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In-Depth Interview with Carole Picou-Katmann



Carole Picou-Katmann currently works at Uber (Montreal) as the Head of the Marketing and Partnerships department. Having been with the company for over a year, Mrs. Picou-Katmann shares her past experience, some of her daily/weekly tasks, the future of the company and pointers on succeeding in the consumer business industry.

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Introduction

The Industry professional I was able to conduct an in-depth interview with is Carole Picou-Katmann. Mrs. Picou-Katmann, holds an MBA in Marketing & International Business from HEC Montreal. More so, has had an lengthy and extensive career past in the consumer business industry.

From a Startup in NYC (Cosfibel) to an established Jewelry Institution part of the Canadian Heritage (Maison Birks), to a Fast Fashion Brand looking to expand in the Europe, the Middle East and Africa (Aldo), to teaching a Marketing & Branding class at a Master level (HEC), to working for an iconic Beauty Brand (Lise Watier) and finally to direct the Marketing & Partnerships department for the fastest growing Startup (Uber, Montreal). I first made a connection with Mrs Picou-Katmann, by finding her profile through a mutual connection on LinkedIn, which also worked for Uber.



Going back, Mrs. Picou-Katmann was not always happy with her career in the industry. She remembers, working as a Marketing Coordinator for an insurance company a few years back in Sherbrooke. She was not happy with her position which led her to move to New York City for the chance at bigger and better opportunities. A few years in New York, she was able to land a job as an Operation Manager / Buyer for a Startup. Although, at the time, she recalls doing everything from overseeing the packaging, to visiting the manufactures in China and to taking care of the logistics, and finally to invoicing the clients. She understood, her position was far from marketing but all part of the job when working for a Startup. She also had a few internships as a Marketing Assistant, and gone to be a Junior Product Manager. What made her deiced a career in marketing she tells was: "I followed what I loved, and wanted a job that didn't feel so much like a job." This all made sense to her that this was really something she enjoyed doing and also got to play on her strengths.

As mentioned, Mrs. Picou-Katmann is in charge of the Marketing & Partnerships department for Uber, Montreal. Her role is to target all those with a smartphone in Montreal, to download the Uber app and use it once a day or several times a week. In doing so, she must do everything she can to achieve this

Facts:

- Uber owns a transportation network spanning 311 cities in 58 countries.
- Uber raised close to a billion dollars in a funding, bringing its total funding to about \$5 billion and the company valued at almost \$51 billion.
- Uber has a dedicated support team available around the clock to millions of riders.

***by Larry Kim from inc.com*



(continuation...) with a restricted budget. This means, she has to utilize her creativity in her marketing campaigns. For example, Uber recently partnered with Piknic Électronik, an outdoor electronic music event in Montreal, to create a “stunt”. On Sunday, September 20th, from 4:00PM to 6:30PM, consumers were able to request “uberBICYCLE” and ride to the Old Port on a party bike. This enable them, to enjoy a scenic ride, free entrance to the event and receive exclusive Uber ‘swag’. She explains, this method allowed Uber to provide help with the logistics and the creation of an experience without monetary requirements. Her mission at Uber, is to really engage with the community, enhance the word of mouth promotion, and at the end of the day leave people delighted.

“The Disruptor” — Founded in 2009 by Travis Kalanick and Garrett Camp, Uber Technologies Inc. is an American international transportation network company, headquartered in San Francisco, California. The company, in essence, offers an alternative service to taxi cabs. Brief, the consumer downloads the Uber mobile app onto their smartphones, and submits a trip request which is then broadcasted to several Uber drivers around the cities. The company, has gone to describe themselves as “evolving the way the world moves.” Furthermore, the company claims: “By seamlessly connecting riders to drivers through [their] apps, Uber makes cities more accessible, opening up more possibilities for riders and more business for drivers.” Over the last few years, Uber has faced several lawsuits by governments and taxi companies. Several taxi organizations have argued, Uber must own taxi licenses in order to provide their service. But the truth is, they are not required to under current laws. Technically, Uber is not a taxi service but is registered under the state government of California as a Transportation Network Company, essentially like a busing service. This has allowed Uber access to all cities in the state of America, and eventually to reach global markets.

