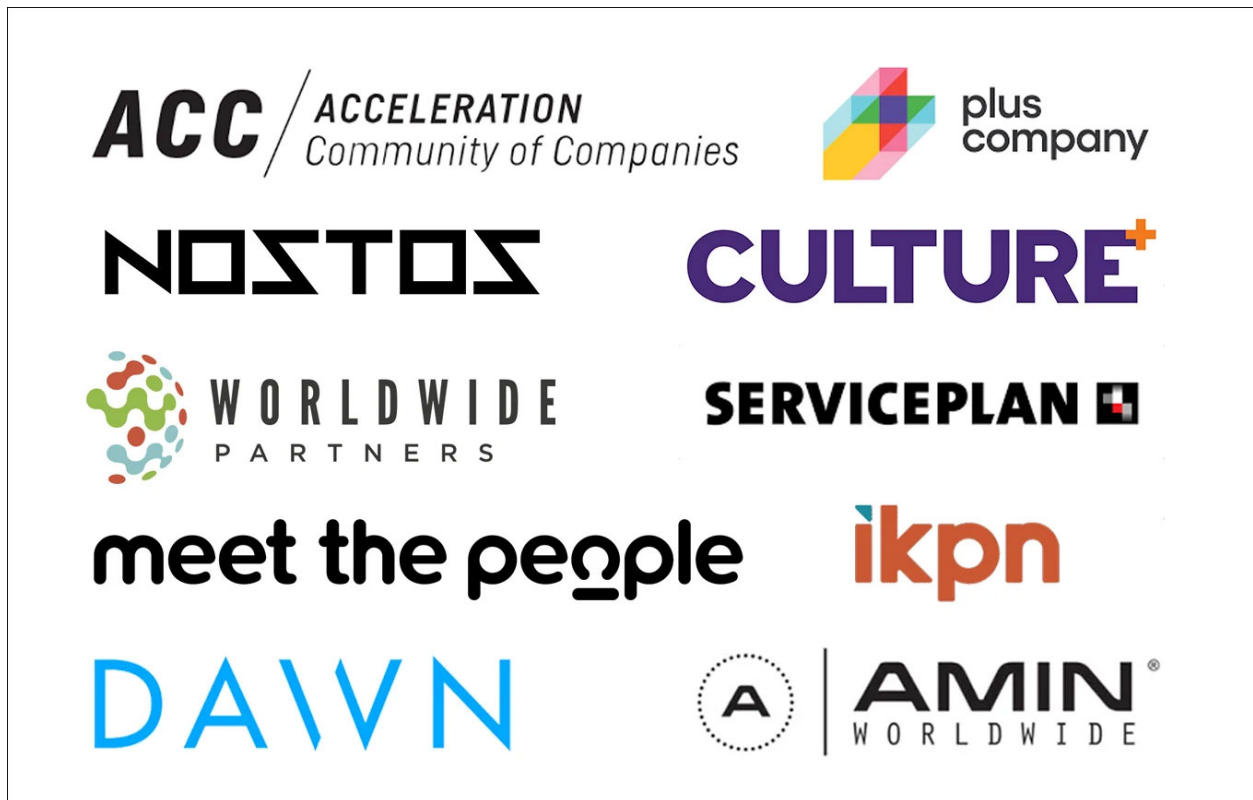


# AdAge

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## 10 INDEPENDENT AGENCY NETWORKS FOR BRANDS TO KNOW

These independent networks work with agencies including Tombras, Rethink and L&C



# TEN INDEPENDENT AGENCY NETWORKS

*Credit: Composite by Ad Age*

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It's no secret that the majority of agencies in the industry are owned by just a handful of major holding companies including WPP, Publicis, Omnicom, Interpublic Group of Cos., Dentsu Group and Havas. Although holding companies still have a grip on the overall agency landscape, independent agencies have made a significant push over the past few years. In fact, seven of [Ad Age's 10 A-list agencies](#) this year are independent agencies.

