

JWT hires Patrick Pitcher to lead Asia Pacific-South 2 July 2004

J. Walter Thompson has hired Patrick Pitcher, the former Chief Executive Officer of Saatchi and Saatchi Asia Pacific and Africa, to become the agency's Area Director for an enlarged Asia Pacific-South region from 1 July.

Pitcher, who will be based in Singapore and report to JWT's Worldwide President Michael Maedel, will have responsibility for managing an expanded region that comprises 14 countries including the important Indian market. The appointment completes JWT's top management in the region with Tom Doctoroff for Greater China, and Ambar Brahmachary in Japan.

Mark Webster, previously head of South East Asia, will become Chairman of the JWT Group in Thailand. JWT is the leading agency in Thailand in both terms of size and creativity and Webster will be charged with consolidating this strength and establishing it as one of JWT's strategically positioned global hub offices.

Bryan Cooper, Managing Director of JWT Northeast and Southeast Asia since March 2003, is retiring to his native Australia after 16 years and a distinguished career with the agency. He will however work as a consultant to the agency on specific projects. Bryan joined JWT in 1988 as Creative Director of the Melbourne office and ever since then has maintained a strong link with the agency's Ford business. He moved to Detroit in 1995 and as Executive Vice President and International Account Director on the Ford Automotive Group business he was responsible for business outside of the US which covers 50 countries.

Said Maedel, "Bryan has made an outstanding contribution to JWT over the past 16 years and I'm very pleased that he will continue to be associated with us through his consultancy."

JWT is one of the top three advertising agencies in the Asia Pacific region with a strong creative reputation and an enviable client list including Ford, Unilever, Shell, Reckitt Benckiser, Vodafone and the recently won HSBC global banking business.

Commenting on Pitcher's appointment, Maedel said, "Patrick has an excellent track record in managing and building creative agencies. His skills will be an added bonus to JWT's established and strong creative reputation in this hugely important region."

Pitcher, a South African, has worked for Saatchis for 21 years. In 1997 he moved to Hong Kong to head up the agency's Asian region and joined the worldwide executive board. The Africa region, Australia and New Zealand were included under his control in 2001. He first joined Saatchis in 1982 in South Africa and during the ten years there he rose to become managing director. He moved to the agency's Canadian operation in 1992 as President. Previously Pitcher worked on the client side for Unilever and Johnson & Johnson.

Under Pitcher's inspirational direction Saatchis' Asian operation flourished by scoring top creative accolades, winning new business and delivering record profits.

Said Pitcher, "Within a few weeks of the announcement of my departure I found myself in the fortunate position of talking to three global networks about positions within the Asia Pacific Region. I believe that JWT under the new management of Bob Jeffrey and Michael Maedel is very exciting right now and is the network to watch. There is a new energy and a focus on creativity, which is perfect for me. Evidence of this is the recent win of HSBC worldwide which included the impressive offerings of the WPP network combined with the new leadership team and the creative strength of JWT.

"JWT has a strong team in the region and I am looking forward to working with them. I haven't felt this motivated or excited for a long time."