Analysis of the Job Task within the Company

First off, let me draw attention to Uber's global company hierarchy as seen on [The Official Board](#). The Official Board is an online contact database, updated by industry experts or verified members.

Board	N-1	N-2
CEO — Travis Kalanick	Chief Product Officer — Jeff Holden	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Head of Advanced Technologies Center 2. Head of Design 3. Vice President, Mobile
Director 1: David Bonderman	Chief Security Officer — Joe Sullivan	
Director 2: David Drummond	Chief Technology Officer — Thuan Pham	
Director 3: Bill Gurley	Legal (General Counsel) — Salle Yoo	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Head of Policy, Europe, the Middle East & Africa 2. Senior Vice President, Policy & Communications
	Head of Global Operations — Ryan Graves	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Director of Recruiting, Americas Operations 2. Head of Asia Operations 3. Vice President, International Growth 4. Vice President, Global Community Operations
	HR (Head of People)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Head of Global Talent
	Policy & Community (Head of Policy Development and Community Engagement)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vice President, Communication
	Senior Vice President, EMEA & APAC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managing Director, Belgium 2. General Manager, Western Europe 3. Managing Director, France 4. Regional General Manager for Uk, Ireland & Nordics
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vice President, Strategic Initiatives

Please note the following company investors:

[Lowercase Capital](#), [First Round](#), [Menlo](#), [Benchmark](#), [Goldman Sachs](#) and [Google Ventures](#).

The Global Company Hierarchy — As seen on the previous page, the company entitles several positions and several departments. To begin, at the top of the chain is the Chief Executive Officer, Travis Kalanick. Mr. Kalanick is directly in charge of all the N-1 departments, which all have their own direct subsidiaries (N-2 department). Globally, Uber is a Weberian hierarchy, based on a vertical, linear understanding of superiority and subordination. In essence, at the bottom of the chain are the drivers (workers), in the middle resides the thousand plus employees working on the operation and marketing and above them are the founders and management which set the rules and aims of the organization. Along with the founders and management at the top of the hierarchy, is the investors and the shareholders.

Among the local company hierarchy, Mrs. Picou-Katmann stands under the direct authority of General Manager, Jean-Nicolas Guillemette. Mr. Guillemette would then report back to the Vice President of Global Community Operations in the N-2 department. From there, the Vice President of Global Community Operations (N-2) would report back to Ryan Graves, the Head of Global Operations (N-1). Although, Mrs. Picou-Katmann confirms most of the power is in the city. The following graph, illustrates the **Local Company Hierarchy, at Uber (Montreal)**:

N-2	N-3	N-4
General Manager — Jean-Nicolas Guillemette	Marketing Manager / Partnerships — Carole Picou-Katmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team of 3 people
	Operations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team of 4 people
	Communication Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with the press
	Customer Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team of 5 people

In correlation, Mrs. Picou-Katmann explains working at a Startup company you essentially “create your own job.” She continues to explain, her job description can be very vague and she wears many hats. Her roles include those of a: community manager, marketing manager, email account manager, event manager, and PR manager. Locally, the company hierarchy is very flat. As seen, she is in charge of much more than what her job title would typically entitle. More so, she reveals city General Managers typically have had their own business at some point or are entrepreneurs of some sort.

As a glocal collective teamwork, the bigger cities take care of some of the smaller cities. For example, in Ontario, Toronto takes care of Ottawa. The San Fransisco headquarter, generally drafts guidelines, but all

