**A close-up of a person

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**VERRA BUDIMLIJA.**

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PROFILE

**Verra Budimlija** is widely recognised as a pioneering strategic leader in the communications and marketing industry, holding senior leadership positions in creative, digital and media agencies. Her strategic prowess has had a profound impact on agency business performance and reputation, driving significant growth in challenging times. Verra understands brands innately, reinforced by her own experiences as a brand owner.

**Business growth**

£15m revenue growth, £500m billings growth Wavemaker 2018-2023

£11m revenue growth, £450m billings growth MEC 2011-2017

Raised Wavemaker UK from #6 to #2 position

**Brand experience**

Compare the Market, Allianz, Vodafone, Danone Dairies, Beiersdorf, Unilever Ice Cream, P&G Haircare, Sainsbury’s, Morrisons, Sky, Netflix, Natwest, Nationwide, Transport for London, Asprey, Garrard

**Strategic stewardship**

Co-created Positive Provocation positioning, Wavemaker

Established a purchase journey strategic planning system

Defined Wavemaker Content proposition

Incubated Applied Innovation expertise within Wavemaker

**Business leadership**

Chief Strategy Officer, Wavemaker (Member of Executive Committee)

Practice Lead, Wavemaker Content (responsible for P&L)

Chief Strategy Officer, MEC (Member of Executive Committee)

Head of Planning, G2 & Nitro (Member of SLT)

**Authorship**

1x Cannes Lions, 2x Effies, 6 APG awards (including grand prix), 20 x Campaign Media Awards,

10 x UK Sponsorship Awards

4x white papers

4x publications

**Juror/Platform speaker/Industry commentator**

Cannes Lions

Effies

Eurobest

Google Firestarter

IPA Effectiveness Awards

Best Agency Partner, Campaign Media Awards, 2018, 2019, 2020

Top 10 lists, Campaign, 2013-2023

**Establishing businesses**

Owner, Starjump Studio (sustainable fashion DTC brand)

Co-founder, De Beauvoir Community Soup Kitchen

**WAVEMAKER/MEC UK (WPP) *Chief Strategy Officer* 2011-2023**

**Clients:** BMW, Beiersdorf (skincare), Eurostar (travel), [Compare the Market](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFi5r22ymB0) (insurance), Danone, [Nationwide](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJmjj8Xz6LU) (banking), [Public Health England](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/health/sugar-total-added-up-by-mysupermarketcouk/514031.article) (public sector), Transport for London (public sector), Vodafone (telcom), Netflix, Paramount, Audible (ents)

**Responsibilities:**

* Formulatedagency vision and strategic pillars
* Built a strong culture of curiosity and creativity across the entire business
* Hired and developed the most respected strategy team (acc.IPA) in media (only 8% churn rate pa)
* Responsible for driving the agency reputation through thought leadership including the much-revered annual Growth Trends Report
* Contributor to events including presenting at Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity, thought pieces for industry publications and regularly sits on award juries

**Achievements:**

* Pitched and won 10 blue chip clients propelling the agency from no.6 to no.2 position in terms of billings and new business
* Created and launched a new global planning process which drove applied creativity and collaboration through the business
* Integrated WWP/ GroupM data and tech capabilities into the new planning process
* Built and grew a distinctive in-house creative studio – with responsibility for proposition and P&L
* Successfully launched Wavemaker’s Applied Innovation proposition and Addressable Content offer
* Reinforced the agency DEI strategy through product innovation and radical collaboration
* Navigated the MEC and Maxus teams through the merger and was one of four members of the C-Suite chosen to launch Wavemaker
* Most awarded strategy team through the IPA’s Excellence Diploma

**G2 (WPP) *Head of Planning*  2009 – 2011**

**Clients:** Mars Petcare, Mars confectionary, [P&G haircare](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5dMdbJDmTY), Allianz (insurance)

**Responsibilities:**

* Redefined and led the planning dept.
* Established a new creative development process with the ECD
* Worked closely with clients to guide integration of their communication strategy

**Achievements**:

* Created an integrated data, insight and planning team working across performance/brand/CX, sales promotion and packaging design within the agency and across Grey Advertising clients
* 30%+ clients bought at least one additional service as a result of an integrated approach to planning

**NITRO, (SAPIENT NITRO) *Head of Planning* 2007-2009**

**Clients:** Unilever Ice Cream Division including Magnum, Solero, Walls

**Responsibilities:**

* Part of the Unilever European Innovation Team

**Achievements:**

* Worked across digital, sales activation and packaging design and devised an integrated approach to strategy
* Created a new model for product innovation development
* 100% Revenue increase for the Unilever account over the course of my tenure

**M&C SAATCHI UK *Planning Director* 1998 – 2007**

**Clients:** [Sky](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgiiT_Fx9fU)(ents), Natwest (banking), [Sainsbury’s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=kKtGwY4BbgY)(retail), [Transport for London](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBPe9VfOXcI), Asprey(lux), [Garrard](https://adsspot.me/media/prints/garrard-rupert-everett-ee3a3449d624) (lux), Watches of Switzerland(lux)

**LEO BURNETT BANGKOK *Planning Director* 1995-1998**

**Clients:** P&G, Kellogg’s, Tourism Authority of Thailand

**HOWELL HENRY CHALDECOTT LURY (HHCL) *Senior Planner* 1993- 1995**

**Clients:** Avis, Britvic, British Home Stores (retail)

**DARCY MASIUS, BENTON & BOWLES (DMB&B) *Planner* 1991-1993**

**Clients:** Texaco, Woolworths (retail), P&O Crusies

**AWARDS**

Consistently features in Campaign’s annual Top 10 List of strategists

APG 1xGrand Prix, 3x Gold 1x Silver

Campaign Media (20+ awards including Media Creativity, Best Use of Data, Media Idea under £250K), UK Sponsorship Awards (10+ awards including Agency of The Year, Celebrity and Influencer Marketing Programmes) Media Week Awards (50+ awards including Best Long-Term Strategy, Best Use of Content, Best Use of Audio)