

FRENCH-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TEXAS

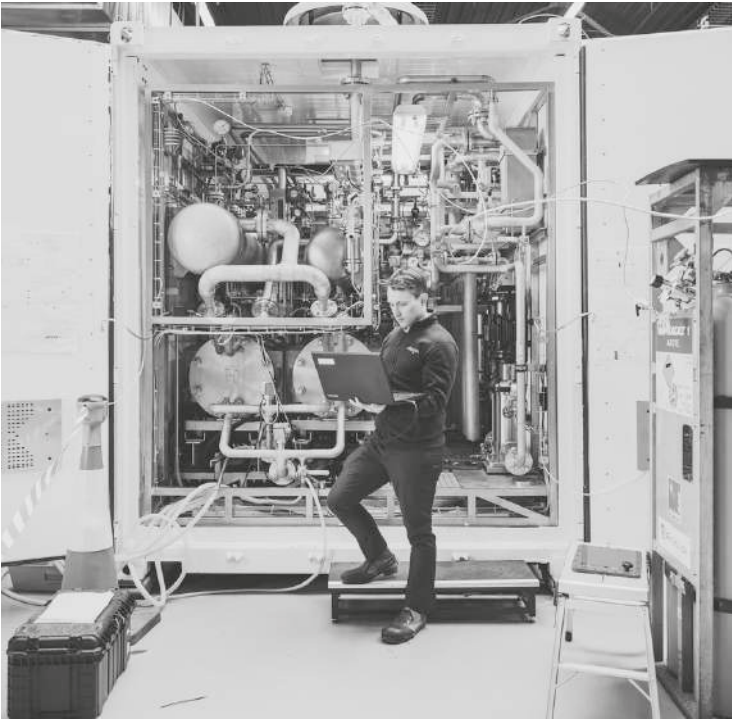
RICHEMONT TECHNICAL CENTER

LUXURY WATCHMAKING
SAVOIR-FAIRE AT THE
HEART OF DALLAS-FORT-
WORTH AREA

HELENA PINTO,
VP CUSTOMER SERVICE AT RICHEMONT GROUP

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A portrait of Ghadi Hobeika, a man with a beard and a shaved head, wearing a dark blue sweater over a light blue collared shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a stone wall and some foliage.

*Ghadi
Hobeika*

**Managing Partner USA
at Artefact**

ARTEFACT
VALUE BY DATA

Tell us how did you join the Artefact U.S adventure?

Firstly, I have known Artefact since its inception in 2015 as I had already worked with them in France as a client. I loved their deep data expertise, and their ability to take risks and innovate and work in the trenches with their clients to deliver tangible outcomes.

When Vincent Luciani, co-founder, and CEO of Artefact, contacted me at the end of 2020 to expand their operations to the US, I knew it was the perfect opportunity to blend my strategy-consulting toolkit with my operational-industry background. I have led data and analytics transformations for years in retail, e-commerce, and real estate and at Artefact, I could use my experience to help other organizations fast-track theirs.

Ghadi Hobeika, Managing Partner, U.S.A. at Artefact explains the reasoning behind why he joined the data consulting company, what his team's ambitions are, and the type of profiles they look to recruit. Furthermore, he draws from his years of experience to share his insight into data governance, data maturity, and the role of AI.

Looking ahead, he explains his predictions for the evolution of the data industry and how it will change companies' business strategies and decisions in the coming years.

What is your ambition for the U.S?

The US is the largest data consulting market in the world as it captures approximately 60% of global spending with an estimated \$20 Bn annually, growing double digits every year.

Our goal with Artefact USA is threefold:

- (1) position Artefact as a global consultancy capable of winning and servicing global Data RFPs
- (2) serve the US subsidiaries of our European, Middle Eastern, and Asian clients.
- (3) grow the business organically with new US-based logos.

We started our operations about a year ago and we've grown faster than we had planned.

We have about 35 team members now, with 25 across our New York, Dallas, and Los Angeles offices and 10 supporting us from Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Our objective is to rank across the top three countries within Artefact by the size of the business by 2025.

What kind of profiles do you recruit for your U.S team?

In the professional services world, more than anywhere else, our employees are our key asset.