## Ad Age Small Agency Conference & Awards

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Not only has there been an [influx of new agencies](#), but independent agencies are making moves through [mergers and acquisitions](#) to diversify their offerings and grow. For example, consultancy Globant acquired a majority stake in [Gut](#) late last year, and agencies such as [Team Epiphany](#), [Movers+Shakers](#), [Majority](#), [Highdive](#) and [L&C](#) have recently sold stakes in their companies.

While it has never been more competitive for agencies, there are now a growing number of alternative options for agencies that may be looking to grow without going the traditional holding company route. For example [Mischief](#), one of the hottest agencies in the country right now, is part of an alternative holding company model through what is called [The Grid](#), an entity that houses creative agencies such as Mischief, No Fixed Address, Courage and specialty shops such as No Fixed Address Health and multicultural shop Ethnicity Matters. The Grid provides HR, IT, financial, and other backend support to its agencies which operate independently.

“The Grid was created to flip the traditional network model on its head: Instead of agencies working in service of a holding company and its shareholders, The Grid works in service of its agency brands,” Dave Lafond, Co-Founder of The Grid, said in a statement.

Several agencies such as [Rethink](#), [Tombras](#), [BarkleyOKRP](#), Quality Meats, Mekanism and Pereira O’Dell are also part of independent networks.

These groups facilitate collaboration among network members, providing access to new disciplines, peer-to-peer sharing, global resources, and support with finance, HR and other administrative tasks. Some networks require members to sell a stake to join while others require yearly dues.

Here’s a look at 10 of these agency networks; please note that in the case of bigger networks, not all member shops are listed.

## **ACC (ACCELERATION COMMUNITY OF COMPANIES)**

**Number of employees:** 330

**Number of agencies:** 6

**Shops within the network:** MKG, Stripe, Pixly, Trailblaze, Pink Sparrow, ACC Advisory

**Regions of operation:** U.S.

**Top executives:** Founder and CEO Michael Nyman, Chief Client Officer Monica Chun

**Notable clients:** PepsiCo, Meta, Google, Netflix, MAX, VinFast Auto, Target, Paramount+, Delta Airlines, Spotify, DoorDash, Amazon, Opera, Epic Games, Dolby, e.l.f. Cosmetics, Coach, Béis

**How it works:** ACC owns 100% of its agencies and has partnerships with other non-ACC agencies.

# AMIN WORLDWIDE (ADVERTISING AND MARKETING)

## INDEPENDENT NETWORK

Number of employees: 6,000

Number of agencies: 60

Shops within the network: Bailey Lauerma, Cayenne, Cronin, Crowley Webb, CVR, Dalton Agency, Davis Elen, DCG One, di Paola Latina, Doe-Anderson, EGC Group, Fusion92, Gatesman, H/L Partners, Hoffman York, MāHk Advertising, Marca Miami, Meyocks, Pathos, Paradowski, PeterMayer, Planit, Riester, Rinaldi, Sasquatch, Signal Theory, Simantel, Six Speed/KC Truth, Slingshot, Trone, True Media Services, White64

Below, [an ad Cronin created for Modern Woodmen of America](#)

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Regions of operation: The Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Asia Pacific

Top executives: Americas co-presidents Ali Mahaffy and Kelly Ferguson

Notable clients: 3M, Allison Transmission, Caterpillar, Sony, Ferrari, Microsoft, McDonald's, Maker's Mark, Cargill, Subway, Swiss+, Marriott

How it works: All of its shops are independent full-service agencies; they must have 10-plus employees and be self-managed to join. Members pay undisclosed annual dues.

## CULTURE + GROUP

Number of employees: 150

Number of agencies: Five, with plans to expand to 20

Shops within the network: Culture+ Group, Cien+, Cien+ Health, Human Dot Plus, TheChoice+

Regions of operation: U.S.



