

Alan Bell



By Louise Marsland

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The Hardy Boys promoted client service director Alan Bell to managing director of the Durban agency in December after he played a key role in the J Walter Thompson acquisition...

JWT acquired a majority stake in The Hardy Boys at the end of last year. JWT is one of the key companies in the WPP Group and is headquartered in New York. It has more than 200 offices in over 90 countries and employs nearly 10,000 marketing professionals.

"This is a tremendously exciting time for The Hardy Boys and for our clients as we expand into new markets and disciplines. We are fortunate enough to attract some of the best talent in the region, and my primary role will be to assist Dale Tomlinson (CEO) and Geoff Paton (Chief Creative Officer) in building an environment which empowers people and allows creativity to flourish. Great people create great work. And great work helps build great brands."

Established by Dale Tomlinson in 1994, The Hardy Boys is a multi-disciplinary agency based in Durban, with a complete suite of offerings for highly effective, through-the-line communication campaigns.



ABOUT ALAN BELL

Alan Bell has been appointed Managing Director of The Hardy Boys after serving as Client Service Director for four years. Bell received a B Com from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and was recruited into Unilever's Management Development Program. After four years with the FMCG giant he crossed the floor to the world of advertising. He moved quickly through the ranks at Ogilvy Cape Town and at the age of 29 was running the pan-African business of BP plc. His next move was within the Ogilvy Group, establishing the first African office of activation specialists OgilvyAction in Durban. After 10 years with Ogilvy, he joined The Hardy Boys.

Q: What is at the top of your to do list?

A: Working directly with several senior clients on specific projects to step-change their marketing efforts in the region.

Q: What is your main business challenge?

A: Streamlining client/agency processes to create sufficient time for great creative work.

Q: What does the JWT acquisition mean for The Hardy Boys?

A: It provides a broad intellectual, creative and financial support-base which enables us to provide stronger solutions to our clients' marketing needs, across more geographies. Plus enhanced career opportunities for our talented staff.

Q: What do you wish to achieve in 2015 in your new position?

A: Continue the creative momentum from 2014, raise our profile in the industry, win a big piece of business, and open a

new office.

Q: Most important attribute needed to do your job?

A: Drive.

Q: Your ideal client?

A: One who believes in brands, the power of creativity, and partnership.

Q: The biggest trend to note in your industry?

A: Channel convergence and campaign integration.

Q: How would you describe the advertising industry currently?

A: Fighting hard to stay in front.

Q: How will you make an impact?

A: Focus on actions which can make a difference.

Q: What inspires you?

A: Ideas that touch hearts and improve lives.

Q: What are you currently reading for work?

A: *Game of Thrones*.

Q: Tell us something about yourself not generally known?

A: I studied to be a stockbroker.

Q: At the top of my 'bucket list' is...

A: To sail around the world with my family.

ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

Louise Burgers (previously Marsland) is Founder/Content Director: SOURCE Content Marketing Agency. Louise is a Writer, Publisher, Editor, Content Strategist, Content/Media Trainer. She has written about consumer trends, brands, branding, media, marketing and the advertising communications industry in SA and across Africa, for over 20 years, notably, as previous Africa Editor: Bizcommunity.com; Editor: Bizcommunity Media/Marketing SA; Editor-in-Chief: AdVantage magazine; Editor: Marketing Mx magazine; Editor: Progressive Retailing magazine; Editor: BusinessBrief magazine; Editor: FMOG Files newsletter. Web: www.sourceagency.co.za.

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