

#BehindtheSelfie with... Brad Smale, group MD at IPG Mediabrands

 By Leigh Andrews

8 Jan 2020

This week, we go #BehindtheSelfie with Brad Smale, group managing director at IPG Mediabrands for UM, Initiative, Reprise, Cadreon, Marketing Sciences and Mullen Lowe.



Smale captions this: "Thumbs up if you like advertising... or monster trucks!"

1. Where do you live, work and play?

I live in Fourways, work in Bryanston and play in the Cradle of Mankind.

2. What's your claim to fame?

Finding someone to love and marry and bringing up two wonderful kids.

3. Describe your career so far.

Exciting, brutal, rewarding.

4. Tell us a few of your favourite things.

Camping in the bush (or with the kids in the garden if we can't get away), mountain biking, trail running and sunsets... these are a few of my favourite things.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



Beautiful sunset off the dam wall at Cradle Moon

A post shared by [Brad Smale](#) (@brad.smale) on Dec 14, 2018 at 4:57am PST

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5. What do you love about your industry?

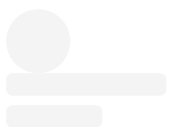
Discontinuous change, the need to continually evolve, sometimes quickly and dramatically. There's always a need to learn and improve what we do in order to stay ahead.

“ I love the unique personalities that make the industry work, from the crazy and colourful creative types to the equally crazy and keen data scientists. Advertising is so diverse, open and grounded in culture that it's hard to think of a better industry to be a part of. ”

6. Describe your average workday, if such a thing exists.

I'm a creature of habit, so it definitely exists for me. I'm up at 5:30am, kick start with coffee, get the kids ready and in the car for school by 6:30am, drive (winter) or cycle (summer) to the office by 8:30am.

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And that's a wrap on #Cannes2019! Birthdays celebrated, inspiring sessions hosted, Grand Prixs won, and memories made. Until next year!

#IPGMBCCannes2019

A post shared by [IPG Mediabrands](#) (@ipgmediabrands) on Jun 21, 2019 at 9:00am PDT

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There I check emails, digital meeting, coffee, HR meeting, coffee, Africa meeting, have lunch if I'm lucky/maybe go for a run, strategy session, IT meeting, coffee, global call, client meeting, check emails, start answering emails, 6:30pm leave for home.

Then it's catch up time with the family for 30mins, 7:30pm get the kids to bed, dinner with my wife Jacqui while we chat or watch a series like *Billions*, *Suits* or *Game of Thrones*, and 9:30pm bed.



Global survey reveals social habits of consumers in 72 countries

13 Mar 2014



Next day repeat... repeat... travel... repeat.

7. What are the tools of your trade?

Laptop, Google, Office365 and some really cool strategic and implementation tech that IPG Mediabrands has built over the years.

8. Who is getting it right in your industry?

“ I think the smaller, digitally focused agencies are getting it right. The ones that operate in the world that exists between the traditional media and creative agencies. ”

Their speed and agility is making them exceptionally important in a space where high volume, low-cost performance digital and disposable creative exists.

9. List a few pain points the industry can improve on.

The type of talent we employ and how we then invest in educating this talent are the two areas we can really improve on as an industry.



#BehindtheSelfie with... Michael King

Leigh Andrews 9 Oct 2019



10. What are you working on right now?

An acquisition and a restructure.

11. Tell us some of the buzzwords floating around in your industry at the moment, and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself.

Data-driven marketing! Performance digital! E-commerce! Few people are getting this right, even fewer clients are adopting this to its full extent.



#Newsmaker: Kevin Ndinguri, UM's new MD

Jessica Tennant 29 Nov 2019



Me: “Be great, do great sh*t!”

12. Where and when do you have your best ideas?

While I’m on holiday or away from work, usually.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



Wonderful evening in Amsterdam

A post shared by [Brad Smale \(@brad.smale\)](#) on Dec 14, 2018 at 5:07am PST

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Thank goodness for tech – no need to carry around a pen and paper anymore!

13. What's your secret talent/party trick?

I do tend to bring out the Moonwalk every now and again. What a joke, I don't even know how to do the Moonwalk!

14. Are you a technophobe or a technophile?

Probably a bit of both, I love the latest tech and gadgets, but need my 10-year-old daughter to teach me how to use them.

15. What would we find if we scrolled through your phone?

Very little, I'm a minimalist. I do, however, have Toon Blast – the perfect companion for travelling.



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16. What advice would you give to newbies hoping to crack into the industry?

You really need to have grit to cut it in this industry. It can chew you up and spit you out pretty quickly if you can't handle the pressure. There is a section of a poem I love, called 'Thinking' by Walter D Wintle that I think defines the approach people should have to crack it in our industry:

“ Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man;
But sooner or later the person who wins
Is the one who thinks he can. ”

Simple as that. Follow Smale on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#); and IPG Mediabrands on their [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) feeds for the latest updates.

*Interviewed by [Leigh Andrews](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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