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*Source: Roy Morgan Single Source, Jul 24 - Jun 25, P4+, Roy Morgan iNS, ACM Cross Platform Audience.

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AGENCIES BEST OF THE BEST MARKETING

SCYTHE THROUGH THE NOISE WITH B&T'S BEST OF THE BEST INDEPENDENT CONSULTANTS



Tom Fogden

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It appears that the word 'unprecedented' might be seeing an unprecedented increase in usage due to the unprecedented times we're living through. But is that really the case?

For some, it may appear so. For others, particularly the 10 (or, rather, 12) names on this list, little, if anything, is without precedent in the world of advertising, agencies, marketing and media. They are the guiding hands and fonts of knowledge for those at the coalface lacking time of their own to think.

Some of the list specialise in M&As, others in agency-client relationships. Others in pitches, *naturellement*. Others are in less traditional aspects of the business. Before we get to the 10, a few were very unlucky to miss out, especially so SI Partners' Julia Vargiu, last year's number eight, but the competition is truly cut-throat. Matt Rose, John James and Sam Wood are certainly three to watch, as is Mel Ho, formerly of the LabBible Group. Chloe Hooper is also unlucky to miss out given her impressive recent work on workplace culture.

Before you go any further, make sure you nominate suggestions for future *B&T* Best of the Best lists. We honestly read all of your suggestions and we take them into account. Next week, we're looking at the best influencer and creator agency bosses—a sector of the marketing that is seriously heating up, we're sure you'd agree. Let us know who you think should be on the list by filling out the form below:



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younger staff.

But now, onto the list.



10. Peter Coffey, project director and partner, Enth Degree

There's every chance that when you think of Enth Degree, you think of Graham Webster. However, Peter Coffey has been with the business for some 16 years and is very much in the driving seat of the business.

His work extends beyond agency appointment, commercial negotiations and contract development. He oversees and manages agency performance in an ongoing capacity and works to ensure transparency in all operations. Coffey works across all areas of the advertising and media ecosystem, including creative, strategy, planning and buying, digital, research and public relations. That's some doing.

9. James Ledger, consultant, Verity Relationship Intelligence

James Ledger is among the foremost client-agency relationship consultants in the business. He joined Verity Relationship Intelligence back in 2015 (when it was the Client Relationship Consultancy) following stints at some of the biggest agencies in the country, including two years with Carat as group business director and GM of its Sydney office followed by nearly five years as MediaCom's chief client officer.

Ledger helps client leads and account teams learn from their mistakes and build deep, lasting, personal relationships between clients and their agencies for the future.

8. Mark Leone, partner, Madclarity

Mark Leone co-founded Madclarity with Eric Faulkner in 2015 following a decade at Faulkner Media Management beforehand, where he progressed from a humble grad to head of client service, built the company's New Zealand operation, and helped establish Southeast Asia's first independent media consultancy.

Nowadays, he leads Madclarity's consulting, coaching, pitch management and training and has worked with some of the largest clients in the business. He recently led the media review for Alinta Energy, which saw Avenue C best incumbent Carat. He's also a regular contributor to B&T with his quite excellent and bullshit-free [Mad Reality Check column](#).

7. Clive Burcham, founder, Compadres

To call Clive Burcham merely the founder of Compadres does him something of a disservice. He was a founding partner of Global Citizen, chair of Amplify, an advisory board member of Women in Tech and a non-exec director of Adoreum Partners. He also founded The Conscience Organisation, selling it to WPP (before buying it back) and worked as the creative director for The Comedy Channel in the US among literally countless other roles across the agency and media spectrum.

With Compadres, he empowers CEOs, founders and other leaders around the world to succeed by navigating the various challenges of business management—something they

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succeed by navigating the varied challenges of business management. Something they describe as asking to climbing a mountain while spinning plates. But Burcham does it all with heart, too, it's not a coincidence that his [session at Cairns Crocodiles](#) this year was a [crowd favourite](#).

