

Rob Merrett

Digital NED | Director | Chartered Marketer FCIM

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A seasoned Director with particular focus on Commercial and Marketing with the ability and rigour to be hands-on when required.

An extensive and technical background in Digital First Retail, eCommerce and brand building spanning over 20 years. Expreienced in both Start-up and scale-up operations with a track record of value creation.

Current appointments: Managing Director of Online Division Young Ideas Group and Non-Executive Digital Marketing Director at The Brand Cloud.

Recent previous appointments include; Non-Executive Marketing Director at Orangetheory® Fitness and Marketing Director at Nature's Supplements.

A committed life-long learner, with a particular passion for personal growth as well as nurturing talent and driving performance culture.

EXPERIENCE

The Brand Cloud

Non-Executive Digital Marketing Director

Dec 2016 - Present

The Brand Cloud is one of the leading natural & organic, health, beauty and well-being groups in the UK.

We supply award winning products and services to our 'naturally better' biased consumers via many of the UK's largest retailers as well as through our own direct to consumer channels.

My role since December 2016 has been as Non Executive Digital Marketing Director when Nature's Supplements, a business I was an active founding shareholder in, was acquired by The Brand Cloud.

This new role within the group has entailed ensuring our actions follow our channel strategy and that we respond correctly to the challenges we face as a board. Helping to managing the careful balance between B2B, B2C and D2C channels whilst delivering customer clarity.

Young Ideas Group

Managing Director of Online Division

Mar 2015 - Present

Founded on 50 years of retail expertise, Young Ideas Group has a portfolio of four retail businesses based in Derbyshire. It is a multi-channel company specialising in designer fashion and niche categories.

I Manage a team of 30 across all functions of Buying, Sales & Marketing and Operations.

I Joined the board in 2015 with the purview of delivering growth to the newly formed group through a period of 'Buy and Build'.

I have been responsible for significant change over the last five years.

- 2015 Young Ideas Online A loss making premium fashion online operation was wound-up.
- 2015 boobydoo Acquisition of a niche sportswear business as a cornerstone of the strategy,

after a swift range rationalisation, the business was refocused and our two nearest competitors were acquired, providing significant critical mass to this niche business.

- 2016 **Henmores** An existing, lifestyle clothing, retail only business in the group was re-branded and a multichannel strategy laid out for growth, a small acquisition was also made to bolster the digital footprint. Late 2018 will see significant investment in increasing the retail square footage threefold, inline with significant online growth.
- 2017 **Little Trekkers** Acquisition of a specialist active childrenswear retailer offered more scale to the group to support our growth ambitions and allowed consolidations of our operations.
- 2017 **Spotty Otter** Acquisition of a specialist childrenswear wholesale brand has allowed to a considered moved into wholesale and D2C.
- 2018 **boobydoo** Secured a significant supply contract with the MoD
- 2019 **Shock Absorber** Acquired the rights to operate the Shock Absorber D2C website a specialist sportswear brand, launched in December 2019 with double digit MoM growth.
- 2020 **Wonderbra** Acquired the rights to operate the Wonderbra D2C website within UK and the EU, a specialist lingerie brand, launched in June 2020 and has outpaced all early growth targets.
- 2020 **Young Ideas Online** Relaunched the YI brand online, addressing the shift of luxury to online in this boutique space.

Orangetheory® Fitness

Jan 2018 - Nov 2019

Non-Executive Marketing Director

Supporting the board of Wellcomm Health and Fitness to bring Orangetheory® Fitness Studios to the North of England.

Orangetheory® Fitness is a scientifically designed, one-of-a-kind, group personal training workout broken into intervals of cardiovascular and strength training.

Nature's Supplements

May 2015 - Dec 2016

Marketing Director

Marketing Director at Nature's Supplements, nurturing the startup through it's infancy and supporting it's acquisition and integration in 2016 into The Brand Cloud. Our two main brands were;

Dynamic Supplements which was originally established in 2011, but we've reignited the Brand and is the new home of Bodybuilding Supplements and Mutant Nutrition, as a group we have shipped over 350,000 orders since inception.

Naturally Better You, a naturally better Beauty and Health & Wellbeing startup retailer, we quickly built a portfolio of exclusive product and community following.

Country House Outdoor

Mar 2010 - Mar 2015

Marketing and Operations Director

As a previous client of mine, I was providing consultation in regard to retail and eCommerce growth on a retained basis and was asked by the founder to join the Senior Management Team on a full time basis to deliver the strategy I had already laid out. The prospect was enticing and I made the move.

I was responsible for all Marketing Activity and Channel Development. In addition to management of both the Customer Services and Operations Functions. during this intense period of growth we achieved consistent YoY growth despite operating in a rapidly changing supplier environment.

- **Operations Functions Deployed:** Inventory Management, Stock Control System, Dispatch System and Back Office Suite.
- **Marketing Functions:** Above and Below the Line Promotion, Social Media Campaigns, SEO Strategy, PPC Strategy, Email Marketing, Channel Marketing, In-Store Promotion, Media Buying, Packaging Design, Website Merchandising and Feature development.
- Responsible for analysing and deploying **3rd Party Channel Development** which have included; Amazon.co.uk, Amazon.de, Amazon.fr, Amazon.it, Amazon.es, Amazon.com, eBay.co.uk and Play.com

Freelance

May 2008 - Mar 2010

Consultant

Freelance consultancy for at number of businesses looking for retail and eCommerce growth support, including Country House Outdoor.

Pulse Business Solutions

Apr 2004 - May 2008

Marketing Director

For just over 4 Years I founded and managed a small team of four, specialising in Business and Marketing Solutions, based in West Cumbria but operating nationwide.

I was responsible for Business Development, Project Strategy and managing a number of key accounts, including in some cases overseeing projects from conception to completion.

Clients have included, in addition to many local firms, BBC, Glasgow Rangers, Bellerbys, Lancaster University, McKeever Hotels, Senator Homes, Persimmon Homes, Bambury Regeneration Centre, NE Copeland Regeneration, Communicaid and Golden Palace Casino.

I made the decision in 2008 to focus on Retail and eCommerce growth consultancy and helped my team into new roles.

Founding Director

Sep 1998 - Apr 2004

North West Mini Spares

Born from a personal need to obtain increasingly hard to find parts for classic Minis. Founded in 1998, North West Mini Spares was a online business selling New (drop ship) and Used (direct) parts for Minis from 1959 - 2001.

It was an intense period of learning, setting up a website and liaising with suppliers, but over nearly six years I built a great community through forum participation and mailing lists.

I exited the business in 2004 through a sale to a larger Mini Spares business.

EDUCATION

Google Squared Online

March - September 2014

Squared Online Certificate in Digital Marketing

The University of Salford
PG DIP Real Estate & Property Management

September 2008 - July 2009

The Nottingham Trent University
BA Hons Graphic Communications Management

2000 - 2004

SKILLS

Business Partner Competencies: Contract Negotiation and Management, Supplier Liaison, Operations Management, Business Development, Brand Management, Sector Analysis

Marketing Competencies: Multi-Channel Strategy, Marketing Communications, Marketing Automation, Affiliate Marketing, SEO Strategy, Paid Media Strategy, Social Media, Email Marketing and Funnel Management

Technical Competencies: Analytics, Platform Integration, Data Management and Emerging Technologies.