

Business Innovation

September 2025

Decode Business Around the World



James Ordonez
Chairman & President
Tayrona Capital Group

Tayrona Maisons

Crafting a New Language of Luxury – From Earth's Treasures to Ethical Elegance

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Business Innovation is a platform for innovative business ideas and innovators to bloom. The world is changing rapidly as we speak. Technology and innovations are causing radical changes and reshaping business prospects. As such, it becomes critical to stay updated and have a sound presence in the online space. This is where we come in! We are a digital magazine with a readership spanning across the globe. If you have what it takes to disrupt the status quo, whether you're an entrepreneur, a C-Suite executive, or another dignitary, we'd love to connect and feature your journey.

In addition, we provide a range of intriguing blogs, instructive articles, and business news to keep you informed about the market and help you strategize your next move to make the most of it.

MISSION

We want to tell compelling stories from all corners of the corporate world. We strive to inspire meaningful ideas as we live and breathe in a dynamic world.

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We want to be our readers' favorite digital medium, feeding their need for knowledge. We also wish to be a reliable source of new information and learning for our audience.

VALUES

Trust, integrity, and commitment are our keystones. They guide us to uphold our mission and vision and bind us to our purpose.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Despite being two prominent entities at work, leadership and management operate quite well together. Managers and leaders both motivate the team to improve both the organization and itself. Their efforts help the company stay on track to meet its objectives. In addition, leaders give their teams the opportunity to take the lead on occasion while listening to their suggestions and thoughts. Their work is evident during the planning, forecasting, team-building, training, performance-monitoring, and assessment processes. In order to efficiently use organizational resources to achieve operational goals, leaders and teams work together.

The outcomes of these efforts impact the company's overall performance, which strengthens its market presence and reputation. We'll be putting some light on this specific synergistic relationship and how it affects organizations in this edition. The top-down model of business is no longer used in today's organizations; instead, they have a more unified structure that guarantees that every level of the organization is regarded equally. As a result, we have compiled business tales from many industries. While each of these businesses is motivated by a distinct goal and objective, they all value teamwork. And every one of them brings something special to their management and leadership.

We will feature the history of **James Ordonez, Chairman & President, Tayrona Capital Group** On our cover page. The tale serves as a superb illustration of how a contemporary business operates and establishes new industry standards for goods and services. The issue will also include a number of blogs on subjects that are currently popular in business. Overall, the edition has all the potential to keep you interested.

Hope you find it in a similar light.

Anuradha Thakur



CONTENTS



10 | Tayrona Maisons
Crafting a New Language of Luxury - From Earth's Treasures to Ethical Elegance

20 | AuCom MCS GmbH & Co. KG
The Leader Taking AuCom to new Heights



22 | Warren Buffett
From Paperboy to Billionaire: The Remarkable Success Story of Warren Buffett



30 | STT Logistics Group
A Resounding Name for Reliable and Customized Logistics Solutions



36 | Krown Technologies
Building the World's Most Secure Blockchain Empire



46 | Kristin Marquet
The Visionary Powerhouse Merging PR, Branding, and Tech to Build an Empire



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Tayrona Maisons

CRAFTING A NEW LANGUAGE OF LUXURY - FROM EARTH'S TREASURES TO ETHICAL ELEGANCE



A LEGACY ROOTED IN HOSPITALITY

The story of this ambitious venture begins not in a mine but in the warmth of a South American hotel lobby. More than five decades ago, around 1969, a family-run hotel business was born. Based primarily in scenic locales of South America, the hospitality business quickly attracted the attention of global filmmakers who were drawn to the region's cinematic beauty. These picturesque hotel properties became hubs for major international film productions — from Kites to Singularity, even participating in iconic franchises like Game of Thrones, Troy, and Gladiator.

What began as traditional hotel service evolved into a creative business model. The company, Tayrona Capital, offered full-scale hospitality — accommodation, transport, F&B, logistics — in exchange for a stake in the film's revenue. This barter-style model allowed them to reinvest



profits, expand operations, and become deeply intertwined with the film industry worldwide.

ENTERING THE WORLD OF IMPACT INVESTING

By 1999, the company's success in film-hospitality partnerships gave way to a broader mission: creating lasting socioeconomic impact. Together with a consortium of global partners, including governments and sovereign funds, the group formed an investment vehicle aimed at funding ventures that produced tangible community benefits — employment, tax revenues, and regional development.

This commitment to impact investing would eventually serve as the foundation for one of the most visionary programs the group would undertake: the creation of Tayrona Maisons, a new luxury conglomerate initiative inspired by cultural heritage, natural exclusivity, and sustainable development.

TAYRONA MAISONS: THE PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURAL TREASURE BRANDING

The French-rooted term “Tayrona Maisons” (meaning “Your Homes” or “Your Houses”) reflects the group's philosophy of creating high-luxury brands that celebrate and elevate a country's most precious resources. The approach is simple but powerful: identify a natural or cultural treasure that is unique to a country, build a vertically integrated business model around it, and promote that treasure

What truly sets this venture apart is its deep commitment to social good. In Colombia, the emerald mines were long plagued by a violent history marked by guerrilla warfare, illegal mining, and community trauma. Between the 1990s and early 2000s, the region endured a 20-year conflict known as the “Green War” — where drug lords, guerrilla factions, and crime syndicates fought over control of the mines, leaving hundreds dead and entire communities shattered.

Every emerald mined is not just polished into jewelry — it funds the rebuilding of a society. According to the founder, Mr. James Ordonez, each piece of Qvinto jewelry supports over 1,000 families, embedding the concept of luxury with impact deep into the brand’s identity.

globally as a symbol of national pride and world-class luxury.

This initiative has sparked three powerful ventures across South America:

- Colombian Emeralds - Qvinto
- Ecuadorian Cacao - Tayrona Cacao
- Peruvian Alpaca and Vicuña Wool - Ameria Riva

Each line will be launched as a premium luxury brand, with sustainability, vertical integration, and social impact at its core.

QVINTO - THE EMERALD EMPIRE: BUILDING A BRAND FROM THE MINE UP

Perhaps the most significant of these ventures is the one centred on emeralds — nature’s rare green gem, of which over 80–90% originate from Colombia. While Brazil and Zambia contribute marginally, Colombia remains the uncontested leader in emerald mining.

Recognising this dominance, the group strategically acquired two of the largest emerald mines in Colombia, including the renowned Gachala mine — a 900-hectare operation now under

their full control. What sets this apart is not just the scale or exclusivity of the mines, but the vision: to launch Qvinto, the world’s first fully vertically integrated emerald-based luxury brand.

Unlike giants such as Cartier, Bulgari, or Tiffany — who source gems from third parties — Qvinto owns the entire supply chain: from mine to market, from gem to boutique. Diamonds, gold, and sapphires have also been added to the portfolio, ensuring a comprehensive offering of precious materials, all sourced ethically and in-house.

VERTICAL INTEGRATION WITH A HEART: BEYOND PROFIT

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LAUNCHING QVINTO: THE EMERALD BRAND THAT DARES TO COMPETE GLOBALLY

Set to launch between late this year and early next year, Qvinto will debut as the world's only emerald-exclusive luxury brand with a vertically integrated supply chain. More than 500 boutiques are planned globally, from Paris to Mumbai.

But Qvinto is not just a fashion statement. It is a revolution in how consumers perceive emeralds. For decades, diamonds have dominated the gemstone industry, largely due to their marketing rather than rarity or value. In reality, emeralds — particularly high-quality Colombian ones — often exceed diamonds in rarity, mystique, and even monetary value.



The brand's mission includes educating the global consumer about this forgotten truth: Emeralds are more than just green stones — they are rarer, more meaningful, and more culturally rooted than most of the world believes.

THE CHOCOLATE OF ECUADOR: SWEET LUXURY WITH PROVENANCE

Just as Qvinto seeks to reshape the narrative around emeralds, a parallel initiative is underway in Ecuador — the global origin of the finest cacao. Though Swiss chocolates are globally renowned, few realise that the core ingredient — the rarest and most flavourful cacao beans — come from Ecuador.

The company is now acquiring cacao estates across Ecuador to launch an ultra-premium chocolate and cacao brand, one that places Ecuador at the centre of global chocolate culture. The aim is to flip the narrative: just as champagne is synonymous with France, premium chocolate should be associated with Ecuador.

This venture too is rooted in vertical integration and social upliftment, ensuring that cacao farmers are paid fairly, communities benefit from

infrastructure, and the nation gets the recognition it deserves.

THE WOOL OF THE ANDES: CASHMERE, MEET VICUNA AND ALPACA

The final gem in the Tayrona Maisons program is not a gem at all — but a fibre.

In the freezing climates of Canada, Europe, and the Andes, people have long relied on wool and cashmere for warmth. But few know that alpaca and vicuña wool — derived from unique animals found only in Peru — offer up to 40% better thermal insulation than cashmere, while being significantly lighter.

Now, the company has partnered with over 100 farms in Peru to build a luxury fashion line made from Vicuna and Alpaca wool — a line that is lighter, warmer, and more sustainable than cashmere. Once again, the brand aims to educate global consumers about the fabric's unique value while uplifting the indigenous communities who have raised these animals for centuries.

THE ROAD AHEAD: WHERE HERITAGE MEETS LUXURY

Each of these three ventures — emeralds from Colombia, cacao from Ecuador, and alpaca wool from Peru — represent more than just business opportunities. They are part of a strategic vision to build a new kind of luxury: one rooted in origin, empowered by vertical integration, and committed to social transformation.

And nowhere is this model more powerful than in India — a country with a rich cultural affinity for emeralds, gold, and fine craftsmanship. India is not just a future market for Qvinto; it is a natural partner, an inspiration, and a community deeply aligned with the values this company embodies.



TAYRONA
EMERALDS



In a world captivated by fast fashion and mass-produced luxury, one ambitious initiative is challenging the status quo—redefining luxury not as a symbol of opulence, but as a tribute to culture, community, and sustainability. This global movement, deeply rooted in the authentic treasures of South America and Africa, is revolutionising the gemstone, textile, and cacao industries through a vertically integrated, socially impactful, and technologically advanced business model.

