

# NICHOLAS LEDINGHAM MBA. BSc.

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## PROFESSIONAL PROFILE



An entrepreneurial, commercially astute 'C' Suite Executive, with a track record of success delivering strategic vision, turnaround/transformation programs, new market penetration and profitable revenue growth in diverse family-owned, and corporate businesses, operating across multiple verticals including Automotive, Hospitality, Real Estate, Oil & Gas Services, FMCG & ICT. Proactive efficiency driver with high levels of technical acuity, who builds partnerships across sales and operations to spearhead the delivery of process re-engineering, cost saving & ROI improvements. An inspirational leader, who develops talent and energizes teams, gaining 'buy-in' at all levels to effectively drive organisational change. A visionary Board member, with deep P&L understanding, with proven abilities analysing operations, markets and performance and shaping/executing strategies to deliver greater revenues, profits & shareholder value.

## SKILLS SUMMARY

- Transformation, Turnaround & Change Management
- Process Re-engineering & Cost Efficiency Identification
- Global Operations/Team Management: EMEA, APAC & USA
- Business Vision, Models, Strategic Planning & Execution
- New Market Penetration, Sales & Marketing Strategies
- Multi-million P&L Control, Forecasting & Budgeting
- M&A: Due Diligence & People/Systems Integration
- Risk Management & Corporate Governance
- Building International Teams & Managing Talent
- Digitalization & Systems Implementation
- Construction/New Build Project & Program Management
- Franchise Arrangements & Commercial Negotiations
- Investment Analysis/Justification & Fundraising
- Complex Stakeholder Relationship Management

## CAREER HISTORY & SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

**01/2013 – Current: Group Chief Operating Officer Business Genetics Group, UAE/UK**

*Established a diverse professional services entity in the Middle East to provide strategic, turnaround / business development and management coaching capability through a network of associates.*

- Led the Strategic Planning, Finance and IP build of organization, recruiting a high caliber management team to drive business development, distribution, sales, procurement and administration.
- Established Business Genetics as a Consultancy, Training, Franchise & Recruitment start-up in UAE/China, to serve the Middle East / Africa market, growing T/O at peak to \$5.1m, delivering 7.2% EBITDA in 2018.
- Led sales growth programs for Hotel Chains, restructuring of Property Maintenance business and Developer business.
- Led the acquisition of Pharmaceutical Generics plants (2) in the Middle East and Truck Manufacturing and Assembly (2) in North Africa totaling \$72M. Establishing new executive teams, trading strategies and governance systems.

**01/2013 – 07/2016: Group Chief Operating Officer Kunech Group, Africa / UAE / China**

*Appointed to help turnaround / transform a diverse family business headquartered in Lagos, Nigeria into a corporate structure with an appropriate governance system.*

- Shaped/commenced 5-year Turnaround / Growth Strategy in key sectors of Automotive, Hospitality, FMCG (new manufacturing & distribution division) and Property (development & investment). Key achievements include:
- Developed and executed a \$640m CapEx plan for Hospitality division, 2 existing 3\* and build 3 new 4\* & 5\* establishments.
- Oversaw project management, design, QS and procurement processes for new builds and creating 5 F&B local brand franchises to accommodate in new hotels, increasing annual T/O from \$13.8m to \$23.3m.
- Launched an African Automotive Importer Network & Aftersales Franchising. Led build of 2 aftersales sites and launched a new workshop brand Master Franchise for Africa (PTAC) with roll out model and scalability to increase to 11 sites by 2019.
- Developed a new Parts Distribution business, increasing T/O from start-up to £22m by Y3 and a vehicle Parts Procurement business in the UAE to feed the African market, growing 2017 T/O to £35m.
- Established the FMCG division from scratch in 2014, opening procurement channels in Europe and APAC and creating a local brand to position with rural markets, successfully grew divisional T/O to \$18m by Y2 delivering 14% EBITDA.
- Further developed existing property portfolio, guiding \$14.5m investments into residential rental properties and \$21m into commercial new builds for rental, delivering a critical risk and tax management solution.

**08/2009 – 12/2012: Senior Vice President – Investment Kingdom Automotive Investments, UAE, Europe**

*Appointed to an investment fund for a fixed period to maximise opportunities resulting from a downturn in the Automotive sector and further develop their investment portfolio of property assets.*

- Presented a strategy to buy and lease back distressed assets, securing a \$500m fund, and identifying/leading the tactical acquisition of Automotive Real Estate Assets across Europe.

**03/2007-08/2009: Group Chief Operating Officer Zubair Corporation, Oman**

*Recommended by Toyota and appointed initially as General Manager before rapid promotion to Group COO. Tasked with analysing the performance of a diverse Group portfolio and providing disposal, turnaround and growth recommendations, as well as managing the transition from a family SME to corporate culture with better governance.*

