

Ernst & Young announces AKQA CEO Tom Bedecarré is the Entrepreneur Of The Year 2012 Award winner in Northern California

Award recognizes entrepreneurial excellence in Marketing Services

San Francisco, CA – June 5, 2012 – Ernst & Young LLP announced that Tom Bedecarré, CEO of AKQA, the world's largest independent digital advertising agency, received the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2012 Award in the Marketing Services category in Northern California. The award recognizes outstanding entrepreneurs who demonstrate excellence and extraordinary success in financial performance, innovation and personal commitment to their businesses and communities. Bedecarré was selected by an independent panel of judges, and the award was presented at a special gala on June 2nd at The Fairmont San Francisco.

Bedecarré commented: "I'm truly honored to receive the Entrepreneur Of The Year Award and it's exciting to follow in the footsteps of previous Silicon Valley award winners such as Reid Hoffman, Jeff Weiner, Marc Benioff, Sergey Brin and Larry Page."

An enthusiastic entrepreneur, Bedecarré has been an innovator and pioneer of the advertising and communications business over the last two decades. More than ten years ago, he helped build AKQA with a vision that digital technologies would create opportunities for a new kind of advertising agency.

His leadership has consistently put AKQA at the forefront of the industry by helping the world's most notable brands win in the digital age. Bedecarré also helped AKQA expand its global footprint into New York, Shanghai, Amsterdam, Berlin and Paris while maintaining its independence, becoming the world's largest independent digital agency.

In 2011, AKQA achieved a world-first as the first agency to earn the "Digital Agency of the Year" distinction simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantic by Adweek and Campaign. Bedecarré was also named "Silicon Valley's Favorite Adman" by Fortune Magazine in October 2011, which cited him for being a "rare hybrid" who "has cred with techies and Mad Men alike."

Now in its 26th year, the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Program has honored the inspirational leadership of such entrepreneurs as Jeff Bezos of Amazon.com, Michael Dell of Dell Inc., Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines, Fred Smith of FedEx, Larry Page and Sergey Brin of Google, Richard Schulze of Best Buy, Andrew Mason of Groupon, Mindy Grossman of HSN, Reid Hoffman and Jeff Weiner of LinkedIn and many more.

Award winners in national categories, as well as the National Entrepreneur Of The Year Overall Award winner, will be announced at the annual awards gala in Palm Springs, California, on November 17, 2012.

## Sponsors

Founded and produced by Ernst & Young LLP, the Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards are nationally sponsored in the United States by SAP America and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. In Northern California, sponsors include ManpowerGroup, The Big Picture, Smart Business Network, RoseRyan, Scherzer International, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, Barney & Barney and ADP, which nominated Bedecarré for the award.

About Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year is the world's most prestigious business award for entrepreneurs. The unique award makes a difference through the way it encourages entrepreneurial activity among those with potential, and recognizes the contribution of people who inspire others with their vision, leadership and achievement. As the first and only truly global award of its kind, Entrepreneur Of The Year celebrates those who are building and leading successful, growing and dynamic businesses, recognizing them through regional, national and global awards programs in more than 140 cities in more than 50 countries.

## About Ernst & Young

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## About AKQA

AKQA is an independent, ideas-led agency that helps brands win in the digital age, including Audi, Clorox, Delta, Gap, Nike, Target, Visa and Xbox. A recognized pioneer and innovator, AKQA collected more than 100 major awards in the last year and was the most awarded global digital agency at Cannes Festival of Creativity. AKQA achieved a world first in 2011 when it was named Agency of the Year on both sides of the Atlantic by Adweek and Campaign magazines.

[www.akqa.com](http://www.akqa.com)<<http://www.akqa.com>>