Welcome to a new era of conscious luxury—where emeralds are mined with dignity, cacao is elevated beyond chocolate, and alpaca becomes a thread binding heritage and future. This is not merely a brand. It is a mission to unite nations through treasures of the Earth, honouring communities, preserving biodiversity, and crafting stories with every product.

SPIRITUAL ROOTS AND TECHNOLOGICAL RENAISSANCE IN THE MINES OF COLOMBIA

At the heart of this initiative lies Colombia's emerald belt—a region with spiritual and historical significance. Every day begins with a prayer, as miners hope for a successful find, one that may support their families for months. This profound spiritual connection to the land transcends commerce—it becomes a way of life.

But with reverence comes responsibility. The initiative is integrating state-of-the-art mining technology to honour both the land and the miner. Drones equipped with cameras and sensors are now deployed to locate emerald-rich areas, transforming mining from a laborious and dangerous task to a precision-led, machine-assisted operation. The goal is crystal clear: extract the true value of emeralds without compromising the health and safety of miners.

This is particularly important given the rarity of these stones. Though emerald mines in Colombia were discovered nearly 600 years ago, only 1% of the territory has been explored. The remaining reserves are finite. Experts estimate they may last another 20 to 50 years—but once depleted, they are gone forever. This looming



reality underscores the urgency to both preserve the present and prepare for a future beyond emerald mining.

BEYOND THE STONE: TRAINING FOR A POST-EMERALD FUTURE

A defining element of this mission is foresight. While emeralds form the foundation, the vision is broader—preparing communities for a sustainable, post-mining world. This involves equipping future generations with training, education, and alternative livelihood opportunities.

This is not just CSR—it is a strategic investment in people. The project recognises that if emeralds run dry, the communities mustn't be left behind. Education in new business models, crafts, and industries ensures these communities evolve alongside the brand, not beneath it.

The philosophy here is simple yet radical: luxury must never be divorced from humanity. Every emerald sold carries the legacy of a community's sweat, soil, and spirit. Buyers are urged to see the stone not merely as a fashion statement, but as an endangered cultural artefact, one that won't exist a few decades from now.

FROM EMERALDS TO EMPATHY: CRAFTING CONSCIOUS BOUTIQUES

This global movement isn't satisfied with traditional retail models. While the vision includes opening 500 luxury boutiques worldwide, each space will be more than a showroom. These boutiques will offer immersive experiences, designed to evoke the journey of an emerald—from the South American rainforest to a refined piece of jewellery.

The design is deliberate: customers won't walk into a glass-and-chrome showroom—they will enter a symbolic mine, a replica of the Colombian terrain where their gemstone was born. It is



about storytelling, emotional resonance, and ethical transparency.

While heritage brands like Cartier and Bulgari have decades of brand equity, this new entrant is forging identity through differentiation, education, and experiential retail. The plan is aggressive but principled, setting up shop not only across Asia, the Middle East, and Europe—but doing so next to the legacy players, challenging them on their home turf.

INDIA AT THE HEART OF THE PLAN

India features prominently in the global rollout. As the largest consumer of emeralds today, India is not just a market—it's a cultural ally. The Indian reverence for gemstones, particularly emeralds, aligns with the initiative's ethos. More than transactional, this relationship is about mutual respect.

Through India, the brand hopes to reach a customer base that understands

not only the aesthetic value of emeralds but also their emotional and cultural significance. It's a market that appreciates legacy, spirituality, and craftsmanship—a perfect intersection for this purpose-led luxury brand.

UNITED BY NATURE: DIAMONDS, GOLD, AND SAPPHIRES FROM AFRICA

Emeralds may be the crown jewel, but the vision expands across continents. The initiative has acquired its own mines in Botswana (diamonds), Tanzania (gold), and Nigeria (sapphires). Each of these ventures follows the same model: vertical integration with social upliftment.

As in Colombia, the African model prioritises community welfare, providing employment, training, and education to local populations. These mines are not extractive enterprises—they are engines of long-term social transformation. Hundreds, if not thousands, of families stand to benefit, as the brand insists on doing things differently—ethically, locally, and inclusively.

ALPACA AND VICUNA: TEXTILES WITH A SOUL

In Peru and Bolivia, another treasure is being reimaged: alpaca wool. Under the sub-brand AMERIA RIVA, alpaca is transformed from a rural

resource into a luxury staple. But again, it's not just about material—it's about meaning. The project supports indigenous communities, especially farmers and artisans, ensuring fair wages and skill development.

Each alpaca and vicuna product is a celebration of ancestral craftsmanship and future-forward fashion. The brand proves that you can wear luxury that looks good, feels good, and does good.

CACAO: CHOCOLATE, SKINCARE, AND THE PANAMA HAT

Few would associate cacao with luxury beyond fine chocolate, but this initiative is changing that too. Ecuador—home to the world's finest cacao—is being spotlighted not only for its flavour but also for its versatility.

Under the Tayrona Cacao brand, the project explores cacao-based beauty products, such as moisturisers and skin treatments, as well as textiles and accessories. One fascinating revelation? The iconic Panama hat—a staple in tropical fashion—is crafted from fibres derived from the cacao plant.

With boutiques focusing on multi-sensory cacao experiences, this part of the initiative seeks to reposition



Ecuador as not just a supplier of raw cacao but as a luxury powerhouse in its own right.

FROM “MADE IN” TO “MADE OF”: THE MAISON MODEL

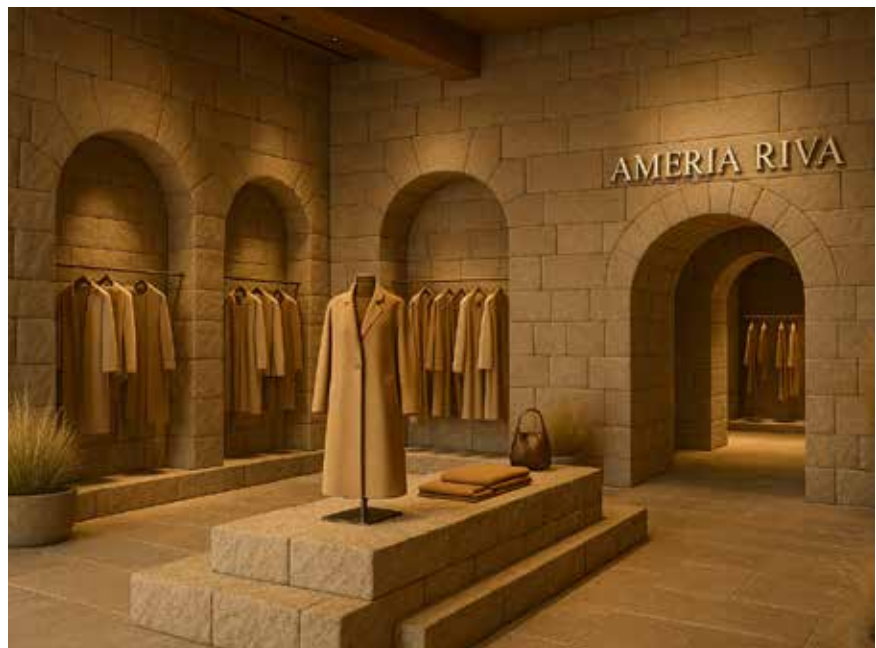
The overarching philosophy is embodied in what the team calls the “Maison” model—a fully integrated, deeply local, and globally scaled luxury house. Each chapter of the Maison focuses on a treasure of a nation—be it Colombia’s emeralds, Peru’s vicuna, or Ecuador’s cacao—and brings it to life through design, education, and storytelling.

Future chapters are already in the works: Vietnamese silk is next, followed by Indian silk, highlighting India’s rich contribution to global textile heritage.

This isn’t about Made in Colombia or Made in India. It’s about being Made of Colombia, Made of India—not just geography, but essence and ethos.

LUXURY WITH LEGACY: A FINAL WORD

This emerging brand is doing more than selling high-end products. It’s reshaping the definition of luxury—from material excess to meaningful experience. It is not just about what you wear or consume—it’s about who made it, where it came from, and what it stands for.



With global boutiques launching in Summer 2026, the world will soon experience a new kind of luxury—one born of prayer, powered by drones, wrapped in culture, and sold with a conscience.

For the conscious consumer, this is more than a purchase. It’s a partnership with purpose, a symbol of support for communities who have lived in the shadows of luxury for too long. It is the start of a new era—where buying beautiful things makes the world a little more beautiful, too.

CONCLUSION

In an age where luxury is often synonymous with excess, Tayrona

Maisons dares to redefine it as a story of purpose, provenance, and people. From the emerald-rich mountains of Colombia to the cacao plantations of Ecuador and the highland pastures of Peru, this initiative charts a bold new course — one where the rarest materials are not just extracted, but honoured, celebrated, and reinvested back into the communities that cradle them.

This is not about chasing trends. It’s about building legacies. It’s about transforming raw, often overlooked treasures into globally admired icons of elegance — all while uplifting the very hands that harvest them. With vertical integration, spiritual grounding, and futuristic technology guiding its path, Tayrona Maisons isn’t just launching luxury brands; it is building cultural bridges, crafting human stories, and planting seeds of equity across continents.

As the world prepares to welcome the first of its boutiques in 2026, Tayrona Maisons stands as a powerful reminder that true luxury is not only about what we wear or own — but what we empower, protect, and preserve. The future of luxury has a new face. And it’s as grounded as it is glittering.



