

## An Interview with Erin Hunter, Global Head of CPG Strategy at Facebook



facebook

*Erin Hunter sets the strategy for how global consumer package goods (CPG) advertisers can best leverage Facebook, the world's largest individual marketing platform. Prior to joining Facebook, Hunter ran sales and client services at comScore, overseeing its media, technology, retail, travel and CPG businesses. Before joining comScore in 1999, she spent eight years at MMA, a marketing mix modeling consultancy where she analyzed clients' return on investment (ROI) from traditional marketing vehicles. Hunter began her career at Procter & Gamble, where she was responsible for the marketing research of brands in the soap and household cleaning sectors. She also worked at Coors Brewing Co., where she contributed to the growth of the Coors and Keystone beer brands.*

*An avid motorcycle racer, Hunter holds two Guinness Book World Records for her land-speed racing accomplishments—her top speed is 209 mph. She was also named one of Advertising Age's 2013 "Women to Watch."*

### Can you describe your role?

**Erin Hunter:** At Facebook, I'm global head of strategy for our CPG business. I work with many teams at Facebook, and it's probably easiest to think of me and my peers as ambassadors for our industries within Facebook. We work with product teams to help them understand the unique challenges of an industry—CPG in my case—and marketing teams to ensure Facebook speaks the language of its customers to serve them best. We also work very closely with our sales teams as they partner with marketers to achieve objectives unique to their industry.

I report to Doug Frisbie, the head of global vertical strategy. We sit inside of Facebook's global sales organization under the leadership of Carolyn Everson, VP of global marketing solutions. We work with many teams, ranging from business operations and marketing to product and engineering.

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### What are your biggest business priorities for 2014?

**Hunter:** Our top priority is driving real value for our customers and users. This means shifting some of the ways in which CPG marketers leverage the platform. A lot of CPG marketers have been looking for the "next big idea" or something innovative to do with social media. But at the end of the day, good social marketing is just good marketing. And CPG marketers know good marketing—frankly, they invented it.

Focusing on the cornerstones of brand marketing like reach and targeting are massive priorities for CPG marketers. We tell our clients, "Facebook is all the people who matter to you." We have more than 1 billion people, and with sophisticated targeting and data partnerships, you can reach exactly the appropriate people, at scale, with messages that are relevant to them. But there's another

element, too: Facebook is where people discover what is important to them. CPG brands have been telling their stories for decades, and that's why those brands are important to people. Our priority is to help brands be what matters to their consumers.

### **Can you explain how your ad products can be targeted based on offline shopping history?**

**Hunter:** CPG marketing has long been driven by rich information about consumer shopping behaviors and preferences. CPG firms capture some of this data themselves, though the majority of it is available from long-established third parties. Our Custom Audiences and Partner Categories products allow marketers to leverage their own data, grocery frequent shopper data and third-party data—all in a privacy-safe way—to reach consumers with the most relevant and helpful messages. And it works. Lysol used Facebook to drive awareness and sales of its newly launched Power & Free hydrogen peroxide-based cleaner in the US, increasing awareness by 7 percentage points and achieving a nearly 2x return on investment from product sales.

### **What are the greatest challenges for CPG marketers?**

**Hunter:** The challenges facing the CPG sector are also its biggest opportunities. For instance, technology has made CPG marketing and the ecosystem much more complex. But that same technology has introduced massive amounts of data and consumer insight. Incorporating this data to deliver the right message, at the right time, to the right person is both more complicated and more effective than it has ever been.

### **What experience have you brought to Facebook from your previous roles?**

**Hunter:** In general, my career has always been based on two things: a passion for analytics and a love for people—“consumers,” in CPG terms. CPG has always been a data-driven business. Consumer packaged goods truly are the everyday things that make people's lives better. Facebook was a natural extension of both of these with rich analytical opportunities, and a meaningful technology with people at its very core.

### **How has eMarketer helped you convince clients about the value of Facebook ad programs and informed your thinking?**

**Hunter:** It's no secret that much of the business world looks to Facebook for a point of view on dozens of topics. Whether it's the future of marketing or technology or mobile, Facebook's point of view is always thoughtful and data-driven. Because of this, reliable and credible sources like eMarketer tend to echo our conclusions because they are also data-driven at the core.

We use a lot of research sources in our work, and even have a team of researchers working with Facebook's own data to inform our business decisions and develop the best strategies for our customers. eMarketer is a valuable resource to us because it identifies and clarifies relevant trends in the industry. In a world increasingly filled with data sources and new studies, it's easy to feel bombarded by “insights.” eMarketer helps us clarify for our clients what actually matters—whether it's a trend in mobile shopping or the real data behind a recent fad. eMarketer provides a credible source of truth that helps all of us have constructive conversations.

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### **Why was it important to offer eMarketer access to everyone at Facebook?**

**Hunter:** Facebook has always had a culture of internal access to data. The benefit is you never know what smart people will be able to do with data until they do it. Innovation happens faster this way, no matter where you work.

### **Does anything keep you up at night from a business standpoint?**

**Hunter:** I actually sleep great. CPG is an industry filled with some of the best marketers in the world, and Facebook is building incredible, data-driven products that provide real value for them. All of the agencies, partners and developers working with our business are making the world better for people.

## What keeps you revved up about the business?

**Hunter:** This business revs me up every day. When I'm grocery shopping and look around, almost every single person in that store has the Facebook newsfeed in the palm of their hand—literally. It's exciting to think about what that can mean for retailers, manufacturers and—ultimately—consumers.

## Is there a correlation between your motorcycle racing records and the global digital business?

**Hunter:** Both passions involve moving faster than anyone in history, building amazing technologies and surrounding yourself with extremely talented teams. Motorcycling is also a useful means to demonstrate how traditional demographic-based targeting is better when replaced by real consumer data. By demographic definitions, I'm a female in the 25- to 49-year-old age group and should not be seeing ads for motorcycle helmets. But the best marketers have figured out sophisticated, data-driven techniques to reach all of their potential consumers—instead of just the obvious ones. ■

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