than following it. **By Cale Guthrie Weissman**

First it was a failure, then it was a success. Then it was a failure again, now it's, er, who knows? That's a brief synopsis of the changing story arc in coverage about the four-day workweek. It's undoubtedly the Himalayan Yeti of routinized labor schedules.

The most recent organization to trumpet the truncated workweek is Microsoft Japan, which boasted about its four-days-a-week trial last summer. The company gave more than 2,200 workers Fridays off but paid them the same. The results, according to Microsoft's own report, were generally good; the company saved on energy costs and productivity increased.

In the wake of these preliminary findings, the online content machine pounced. Dozens of news articles appeared as outlets, from CNBC to the New York Post and NPR, covered the findings. This small experiment produced what was deemed some potentially positive results — along with a barrage of dramatic headlines, almost productivity porn. Microsoft Japan is now hedging a bit on the takeaways from last summer, saying it might try the shortened workweek this winter but not promising to.

While the four-day workweek might sound like a dream to some people, few organizations have initiated large trials. And some experiments

underwhelmed decision-makers. In 2008, the state of Utah, for example, adopted a 10-hours-a-day schedule for its state workers, four times a week. Officials embraced the change because of the then growing expense of gas. Yet state planners detected only a modest uptick in energy conservation, NPR reported in 2009, adding, however, that they found the new schedule brought about "unexpected boosts to productivity and worker satisfaction."

Originally, the plan was billed as a cost and energy saver, but critics weren't so sure about the program's merits. Utah underwent a state audit a few years later and found the new arrangement resulted in few savings. In 2011, Utah returned to its normal five-day workweek, save for a couple of cities and departments. Some advocates of the condensed schedule maintain, however, that the state didn't give the trial a fair shot.

An estate planning company in New Zealand, Perpetual Guardian, has recorded perhaps one of the most well-documented experiments with a four-day workweek. In 2018 its 200-person organization did away with Fridays in the office, and a few months later gave the trial a resounding endorsement: The company permanently adopted a four-day work schedule. Perpetual Garden's employees and its CEO frequently discuss the matter on the record. "What we're trying to do here is to frame the debate in a way that makes it easier for companies to say, you know what, let's give this a go," CEO Andrew Barnes told Fast Company.

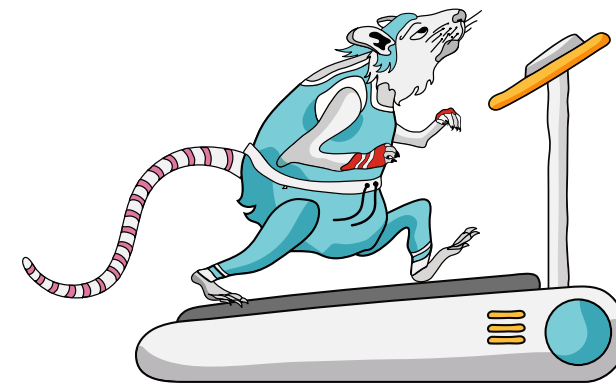
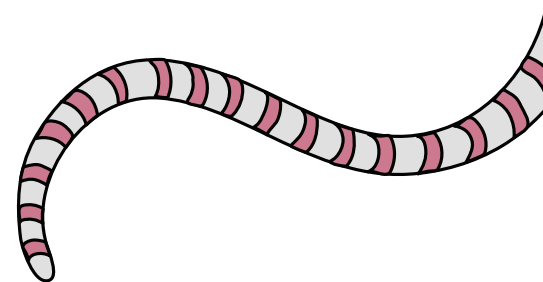
Barnes has become a poster child for a potential movement. Dozens of news outlets have reported on his experiment, including the Guardian (at least twice), Fortune, CNN and The New York Times. He has launched an organization called 4 Day Week, which advocates for more offices to follow his company's lead. Barnes is even writing a book also to be called, yes, "4 Day Week," which according to his website, will present "a radical, convincing case for a sustainable, profitable future in which we work less, but are more productive, engaged and satisfied."