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THE LEADER TAKING AUCOM TO NEW HEIGHTS



AuCom has risen to become a leader in both business practices and technology. The quest began under the aegis of two industry gurus: Ray Archer, an entrepreneur, and Mark Empson, an electronics design expert. Since the debut of the first soft starter, their objective has been to grow to be the industry's leading soft starter producer and the go-to partner for major international brands. Under their direction, AuCom developed from a fledgling company into a world leader and finally became a "home" for its employees. Today, however, AuCom is globally recognized as a motor control specialist, and this milestone is attributed to Mr. Thomas Zirk-Gunnemann, Managing Director. An electrical engineer by trade, Thomas brings over two decades of industrial experience to the table. He joined AuCom in 2014 and has played a critical role in the company's rise to prominence through various leadership positions. His technical prowess and people-driven leadership have propelled AuCom to new heights in flexibility and engineering designs, eventually establishing it as a motor starter



specialist. His passion and enthusiasm for the company and its mission reflect on his team and auspices of the Benshaw Group of Companies, AuCom has an established record of facilitating the growth and development of multinational corporations.

BECOMING A LEADER WORLDWIDE

The origins of AuCom date back to 1978. AuCom was founded in Christchurch, New Zealand, to develop high-end stereo amplifiers. In fact, this is how it got

its name. But the following year, it got a NASA license to create energy-saving single-phase electric motors and later created and patented 3-phase energy-saving technology. Strong demand for the product propelled AuCom from a start-up to a major exporter in a relatively short period of time. Upon entering the motor control market, AuCom noticed a niche demand for the soft start function in its energy-saving product. This revelation inspired the creation of the world's first range of commercially feasible soft starters. Turning inspiration into reality, AuCom released the EMS Series of soft starters in 1982, ushering in a new era in low-voltage motor control.

As time passed, AuCom expanded on all fronts, and its expertise began to echo across nations. In 2019, AuCom merged with Benshaw Group of Companies to become the world's largest privately held soft starter company. With both their technologies combined, as well as each enterprise's already impressive sales and service capabilities, AuCom has been a critical infrastructure partner in many organizations' growth stories. The company has geographical dominance in Europe, Asia-Pacific, North and Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and China. As motor control specialists, they believe in bringing clients' needs to reality through customized support right from the start.

INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS FOR EVERY GIRTH GEAR DRIVE

Soft starters have become wildly influential in high-tension motors for effective torque control and smooth motor acceleration. It has supplanted several common mechanisms, such as Star-Delta or autotransformers,



and created a thriving industry for itself. Modern soft starts, however, don't resemble the big ones from the 1980s. A standard control panel can accommodate a medium-voltage soft starter. This means a 4 MW soft starter can readily fit in even the most compact areas. This flexibility allows it to cover 99% of the market's drive assemblies. Modern drive assemblies must, however, adhere to much stricter standards in order to maintain the connected machine's efficiency. AuCom has created a good selection of LV and MV starters that are customized to meet individual needs in light of this. In addition, it provides MV AC drives (MVH 2.0), which are hundreds of times more powerful than their smaller, more prevalent low-voltage counterparts. This is mostly utilized to control massive, multimegawatt electric motors that power huge industrial loads found

in mines, power plants, or metal processing plants. Its versatility allows it to work in a wide range of industries, including construction, food and beverage, irrigation, marine, mining and quarrying, oil and gas, pulp and paper, sawmilling, water, and wastewater. The strong understanding of these applications gives it a noteworthy edge in the industry and over its peers. AuCom also works on specialized projects that are customized to the specific needs of particular companies. With competitive brands like Siemens, ABB, and Telemecanique making waves in the industry, it leaves no stone unturned. Earlier, it partnered with VFD manufacturers as soft starters, and VFDs are more like close siblings. But with the changing dynamics, AuCom is driving continuous innovations to level up its game and keep clients up and running.

SUCCESS STORY OF WARREN BUFFETT

From Paperboy to Billionaire: The Remarkable Success Story of Warren Buffett



Warren Buffett is one of the most successful investors in history, with a net worth of over \$100 billion. He has been the Chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway since 1970, and is widely regarded as a genius in the world of finance.

Buffett was born in 1930 in Omaha, Nebraska, and grew up in a middle-class family. He showed an early interest in business and investing, and by the age of 11, he had bought his first stock. By the time he was a teenager, he was already a shrewd investor, buying and selling stocks for a profit.

After graduating from the University of Nebraska with a degree in business, Buffett went on to study at Columbia Business School. There, he was mentored by Benjamin Graham, a famous value investor who taught Buffett the principles of value investing. Graham's teachings had a profound impact on Buffett, and he would later credit Graham with much of his success.

In 1956, Buffett formed his own investment partnership, which he ran for more than a decade. He was an early proponent of the "value investing" approach, which involves buying stocks that are undervalued by the market and holding onto them until their true value is recognized. Buffett was particularly skilled at finding undervalued companies that had strong fundamentals and a competitive advantage, and he was able to generate impressive returns for his investors.

In 1962, Buffett bought a textile company called Berkshire Hathaway, which he saw as an undervalued asset. He believed that the company's assets were worth more than the market was valuing them at, and he saw an opportunity to turn the company around. However, he was unable to do so, and the textile business continued to decline.



Despite this setback, Buffett remained committed to Berkshire Hathaway, and he started to shift the company's focus towards investing in other businesses. He used the cash generated by the textile business to buy other companies, and over time, he built a diverse portfolio of businesses in a wide range of industries.

One of Buffett's most famous investments was in Coca-Cola. In 1988, he started buying shares of the soft drink giant, and over time, he built up a massive stake in the company. Today, Berkshire Hathaway is the largest shareholder of Coca-Cola, and the investment has generated enormous returns for Buffett and his investors.

Buffett is also known for his disciplined approach to investing. He is a long-term investor who holds onto his investments for years or

even decades, and he is not swayed by short-term market fluctuations or popular trends. He also avoids investing in businesses that he does not understand, and he has been known to pass up on opportunities that do not meet his rigorous standards.

In addition to his investing prowess, Buffett is also known for his philanthropy. He has pledged to give away the majority of his wealth to charitable causes, and he has already donated billions of dollars to organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Buffett's success story is a testament to the power of disciplined investing and long-term thinking. He has built his fortune through a combination of hard work, intelligence, and a commitment to his principles. He has also been incredibly generous with his wealth, using his resources to make a positive impact on the world.

Today, Buffett is in his nineties, but he remains an active and influential figure in the world of finance. His investment strategies and philosophy continue to inspire investors around the world, and his legacy is sure to endure for generations to come.

One of Buffett's most famous investments was in Coca-Cola. In 1988, he started buying shares of the soft drink giant, and over time, he built up a massive stake in the company.

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The World's Identity Company

DEREK CAFFERATA

Chairman, TRAVELADVANCES.COM



Derek Cafferata isn't just changing how we travel; he's changing how we connect, share, and remember it. As Chairman of TRAVELADVANCES.COM, he's leading one of the most emotionally intelligent tech movements of the decade: a travel-centric social platform where every journey becomes a shared story, and every traveler feels seen.

Forget the old-school booking sites. TRAVELADVANCES.COM is built for spontaneous storytelling, real-time connection, and features that feel more like friendship than functionality. Think emotionally intelligent AI companions (hello, Tommy and Taylor), vibe-based travel matching, and a ranked destination list that favors soul over selfies.

Under Derek's leadership, the platform has evolved into a living, breathing travel companion, one that doesn't just help you go places, but also helps you find your people. Members can post updates, drop pins, share photos and videos, and

connect through Travel Mates, which pairs kindred spirits based on energy, interests, and emotional resonance. It's not about proximity, it's about compatibility. Adventures are better when shared with someone who gets you.

Then there's Travel 100, a ranked list of the top 100 U.S. destinations, curated not by popularity or price, but by authenticity, community, and emotional impact. Think soulful cities, hidden gems, and places that leave a mark. It's travel with heart, not just hashtags.

Want to book a trip on a whim? Travel Now connects users with trusted

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partners for spontaneous, secure bookings, no stress, no guesswork. Whether it's a last-minute escape or a serendipitous detour, Travel Now makes spontaneity feel safe and seamless.

And when it comes to sharing the journey, Tommy Talk is the heartbeat of the platform — a social media feed built for travelers. Users can post updates, swap stories, share photos, and engage with emotionally intelligent AI companions who actually respond with empathy, curiosity, and personality. Tommy Talk isn't just a feed, it's a conversation. It's where travel becomes communal, and every post is a passport to connection.

Derek's vision is clear: travel should be spontaneous, inclusive, and unforgettable, and money shouldn't be the gatekeeper. With features like Travel Now, Pay Later on the horizon, TRAVELADVANCES.COM is making sure that adventure is accessible to all.

But Derek doesn't lead alone. TRAVELADVANCES.COM is powered by a leadership team that reads like a dream cast for innovation. Roger Thomson, Vice

Chairman and former COO of HSBC Capital Markets, brings global strategy and financial precision to the table. Rakesh Mittal, Lead Technology Director and former Managing Director at Gen Pac, is the architect behind the platform's seamless, scalable tech infrastructure. Together, they've built a foundation as strong as the vision it supports.

In 2025, Derek's leadership earned him accolades from coast to coast, including being named Best Management Consultant by the Fort Worth Award Program and being spotlighted as one of the Most Influential Business Leaders to Watch. But what sets him apart isn't just recognition. It's the resonance.

TRAVELADVANCES.COM isn't just launching a product in 2026. It's launching a movement. One where travel becomes a shared adventure, and emotional intelligence becomes the passport. Derek's roadmap is bold, his team is brilliant, and his platform is poised to redefine the way we explore the world, together.

So yes, he's iconic. But more importantly, he's building something unforgettable.



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STT Logistics Group

A Resounding Name for Reliable and Customized
Logistics Solutions



ANDRE CORBERT
CEO, STT Logistics Group



The logistics industry is tremendously dynamic, and freight brokers are the unsung heroes. In a sector that depends heavily on accuracy and efficiency, freight brokers play a critical role in helping companies streamline their operations and guarantee that goods are transported from point A to point B. They serve as essential go-betweens for shippers and carriers, efficiently matching available cargo with appropriate modes of transportation. This helps companies cut expenses, boost productivity, and give the supply chain more flexibility. As essential as they are, there are certain things that become a hurdle for a business.

