Can you describe your role and what it entails?

Kate Sirkin: I run the global research operation at SMG and have three core responsibilities. The first revolves around the fact that our teams and clients need access to the best data available to make the smartest decisions about where to invest budgets to grow business for the brands.

The second is working with SMG leadership to identify and develop data-based partnerships and alliances with existing and emerging companies that have a unique view of consumer behavior and can help us identify opportunities to invest brand budgets more effectively.

The third is working with the SMG global research lead team to ensure we are sharing and reapplying best practices in research innovation, insight development and accountability practices throughout our global network.

“Our teams and clients need access to the best data available to make the smartest decisions about where to invest budgets to grow business for the brands.”

What are your top three business priorities?

Sirkin: The first involves ensuring all of our offices globally have the same access to data partnerships and data advances that we have in the US. Those partnerships are with companies that include eMarketer, comScore, ShareThis and Visible Measures.

The second revolves around mobile and ensuring our teams have access to the most actionable mobile data available in the market to feed our planning systems. I also need to ensure our teams have access to insight-based approaches that uncover new opportunities to build more meaningful experiences that connect consumers with brands across screens.
Third, I’m focusing on continually driving efficiency across the operation—efficiency in data and knowledge management, research and project management, and reporting—so teams can spend the appropriate amount of time on strategy development and remain more agile in market campaign optimization.

What do you see as the greatest challenges in your business and for marketing as a whole?

Sirkin: I see challenges around the vast amount of data and information overload—it’s too easy to get stuck in the weeds—as well as with knowledge management and sharing best practices, the rising cost of high-quality research and the pace of change.

How has eMarketer helped you address those challenges and informed your thinking?

Sirkin: eMarketer is a great resource for the management of marketing information, providing relevant data, information, trends, profiles, forecasts, reports and interviews. It’s available to everyone on a 24/7 basis, and it’s easy to search, find, pull and incorporate data into our client presentations, reports and recommendations.

What do you like best about eMarketer?

Sirkin: It’s easy to use and provides a depth and breadth of intelligence that’s available to everyone in our organization. Our partnership with eMarketer on the Global Media Intelligence report is very valuable. And with eMarketer, we are able to get help with training, prioritize against our needs and improve planning for our in-market visits.

How is eMarketer different?

Sirkin: It’s a one-stop shop, delivers an easy licensing approach, everyone has access to it and the content is presentation-ready.

“Digital revenues in our organization have doubled since 2009, when we started our extensive partnership with eMarketer.”

Why did SMG decide to make eMarketer available to the entire company?

Sirkin: We wanted to give the power of digital intelligence to more people and not restrict access to the research teams. The days of librarians controlling access are gone. Things are more efficient and effective this way.

The world is changing so quickly that our teams need the most up-to-date information on demand to ensure they are developing the best recommendations for our clients. In addition, digital revenues in our organization have doubled since 2009, when we started our extensive partnership with eMarketer.

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