

OBE Appoints Former GMR Chief Creative & Innovation Officer and Nike Vice President Ken Black as Creative-in-Residence

Renowned brand builder and design leader joins OBE to help inspire the global agency's next chapter of international growth, innovation, and cultural impact

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, June 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [On Board Experiential](#), the global marketing agency behind culture-shaping work for brands including Nike, Starbucks, Meta, JPMorganChase, and the NFL, today announced the appointment of former GMR Chief Creative & Innovation Officer and Nike Vice President [Ken Black](#) as Creative-in-Residence, further strengthening the agency's investment in creative leadership, global growth, and cultural impact.

As Creative-in-Residence, Black will collaborate closely with agency leadership and creative teams, providing strategic counsel, creative mentorship, and an outside perspective shaped by decades of experience building brands, businesses, products, and experiences. His role will focus on elevating creative rigor, strengthening design and storytelling capabilities, supporting talent development, and helping OBE continue pushing the boundaries of what experiential marketing can be.

Black joins OBE following a distinguished career spanning more than 30 years at the forefront of brand marketing, design, innovation, and storytelling. Most recently, he served as Global Chief Creative & Innovation Officer at GMR Marketing, where he led the agency's creative vision and multidisciplinary teams. Prior to GMR, Black spent 25 years at Nike, starting new divisions and serving in a number of senior creative leadership roles including Vice President of Digital Design Transformation and Global Olympic Creative Director, helping shape some of the company's most iconic products, experiences, and cultural moments.

Today, Black is a sought-after advisor, brand builder, and design leader to executives and global



Ken Black, OBE Creative-in-Residence

organizations across sports, media, technology, and culture. Throughout his career, he has built a reputation for helping brands and businesses navigate change, unlock growth, and create lasting cultural relevance through creativity, design, innovation, and storytelling.

His appointment comes during a period of significant momentum for OBE. The agency recently expanded its offering with the launch of Onboard Sports Advisory (OSA), its dedicated sports marketing and partnership consultancy. OBE also continues to deliver high-profile cultural work for global brands, including Starbucks' first-ever experiential activation at Coachella. Together, these milestones reflect OBE's growing influence across both the boardroom and the broader consumer landscape. As brands increasingly invest in culture-driven engagement around major global sporting and entertainment moments, OBE continues to provide the dynamic consulting and creative expertise that clients need to help capitalize on those opportunities.

"Ken is one of the most respected creative minds in our industry—not simply because of where he's worked, but because of the way he thinks," said [Trish Rexroth](#), Chief Creative Officer at OBE. "He brings a rare combination of creative leadership, business acumen, cultural intuition, and entrepreneurial thinking. More importantly, he has an ability to see around corners. As OBE continues to evolve, we wanted a creative partner who could challenge our assumptions, inspire our teams, and help us imagine what's possible next. Ken brings exactly that."

Black's appointment reflects a shared belief that the future of brand building belongs to organizations capable of connecting creativity, culture, technology, experience, and storytelling. As brands navigate an increasingly complex landscape, OBE is investing in the people, perspectives, and partnerships that will help clients stay ahead of what's next.

"When it comes to marketing, I believe that a brand is already an experience—it is just waiting to be contextualized into the life of the human for whom it was created. And as humans, we crave moments and stories that capture the wonder within us and make us want them to last forever. I've spent my career obsessed with making things that move people and have seen firsthand that the companies and agencies that are invested in evoking emotion through storytelling, and curiosity through design, have a true competitive advantage," said Black. "OBE shares my obsession and curiosity in this regard and has a strong foundation, an impressive client roster, and a clear ambition to shape what's next in culture, experience, and brand building. That's the kind of environment I love being part of."

Black's appointment also reflects OBE's ongoing commitment to harnessing outside perspectives to bolster the agency through its Creative-in-Residence program. Started five years ago, this initiative invites influential leaders from across business, culture, design, innovation, and creativity to challenge convention, inspire teams, and help shape the future of brand experience.

As OBE enters its fourth decade, Black's arrival signals a continued commitment to investing in the people and ideas that will shape the agency's.

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