

MediaLink Taps Lucas Cridland to Lead Hudson Bridge

New Practice Provides Technology-driven Transformation Advisory with Focus on Hudson MX Implementation

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NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Strategic advisory firm MediaLink, an Ascential company, plc (LSE: ASCL.L), today announced the appointment of Lucas Cridland as Managing Director of its newly-launched practice, Hudson Bridge, effective immediately. In this post, Cridland will be responsible for leading the new practice supporting MediaLink and Ascential companies by providing its clients advisory on technology-driven transformation. The practice will include expertise on agency enterprise systems and their implementation, transition, and integration, as well as optimizing processes to accelerate companies' operational speed, efficiency and efficacy.

Within this remit, Hudson Bridge and Cridland will provide immediate focus on the implementation excellence of Hudson MX, an advertising technology business. Hudson MX provides media buying and media accounting solutions globally through a cloud-based SaaS platform, partnering with its agency clients to catalyze marketing transformation efforts.

Michael Kassan, Chairman and CEO, MediaLink, commented: "At a time when media fragmentation and technology complexity has never been greater, we are launching Hudson Bridge with Lucas at the helm to help clients harness technology as a competitive advantage to simplify, optimize, and drive better results. Importantly, a key focus area for Lucas and the practice will be to further scale Hudson MX onboarding as clients increasingly migrate to the platform. Lucas knows the business deeply including, critically, how to deliver enterprise solutions for agencies and clients against a backdrop of rapid industry evolution."

Cridland most recently served as Chief Operating Officer, Media US, Dentsu where he was responsible for the operational infrastructure, technology platforms and working processes across the holding company's media businesses. Prior, Cridland held other leadership positions within Dentsu and earlier in his career at Omnicom Media Group and Publicis Groupe.

JT Batson, CEO of Hudson MX commented: "We are thrilled to continue to reinforce our partnership with Ascential and MediaLink as we scale our capabilities and expand our client base with technology to support agencies' transformation ambitions. Building on our ongoing, strong collaboration with Ascential resources and advisors, we look forward to partnering with Lucas. He brings unparalleled depth of knowledge of media agency operations and systems, honed from 25 years of leading media agency businesses, including developing and overseeing organizational, process and systems strategy and implementation in support of agency and marketer goals."

Cridland commented: "The industry has changed so much over the past decade, yet the foundational systems that support our business are the same despite the complexity in media that exists today. The industry needs new technology solutions and working practices to deliver successfully for the future. We have an opportunity to re-imagine how agencies can work, supported by technologies that empower agencies' businesses and improve where people's time and effort is deployed. A better technology-led infrastructure will benefit both the individuals working in the industry and the businesses that work together across the media supply chain. I'm excited to partner with Ascential companies, Hudson MX and agencies in my new role to deliver on this front, helping establish a strong technology foundation for the future."

The launch of MediaLink's Hudson Bridge practice and Cridland's appointment follow a year of significant growth including expansion of Hudson MX's capability to span all online and traditional media types, a rapid increase in clients onboarding to the platform, and most recently series D financing of up to \$63.5 million led by Ascential.

About MediaLink:

MediaLink is a leading strategic advisory firm operating at the intersection of media, marketing, advertising, entertainment, technology and finance. Unlike any other company in the strategic advisory space, MediaLink provides counsel for navigating the age of digital disruption in the core areas of data and technology, investor strategies, marketplace development, partnership optimization, talent and organization, and transformations. Founded in 2003 by Michael E. Kassar, MediaLink employs 125 professionals in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and London. MediaLink is an Ascential company. www.medialink.com

About Ascential plc:

Ascential is a specialist information, data and analytics company that helps the world's most ambitious businesses win in the digital economy. Our information, insights, connections, data and digital tools solve customer problems in four principal disciplines:

- Digital Commerce via data, analytics and managed services brands Flywheel Digital, Yimian and Edge;
- Product Design via global trend forecasting service WGSN;
- Marketing via global benchmarks for creative excellence and effectiveness, Lions and WARC, and strategic advisory firm MediaLink; and
- Retail & Financial Services, including the world's premier payments and FinTech congress Money20/20 and events, data and tools for retailers.

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