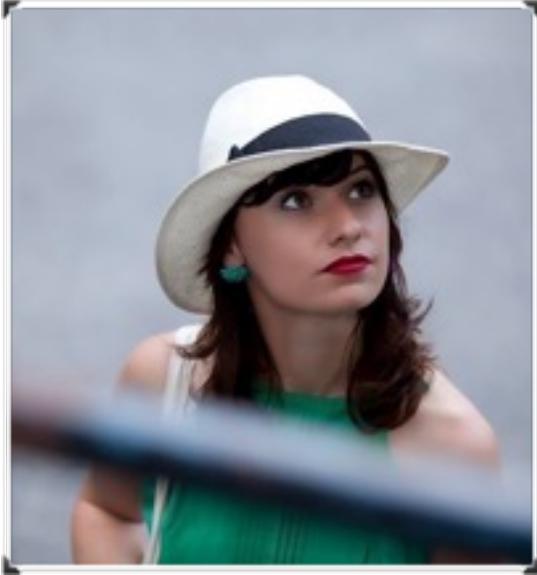
(continuation...) of the major decisions must only get approved by the direct city General Managers in this case Mr. Guillemette. This method allows her to receive much quicker approval responses which was not always the case in her previous jobs. Although, this might change in the future.

Daily / Weekly Tasks — When asked what a typical day looks like, she tells me “not one day looks like another.” Just yesterday, she left the office at 10:30PM. In perspective, she does not work a typical 9-5, but a hefty seven days a week. For example, everyone in the marketing department must complete social media duties which could be posting on Twitter throughout the day, and this rotates.

She states: “at the end of the day, you must keep in mind what will make the business grow.” She also reminds me, you must find “What is important in Montreal?”, “What is the talking point?”, and really get to know your market. Furthermore, she explains her agenda for Tuesday, October 6th, 2015:

- 9:00AM — meet with me and allow her team to get settled
- 9:30AM — meet with a community organization for the launch of a campaign (for example, this month's stunt for the Movember Foundation, Canada)
- 10:00AM — Conference call with Regional Director of Central America Region for a business update (to go over future campaigns, company targets and company goals)
- Afternoon — meet with the General Manager to discuss / follow up with the community engagement campaigns, budgets, target market and execution plan.
- 2:00PM — Research talking points (what is happening in Montreal?)
- 3:00PM — meet with her Marketing Department (coaching session, writing a new blog post)
- 4:00PM — Social Media duties (including posting on Twitter)
- 5:00PM — training sessions, mentor coming in to talk about his experience
- 6:00PM — conference call with different company partners and sponsors

In-House Marketing — One of the key elements, Mrs. Picou-Katmann mentions when comparing previous jobs, Uber does not use any external advertising agencies. At Uber, everything is done internally, which includes the creative process all the way to the execution. She explains, this is the fun part of the job which in the past was mostly taken away from her by the ad agencies. No agencies also means her team budgets the paid marketing. The Marketing Department are the ones who budget the money spent on Google or Facebook to promote their content or create brand awareness. She mentions, this a major benefit in gaining agility. In the sense, who better to know your brand than yourself.



Brief Snapshot

- Name: Carole Picou-Katmann
- Company: [Uber](#)
- Job Title: Marketing & Partnerships
- MBA, Marketing & International Business from HEC, Montreal.
- Bachelors in Marketing from École Supérieure des Sciences Commerciales d'Angers, France.

Contact Information:

- Email: carole@uber.com
- LinkedIn: [Carole Picou-Katmann](#)

Analysis of the Individual

Past Experience:

Lecturer in Advertising and Promotion at HEC, Montreal.

- Taught a class in Advertising and Promotion with a strong component on Digital Marketing and Social Media.

Global Director of Communication and Digital Marketing at Maison Birks.

- Directed the activities of Digital Marketing.
- Reviewed analysis of activities, costs, and forecast data for all areas of Digital Marketing responsibility.

Global Director of Digital Marketing, e-Commerce and Content at Maison Birks.

- Lead the full revamp of Maison Birks on the digital ecosystem (e-commerce website, social media, media buys, newsletter).
- Developed and implemented a digital marketing strategy including SEM, SEO, affiliate marketing, brand awareness, etc., as well as developing and implementing a social media strategy including Facebook, Twitter, blogging, etc.

Director of Digital Marketing at Lise Waiter Cosmetics.

- Launched of the E-commerce website in Canada.
- Coordinated work of Web, Creative and Media Agencies.



Past Experience:

Marketing Specialist at Aldo Group.

