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THE NEW HEROES
— Worldwide

Preface

Monocle has drawn up a shortlist of 20 people – from politics, business, music and design – who we want to hear more of in 2009. By overcoming the odds, finding gaps in the market and thinking creatively, they've already helped make the world a better place.

ILLUSTRATOR
Susumu Uchida

This is going to be a year when the world shifts – in a good way. From retail to politics, music to urban design, people are going to look at what is really important to their lives, what they really want to own, and really want to believe in. We'll look back at 2009 as a year when we reinvested in people with integrity and in brands with core values we can trust.

And around the globe there are people that have all the qualities needed to thrive in this new world. These are people who have found business opportunities and causes that we can all invest in – and take pride in.

From the Portland coffee chain owner who brings his roasters to the US on internships (and pays them a full American salary) to the hotelier helping her nation shake off its “Axis of Evil” mantle, and the Lebanese foodie who is healing his country's sectarian divides, to the Italian politician taking a stand against corruption, this is MONOCLE's choice of 20 people who deserve a bigger stage. Few are household names, all have something we need for the year ahead.

01

Lord of the wings

Naresh Goyal*Aviation chief, India*

Naresh Goyal, founder and chairman of Jet Airways, India's biggest private carrier, is known as a hands-on businessman who delivers great service to over 11 million customers every year. Aviation experts predict Jet Airways will survive the rising fuel prices and declining passenger traffic that has hit the Indian airline industry. Jet now serves 45 domestic and 19 international destinations with its fleet of 85 aircraft, and Goyal's recent alliance with Jet's rival Kingfisher is set to keep Jet passengers happy because of cost cuts. Jet's revenue topped €1.5bn in 2008 and Goyal is one of

India's richest men. He climbed the ranks of various Middle Eastern and Asian airlines. Then in 1974, he launched a travel agency representing foreign airlines in India. Next came Jet Airways in 1993.

MONOCLE admires Goyal's commitment to service – in all classes. “The big difference between him and other airline leaders is that he's on the spot. [To Europe], he's an outsider but he has so much charisma that he achieves what he wants,” says Patrick Ansbach, aviation editor of Belgian financial daily *L'Echo*. — LL



02

Shelf starter

Mark Adams*Director of Vitsoe, UK*

We need companies that create furniture that will last, literally, a lifetime. That's why we want the spotlight on Mark Adams, director of Vitsoe – manufacturer of the iconic 606 shelving system by Dieter Rams.

Since you started at Vitsoe in 1993, what's been your business plan?

I concentrated on just one product [the 606 shelving system]. What sustains us at Vitsoe is to do one thing and do it well. I believe we will see more organisations like us in the future.

Does Vitsoe change its customers?

We encourage our customers to buy less. We have to move away from being a disposable society.

Why is sustainable design so important?

Founders Nils Vitsoe and Dieter Rams wanted to make products that lasted. 'Sustainable' didn't come into it. It was common sense.

What are your plans for next year?

It's our 50th anniversary and the fact we still exist gives reassurance to people. Vitsoe is practising evolution in its purest form and will try to remain fit as the world changes. — AK

03

Soundtracking the future

DJ Deckstream*DJ, Japan*

Japan has some of the slickest, best produced bands and singers going but they never get the global recognition they deserve. That must change and DJ Deckstream could prove to be the country's Pharrell Williams. In 2007 Deckstream released his brilliant album *Soundtracks*, boasting collaborations with US artists including Lupe Fiasco. His second album will be out soon, featuring musicians from all over the world. Any hints on what to expect? “I'm listening to old jazz and soul records from the 1970s and 1980s,” he says. “I don't follow trends. I have my own sound.” — FW



04

Task master

Renato Brunetta*Politician, Italy*

Absenteeism is a chronic problem among the 3.65 million people employed in Italy's public sector. News reports regularly cite cases of *fannulloni* (“do-nothings”) who take extended holidays under the guise of sick leave, or moonlight in second jobs while on the public payroll.

Yet a reform package devised by Renato Brunetta, Italy's minister for public administration, is about to end such conduct. Tasked in spring 2008 by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi to fix Italy's ailing bureaucracy, the economist has wasted little time. His first move was to crack down on faked doctor's notes – the number of absences due to illness has fallen by nearly 50 per cent.

“Nobody had the courage to take on the *fannulloni*,” says Brunetta. “Before, citizens weren't seen as clients that needed to be served. My revolution is to change that.”

To improve productivity, he wants to shift more services online and eliminate needless paperwork. He's also proposing an Erasmus programme for civil servants to learn best practice abroad.

Not surprisingly, his polices have earned him 85 per cent approval ratings. Even the country's prickly unions are coming around.

But we have picked Brunetta because he represents a chance to turn around Italy's global reputation as one of the worst places to do business in Europe. — IC



05

Inn from the cold

May Mamarbachi*Hotelier, Syria*

Syria wants to come in from the political wilderness but it's not its diplomats but a chic hotelier who is putting a human face on the country.

And it's ironic that the woman doing this once had her rights taken away from her by the Syrian government. Four years ago,

May Mamarbachi, 54, opened Beit al Mamlouka, the first boutique hotel in Damascus. Then in 2008 she opened Beroia, a bespoke travel company, which helped organise President

Nicolas Sarkozy's recent trip, the first by a western head of state to Syria in years.

Shows what a little hospitality can do.

Can Syria become a serious tourist destination?

“Of course it can, if the service industry grows, and for that we need to invest more time and money in human resources.”

Are regional politics an obstacle?

“Terrorism exists all over the world and Syria is a relatively safe country. There's also a thrill in saying, ‘I was in Syria last week.’”

What are you working on now?

“I have ideas for more hotels in Damascus and Lebanon.” — CC