Time and increasing opportunities have made the logistics industry complex and introduced plenty of players. With a lot of third-party logistics service providers in the market, the logistics space has become increasingly disruptive. The environment has become ripe for criminals to take advantage of the domestic supply chain. It becomes difficult for businesses to find the

right partner that can streamline the logistics process, providing the best carrier for each shipment based on specific requirements such as route, time limits, and product type. The scenario demands a trusted company that utilizes its resources to streamline operations and help business ahead of the vulnerabilities in the industry.

STT Logistics Group has a distinct repertoire in the freight brokerage field built on years of trust and unwavering commitment towards its clients. Business Innovation Magazine recently had an opportunity to speak with the CEO of STT, Mr. Andre Corbert to have a better understanding of how the company is transforming the way freight industry manages transportation of goods. Here is a summary of the discussion.

A TRUSTED NAME FOR TRANSPORTING GOODS

STT entered the logistics industry in 2015 – a year marked by the emergence of exciting technologies, reformed guidelines, growth of e-Commerce and adoption of omni-channel fulfilment. The

company was poised to explore these emerging opportunities and provide end to end logistics solutions to businesses of all sizes and shapes. It didn't take long for it to create a portfolio of practical solutions that can cater to the emerging needs of business in US and other parts of the world. STT started to become a resounding name for its freight brokerage, custom clearance, industrial logistics and other services related to transportation of goods.

In time, the company became a favoured name for specialised transportation solutions across different niches. With heavy equipment transportation for construction, mining and farming as core business, the company positions itself as a one-stop shop for all kinds of logistics solutions. The company has the capacity to ship almost all kinds of goods from small boxes to largest pieces of equipment on earth. Along with moving items, the company assists its clients with permits, escorts, route surveys, storage, loading and unloading assistance, and other complementary services needed for transportation.

LED BY SEASONED LEADERS

STT is led by a band of industrial experts, which ensures the company remains at the forefront of the industry and provides cutting-edge services to its customers. Andre is a passionate entrepreneur whose idea behind this company was to build on the unexplored opportunities of the logistics space. He possesses extensive knowledge of the logistics sector with expertise in negotiation, management, sales, leadership, and sales management.

Working alongside him is Mr. Stylianos Vergitsis (Vice President). Stylianos has been profoundly instrumental in giving STT a structure, including development of new departments and standardizing procedures. Since last year, he has been leading a new company HEMS (Heavy Equipment and Machinery Sales Corp). The venture was launched to cater to the increasing need of their customers in Latin America. Both HEMS and STT work parallelly to help customers buy heavy equipment by bidding at auctions and provide the best shipping solutions to transport them.





The duo is supported by Axel Dimas (CTO), who is in charge of working with inhouse and outsourced teams improve the company's technological base. Anjuli Mansilla (finance Manager) manages all kind of cashflow in the company with an efficient finance team and ensures its financial health. Lastly, the leaders have Evelyn Ulban (Back Office Manager). She handles the company's legal concerns as well as compliance with carriers.

The combined effort of the leaders ensures the company consistently provides exceptional service. The leaders and their associates work together to ensure clients receive tailored solutions that meets their needs. Their passion and determination have bolstered the company with robust principles to lead the industry.

DRIVEN TO EXCEL INDUSTRY NORMS

STT has made it its goal to form robust relationships with carriers and provide peace of mind to every client. It has strong expertise in land transportation, railroad freight services, airfreight services, overseas shipping and storage facilities. The

company goes out of its way to provide the right solution that fits the customer's specific needs. Instead of having a one-size fits for all approach, the company values the fact that every customer and every load is different and requires a personalized approach. This core philosophy has helped with its expansion. The company is affiliated with around 12,000 carriers and has a database of over 400,000 carrier companies capable to meet its client's needs.

The company is also constantly updating its inhouse technologies. For instance, it partnered with Salesforce in 2021 to create a customized Truck

Management System and CRM. But the company still had its share of limitations. Ever since 2023, the company began developing its own innovative platform and over the last two years has significantly enhanced operational efficiency. Today, the company works with various automation tools that enhances efficiency and a consistent flow of revenue.

DRIVING REFORMS WITHIN THE LOGISTICS SPACE

STT leverages technology not only to outclass the industry norms but also inspire necessary reforms within the industry. While global logistics have



“We are also in process of developing a mobile app that will automate a lot of our verification process, making them faster & more reliable”

come a long way, the industry is still susceptible to various challenges like scamming. A lot of fake freighters impersonate carriers to acquire loads that they resale at higher prices. Sometimes, these situations can escalate to the point where shippers unwillingly pay huge sum to retrieve their loads. STT ensures its clients don't face similar scenarios. They have automation tools in place that ensures real-time tracking of loads, verify carrier identities and more. **"We are also in process of developing a mobile app that will automate a lot of our verification process, making them faster and more reliable,"** shares Andre.

It also focuses addressing the issue of truck dead miles. To drastically reduce dead miles and optimize truck routes, the company has created user-friendly solutions. In addition to lowering shippers' expenses, this strategy helps to cut carbon emissions and fosters an ecologically sound logistics network.

A DEDICATED TEAM ON BOARD

The dynamic and innovative nature of STT Logistics complements the combined efforts of its leaders and associates. When André began this



company, he had a clear vision of where he wanted to see his business but not all the knowledge necessary to do so. This is why created his leadership team. It is also the reason he wholeheartedly believes in growth and development of his employees. The people on board stand out for their innovative and dynamic nature and work cohesively to instill creativity in the company's offerings. The team is encouraged to brainstorm innovative ideas and explore new opportunities for growth.

André dedicates a significant amount of time to connect with his team members and help them develop. His commitment to nurturing his team helps them unleash their potential and be more contributing towards the company's growth.

RECOGNIZED ACROSS THE INDUSTRY AND BEYOND

The journey of STT is a testament of unwavering dedication to growth, commitment to exceeding customer experience. And looking at the company's progress, the company has always walked its talk. By consistently meeting its client's satisfaction levels, the company has created a strong record of delivering its promises. It has helped clients transport heavy machineries from Canada to Nigeria. It has also served the US military in transporting tanks, armaments and a huge shipment of containers to a military base in Arizona. STT Logistics went an

extra mile, appointing an individual with advanced military training to supervise the entire transportation.

These successful cases reflect the company's undiluted expertise in providing customized solutions repeatedly. Its integrated services, global network and the expertise of its team has earned it widespread recognition in the industry. Many prestigious publications such as CEO Magazine, Business insider, dotcom magazine, Business Talk Magazine and CIO Bulletin. The growing recognition has also helped the company solidify its foothold across Latin America, providing services to Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Puerto Rico.

ROAD MAP FOR THE YEARS AHEAD

STT have many ambitious plans in its pipeline. The company is heavily investing in the transformative power of AI and self-driving technologies. By doing so, the company aims to become one of the leading technology providers in the global logistics space. While it has planned for expansion into new and underserved regions, the company is definitely glued on utilizing AI and automation to further revolutionize the industry and unlock innovative opportunities to climb to new heights. The company is also planning to take its business public by 2030 to 2033 depending on market conditions.



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National Runners-Up

Sophia Crockett &

Emma Weaver

Team Christ Presbyterian
Academy – Secure The Cure
Nashville, TN



**National Team
Member of the Year**

Andrew Lim

Team Banking on a Cure

Houston, TX

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Scarlett Fisher & Jamie Sinaiko

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Bobby Cusimano & David Reale

North Jersey, NJ



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Charlotte, NC



National Runner Up
Claire Warren
Better Homes & Gardens
Gary Greene
Houston, TX



**National Team Member
of the Year**
Joe Cupoli
P&A Autoparts
Park Ridge, NJ



National All Star
Bill Rawlings
Atlanta Fine Homes Sotheby's
International Realty
Atlanta, GA



**National All Star
Runner Up**
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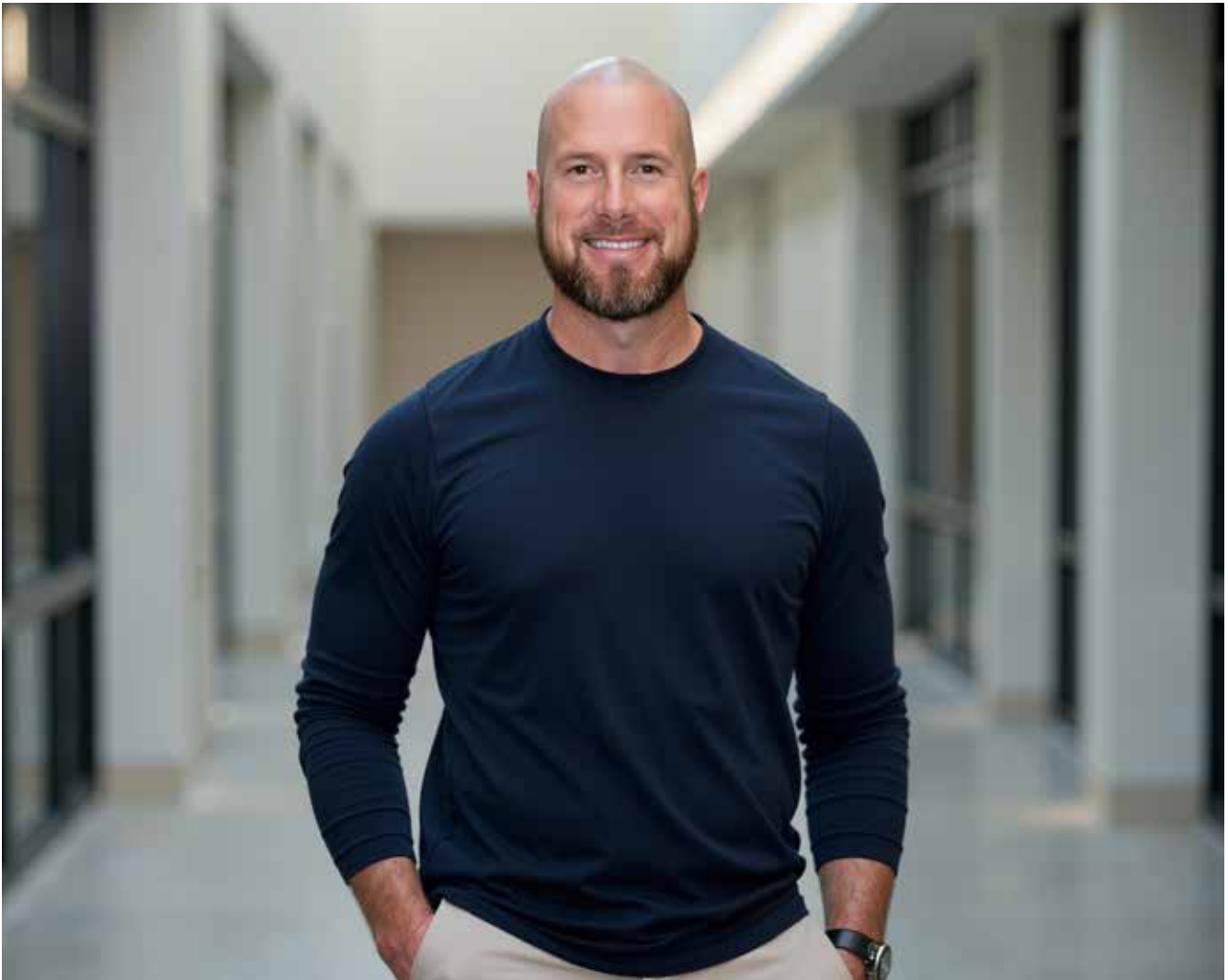
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Building the World's Most Secure Blockchain Empire



