**Michael Richards**

**Profile**

I’m a transformational Agency leader looking for new challenges. I’m entrepreneurial, driven to win business and to develop digitally focused ideas that deliver profitable growth. Having had senior roles in some of the best Agencies, run my own successful businesses and one of the UK’s largest digital marketing Groups I’m now looking for a senior management positions in ‘culture first’ businesses, where I can help drive greater success and be wingman to motivated and ambitious teams

**Skills**

* Consummate - successful career in Top 10 Agencies
* Integrated - broad ranging Client experience across all marketing disciplines
* Business builder - bought, ran, built and floated £45m+ AIM listed integrated Agency
* Commercial - Non Exec Director at digital, design and integrated Agencies
* Strategic - business, marketing & brand consultancy
* Entrepreneurial - front-line Client & manufacturing experience, as founder of unique sustainable FMCG brand
* Global player - International MD at VCCP
* Digital marketing leader - Group CEO at Digital Unlimited Group (£85m revenue FY’20)

**Career Summary**

**DIGITAL UNLIMITED GROUP (April 2018 to June 2019)**

**Group CEO**

* Appointed by Private Equity owners to accelerate growth of their underperforming acquisition
* Successfully galvanised the Group of 8 subsidiary companies and 900+ people
* Drove business performance to reach £12m EBIT
* Imposed ownable proposition & strategic methodology, Client development strategy, new business strategy, PR & cultural strategies
* Developed team approach so that all the once siloed Agencies worked together for the first time to grow existing Clients and win more new business than ever before
* Completed 3 acquisitions – advanced data analytics, btb CRM & tech marcomms. Social media and digital media agency acquisitions in hand
* Resigned as not happy with PE’s financial transparency & balance sheet issues

**VCCP (May 2016 to April 2018)**

**International Managing Director**

* Drove the development of embryonic world-class network
* Business partner & wingman to the leadership team in each network Agency
* Developed business plans throughout the network to maximise operations, widen the offer, drive business development (existing Clients & new business) and identify M&A
* Inspired network Agencies to work together for the greater good & bigger opportunities
* Led the charge for pan-European new business
* Pitched, won and ran major Clients including eBay & Paddy Power

**NED (2011 to 2016)**

Wanting to share my experience and help other ambitious businesses grow, I decided to pursue a portfolio career of non-executive directorships, as well as starting a manufacturing business of my own with a focus on sustainability

* Non Executive Director – Integrated Agency
* Non Executive Director – Design Agency
* Non Executive Director – Digital Agency
* Marketing & business consultant to a dairy, financial services and fashion business
* Developed & launched my own sustainable soft drinks brand (waterinabox.co.uk)

**WATER IN A BOX (2012 to date)**

**Founder**

**‘Better Water for a Better World’**

* Whilst travelling in India, I came upon a mountain of plastic bottles on the beach. Deciding there had to be a better way, I launched this new concept in packaged water in Tesco
* Positioned as the better way to drink water ‘on the go’, limiting damage to the environment and health, it’s ‘eco-conscious spring water’ boxed at source in the Mendip Hills. 100% recyclable, made from low carbon, naturally renewable and sustainable materials sourced responsibly and doesn’t contain PET
* After initial launch in Tesco we rolled out globally exporting to as far as Australia and Korea
* Now the business is set up strategically and operationally, my role is now that of shareholder & marketing consultant; www.waterinabox.co.uk

**WFCA plc (2008 – 2011)**

**CEO**

I reversed WFCA Integrated into EKAY plc and WFCA plc became the largest regional Agency in UK

* Continued in role of Business Director, described below
* Hired new plc board and became ‘City face’ to seduce fund managers, brokers, press etc
* Integrated six Agencies into WFCA – initial total staff of nearly 200
* Fronted City fundraising for re-financing to deal with Ekay’s balance sheet issues magnified by ‘credit crunch’
* Resigned & started advising various marketing and digital businesses
* WFCA plc bought by Porta plc

**WFCA Integrated (2001 – 2008)**

**CEO**

I bought this failing, small Agency and crafted a compelling & winning proposition offering both integrated (Digital, CRM, Advertising, Design) and full service (Media planning & buying)

* 28th largest Agency in UK with £44.1m billings (Campaign 2009)
* 30% net margin – top in UK (WKS 2008 & 2009)
* Twice recognised as Sunday Times Fast Track Top 100 business

I also ran the Agency’s most challenging accounts as Business Director to provide strategic direction, creativity, innovation and commercial nous and led the charge on all New Business. Clients included: AXA, Bathstore, Bialetti, BMI Healthcare, Brittanic, Bowers & Wilkins, Budgens, Carpetright, GE, Greene King, Kia, Pedigree, Tabasco, Toyota, Western Union and Yazoo

**Grey (1996 – 2001)**

**UK Board Business Director & Worldwide Business Director**

**Group CMO – UK Agency, Group & European responsibilities**

Feeling I needed more credible FMCG experience, I threw myself at some of the world’s toughest strategic taskmasters. I also ran the Agency’s New Business team, with Group-wide and pan European remit. Clients worked on included: Allied Dunbar/Zurich, Canon (UK & Europe), GlaxoSmithKline (Ribena, Horlicks, Aquafresh, Beechams, Contac – UK & Worldwide), Procter & Gamble (Pantene – UK & Worldwide), Skoda, Forte, ITV Network, Little Chef, Mars Confectionery (Starburst, Galaxy, Twix, Milky Way – UK & Worldwide) and the Mirror Group

**Saatchi**

**Account Director/Business Director &** **New Business Director**

Wanting to spread my wings beyond Canary Wharf, I pitched that my limited Swedish would be useful to help run their Saab car account. Clients included:AA, Colman's, Federal Express (International), Canadian Club (Pan Europe), Carlsberg, Grand Marnier, Robinson’s, Saab, Stolichnaya, Uniroyal (International)

**Ogilvy**

**Account Executive/Account Manager/Account Supervisor**

Having decided medical school wasn’t for me, I secured a graduate trainee role at the first Agency that would see me. Clients included: Ford, Guinness, Nutrasweet, and Reebok

**Interests**

Surfing, rugby, golf, guitar, chain-sawing, stand-up comedy