He's not the only ardent advocate. Washingtonian Jon Steinman is an

entrepreneur turned activist who actively promotes the four-day workweek. In his estimation, what's required is not a piecemeal, company-by-company approach but something more radical. "It needs support from above," he says.

A look at the extensive news coverage might prompt someone to conclude this is burgeoning phenomenon. Interest from many people has certainly been piqued, but the examples remain isolated. Still, Steinman sees a bright future for the idea — and his PR strategy may be why. Politicians are taking his calls and more people are nodding in approval. Democratic presidential candidate Andrew Yang has sung the four-day workweek's praises and fellow contender Bernie Sanders says he is exploring the idea. Says Steinman: "It's gone from fantasy to attainable reality really fast."

Indeed, other companies like Shake Shack have decided to test it. "We've dreamed of doing this for so long," CEO Randy Garutti said in November when his company reported its third-quarter earnings. But even with more organizations testing the idea, Steinman insists the real benefits won't be reaped until many people press for its large-scale adoption like labor unions' push for the eight-hour day. "A lot of the big benefits of the four-day workweek [don't] happen until it's society-wide," Steinman says. ▣



Workplace Fads Over the Years

Matrix Management: Gaining popularity in the 1970s, "matrix management" is the idea of people reporting to multiple hierarchies to attend to the cross-functional needs of their roles. While the idea makes sense — jobs require multiple skills that transcend roles — the implementation is difficult and confusing. As a result, most companies that used matrix management came back to normal reality.

360-degree Feedback: 360-degree feedback was a way for managers to better evaluate an employee's performance by seeking out commentary from other workers at different levels. The idea was to create as holistic a picture as possible to better analyze performance, but most workplaces that tried it out find the implementation — and results — less than ideal.

Six Sigma: First developed by Motorola in the '80s, and then taken up by GE in the late '90s, Six Sigma is a pedagogy to try and improve organizational processes. The intent was to remove as many defects as possible by testing the quality of processes method at every step.

Gamification: In the late 2000s/early 2010s, enterprise gamification was all the rage. It was essentially injecting fun, game-like elements into employee tasks and trainings to keep them engaged. While companies like Cisco and Deloitte have used gamification in various ways over the years, a 2014 Gartner study said that 80% of the applications using the tactic would fail because of poor design.

Holacracy: The idea behind holacracy is that management is decentralized and employees are given more autonomy to self-organize. Its cheerleaders say it provides better transparency, and removes organizational red-tape that leads to inefficiency. Companies like Zappos and Medium adopted the program in the early 2010s — and some thought it to be the next big wave in management. -- Cale Guthrie Weissman

The Elephant in the Room

How Drunk Elephant's founder learned to be a boss. **By Emma Sandler**

Tiffany Masterson, Drunk Elephant's founder, never intended to start a skin-care business in 2013, let alone sell it in October for \$845 million to Shiseido Group. She describes her transition from someone with no management experience to chief creative officer of a company with more than 100 people.

I had zero leadership experience before starting Drunk Elephant. I never had any job position where anyone worked under me. And as the youngest child in my family, I was also bossed around my whole life. It's an interesting twist in my life that I have ended up in a situation where I do have people reporting to me. I can't say being a boss has come naturally for me. The only role I've ever had in my life as a boss has been as a mom, so I tend to lead that way.

That is to say that I love all my employees, and I am careful about whom I hire. I love to hire people with like-minded values and my company's culture is important to me. I am a people pleaser by nature, and I like people to be happy and I don't like to say no. I don't like confrontation. So it has been hard for me to step into this role, although I do have discipline. It took me a while to learn ... how to tell employees I don't like something or that something is not allowed.

At the end of the day, I lead by saying what I want, how things need to be and what I want people to do. I have a lot of great people who can execute around me, but I also don't keep yes-men around me.