That's why since its inception, Artefact has always taken pride in hiring high-quality talent across various specialties that we call internally "chapters" to keep up with the constantly moving data environment and of course, to bring the most value to our clients.

We are constantly looking for bright and talented people to join our consulting team, our data analysis team, and our



tech team (data engineering, data science). Beyond an obvious edge in digital, data, or tech, we are looking for entrepreneurial-minded people to help us grow the office, contribute to work beyond their project scope and be an inspiration for other candidates to join our team.

What trends and needs do you see emerging in data governance?

Data governance is not a new field in the data world as highly-regulated industries such as banking, insurance and healthcare have tackled it years ago. However, in the retail or CPG space, it's certainly a field that has captured more interest and attention recently. There are multiple reasons for this:

First, an increasingly complex technical and legal environment around consumer privacy (GDPR, CCPA) has forced every enterprise to mitigate those risks with a defensive approach in order to protect their brand and reputation. Second, the data maturity of most companies has leapfrogged in the last two years,

fueled by COVID and the transition to digital. The need to have qualitative and business-ready data has been reinforced as most of them realized that their data programs would not deliver the expected results if their data inputs were weak.

Third and last, tooling has also become more accessible as new data fabric, data cataloging and other types of solutions have developed strongly. We have designed and are operating a number of these programs at a large scale for leaders in the CPG, telecommunications, and healthcare industries and we are noticing more C-level sponsorship than ever before.

What is the role of AI in your industry?

The technology, exponential multiplication, and adoption of digital customer touchpoints have made it impossible for any organization to manually ingest, process, and activate the data sets that they have collected. In marketing and media, for instance, the number of customer segments, customer journeys, and campaign scenarios has outpaced any team's capacity to monitor that efficiently, let alone optimize it.

In this context, AI becomes a necessity as it augments the human capacity to manage complexity in a timely manner. We have built advanced customer segmentation and media activation use cases for our clients using AI in one of our best-selling solutions called the Audience Engine, which ingests multiple sources of data, creates audiences on the go, sends them to a number of media platforms for activation and then analyses the results. AI is used at most steps to be able to optimize media training and generate the highest value for our customers. This is only one example of many.

I believe that with a new generation of consumers, who are more demanding and connected than ever, and with increasing levels of competition in virtually every market, companies that do not become more customer-obsessed will not only not thrive in the years to come, but will have trouble surviving.

Data will be an enabler of that as it allows companies to listen to your customers, identify pain points, highlight areas where your company is delivering magic, fix the former, and scale the latter.

Data for data has no meaning per se, and although external factors such as regulations are forcing companies to take it more seriously, it is only the business value powered by data that will seduce C-level executives to start looking at data more like an offensive capability, not just a defensive one.

Data to pursue customer-centricity and deliver tangible value is what we've believed at Artefact since the start, and this is where the market is headed!



What are your client's biggest challenges and how do your teams address them?

The level of data maturity of our clients varies across a wide spectrum, from nascent to extremely proficient.

At each stage comes a variety of challenges that we help solve.

For clients on the lower side of the data maturity spectrum ("crawlers"), the challenge is often to align the organization on a strategy and data programs that will create the most impact and value in the shortest amount of time and to agree to invest in technology, people and processes to capture that value. We help them through data maturity and strategy assessments as well as building the enablers or foundational elements of the strategy.

These clients also struggle to attract expert data talent so reaching out to Artefact is a great solution to both backfill open roles as well as upskill their organization.

For clients that are in the middle of their journey ("walkers"), their goal is usually to accelerate their data transformation and optimize fields where data has not been leveraged yet.

Most companies will start their journey with marketing and digital use-cases, but data applications in sales organizations, supply chains, or other departments (Finance, HR) will tend to be less mature. In parallel, we help them venture into more predictive types of analytics rather than focusing on descriptive use cases.

For example, we can not only explain why they haven't been able to produce and ship enough goods to meet demand but rather how to avoid doing that in the future, by building advanced demand forecasting algorithms. For clients that are very proficient ("runners"), the challenge is



to start innovating and creating new business models thanks to data, as well as shifting beyond predictive analytics to prescriptive models that will automate or semi-automate some of their decision-making. In the retail space, data monetization through second-party data partnerships or retail media types of offerings are illustrations of that.

More info: <https://www.artefact.com/>

FRENCH-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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