

When Titans Talk...Leadership Lessons Flourish

Whatever kind of ambition it took to do what you did around here, this world could use a lot more of it.

From Remember the Titans

Four sign, graphics and visual communications industry leaders point the way forward as part of Titan Talks at ISA International Sign Expo 2021 - Virtual.

Harry Patz, SVP and GM, Samsung Electronics America Display Division; Denise Rutherford, 3M, SVP of Corporate Affairs; Guayente Sanmartin, GM, HP Large Format Division and Matt Shay, President and CEO, National Retail Federation discussed how they lead and where they see the industry headed.

Watch their recorded sessions FREE at SignExpo.org/Session-Recordings



TOP 10 TITAN TALK INSIGHTS & INSPIRATIONS

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Leadership is needed now more than ever, especially as companies and employees navigate the unknown.

"It's my job to make sure my team feels supported, has the technology they need to be successful and ensure that they have a safe place to return to once we are able," Patz says.



Good leaders direct their teams with empathy.

Shay points to retailers like Starbucks and Best Buy, which closed their companies and paid associates anyway. Retailers, he said, need to emphasize people as well as profits. Empathetic leadership is modeled and replicated, since a leader can't be everywhere at once.

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Share your values and not just internally.

"The world is at an inflection point, where it is imperative that brands step forward," Sanmartin said. "Not simply [to] drive profit, but in ways that demonstrate purpose. The companies that will win in this changing world will be those that recognize the two go hand in hand. This is not just the right thing to do, it is a business imperative."



Build in "idle capacity."

Rutherford notes how quickly 3M had to ramp up production to meet needs for personal protective equipment. It meant reinvigorating inactive lines. Reallocating inhouse resources or partnering with contractors can help a company meet peak periods. And as pandemic restrictions continue to ease, Rutherford suggests many industries will see pent-up demand.

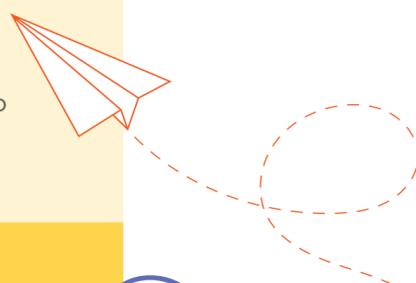


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Change is constant, and good leaders prepare for it.

Samsung lost a significant portion of its business when large stadiums and hospitality venues closed in the pandemic. The company reallocated resources to meet the needs of at-home workers (who needed monitors) and retailers and grocers who needed to deliver on curbside pickups. Sanmartin notes that futurists expect the next decade to bring more technological innovation than the last century.



Be an evangelist for your products.

For Sanmartin, it's essential to demonstrate the importance of the large-format business. "Our prints can make any idea big and turn fear into fun," she said. Patz believes the role for displays will continue to grow. "From small storefronts and restaurants to behemoth corporate campuses, the broad range of digital-displays solutions available in today's marketplace will enables businesses and organizations of all types to efficiently serve their communities."



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Industries are stronger when everyone is included.

Rutherford believes embracing diversity, equity and inclusion are an essential company focus. Being based in Minneapolis, George Floyd's death last summer was particularly impactful to 3M. 3M enhanced its scholarship and sponsorship programs. Education in STEM programs, in particular helping women and economically challenged communities, has been a focal point. Shay points to the diverse backgrounds of retail employees, which make up the largest sector of the U.S. employment. NRF has created a diversity and inclusion working group with more than 100 companies. Sanmartin participates in programs that help women enter careers in science and graphic arts.



Keep yourself refreshed and renewed.

Leaders can't effectively lead when they're fatigued. Make time to get the physical exercise and mental breaks you need to lead effectively. Patz bought a Rogue fitness bike and Precor ab machine and works out most mornings. He also has a goal of walking 20,000 steps every weekend day.



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Maximize the value of partnerships.

One positive outcome of the COVID-19 crisis has been the rapid development of collaborations to satisfy urgent marketplace, Rutherford said. She hopes the positive results of these partnerships will encourage more businesses joining forces to innovate and, ultimately, elevate the marketplace.



The future is bright.

Shay sees new branding opportunities and new signage, with shops accommodating in-store shopping, warehousing and onsite pickup, with signs playing a key role. Patz believes the market for digital displays is vast, from exterior LEDs and wayfinding to interior kiosks and display.



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Titan Talks at ISA Sign Expo 2021 - Virtual:

Guayente Sanmartin
General Manager of
HP Large Format Business

Harry Patz
SVP & GM at Samsung

Matthew Shay
President & CEO at
National Retail Federation

Denise Rutherford
SVP of Corporate Affairs at 3M

