

LEADING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS HONORS 11 TOP BRAND BUILDERS

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LEADING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

& Business Owners

Leading Women Entrepreneurs honored this year's "Leading Women Brand Builders" at its networking event, "The Leaders Behind the Biggest Brands," on Monday at The Palace at Somerset Park.

"Brand recognition and loyalty is a high priority for marketers. Statistically speaking, 80 percent of companies' projected revenues come from 20 percent of their customer base. This shows how dedicated customers impact the bottom line and why a solid brand and marketing strategy is the successful foundation to any business," LWE's founder and CEO, Linda Wellbrock, said.

"Despite their notable success and the brands that they have built, these women are often times not showcased at all. Therefore, recognizing those who have put forth such an incredible effort into creating businesses that are changing the landscape of the business world that we live in is a crucial part to their continued success."

Founded by Wellbrock in 2011, Leading Women Entrepreneurs is a Clinton-based media and events company that acts as a top business resource for women business owners. Its member organization regularly hosts networking events, investor dinners, educational opportunities and global retreats.

Monday's honorees, according to Wellbrock, have excelled in marketing innovation, increasing brand awareness and leveraging media and creative resources.

Here are the honorees:

- Susan Angelo, director of marketing, Micro Strategies Inc.;
- Erin Connolly-Kriarakis, senior manager, CohnReznick;
- Richelle J. Delavan, director of practice development, Riker Danzig Scherer Hyland & Perretti;
- Jeanine Genauer, principal and founder, The JPR Group (public relations);
- Michele Hayes, director of marketing and community affairs, NJ Advance Media;
- Sarann Jennings, director of local sales, Comcast Spotlight;
- Tracey Leaver, founder and executive director, Woodlands Wildlife Refuge;
- Michelle Malave, event planner and social media and marketing strategist, The Palace at Somerset Park;
- Rebecca Mazarella, communications manager, Children's Specialized Hospital;
- Chrisie Scott, chief marketing officer, Hackensack Meridian Health;
- Terry Tateossian, founder and lead engineer, Socialfix Media.

"Leading Women Brand Builders" also featured four exemplary speakers, all highly respected for being masters of their brands.

Here are some highlights:

Mandell Crawley, managing director, chief marketing officer for Morgan Stanley:

“Being in marketing means facing off with 15,000 advisers who all have to in some respects take a hard look at their value proposition and make sure that they are able to articulate it not just through their voice, the telephone and email, but all of these new highways that now exist for all of us as the digital landscape unfolds.”

“The advertising campaign that we launched last April is called ‘Capital Creates.’ It is essentially a reflection of who Morgan Stanley is and what we do. We advise, originate, trade, manage and distribute capital. We do it for the government, institutions and individuals, and we try to do that with a standard of excellence. ... I didn’t want to be gimmicky; I didn’t want to be funny; I wanted us to be exactly who we are and speak about what we do in a very authentic way. ... For an idea to become real and have transformative impact, you need capital — people don’t care about what you do, they care about why you do what you do.”

“Every single entrepreneur should ask themselves: What is the increment of return above and beyond what the market is giving you? What is your alpha? Why do clients want to do business with you versus your competitors? You should discuss what open flanks you have and where you are vulnerable for disruption.”

Jeff Hoffman, co-founder, Priceline.com:

“What is the brand’s goal? The brand’s goal is the first time someone says, ‘Hey, I have this problem,’ you want them to immediately think of you. ... A brand’s goal is to get someone to say, ‘Wait, what?’ People want to pull up a chair and hear more. A brand grabs people who are hearing about you for the first time and makes them want to hear more. ... The tipping point of hyper-growth is the day that you don’t even leave your office and somebody calls you that you haven’t even pitched yet. ... The only way they start calling is because your brand is a voice and a presence in the world that got ahead of you.”