- Analyzed the Market : Consumer Study, Market Study, Potential Partnership, Sales Potential Evaluation.

Marketing and Communication Project Manager at Global Excel Management Inc.

- Coordinated Communication and Marketing Projects.

The Hiring Process — Mrs. Picou-Katmann briefly explained the hiring process at Uber. Although, having been with the company for over a year, it might have changed. First, there is a screening process through a recruiter (mostly done in the United States). Second, if you are successful in the screening you are asked to complete a very creative marketing exercise, or analytic if applying for an Operations Manager position. Third, if proven successful in your exercise, you must complete an over the phone interview with your regional General Manager. Fourth, you are sent a second batch of questions based on your interview. And lastly, you must complete a fifth interview which is more a fit test in order to test your knowledge, and your values as a person in order to make sure they align with those of the company.

Mrs. Picou-Katmann personal point of view regarding her job at Uber is very pleasant. She recalls, this was not always the case. After her last few experiences, she felt really burnt out by the weight of hierarchy. She explains this was caused by several factors. For example: 1. the approval process took forever, 2. the ad agency was doing all the fun part and, 3. the environment wanted change but were not willing to change. She felt constantly defeated when pushing for development. She also mentioned, some of the people were very pessimistic: “every time you brought up an idea they were quick to shoot it

(continuation...) down, and told me it's not going to happen, it's never going to work." She found that attitude very difficult. This left her at low point in her career. It took her three months off of soul searching to regain perspective on her future and realize true happiness. She realized, she always saw herself as the "geek" and would like to potentially take care of the digital marketing and the e-commerce of a company. From this, she decided to make the change from the cosmetics industry to the tech world. At the time, her friend mentioned working for Uber. After looking into it, she was instantly hooked.

In regards to the industry in general, Mrs. Picou-Katmann, admits "its hard to be a disruptor in non disrupting environment." She mentions, one of they key values she has learnt from working at Uber is resilience. She confesses, in working with such a controversial brand (for the time being), she has had several let downs. For example, after several meetings with various brands, she is often told no just as she is about to file an agreement, as they have doubt, or want to wait. Thus, after hearing this answer several times in a week, she finds this can be discouraging. All in all, Mrs. Picou-Katmann continues to fight for Uber as she believes in five years from now the brand will be "everywhere". More so, will incorporate many other channels and business trajectories. She says: "the driving part will be a no brainer, and we will looking back thinking did really fight over that." Finally, she stresses, Uber has decongested many cities and decrease Drinking Under the Influence (DUI's) creating safer cities.



Conclusion

In conclusion, getting to meet with an industry expert for an in-depth interview has taught me a lot about my future prospect. I have realized, earning your dream job takes a lot of work and a great deal of time. In addition, every job should be seen as a stepping stone to working towards your greater potential. Of course, you will face difficulties on the way and it would be a lie to say otherwise.

When Mrs. Picou-Katmann was younger, she recalls having a lack of confidence and did not always voice her opinions. In time, she established great confidence is built by conducting your research, doing your homework and really apprehending your subject. She suggest, people must get over the pain of feeling like a fool. In doing so, you must also take into consideration time, be patient and understand Rome wasn't built in a day. Today, she has completed a handful of jobs, gone through a three month break and is proud to be apart of a revolution on how the world moves. And even at that, when asked where she saw herself in five years, she was unable to provide a precise answer. From this, I understood, everyday is a new day.

In regards to the industry, Mrs. Picou-Katmann has taught me one of the most important parts of working for a company is determining if your moral compass aligns with their values and beliefs. In doing so, you must really gain an understanding of your colleagues and truly question their happiness. On that note, Mrs. has left me with **three key insights on future job searches**:

1. Build and maintain a close relationship with a professor or mentor in order to get feedback and ask questions on future opportunities.
2. Get involved! Constantly work towards building your portfolio and your personal brand by volunteering, or joining an organization.
3. Take advantage of your resources. There is an abundance of websites out there such as www.carbonmade.com and www.linkedin.com which help you show case your work.