▼

In the fast-moving world of blockchain and digital finance, few names are rising as quickly—or as boldly—as Krown Technologies, Inc. At the helm is a visionary team led by James Stephens, who has turned both

personal hardship and professional expertise into the foundation of a company positioning itself as the benchmark for quantum-secured blockchain ecosystems.

A VISION ROOTED IN SECURITY AND UTILITY

“Krown is not just another blockchain project,” Stephens explains. “It’s a

thriving empire designed to empower users, investors, and creators. We’re building the world’s largest blockchain ecosystem, known as Camelot, and we’re doing it with security, transparency, and rewards at the core.” Krown Technologies is the parent company of the Krown Network, a Layer 1 Proof-of-Stake blockchain built with quantum resistance at its

“Our vision is simple,” Stephens concludes. “We want to set the global benchmark for blockchain security and utility. Success won’t just be measured by market cap—it will be measured by how many people use Krown daily to pay, trade, communicate, and build.”



foundation. The Camelot Ecosystem currently includes over 30 integrated utilities, spanning everything from finance and payments to community engagement and enterprise solutions.

Among its offerings are KrownPay and the Krown Card for real-world transactions, KrownTrade for AI-powered trading analytics, Excalibur and Qastle for quantum-secured wallet solutions, KrownSocial for decentralized communication, and the Krown Agency for enterprise-level smart contract auditing and tokenization consulting.

BORN FROM CHALLENGE, BUILT ON EXPERIENCE

The idea for Krown came from Stephens’ own experiences in the blockchain industry. With a background in blockchain forensics and cybersecurity, he witnessed the weaknesses of existing networks. But it was his personal experience—being a victim of fraud and theft—that sharpened his determination to build something different.

“Too many people have lost money to insecure systems or failed promises,” he says. “I wanted to create a blockchain that wasn’t just future-

proof against quantum threats, but also gave users real-world utility beyond speculation.”

STAYING AHEAD OF TECHNOLOGY

Krown stays aligned with the latest advancements by sitting at the crossroads of Quantum, AI, and Web3. Through partnerships with Quantum eMotion (QRNG) and ExeQuantum (PQC), the company has built true quantum resilience into its foundation.

Krown is also a proud sponsor and partner of QSECDEF (Quantum Security Defense Group), a quantum educational technology platform advancing awareness and integration of quantum solutions worldwide. Meanwhile, the company’s alliance with Esposito Intellectual Enterprises (EIE)—led by renowned strategist Brian Esposito—gives Krown access to a network of 200+ companies and ventures, accelerating its global reach.

“Our partnerships are not about hype,” Stephens emphasizes. “They’re about building the strongest, most secure, and most scalable foundation possible for the future of blockchain.”



R&D AS THE ENGINE OF GROWTH

Research and development is central to Krown’s innovation strategy. The company is advancing proprietary solutions such as 4FSA (Four Factor Synchronous Authentication), which layers biometric and digital protections to secure wallets and transactions.

Beyond security, R&D is fueling utility expansion—from tokenization platforms that unlock new markets for real estate and intellectual property, to AI-driven convergence tools that enhance fraud detection, compliance, and predictive analytics.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE VISION

The strength of Krown Technologies lies not only in its innovation, but in the leadership team that guides it. At the top, the company is led

“Our partnerships are not about hype,” Stephens emphasizes. “They’re about building the strongest, most secure, and most scalable foundation possible for the future of blockchain.”

by visionaries who bring together expertise in blockchain forensics, cybersecurity, and quantum technologies, ensuring the project’s foundation is both secure and future-ready.

On the technical side, decades of experience in cybersecurity and cloud DevOps drive the architecture of the Krown Network, making it scalable and resilient for global adoption. Financial leadership comes from seasoned professionals with backgrounds on Wall Street and in global capital markets, providing the strategic discipline needed to fuel rapid yet sustainable growth.

Governance and compliance are overseen by an Outside General Counsel with deep experience in corporate law, regulatory frameworks,

and data privacy, ensuring Krown maintains integrity while navigating a fast-evolving landscape. Strategic expansion is driven by leaders with global reach—individuals who oversee hundreds of companies and joint ventures, opening doors to partnerships, integrations, and new markets.

Business development expertise connects Krown to the broader DeFi and venture capital community, forging relationships with exchanges, investors, and partners worldwide. At the operational core, experienced executives oversee departments and align daily execution with long-term vision, ensuring that every piece of the Camelot Ecosystem advances in harmony.

Together, this leadership team blends technical innovation, financial discipline, legal integrity, and global strategic networks. They are the architects of Camelot—the empire Krown is building—and



their collective expertise ensures that the vision doesn't just inspire, but endures.

RECOGNITION AND MOMENTUM

Despite being a young company, Krown has already achieved notable recognition:

- Selected for the 125th Annual Edition of Marquis Who's

Who in America (2025–2026), permanently archived in the Library of Congress, an honor shared with leaders such as Warren Buffett.

- Established exclusive quantum partnerships with Quantum eMotion and ExeQuantum.
- Partnered with QSECDEF to advance quantum education and industry integration.
- Featured in multiple international fintech and blockchain publications for innovation and scale.
- Built one of the largest blockchain ecosystems in development, with 30+ interconnected utilities.

LOOKING AHEAD: THE FUTURE OF CAMELOT

Krown's ambitions for the future are as bold as its branding. The roadmap includes:

- Launching the Krown MainNet with full quantum-secured infrastructure.
- Scaling KrownPay, Krown Card, and tokenization platforms into global adoption.
- Leading in asset tokenization, bringing real estate, commodities, and intellectual property on-chain.
- Expanding community presence with Krown Conference, Camelot Gala, and Roundtable events.

“Our vision is simple,” Stephens concludes. “We want to set the global benchmark for blockchain security and utility. Success won't just be measured by market cap—it will be measured by how many people use Krown daily to pay, trade, communicate, and build.”

SPOTLIGHT QUOTE FOR PULL-OUT:

“Krown is more than a blockchain—it's a secure, thriving empire designed to empower users, investors, and creators.” – James Stephens, CEO





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Taylor Kennedy

THE BUSINESS OF BEAUTY AND HOLISTIC TRANSFORMATION



In an industry where fleeting trends often dictate success, Taylor Kennedy has built a brand that stands the test of time by merging beauty, wellness, and business innovation. As a celebrity makeup artist, best-selling author, and Ayurvedic specialist, Taylor has revolutionized beauty, proving that self-care is more than skin deep. Her holistic approach empowers high-achievers to cultivate confidence, balance, and radiant well-being.

Blending Artistry with Science

Taylor's expertise extends far beyond traditional makeup artistry. With years of experience in editorial, runway, and celebrity beauty, she seamlessly incorporates Ayurvedic principles into her work, helping individuals achieve beauty from the inside out. Her approach to beauty is not just about appearance but about fostering deep self-care and personal empowerment.

This fusion of science and aesthetics has made her one of the most sought-after experts in the industry. While many professionals focus on surface-level transformations, Taylor emphasizes sustainable beauty practices, ensuring her clients cultivate a glow beyond a makeup session. Her work enhances appearances and fosters deeper well-being, proving that true beauty radiates from a foundation of health and mindfulness.



Her approach to beauty also integrates nutritional wellness, skincare longevity, and emotional well-being, making it a truly comprehensive and innovative experience. By understanding how diet, mental health, and environmental factors influence beauty, Taylor crafts solutions beyond the surface, focusing on long-term health benefits rather than quick fixes. This holistic perspective is what differentiates her from traditional beauty experts.

A Business Built on Innovation

Beyond her influence in beauty and wellness, Taylor has built a thriving business that merges luxury, science, and holistic self-care. She has developed a successful brand beyond artistry, offering premium digital products, educational resources, and custom-tailored wellness

solutions for high-achieving professionals seeking balance and self-care.

Her scalable business model demonstrates that wellness and entrepreneurship can coexist. As she expands her brand, Taylor's ability to merge business acumen with holistic well-being positions her as a leader in the evolving beauty-wellness industry. She understands that beauty brands today need to be more than product-driven; they must be experience-driven, providing clients with a transformative journey that extends beyond the mirror.