“The reason to do business with you is your brand asset. ... As soon as you start describing all the great things about your business, it becomes a blur. If you tell me one thing about you, I can remember it. Companies try to talk about all the things they do and all the reasons to do business with them but here is what the data shows: People choose you for one overriding resonant reason. ... So ask everyone at your company and say, what is the one most important reason anyone should do business with us? ... Text or email 10 people who are already your customer. Tell them to give you one single most important reason why they chose you. ... You will be amazed, first of all, nine of them will say the same thing, second of all, 95 percent of the time, that thing that nine people texted you is not even in your advertising.”

“A brand is not just a clever slogan. It is a personality for a company. It is a way of life. ... Your brand personality is the consistent voice in which your company always speaks. ... In the marketplace, will people be able to recognize you? ... If your company was a person, who would she be? How does she dress? How does she talk? What does she look like? Where is she from? ... Use your brand personality to guide every form of communication. ... When we were talking about our personality, we were saying that we are experienced travelers. This is a company that has traveled the galaxy. We’re space age and high tech with a corny sense of humor. So, you know who we are? We are Captain James T. Kirk upon the Starship Enterprise. He delivers our personality.”

“Everything we ever learned about marketing all died with the millennials. They are transitioning from value to values. Traditional value is what you get for your money. Theirs is what do you do with the money I give you?”

“It’s all about customer intimacy and that doesn’t happen if you have 50-year-old men designing products for 30-year-old women. ... Our customer for one of our businesses was absolutely ‘mom.’ ... So we made cardboard cutouts named Mary for our office and on the back of her, we write down everything we know: her favorite music, colors, stores, books and more —

why? That's what color our website should be. That is the music that should play in the background. We use all of the things that will make Mary comfortable — and we spend all our time trying to spend a day in her life. If something will not appeal to Mary, don't even waste my time."

Susan Spencer, editor in chief of Woman's Day Magazine:

"Women's Day is very much a legacy publication — we will be 80 years old next year — and the key to our success is trust. ... About five years ago, the brand lost its way. ... It was editorially not very interesting and readers could no longer differentiate us from 'Good Housekeeping' or 'Family Circle.' What happened with the previous owners is that people lost their connection and trust with the magazine. The first thing we did was go back to our readers and ask, 'What do you want from this magazine? What are you looking for?' We did qualitative and quantitative research, including going out to dinner with them, asking them what they are passionate about, what their values are, what gets them up in the morning. ... We then doubled down on the topics of interest to them such as health and food and we curated content that really spoke to their passions and values. ... The thing that tipped the balance for us back to a place of strength was to become storytellers telling their stories. We broke a lot of ground by covering topics that they wouldn't have read in our competitors' publications, such as transgender issues, rape in the military, gun control and more. ... We have become the storytellers of these women who are our audience. We've developed an emotional connection with them."

"When I was being considered for the job, I opened up the magazine and saw there wasn't a single picture of a woman in it. ... A time of change gives you the opportunity to take risks. When your readership cycles in and out, when you are trying to appeal to a shifting group or a new age range — you can try things you never would have done."

"You have to constantly evolve. For a brand like ours,

partnerships are critical. We need to be partnering with other organizations to stay relevant and in the know of what's going on around us. We are constantly looking for people to help remind our readers how current we actually are."

Diane S. Turton, president and founder of Diane Turton Realtors, closed the speakers' portion of the evening by recalling how she would market herself in the real estate industry when men would not hire her based on her gender:

"I went to night school to get a teacher's degree so I could substitute and, along the way, I would ask the kids if their parents were selling their homes," Turton said. "I would also have garage sales and put a 'For Sale' sign in the garage. They'd say, 'Is your house for sale?' I'd say, 'No, is yours?' I then gave them 100 business cards and said 'You can have that for free if you pass out 100 of my cards!' And they did."

"I also invited 400 people over for a Tupperware party, but if you knew me, you couldn't get in. ... Then I would purposely deliver the merchandise to the wrong house. I had already made the contact with the person who bought it. They'd say, 'I didn't order any Tupperware.' I'd say, 'Oh, I must be at the wrong house. I'm Diane Turton, do you know anyone who wants to buy or sell a house?' And I would get another lead, and I would think, why doesn't everyone do this? This is so much fun!"