For the first two years of the business, it comprised ... one investor, my contract designer and someone to handle the books. Once we started selling through Sephora in 2014, our designer joined the company as our first official hire. I lead by finding people whom I trust and share values with and who allow me to make choices. But they don't take advantage of my nature. I know what I know. And for what I don't know, I have hired people with shared values who understand and respect my vision and can adjust their own, because we do things differently. The brand is coming from my gut, but I have learned to let people with more experience guide me. I have sat in on interviews with people before who say, "I don't settle for less. I'm No. 1. I'm going to kill the competition." [That] to me is not the point, which is to do something you love and actually help people with their skin.

We have about 113 people and we will definitely grow that with the Shiseido acquisition. I was very clear in my negotiation that the company

should remain the same. I wanted to sell to a company that would let us have cultural autonomy. I decided early on ... that I wanted to take care of all of my employees and made them all owners of Drunk Elephant. It was a big part of how I showed my employees my appreciation of coming together and working toward a common goal. ▣

“I have a lot of great people who can execute around me, but I also don't keep yes-men around me.”



Seeds of Discontent

By Brian Morrissey



Recently, an exasperated top media executive asked me a question: “What is a progressive media company to do to keep their people happy?” He ticked through the various programs the company had in place, its strong culture, comparatively good pay. It is a discussion that plays out in most conversations with top execs. No matter where the starting point, conversations tend to veer to issues that make up the wild world of the modern work experience.

For years, these issues -- entitled and flaky employees, infantilized work cultures (thanks Google), constant pestering for unearned promotions -- were best filed under “WTF millennial.” Now, however, it’s clear that the changed nature of work and the office is more than yet another skirmish in the rolling generational wars. For starters, millennials aren’t new to the workforce, they’re your boss. The oldest millennials are now 38. Instead, younger workers have caused a reexamination of the place of work in a fulfilled life. There is a broad rejection of many aspects of work that were taken for granted for too long.

On the surface, this is a strange time for a bottom-up revolt. Few people would have predicted the revival of unions in media a decade ago. In the time since the financial crisis, the economy has shed many jobs in certain sectors -- manufacturing,

apparel, media -- but it has added many more. The U.S. economy is at functionally negative unemployment. There are more jobs than people to fill them. The U.S. gross domestic product has expanded for over a decade. And yet there is roiling discontent. This baffles many bosses.

What I told the exasperated exec over coffee is that, in my view, companies are being held accountable not just for their own shortcomings but the overall failures of an economic system that is patently out of whack. Younger people have simply felt the brunt of it more. They are graduating from college with a total of \$1.6 trillion of outstanding student loan debt. Home ownership in many cities is an absurd fantasy. Yes, the S&P 500 is up 27% this year. That’s great for the half of Americans who own stock, but a junior employee struggling to pay rent doesn’t.

Companies themselves bear their fair share of the blame. Corporate profits have expanded to high levels. The 2017 tax cuts for companies expanded these even further. Some companies used the extra cash to pay down debt, some to pay dividends to shareholders or enact tax buybacks, few passed the extra cash in a meaningful way to workers. Too many workplaces have focused on “culture” in ways that are wearing thin for stretched employees.

Endless activities can make the modern office feel like summer camp. The free snacks, outings and team building exercises are nice-to-haves, but they don’t make up for rising health care costs that are passed on to workers. Oh, and workers are onto the open-office scam being about saving costs, not fostering collaboration.

On a day-to-day level, many workers are also rejecting the entire idea of “suffering” as a requirement for getting ahead. Seasoned workers -- that means older, by the way -- love to regale the young on how they had to put up with untold amounts of humiliation and deprivation on their way up the career ladder. Their charges aren’t buying it, dismissing it instead with a terse “OK boomer.” And they have a point. The saga at luggage company -- sorry, travel brand -- Away is a great showcase of the divide. Steph Korey, Away’s former CEO, was simply a hard-charging startup exec in the views of her backers, often the well-off investor class. But to those not tweeting from their vacation homes, Korey’s vicious Slack messages were another corporate monster, taking her place on the org chart as license to behave atrociously to those without similar power. ■

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