Her digital products—from guided self-care routines to personalized wellness programs—allow clients to integrate beauty and mindfulness into their daily lives. By leveraging the power of digital

content and e-learning, she ensures that anyone, regardless of location, can benefit from her expertise. This scalability and accessibility make her brand a forward-thinking powerhouse in the industry.

Empowering the Future of Beauty

As a thought leader, Tayelor shares insights on mindful beauty routines, self-care strategies, and the intersection of business and wellness. She aims to shift the conversation around beauty through her work, making it a holistic, empowering experience rather than a superficial standard.

Her approach has garnered widespread recognition, and her expertise continues to shape the next generation of beauty entrepreneurs. She mentors emerging beauty professionals, helping them develop strong brand identities, high-value services, and a deeper understanding of wellness-based beauty.

She also collaborates with luxury wellness brands and beauty startups, bringing her signature holistic approach to high-end product formulations, digital experiences, and business strategy. Her ability to bridge the gap between beauty and well-being has led her to work with top-tier brands that want to integrate wellness seamlessly into their offerings.

Taylor's expertise extends far beyond traditional makeup artistry. With years of experience in editorial, runway, and celebrity beauty, she seamlessly incorporates Ayurvedic principles into her work, helping individuals achieve beauty from the inside out. Her approach to beauty is not just about appearance but about fostering deep self-care and personal empowerment.



Taylor's business also focuses on the future of sustainability in beauty. With an emphasis on clean beauty, ethical sourcing, and sustainable production practices, she ensures that her brand aligns with the evolving values of today's conscious consumers. Her commitment to sustainability is a cornerstone of her business philosophy, making her a respected voice in the clean beauty movement.

The Business of Luxe Holistic Beauty

Taylor's philosophy transcends trends—she envisions beauty as a transformative lifestyle. With an ever-growing platform, she remains dedicated to helping individuals redefine beauty on their terms, embracing confidence and holistic harmony. Her deep understanding of consumer behavior and wellness trends allows her to craft beauty experiences that resonate with modern audiences, positioning her as a leader in luxury holistic branding.

Her influence extends into the corporate and entrepreneurial space, where she offers strategic consulting to high-end beauty brands looking to integrate wellness into their product lines. Whether advising on product development, content marketing, or creating immersive brand experiences, Taylor helps businesses bridge the gap between luxury beauty and holistic well-being.

As she continues to expand her impact, her ability to fuse business innovation with wellness cements her status as an emerging leader in the beauty and self-care industry. With each new venture, Taylor proves that true beauty isn't just applied—it's cultivated, nurtured, and embodied.

Expanding the Taylor Kennedy Brand

Looking to the future, Taylor is focused on expanding her digital empire through innovative content, partnerships, and product development. She is launching a new line of digital beauty and wellness guides designed to help professionals and beauty enthusiasts master the art of holistic self-care.

Additionally, she is exploring luxury collaborations with high-end beauty brands, infusing her holistic expertise into skincare and beauty products that align with her philosophy of balance, sustainability, and well-being. With a deep commitment to business growth and innovation, Taylor sets the stage for a new era of luxury self-care experiences that redefine the beauty industry.

The Future of Beauty: What's Next?

The beauty industry is rapidly evolving, and Taylor Kennedy is at the forefront of this transformation. By combining business acumen with wellness expertise, she is paving the way for a more sustainable, empowering, and luxurious beauty industry. Her next big move? Scaling her brand globally, bringing her innovative approach to a broader audience through digital expansion and exclusive high-end partnerships.

As demand for clean beauty, mindfulness, and sustainable luxury grows, Taylor's brand is poised to lead the charge. With a focus on education, digital innovation, and ethical business practices, she is creating a blueprint for the future of beauty entrepreneurship.

Through her influential work, Taylor Kennedy is proving that beauty is no longer just about looking good—it's about feeling powerful, balanced, and completely in tune with oneself. Whether through her luxury brand partnerships, educational resources, or digital empire, she continues redefining beauty's meaning in the modern world.

Her legacy? A movement that transforms beauty into an experience of well-being, empowerment, and lasting impact. And for Taylor, this is just the beginning.



TWENTY~4

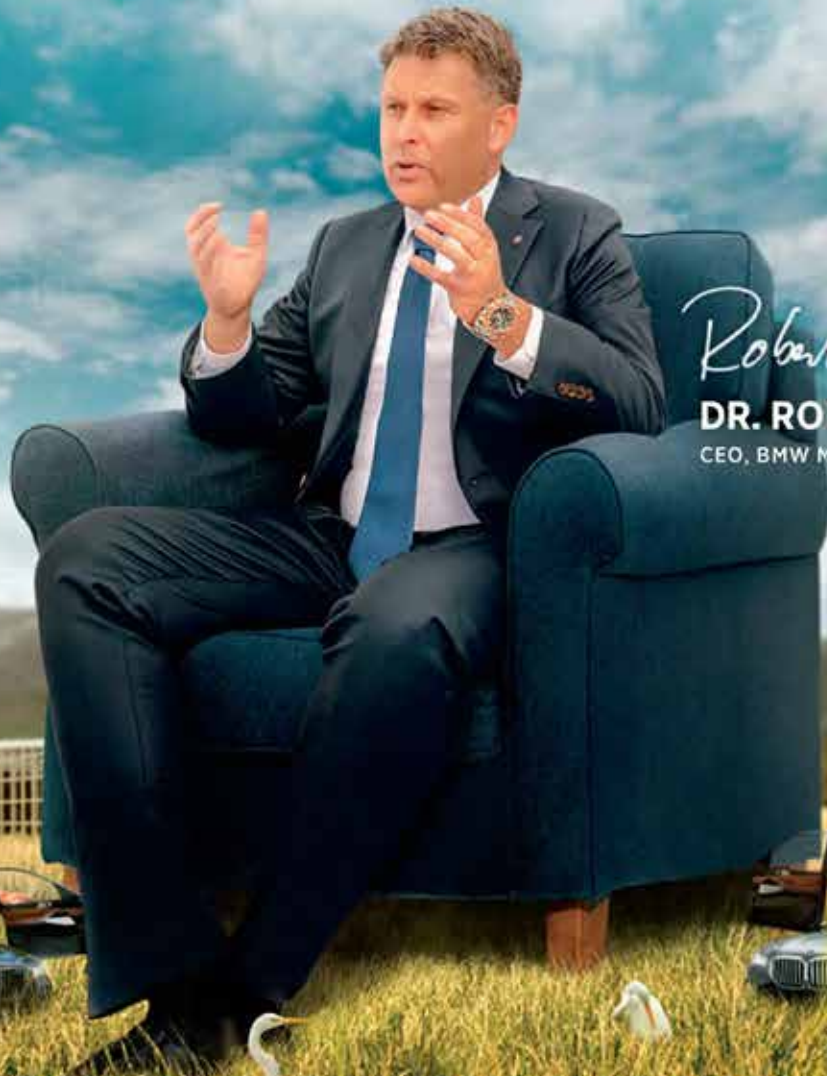
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¹South Carolina was the top U.S. exporter of completed passenger vehicles, 2008-2022; U.S., Census Bureau.



KRISTIN MARQUET

THE VISIONARY POWERHOUSE MERGING PR, BRANDING,
AND TECH TO BUILD AN EMPIRE

▼

A former fashion model turned branding and PR powerhouse, Kristin Marquet built an empire that spans public relations, media, and tech, cementing herself as one of the most influential figures in modern brand storytelling.

From the runways of New York and Paris to the boardrooms of Marquet Media and FemFounder, Kristin has seamlessly blended high fashion sensibilities with data-driven business strategies. She's been featured on over 30 magazine covers, developed two proprietary branding frameworks—PRISM Ascend PR and Dual Catalyst Branding—and launched multiple businesses while mentoring the next generation of female entrepreneurs.

But behind the accolades and the polished social presence lies a woman who has rewritten the rules of branding, helping fashion, beauty, and wellness brands cut through the noise in an era where everyone is fighting for attention.

This is how Kristin Marquet became an “it girl” in business, a tech innovator,



KRISTIN MARQUET
Founder & Creative Director

and a guide for entrepreneurs looking to make an impact.

THE RUNWAY TO REINVENTION: HOW A FASHION MODEL BECAME A PR MAVEN

Kristin's career began in high fashion, gracing runways and magazine

pages in New York and Paris. But even amid the glitz and glamour, she saw something others didn't—a gap between brands and their audiences.

“I saw firsthand how the right story could make or break a brand,” she recalls. “A beautiful product wasn't

enough—you needed a strategy behind it. You needed the right media exposure and message to resonate truly.”

After earning her Master’s in public relations and marketing from NYU, she pivoted into public relations, determined to build a bridge between emerging brands and the media. In 2009, she founded Marquet Media, a PR and branding firm dedicated to elevating businesses through compelling storytelling and cutting-edge strategy.

The firm took off, attracting clients in fashion, beauty, and wellness—industries she intuitively understood from her modeling days. Soon, she worked with everyone from indie beauty startups to established fashion houses, helping them secure major press, brand collaborations, and industry credibility.

But Kristin didn’t stop there. She wasn’t just interested in helping clients land media features—she wanted to redefine how PR was done.

PRISM Ascend and Dual Catalyst Branding: Game-Changers in PR Strategy

Unlike traditional publicists focusing on short-term placements, Kristin developed two proprietary branding frameworks that changed how brands approach visibility.

PRISM ASCEND PR:

A high-touch PR and media relations program that builds industry authority through strategic media placements, personal branding, and executive visibility.

1. Exclusive media connections and introductions
2. Bespoke storytelling and high-impact positioning
3. VIP consulting for thought leadership branding

Her PRISM Ascend PR framework breaks branding and publicity into five steps: Proprietary Tools, Relationships, Insights, Simplified Workflow, and Messaging Development. Each step is designed to streamline PR campaigns, ensuring every initiative is structured and strategically planned for long-term results rather than a one-time media hit. By emphasizing relationships and insights, PRISM Ascend allows clients to develop meaningful connections with journalists, influencers, and key industry figures, sustaining their brand’s media traction.