- Reported to the CEO and assisted the build of new EXCO "C" level management team, recruiting and developing 12 General and Group Managers to oversee 12,000+ multi-national staff across 4 different countries.
- Shaped and started the implementation of a 10-year strategic transformation of the Automotive division to stem declining market share, turn around the business, re-establish brand credibility and help it reemerge as a market leader.
- Successfully re-negotiated and solidified Franchise Distribution Agreements with brands such as Bentley, Audi, Volkswagen and Mitsubishi; acquiring new brands of Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, Citroen, BMC, Chery and Schwing.
- Enhanced margins and cross-selling capability and improved trading GOP from 6% to 13% Y1 by embedding a structured Sales Process Control system and methodology.
- Repositioned and turned around the Digital Media and ICT divisions; created a 5-year strategy to transform the IT offering and delivering an operational yield of over 400%.
- Created a new luxury portfolio Retail Group, adding 4 new brands combining to an existing disparate collection, appointing a new GM and driving an increase in annual revenues from \$12m to \$31m, delivering 21% EBITDA.
- Led a range of digitalization, quality and process improvement projects such as the implementation of a new ERP system and ISO9000 roll-out through the network, delivering 23% cost efficiencies over a 2-year period.
- Overall, uplifted 2008 Automotive revenue to US\$509m, to 14,000 vehicle units & workshop efficiency by 48%, contributing to increasing Group overall turnover from \$790m to c. \$1.2bn.

**04/2004-06/2007: Progression to Group General Manager E.K.Kanoo Group, Bahrain**

*Appointed as General Manager for the Mercantile Division to lead the turnaround of the EK Kanoo, Mercantile business and progressed to take on additional accountability as Group GM of 4 Companies retailing cars and trucks.*

- Reported to the President and shaped/led a successful transformation strategy for the Motor City business, merging sites, brands and staff to increasing net profits by +94%, sales volume by +56% and workshop productivity by c50% Y1.
- Restructured 4 companies including 14 franchises under a new holding company and led M&A activities, acquiring 2 competitor trading companies, 3 truck/heavy vehicle companies and 2 car brands to grow Group portfolio to \$1.15bn.
- Spearheaded a new Aftermarket Franchise proposition, opening 4 outlets to capture competitor traffic for conquest and introduced 27 new Aftermarket Brands into the local market to broaden the portfolio.
- Implemented a range of new business models, processes and digital systems including Finance Leasing and Rental market model, an ERP system and a Controlled Sales Process infrastructure.
- Led the successful turnaround and merger of 3 loss-making Tyre Distributor companies into one business, creating 5 new brands and a distributor network which increased annual T/O from \$460k with 5% loss to \$16.5M, delivering 16% EBITDA.
- Grew the Rental Car business by migrating into a leasing company and rebranded, increasing fleet from 38 to 410 in 2 years (now 1,100 strong), delivering EBITDA growth from -6% loss to + 14% profit during tenure.
- Overall, transformed a collection of low performing brands into an extremely profitable portfolio with annual revenues increasing from \$80.7m to \$126m, delivering EBITDA of 7.9%.

**EARLY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**

**1998-2004: Group Sales & Marketing Director (Shareholder), First Active PLC, UK**

- Established Leasing and Rental partnership which later merged into First Active PLC (became a minority shareholder).
- As part of the Exec Team developed and executed strategies which grew the business from start-up into a full-service profitable B2B Lifestyle brand (Automotive, Leasing, Telecoms, Accident Management, Insurance etc.) with 45 employees.
- Secured CapEx investments of £47m to grow lease fleet from zero to 3,400 vehicles.
- Set up and delivered Company Car Benefits schemes to minimise taxation burden for prestigious clients such as Grant Thornton, Ford Credit and Lloyds Bank.

**1996-1997: Operations Director, BTC (Business Training & Consultancy) Ltd, UK**

- Established a 'corporate structure' for a family-owned Training & Consultancy business, embedding a "Road to the Sale" controlled sales process in automotive sector and Aftersales staff sales skills process training programs.

**1991-1996: Operations Director – Consulting, MITAC (Motor Industry Training & Consultancy) Ltd, UK**

- Joined as a Consultant and achieved rapid promotion to Operations Director in 1995.
- Instrumental in evolving MITAC from 17 consultants /£1.95m T/O to 221 consultants /£26.4m T/O annually over 5 years.
- Established a new Quality & Training Consulting division, growing the team to 26 and delivering £3.43m in new revenues.
- Led bids and won contracts with major brands including Peugeot, Porsche, Mercedes Benz, Citroen, Honda, Rover & Ford.
- Identified, designed and delivered 23 client programs (many of which are in place today), working with c.360 dealerships, the largest being £2.1m Audi Academy, delivering Customer Service and sales NVQ's for 122 dealerships & 1,000+ trainees.

**1987-1990: General Sales Manager, Llonrho PLC, UK**

- Led sales management of Dovercourt St Johns Wood, Audi, VW for New & Used vehicles and general sales management of Dutton Forshaw West end, Vauxhall business for New, Used, Fleet Sales, Export / Government Sales & Rental business.

**1981-1987: Engineer Officer, Royal Navy, UK**

- Youngest promotion to Officer and award of engineering prizes in Royal Navy.

**EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS & CERTIFICATIONS**

- 2015: Corporate Governance**, Brevi Management Institute, UK
- 2009: MBA. International Business**, Western Valley Online, USA
- 1993: BSc. Accountancy & Financial Analysis**, University of Warwick, UK
- 1985: City & Guilds Marine Engineering** Higher Diploma, Royal Naval College, UK
- 1985: BTEC Marine Engineering** Higher Diploma, Royal Naval College, UK

**OTHER DETAILS**

**Nationality:** British      **Date of Birth:** March 1964      **Personal:** Married with 4 children (2 dependant) and in good health.