

# #BehindtheSelfie with... Matthew Buckland

By [Leigh Andrews](#)

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This week we find out what's really going on behind the selfie with Matthew Buckland, MD and founder of Creative Spark, an M&C Saatchi company... Buckland was honoured with a special award for 'best individual contribution to digital' at this year's [Bookmark Awards](#).



Trust Buckland to submit this highly unusual selfie!

## 1. Where do you live, work and play?

Live in Noordhoek.

Work in our offices in Cape Town (Woodstock) and Joburg (Rosebank).

Play in the mountains surrounding Cape Town and Stellenbosch on my mountain bike.

## 2. What's your claim to fame?

I'm proud of my beautiful family (1X wife and 2X kids), my marriage (now almost 15 years), and I am proud of the business I have been a part of building in a short time with the amazing people in it that I work with.

### 3. Describe your career so far.

I've been an early user of computers. I started off as a programmer on a ZX Spectrum at the age of 7 making my own games, doing computer science as a seventh subject at school, then moved into journalism (my major at Rhodes University), then moved into online publishing and digital marketing, which was the genesis of our digital agency, Creative Spark.



SA digital agency Creative Spark launches new look

M&C Saatchi Abel 26 Sep 2016



### 4. Tell us a few of your favourite things.

- Winning a big ticket pitch.
- Creating a successful digital product or campaign that makes an impact and a difference.
- Investing in a startup and being a driven entrepreneur.
- Witnessing all the positive social media comments when we announced the sale of our company to M&C Saatchi UK was really special.
- Breaking massive entrepreneurial success and funding stories on Ventureburn.com.
- Finishing a mountain bike race.

### 5. What do you love about your industry?

Constant change, evolution, endless challenges. The constant 'wow' factor. The strong feeling of "ownership" that our generation has over this industry as we were a part of shaping it — not the old industrialists and the "old money" of the past.

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

Business calls, podcasts and Google Play Music in the car during my long drive into work. I only stream, I no longer do broadcast media. Business development meetings, client meetings, exco meeting, meeting at M&C Saatchi Abel. Lots of meetings. Or cancel all meetings for a pitch. Also, about 75% of my day is email. I am trying to change that.

### 7. What are the tools of your trade?

My Mac Book Air, which never runs out of batteries. My iPhone. And that is it. Our company now runs off [Magnetic's](#) agency management software — they are great guys with a great product

### 8. Who is getting it right in your industry?

There are some great digital agencies out there. Huge respect to fellow digital agencies Hellocomputer, Native, Quirk/Mirum, Liquorice and Gloo for what they have built.

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

Decent budgets, deadlines, pitch fees — we can spend as much as R100k to R150k on a pitch. We need a space that allows digital people to construct world-class digital platforms and products and fail every now and again without someone

breathing down their neck.

## 10. What are you working on right now?

A very big client that we have just won — we are busy assembling the team and governance processes at the moment. Also, some big Joburg and Cape Town pitches, some key hires for the company, integration in Joburg and something interesting for [ventureburn.com](http://ventureburn.com)!

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

I find myself saying “disruption” at least five times a day now. Digital agencies are run on buzzwords: PPC, CMS, SEO, SEM, CX, UX, DSP, SSP, always-on, self-service, AI, API, RSS, analytics, ORM, content marketing, datamining, eCRM, blah blah blah. Seriously, though — the good agencies try to cut through the hype clutter and bring digital services back to the fundamentals, showing how they benefit a business in terms of efficiency, increased exposure, better product, better customer experience and interaction or simply, sales.

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

- On the red eye flight on a plane between about 6am and 8am.
- On my mountain bike, when my endorphins are flowing, usually around 25kms in.
- On holiday, when I am fully relaxed and I don't have a 1,001 things tugging me in 1,001 directions.
- And, yes, in the shower: That hot water on your head does something to your brain. There is something in this.

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

I can do a passable Irish accent. And it gets even better on craft beer!

## 14. Are you a technophobe or a technophile?

I love gadgets and new digital trinkets. That is why I do what I do. It's more than work, but a genuine passion. I created Creative Spark and its publishing products Memeburn, Gearburn, Ventureburn and Motorburn out of a genuine interest and passion for technology, innovation and progress.

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

Banking apps, Strava, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Memeburn, Uber, YouTube, and various share-trading apps like Saxo and TD Ameritrade — I am a keen armchair trader and buy shares in many of the companies we work with e.g.: Facebook, Twitter, Alphabet — and an MMO real-time strategy game called *Dominations*, my now not-so-secret vice!

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

Digital by definition is a newbies' industry. You probably know more than your boss. Own it and fight for it.



Burning bright with that special Creative Spark

Leigh Andrews 17 Sep 2015



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Simple as that. [Click here](#) or visit the M&C Saatchi Abel [office](#) for more and be sure to follow Buckland on the following social media channels: [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

\*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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