Rather than chasing fleeting publicity, PRISM Ascend PR integrates a systematic approach to PR execution, helping businesses maintain consistent visibility, credibility, and authority in their industry. With a focus on efficiency and messaging refinement, the framework simplifies the often overwhelming PR process, making it accessible while delivering tangible, high-impact results. This ensures that each campaign aligns with a larger business strategy, making PR efforts newsworthy, influential, and long-lasting.

DUAL CATALYST BRANDING:

Meanwhile, her Dual Catalyst Branding approach helps businesses balance short-term wins (press, influencer features, viral moments) with long-term growth strategies.

“I wanted to create something that didn’t just get people noticed for a week or a month,” she explains. “I wanted brands to have sustained success—something they could build on.” The DUAL Catalyst™ Framework ensures that brand positioning is unique and built for longevity. It focuses on Distinctive Positioning, Unshakable Authority, Audience Alignment & Expansion, and Leveraging & Legacy, creating a foundation that combines strategic



PR with sustainable brand-building. Rather than relying on quick visibility spikes, this system integrates media credibility, audience engagement, and long-term monetization strategies that evolve with industry trends.

Unlike traditional branding models, Dual Catalyst Branding doesn’t just optimize visuals and messaging—it aligns every brand touchpoint with high-impact marketing, PR, and digital product ecosystems. By leveraging press features, content strategy, and positioning psychology, businesses capture attention and maintain relevance, credibility, and profitability for years. This proprietary method sets Marquet Media apart, making its brand-building strategies both future-proof and impossible to replicate.

The frameworks worked. Clients saw increased visibility and measurable revenue growth, proving that branding isn’t just about looking good—building trust, authority, and lasting influence.

FemFounder: The Platform That’s Changing the Game for Women Entrepreneurs

As Kristin's reputation grew, so did her desire to help other women enter the business world. That's when she launched FemFounder, a digital platform dedicated to empowering female entrepreneurs. What started as a blog quickly became a movement. Today, FemFounder is more than just a website—it's a full-fledged ecosystem that includes:

1. **FemFounder Magazine** – A media platform featuring exclusive interviews with female entrepreneurs, trend reports, and brand spotlights.
2. **FemFounder Podcast** – A deep dive into entrepreneurship, where Kristin shares insights, interviews industry experts, and helps women navigate the business's complexities.
3. **Educational Courses & Templates** – Kristin has developed marketing and PR templates, business planning guides, and brand-building courses that give entrepreneurs the tools they need to grow—without hiring a massive team.

Through FemFounder, Kristin is making industry-level branding expertise accessible to small business owners, solopreneurs, and startups that wouldn't traditionally have the budget for a full PR firm.

"The biggest challenge for female entrepreneurs isn't just funding—it's visibility," she says. "I wanted to create a space where women could learn how to get in front of the right audiences without spending a fortune."

And it's working. Thousands of women have used her courses and tools to land media placements, grow their brands, and scale their businesses.

A TECH FOUNDER AT THE FOREFRONT OF AI AND DIGITAL BRANDING

Not content with just reshaping PR,

"I saw firsthand how the right story could make or break a brand," she recalls. "A beautiful product wasn't enough—you needed a strategy behind it. You needed the right media exposure and message to resonate truly."

Kristin is now making waves in the tech industry by developing an AI-driven PR and branding platform that automates key processes for entrepreneurs.

Inspired by her PRISM Ascend PR framework, the platform will help small- to mid-sized businesses streamline their media outreach, ensuring that even companies without massive PR budgets can land high-profile press.

"We're building technology that levels the playing field for small brands," Kristin says. "AI should empower entrepreneurs, not replace them."

With this tech-enabled expansion, Kristin is redefining branding and PR tech just as she did traditional media strategies.

BEYOND THE BUSINESS: BALANCING MOTHERHOOD, LEADERSHIP, AND VISION

Despite running multiple ventures, Kristin has another full-time role: motherhood. She doesn't showcase her family life on social media, preferring to keep it separate from her brand. But behind the scenes, she's navigating the challenge of balancing motherhood with running an empire.

"Motherhood has changed how I approach business," she admits. "I've become even more focused on efficiency, delegation, and

prioritization. There's no time for busy work—everything I do now has to be intentional and impactful." She's proving that women don't have to choose between success and family.

KRISTIN MARQUET: THE IT-GIRL WHO'S REDEFINING INFLUENCE

Kristin's rise from fashion model to PR mogul to tech founder shows what's possible when creativity meets strategy. She's built Marquet Media into a powerhouse PR firm, turned FemFounder into a household name for women entrepreneurs, and is now at the forefront of AI-driven PR innovation.

Her Instagram isn't filled with personal glimpses or casual selfies—it's a digital portfolio of magazine covers, press features, awards, and podcast episodes—a carefully curated brand image that reflects the empire she's built.

AND SHE'S NOT DONE YET.

In the coming years, Kristin plans to scale FemFounder into a global brand, expand her AI-driven PR tech, and continue empowering female entrepreneurs worldwide.

With nearly two decades of experience, multiple businesses, and an eye for innovation, one thing is clear—Kristin is shaping the future of PR, branding, and entrepreneurship. And as history has shown, she always makes waves when she sets her sights on something.



FINTRADE SECURITIES CORPORATION LTD

Empowering Southeast Asia's Financial Future: The Rise of Fintrade Securities Corporation Ltd

In today's fast-evolving financial landscape, where globalization, digitization, and compliance challenges intersect, few firms manage to maintain both agility and integrity. Fintrade Securities Corporation Ltd (FSCL), a boutique securities and financial advisory firm licensed in Labuan, Malaysia, is one of those rare exceptions.

Helmed by a team of seasoned professionals with global pedigrees and regional insights, FSCL is redefining how cross-border financial services are delivered to institutional clients, corporates, and high-net-worth individuals across Asia and beyond.

At the forefront of this journey is Rajesh Pathak, whose mission is clear: to make international finance more accessible, transparent, and tailored for clients who need more than just vanilla advice.



“We don’t chase trends. We research what our clients actually need,” Rajesh says. “Whether it’s ESG-compliant investments, new trade finance options, or exploring cross-border tax structures, we back every advisory proposal with data, experience, and jurisdictional know-how.”

A Boutique Firm with Global Reach

Fintrade Securities Corporation Ltd was incorporated in 2024, but its roots extend deeper. With its roots in New Zealand—Fintrade Tech Solutions Ltd (operating as Fintrade Financial)—the group brings a multi-jurisdictional structure and regulatory depth that most financial firms cannot match.

FSCL offers a wide spectrum of services:

- Investment and Securities Advisory, covering equities, fixed income, commodities, and foreign exchange.
- Business and Capital Advisory, including trade finance, capital structuring, and corporate strategy.
- Banking Platform Consulting, helping clients implement trading and custodial platforms for better execution and reporting.
- Financial Institution Intermediation, connecting clients with banks, funds, and service providers across Asia-Pacific.
- Regulatory and Administrative Support, ensuring clients remain compliant as they expand across jurisdictions.

But Rajesh is quick to point out—it’s not just the menu of services that sets FSCL apart. “We’re a high-touch firm,” he explains. “We listen more than we talk. Clients today are looking for context, not just content. They want a partner who can bridge the gap between opportunity and execution.”

The Backstory: A Venture Born from Experience

The inception of FSCL was not coincidental. It was born from live experience—of seeing clients underserved, particularly in emerging markets. Rajesh, who has held senior positions in many IT companies and handled BFSI, understood the gaps

involved too well. “Too many advisory firms are either too local, offering cookie-cutter solutions, or too global to be accessible,” he says.

FSCL emerged as a hybrid—lean but experienced, regional but globally fluent. It brings together advisors who’ve worked on Wall Street, in Southeast Asian financial hubs, and across institutional trading desks, all under a regulated and insured framework.

The aim? To provide cross-border financial clarity, whether it’s advising a Malaysian SME seeking offshore capital, or helping a Singapore family office structure a global portfolio with compliance assurance.

Embracing Technology with Purpose

Technology plays a central role in how FSCL operates. But Rajesh is quick to differentiate between tech for trend’s sake and tech with purpose.

“We’re not trying to reinvent the wheel with our own platforms,” he says. “Our job is to help clients choose the right tools and integrate them smartly. That could mean selecting a custody platform, automating reporting systems, or digitizing their onboarding process across jurisdictions.”

FSCL also leverages AI-enhanced tools internally to assess risk exposures, model scenarios, and track global compliance shifts. This helps clients make decisions not just faster, but with foresight.

Research and Innovation, Without the Buzzwords

While FSCL isn’t a Silicon Valley firm, it invests deeply in applied research—particularly in the areas of regulatory change, emerging investment instruments, and risk modeling. This is what keeps the firm’s offerings relevant and forward-facing.

“We don’t chase trends. We research what our clients actually need,” Rajesh says. “Whether it’s ESG-compliant investments, new trade finance options, or exploring cross-border tax structures, we back every advisory proposal with data, experience, and jurisdictional know-how.”

This commitment to relevant innovation is helping FSCL shape bespoke strategies for clients navigating volatility and regulatory complexity.

Staying Unique in a Competitive World

In a world where financial services can feel increasingly commoditized, how does FSCL retain its edge?

According to Rajesh, it’s a combination of three elements:

- **Cross-Border Infrastructure**

FSCL’s structure allows it to work seamlessly across Malaysia, Singapore, India, and New Zealand—providing regulatory clarity and execution agility.

- **Relationship Capital**

Decades of experience have built bridges with decision-makers across banks, family offices, and institutional desks. These are not cold contacts—they’re warm relationships that unlock real access.

- **Modular, Transparent Advisory**

FSCL doesn’t force clients into bundled services. Every engagement is custom-built, with transparency on fees, outcomes, and timelines.

