

Supporting the Business

Media Innovation

**An Interview with Stephanie Noble,
Director of Accounting and Billing – Finance, Active International**

**An Interview with Susanne Morello,
Senior Vice President, Media, Active International Canada**



Stephanie Noble

EDITORS' NOTE Stephanie Noble is the Director of Accounting and Billing for Active International's U.S. Operations. In addition to her day-to-day finance functions, she works closely with the sales, account management and operations teams to offer support and guidance on how to structure and process transactions. Noble also works with many of Active's top clients directly as a finance resource. She joined Active in 2001 as an Accounts Payable Specialist and has held several positions within the finance department. Noble earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in business administration from St. Thomas Aquinas College.



Susanne Morello

EDITORS' NOTE Susanne Morello is a global brand, marketing and media executive with over 25 years' experience in business-to-business and consumer sectors. Prior to joining Active International in 2013, Morello was the head of marketing and digital communications for Noble Corporation, the commercial division of RONA (Lowe's). Throughout her career, Morello held various leadership roles across a mix of large industry leaders and fast-growing companies in North America and abroad, including OfficeMax/Grand & Toy, ADT Security Services, Inscape and Teknion Corporation.

Will you provide an overview of your role and key areas of focus?

In my role, I oversee the accounting and billing functions for our U.S. Operations. In addition to the standard accounting and billing responsibilities, I also work heavily with the business on transaction structure, client support and deal analysis.

How has the accounting and billing function evolved and is the role involved in strategy and business development?

The Finance Team has a key role in the development of current and future business opportunities. Through our partnership with Sales and Account Management, we not only provide the necessary financial and accounting support, but we also contribute to the structuring of transactions that meet our clients' needs as well as our organizational objectives. Once the transaction moves to the execution stage, the finance team continues in its support of the business by managing the billing, tracking and reporting to our internal and external stakeholders. By providing the necessary finance support throughout the transaction, Active helps create further value for our clients.

You have spent 20 years at Active. What has made Active so special for you and a place where you have wanted to spend so much of your career?

The reason why I love working for Active is that you are not restricted by your position. There are ample opportunities within the organization to learn and get exposure to many different facets of the business. This makes your day-to-day so much more interesting and helps solidify understanding of your role in the big picture. In addition, our leadership team has created an inclusive and considerate workplace environment. Active makes its employees' needs and wants a priority while still focusing on organizational goals and objectives.

Do you feel that there are strong opportunities for women in senior leadership roles in finance?

Absolutely! Speaking from personal experience, I began my career at Active in an entry-level role and was able to grow into a senior position based on my skills, abilities and work ethic. Active has always recognized individuals based on their merits and gender will not limit growth within finance or the rest of the organization. Throughout my career at Active, I have been exposed to many different women in leadership roles and have used them as role models for my own career. ●

Will you provide an overview of your role and key areas of focus?

I've had the pleasure of leading a highly-talented team at Active International Canada since 2013. As a member of the leadership team, I am responsible for setting the vision for the media organization in Canada and growing relationships with clients, partner agencies and national media vendors. Working in partnership with some of Canada's most recognizable brands, my team manages all multi-platform media, trade investments, operations and vendor partnerships – ensuring best practices for media innovation in the use of both traditional and interactive channels. Building on our strengths in delivering media value through trade, our goal is to be the most customer-centric media solutions provider for our customers and our partners.

Will you highlight Active's focus on innovation and use of both traditional and interactive channels?

Our innovation agenda is driven by our relentless focus on the customer experience, designing personal experiences that connect real people to each stage of a journey, leveraging the full media ecosystem. The powerful convergence of marketing and technology in today's marketplace means brands are no longer built through advertising alone, but through experiences. Breakthrough and memorable experiences come to life when they reach consumers in a highly-relevant and hyper-targeted manner across all interactions – traditional and interactive. We consider customer data from both offline and online sources, audience preferences, and media habits to inform the right mix, weight and balance of traditional media with online media to deliver results. This approach combined with our innovative trade model – the option to pay for a portion of their media using their products and services unique to Active – offers customers unprecedented value.

How do you define the Active difference in regard to its media offerings and capabilities?

Active's agile and entrepreneurial spirit is still very much alive in our culture today, rooted in a strong belief in partnership and connections. The Active difference lies within our ability to deliver full-service integrated media plans while also presenting clients the opportunity to tap into a smart corporate trade strategy to unlock cash flow, financial flexibility and incremental media value. We help brands achieve more with inventory trade-in solutions to partially fund media investments. Unlike traditional media agencies, we have the unique ability to work with various stakeholders including finance, supply chain and marketing within our client's business, each benefiting from an Active relationship in a unique way. ●