Diageo Global Travel & Middle East (GTME) has announced what it describes as ‘a cycle of changes in its executive team’ which is aimed at making the division ‘more agile, more responsive in decision making and positioning it closer to sources of major growth in travel retail’.

The changes are said to reflect GTME’s adaptation of Diageo’s global operating model review, which was announced by CEO Paul Walsh in May 2011. This major review of the group’s operating model across the business was launched to ensure that more of its resources are deployed closer to the market and in those areas where the potential for growth is greatest.

As such, the review encompasses changes to Diageo’s regional structure and to the way the group’s central functions are organised.

Jane Ewing, Managing Director, Diageo GTME said: “The regional variation in the pace of economic growth has created significant change and new opportunities for Diageo as a global business and GTME clearly has a major role in addressing those opportunities.

GETTING CLOSER TO MARKET

“As our market evolves, so too must our organisation and the changes we are implementing will ensure that we optimise the deployment of our resources by taking us closer to our market and enhancing our focus on those areas where the potential for growth is greatest.

“I am confident that the combination of these changes in our team will put us in an even stronger position to deliver an amazing performance.”

Steve White has been appointed as Marketing Director to lead both brand and customer marketing in a vital role that will also incorporate overall leadership for innovation and gifting, both of which are areas of major strategic focus for GTME.

White has worked for Diageo for seven years, most recently as Johnnie Walker Strategy and Innovation Director. In his three years in that role Diageo says he delivered a significant impact on the performance and development of Johnnie Walker, in particular driving the double-digit growth agenda, which will contribute to the future trajectory of the brand.

The company said he also played a major part in the launch of Johnnie Walker Double Black and his leadership and enthusiasm for simplifying the brand’s growth drivers led to a more cohesive brand feel through the line.

NEW SINGAPORE-BASED POSITION

Ewing said: “I am delighted to be welcoming Steve to GTME. His experience and strong leadership will be hugely valuable as we continue to drive the GTME agenda forward and reach new consumers across travel retail.”

Reflecting Asia-Pacific’s increasing importance and the division’s fastest growing market, White will be based in Singapore for his new role, enabling closer relationships with Asian consumers, who are such a key strategic opportunity in travel retail.

Meanwhile, Diageo says that Tim Rycroft will be leaving Diageo during August. In his four-year role as Corporate Relations Director, Diageo says that Rycroft created a corporate relations function for GTME and transformed GTME’s relations with key external stakeholders and placed GTME at the heart of industry
Major changes made at Diageo GTME

thinking, co-operation and direction.

In particular, he is credited with being central to GTME’s shift in emphasis to ‘Trinity’ partnerships and he personally drove the concept forward across travel retail, helping GTME to be seen as a major influence in this field and helping to revitalise the ‘Trinity’ principle in the liquor category in particular.

TRIBUTE TO TIM RYCROFT
Jane Ewing comments: “Tim has not only developed a dramatically stronger communications profile for Diageo GTME across the range of our audiences, but has also helped place Diageo GTME at the very heart of industry debate, particularly in developing new momentum for the ‘Trinity’ approach that is absolutely fundamental to the future success of both the category and the industry.”

At the same time, Diageo has announced that Olaf Grewe will leave the business at the end of this month when the project role he has performed as sales and operations director will come to an end.

Most of Grewe’s 23-year career with Diageo has been in leadership roles within Europe, latterly delivering consistently strong and holistic performance as GTME Europe’s Regional Director.

Ewing said: “Olaf delivered impressive performance, navigating the region through some difficult times, and created significant breakthroughs in customer relationships whilst building a really strong Europe team.

“In his recent project role, Olaf has driven a number of key improvements and has laid the foundations for the creation of the Supply Chain Director role.” The appointment of the Supply Chain Director will be the subject of a future announcement.

‘DRIVING FORCE’ LEAVES
Yet another departure is Nikki Cartwright, HR Director GTME, who will be leaving Diageo during September. Cartwright has been with GTME for six years and was one of the original architects of GTME’s strategy.

Ewing comments: “Nikki has been the driving force behind the people growth and talent agenda and has presided not only over a significant increase in GTME people resource, but also in a range of interventions to increase our leadership capabilities. These include the roll out of Diageo Leadership Performance Programme and breakthrough performance coaching.”

Cartwright will be replaced as HR Director GTME by Sarah Walton, in a combined role with HR Director India, enabling her to drive a number of synergies between the two businesses. Walton has worked with Diageo for nine years, beginning in the UK with Guinness Supply and going on to become HR director of global supply chain, Amsterdam, then VP HR US conversion. She has been HR director (India) since February.

OTHER EXECUTIVE POSITIONS UNCHANGED
Ewing summarised: “I am delighted to welcome Steve and Sarah to the GTME team and would like to sincerely thank Tim, Olaf and Nikki for their considerable contribution to GTME and wish them every success for the future.”

The company adds that other GTME Executive positions remain unchanged: David Francis, Finance Director; Peter Jacobson, Commercial Director; Marwan Badri, Regional Director MENA; Jay Woo, Regional Director Asia Pacific; Paul Downing, Regional Director Europe; Gregorio Gutierrez, Regional VP Americas.
Major changes made at Diageo GTME