“Our clients trust us because we don’t pretend to be everything,” says Rajesh. “We stay in our lane, but in that lane, we drive very well.”

A Growing Footprint and Recognition

Though FSCL is a young brand, it is already gaining traction:

“

We’re not trying to reinvent the wheel with our own platforms,” he says. “Our job is to help clients choose the right tools and integrate them smartly. That could mean selecting a custody platform, automating reporting systems, or digitizing their onboarding process across jurisdictions.

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- Featured in Asia Business Outlook for its work in virtual advisory and AI-supported client engagement.
- Recognized across business media for offering “complete financial services under one regulated roof.”
- Built a live client base spanning Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and select institutional networks in the West.

These milestones hint at the firm’s growing influence in a highly competitive space.

Looking Ahead: Where is FSCL Going?

Rajesh sees the next few years as a phase of selective expansion and deeper integration.

“We’re not chasing volume. We’re chasing value,” he says. FSCL plans to:

- Establish satellite offices or representation in Singapore,

Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia and the UAE.

- Expand its advisory into ESG investing, private equity syndication, and digital asset structuring.
- Strengthen its alliances with fintech providers to offer plug-and-play tech solutions for clients.

“We want to be the trusted financial growth partner for businesses and investors who want clarity, connection, and compliance—all without red tape,” Rajesh concludes.

Final Thought

Fintrade Securities Corporation Ltd may be new in name, but it carries the wisdom of decades and the agility of a startup. With leaders like Rajesh Pathak driving strategy and relationships in one of the most dynamic regions in the world, FSCL isn’t just a firm to watch—it’s a firm to work with.

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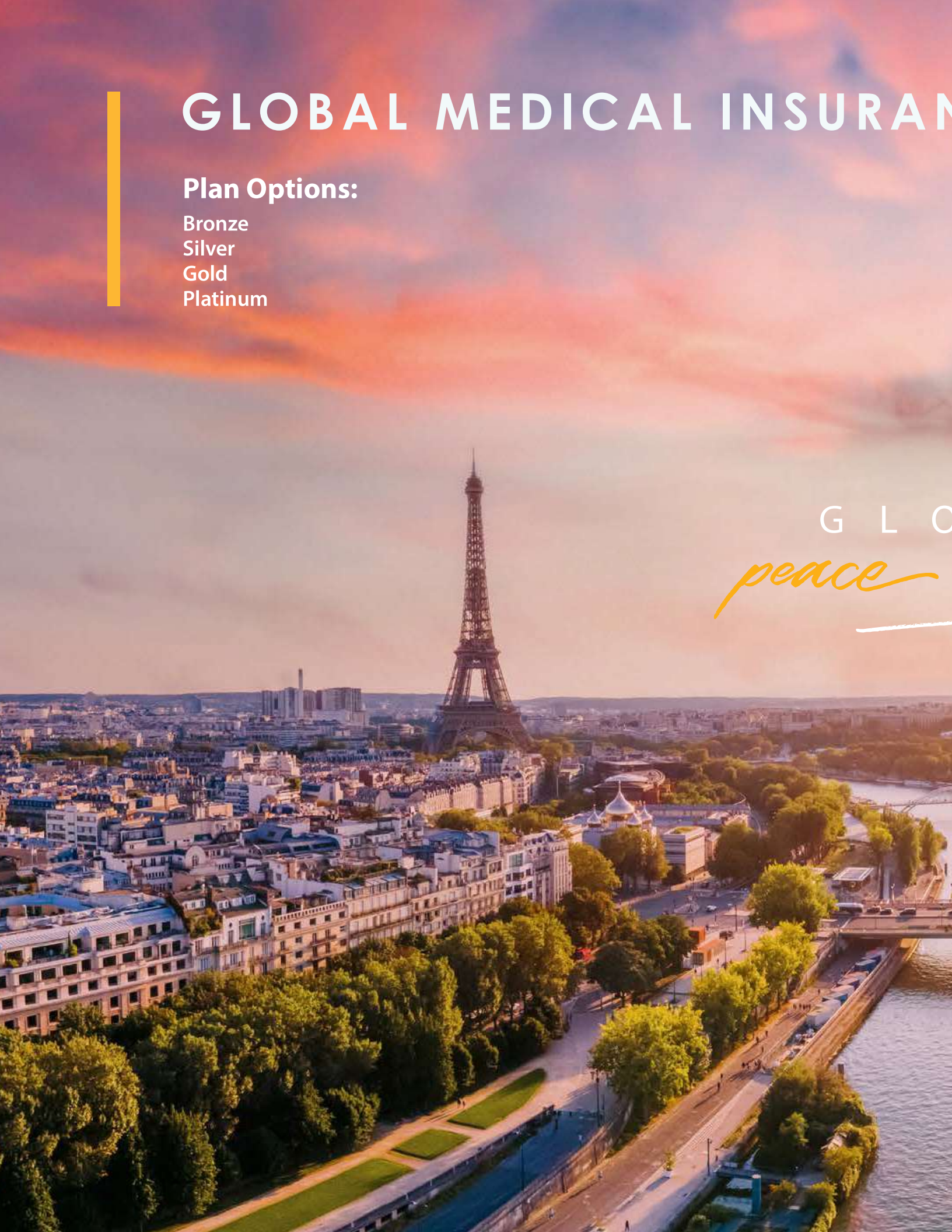
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BLACKCLOAK

PROTECTING EXECUTIVES FROM TARGETED CYBER ATTACKS



When cybercriminals successfully compromise an executive, such as a CEO, CFO, or CIO, they can gain unrestricted access to sensitive company data, networks, and employees.

THE EVOLVING THREAT LANDSCAPE

While business email compromise (BEC) has traditionally been the go-to method for attacking executives, new tactics are now emerging. Although corporate email remains a prime target, hackers are finding success in hijacking other accounts, such as Slack, Zoom, Gmail, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp. These accounts can be just as, if not more, effective in stealing sensitive information or impersonating executives to manipulate employees. The FBI even issued a warning earlier this year about an increase in BEC-style attacks targeting Zoom.

Hackers deploy several methods to hijack these accounts, including phishing, fake login pages, purchasing stolen credentials from the dark web, or using social engineering tactics to reset account passwords or guess security questions.

MOBILE DEVICE THREATS

Executive mobile devices are high-priority targets due to their access to work and personal accounts, company data, network credentials, and multi-factor authentication (MFA) codes.

Attacks by organized criminal groups, like Oktapus and Lapsus\$, illustrate how hackers are increasingly focusing on personal devices and non-work accounts, effectively bypassing even the strongest corporate security systems. These attacks, often targeting high-level executives, exploit the shift from traditional business email breaches to more varied methods that catch executives off guard.

▼

Executives have long been prime targets for hackers, but in the past two years, new methods have emerged, intensifying the need for businesses to address this threat.

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DATATRIBE

Two key threats to be aware of are SMS phishing (or smishing) and SIM card swapping (SIM jacking). Smishing occurs when hackers impersonate trusted sources like IT departments or software vendors via text or messaging apps, stealing login details or one-time passcodes. These messages are hard to verify, making them easier for attackers to disguise as legitimate.

SIM jacking occurs when hackers trick mobile carriers into transferring an executive's phone number to a device under their control. This allows attackers to intercept phone calls, text messages, voicemails, and even bypass MFA protections that rely on SMS codes.

HOME NETWORK VULNERABILITIES

Hackers are also targeting executives' home networks to bypass corporate security. Many home networks are poorly secured, with vulnerabilities such as outdated WiFi routers and Internet of Things (IoT) devices using default passwords. The more connected the home, the greater the risk. Research shows that 20% of connected homes are accessible online

by strangers. Additionally, 40% of data brokers collect home IP addresses, making it easy for hackers to find and exploit these networks.

Once inside the home network, attackers can access devices like laptops, desktops, and printers, and install malware or steal sensitive data. Even a home printer can be a security risk if it stores documents in memory that could be accessed by attackers.

FAMILY MEMBER VULNERABILITIES

Family members of executives are also at risk, as they may not consider themselves targets for sophisticated cybercrime. This often results in weaker security, such as outdated software or missing patches. Hackers may target family members directly through social media or messaging apps, or use social engineering to compromise their accounts. One

Dr. Chris Pierson is the CEO and Founder of BlackCloak. With over a decade of service on the Department of Homeland Security's Privacy Committee and Cybersecurity Subcommittee, he has extensive expertise in cybersecurity. He is also the former president of the FBI's Arizona InfraGard and previously served as the Chief Privacy Officer for Royal Bank of Scotland. Dr. Pierson is a Distinguished Fellow at the Ponemon Institute.



example includes “catfishing” scams where cybercriminals manipulate family members to gain leverage over the executive.

Another tactic involves hijacking ongoing email or message conversations, injecting malicious links or attachments that the executive may inadvertently open, believing they came from a trusted family member.

MITIGATING THE RISK OF TARGETED ATTACKS

Preventing attacks targeting executives outside the workplace is challenging, as they often exploit gaps in corporate security. However, there are several strategies that can help mitigate the risk:

- 1. Remove Personal Information from Data Brokers:** Executives should work to have their personal information removed from online data brokers. This includes personal phone numbers, home IP addresses, and family details. Professional services can assist in this process.
- 2. Secure Home Networks:** Fortify home networks by updating all devices with the latest security patches, changing default passwords, and separating IoT devices on a guest network. Ensuring guests use the guest network

prevents potential malware from affecting the executive’s devices.

- 3. Protect Personal Accounts:** Personal accounts, especially those used for business communication like Gmail, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp, should be protected with strong, unique passwords and enabled MFA.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Chris Pierson is the CEO and Founder of BlackCloak. With over a decade of service on the Department of Homeland Security’s Privacy Committee and Cybersecurity Subcommittee, he has extensive expertise in cybersecurity. He is also the former president of the FBI’s Arizona InfraGard and previously served as the Chief Privacy Officer for Royal Bank of Scotland. Dr. Pierson is a Distinguished Fellow at the Ponemon Institute.



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