*Left to Right: Culture+ Group Co-founders Enrique Arbelaez and Lili Gil Valletta.  
Credit: Culture+ Group*

**Top executives:** Co-founders Enrique Arbelaez and Liliana Gil Valletta

**Notable clients:** Johnson & Johnson, Google, United Healthcare Group, Kellanova, Novartis, GSK, Paramount, Prudential

How it works: Culture+ Group defines itself as “an independent family of cultural intelligence companies.” Requirements for joining vary, from investment partnerships to joint ventures.

DAWN

**Number of Employees:** 3,200

**Number of Agencies:** 15

Shops within the network: Active International, BarkleyOKRP, Bleacher Report, Bridgenext, Co:Collective, Crossmedia, Main Street One, Monday, NIL Influence, People First, Pixis, Redbox, Redpeg, Rethink, Zoo Media

**Regions of Operation:** North America, Europe and Asia.

**Top Executives:** CEO Bob Kantor

**Notable clients:** Amazon, Burger King, Geico, Kellogg's, Marriott, L'Oreal, Microsoft, Mondelez, Netflix, Planet Fitness, PwC, T-Mobile, Uber, Under Armour, Unilever, US Bank, Walmart, Zillow

**How it Works:** Dawn takes a minority stake in its partners there is an undisclosed fee to join.

[More agency news](#)

## IKPN

**Number of employees:** 5

**Number of agencies:** 13

**Shops within the Network:** Evolve Agency Group, The Social Circle, Ken Media, Mediology Media, TDG Marketing

Regions of operation: U.S. and Canada

Top executives: Founder and CEO Vikram Seth and President Lindsay Rutherford

**Notable Clients:** Toyota Parts & Service, Big Star Lights, Kommunity Fitness, British Columbia Institute of Technology, Nimmo Bay Resort, Cactus Club, Shiner, Promised Land Dairy

**How it Works:** IKPN has a minority ownership in all of its agencies, with stakes ranging from 5-15%. It is focused on agencies with 150 employees or fewer. IKPN provides support in terms of talent pipeline, operations, digital media technology and financial management.

## MEET THE PEOPLE

**Number of employees:** 800

**Number of agencies:** 9

Shops within the network: VSA Partners, Public Label, Match Retail, Saltwater Collective, Swell Media, True Media US, True Media Canada, Coegi, RAdAR Analytics

**Regions of operation:** U.S. and Canada

**Top executives:** CEO Tim Ringel and COO Thomas Armbruster

**Notable clients:** Moet Hennessy, LG Electronics, L'Oréal, IBM, CME Group, Rogers / Telus, Google, Consumer Reports, Charter Communications, Cricket, Sappi Fine Paper, BNYMellon, GMI, FactSet,

Ford, BankNewport, Walmart, Parexel, Dimension Renewable Energy, Solo Bold Hold

**How it works:** Meet the People has a majority stake in all of its agencies, with agency founders usually securing equity in Meet The People after being acquired. The company is backed by New York-based private equity firm Innovatus Capital Partners. It plans to expand in the U.S. and Canada, seeking creative, production, media and data expertise. In 2025 and 2026, it will look to acquire companies in EMEA and other international regions.

## **NOSTOS NETWORK**

**Number of employees:** Around 2,000 employees

**Number of agencies:** 50

**Shops within the network:** 829 Studios, Atomic Robot, BFO, Bullhorn, Butler, ButterCo, Confidant, Conscious Minds Studios, Collier.Simon, Craft & Commerce, Farmuse, Fors Marsh, Force Multiplier Strategy, Foundry, fred&ted, General Idea, Glide, The Graphic Standard, Greyduck, HCMA, Heart+Mind Strategies, Hellen, Ingredient, Knit, Knock Inc, Listen + Learn, Livefront, LPK, McSwain Studio, Noble People, The Outloud Group, Pulp+Wire, Quality Meats Creative, Reference, Seicho Syndicate, Shepherd, Silverbean, Straight Line Theory, Street Factory Media, True Stories, Unfettered, VAL Health, Vaulted Oak, Vuja De Digital, Vytal, Whipsaw, Zeus Jones, Zilker Media.