6. Chris Savage, business growth specialist, The Savage Company

What Chris Savage hasn't seen and doesn't know likely aren't worth knowing. He was leading some of the largest PR firms in the world while, we suspect, a number of B&T readers (and some of our staff) were twinkles in their parents' eyes. After serving as Ogilvy PR's Australian chief exec for nearly eight years and nearly seven as chief operating officer of STW, Savage founded The Savage Company.

A decade on, The Savage Company continues to advise agencies and clients across the country on how to thrive in a more challenging world—he's [showing no signs of slowing down, either](#). B&T wonders whether his wisdom could help his ailing West Ham United, too.

5. Rob Brittain, independent marketing consultant, Robert Brittain Consulting

Rob Brittain has been running his own show since 2018 after spending nearly three years as ANZ's head of marketing effectiveness and seven years with Mondelēz, rising to become its head of analytics and marketplace information across Asia-Pacific.

Nowadays, Brittain puts that expertise to use advising clients and publishing research into marketing effectiveness alongside the likes of Peter Field. He's also an Effies judge and you might have seen him pop up at YouTube's Brandcast event a few weeks ago.

4. Darren Woolley, founder and global CEO, Trinity P3

Darren Woolley leads Trinity P3, one of the most important and influential pitch consultancies around, with a number of staff who could, in another world, potentially make this list in their own right.

Starting out working at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, Woolley made the switch to advertising in 1987 at Mattingly Advertising. In 2000, he founded Trinity P3, and the business has gone on to produce important works such as its annual State of the Pitch report, as well as running some of the most consequential creative and media in the land.

While some consultants prefer to operate away from the limelight, Woolley is one of the most outspoken commentators in the industry. One nomination on our Best of the Best (see above) described Woolley as "The only consultancy that actively takes a point of view". As headline purveyors and paragraph constructors ourselves, we think that's a good thing.

Woolley of course, is not alone in his endeavours – far from it. TrinityP3 succeeds because of the skills and capabilities of Stephen Wright, Ellie Angell, Nathan Hodges, Kylie Ridler Dutton, Lydia Feely, Anton Buchner and more besides as much as it does Woolley's.

3. Sangeeta & William Leach, founding director & owner, The Leach Partnership

Sangeeta and William Leach together run The Leach Partnership. With decades of experience between them at a variety of agencies, most notably at various Saatchi & Saatchi offices around the world.

Nowadays, they're running The Leach Partnership, offering a comprehensive suite of services that encompass business strategy, planning, and creative solutions. Their consultancy combines hands-on management expertise with innovative programs such as "unstuck sessions," designed to empower agencies to achieve breakthrough moments and strategic clarity. They're also regularly consulted on agency mergers and acquisitions.

Sangeeta is a regular speaker on the conference circuit and a non-executive director of Wayside Chapel.

2. Jeff Estok, managing partner; Cam Carter, founding partner, Navigare

Jeff Estok and Cam Carter scarcely need an introduction to most of the industry. But we're going to do it anyway.

Carter founded Navigare in 1996 after holding important management roles at Grey and Leo Burnett. Estok joined Navigare in 2009 as a managing partner. Together, the pair enhance client and agency performance through innovative solutions that drive structural

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and behavioural changes. They don't run pitches.

One nominator described them as having “invented the category” and remaining “purveyors of wisdom” with “unquestionable integrity”. We could scarcely have said it better ourselves.

1. Jen Davidson, managing partner, Tumbleturn Marketing Advisory

Jen Davidson has retained her place atop the list. With a career spanning more than three decades in senior roles at Universal McCann and CommBank, she has been leading Tumbleturn for just shy of 10 years.

Davidson remains a go-to for smart thinking on the industry, ably assisted by Dan Johns and Sarah Baskerville, and Tumbleturn's list of blue-chip clients is enough to turn anyone green. That level of influence is not built overnight and could easily be lost if it wasn't for her relentless pursuit of excellence.

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