*A portrait of the Quality Meats agency team.  
Credit: Quality Meats*

**Regions of operation:** U.S. and U.K.

**Top executives:** Co-founders Eric Frost, Adrian Ho, Christian Erickson, Rob White and Paul Bieganski. Partner and Managing Director Nick Johnson.

**Notable clients:** Roche, Snap, Amazon, Intuit, Ark Invest, Saxx, Oobli, Fidelity, CooperSurgical, General Mills, United Healthcare, Stride, Closed Loop Partners, College Board, P&G, Jack in the Box, Bright HealthCare

**How it works:** All member companies remain 100% independent. There is an annual membership fee, undisclosed.

## **PLUS COMPANY**

**Number of Employees:** 3,000

**Number of Agencies:** 26

**Shops within the network:** Cossette, Citizen, Mekanism, We Are Social, All Inclusive Marketing, Aperture 1, Camp Jefferson, Level 11,



Cossette Media, Hello, Impact Research, Jungle, K72, Kobe, Make My Day, Magic Circle Workshop, Septième, Mettā, Middle Child, Mindshaker, Munvo, The Narrative Group, Socialize, Visionnaire, Zapiens, 55rush

Regions of operation: North America, Europe, Africa, APAC

Top executives: CEO Brett Marchand

Notable clients: McDonald's, Samsung, Walmart, Microsoft, Adidas, Google, Netflix, YouTube, Jose Cuervo, Air Canada, Procter & Gamble, Toyota, TD, BRP, Activision, SickKids

How it works: An agency joins the network through acquisition or a majority ownership stake.

## **SERVICEPLAN GROUP**

**Number of Employees:** Over 6,000

Number of agencies and shops within the network: Serviceplan Group is composed of three main agency brands—Serviceplan, Mediaplus and [Plan.Net](#), with each housing specialized agencies and subsidiaries. Serviceplan Group owns minority stakes in Pereira O'Dell and L&C, but both are considered independent agencies within the group. Below, an ad L&C made for PetPace

**Regions of Operation:** Austria, Belgium, China, Croatia, Germany, France, India, Italy, Korea, Middle East, Netherlands, Nordics, Poland, Romania, Saudi-Arabia, Switzerland, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom, U.S.

**Top Executives:** CEO and Managing Partner Florian Haller, Global Chief Creative Officer and Managing Partner Alexander Schill

Notable clients: BMW, Lufthansa, Penny, Ehrmann, O2, Deutsche Bahn, DeLonghi Group, Netflix, L'Oreal Paris, Continental, Capri-Sun, Novartis, Leica

**How it Works:** There is no one way for agencies to enter the Serviceplan network, which acquired a minority stake in L&C in 2023 as part of its U.S. expansion

# WORLDWIDE PARTNERS

**Number of employees:** N/A

**Number of agencies:** 88 agencies in 46 countries

Shops within the network: Ardmore, Brownstein, Five by Five, FUSE Create, Hylink, Monigle, Odysseus Arms, Proof, Rosbeef!, R&R Partners, Tombras, Wasserman, Zambezi  
Below, [an ad Zambezi did for UKG](#)

**Regions of operation:** North America, Latin America, EMEA and Asia Pacific.

**Top Executive:** President and CEO John Harris

**Notable Clients:** Brand USA, Boehringer Ingelheim, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Bureau, Frenchbee Airlines, Taylormade, Bill, Love Holidays, Profile Products.

**How it Works:** All agencies within the network are independent and pay dues based on their revenue. Agencies can also become a shareholder within Worldwide Partners. The network is looking to expand its capabilities in experiential, B2B and PR, and its presence in APAC including Thailand, Singapore and Philippines. It is also looking to add more creative agencies in Latin America and experiential offerings in Europe.