

Wonder celebrates a year of leading purpose-based brands



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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Wonder, a purpose-led customer experience agency that recognises the primacy of data, content and technology in building powerful, connected customer experiences, was launched in May 2021 by industry heavyweights Gareth McPherson (ex-Virgin Active chief marketing officer and both managing director and chief creative officer at Publicis Machine) and Helen Ludwig (local ad industry strategy leader and former managing director at Saatchi & Saatchi) with Adrian Hewlett a partner and non-executive chairperson.



L to R: Gareth McPherson, Nicky Scheepers and Helen Ludwig

■ Congrats on one year since launching Wonder. What has the journey been like?

Thank you! It's been a wonderful journey so far! We've enjoyed building out a purpose-based business and have had a lot of fun moments in the process. The journey has been good for us so far, we've seen growth in our team, our client list and capabilities through technology.

We've been fortunate as it has gone better than planned and hoped for, and we're grateful for the partnerships, purpose-driven work and growth that has come our way.



#Exclusive: Industry heavyweights launch Wonder, SA's newest CX agency

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■ What's been most surprising about the journey so far?

Having launched in a constrained business environment, we had planned out a considered prudent approach, however with companies and brands applying new tactics to reach customers, we've seen the opportunities and gaps to assist. This has

helped us partner with some blue-chip clients at an early stage in our company career and it's been the catalyst for our quick growth.

Our robust client list has grown and includes: Unitrans Africa, Score Energy Drinks, Jet, TFG, Fitch & Leedes, Craft & Design Institute, Granny Goose, Solal, Currency Hub, MoonSport, Old Mutual Wealth Double Century, Fynbos, EMGuidance, Sealand, The Coaching Centre... and our two NGO/non-profits we provide services to - I Love Coffee and Love in a Bowl.

■ ***What are some of the lessons you've learnt?***

When we started the business, we shaped it with our values at our core. This has been the bedrock on which our culture is built. We've definitely felt that staying true to our values is paying off.

Being purpose-led and matching clients and projects to our value system really has shaped a strong culture for doing what's right, doing good business and definitely helping deliver strong results and return on investment for them.



#BehindtheMask: Gareth McPherson, CEO of Wonder

Evan-Lee Courie 25 Aug 2021



■ ***Since starting out, has the focus remained the same, or how has it evolved?***

Our focus has very much stayed the same. We feel that our service offering matched our capabilities and is what our clients are after. Business will always be about connecting customers to services/products. Going to market with a holistic understanding of the customer journey and offering the right solutions at any given touch-point has helped shape a true CX offering.

Each challenge is unique, the customer journey is broad and specific tactics may need to be applied to solve a specific challenge.

■ ***What do you see as the biggest accomplishments since launching?***

Finishing a strong first year. There have been some great business accomplishments and also personal ones. We're humbled to have 10 client partners, a staff complement of five, an affiliate agreement with the Publicis Groupe and also to be working with some amazing NGOs, the likes of The Craft and Design Institute, iLoveCoffee and Love in a Bowl.

Besides the day to day, working with organisations that empower people, improve and build communities really does have a rewarding feeling about it.

■ ***Could you elaborate on the company model/the work you do/the culture and offering?***

From the outset, we were hellbent on launching a company that was different. Our unique model and makeup do set us apart. We are a collective of senior thinkers surrounded by our advisor panel of entrepreneurial experts and we overlay this with the smart delivery of specialist skillsets.

It allows us to be a nimble and agile startup but draw on the scale and backing of a solid network. This definitely has proved to be attractive to clients. Our culture of curiosity, mastery, collaboration and purpose has informed the type of clients we have attracted and the type of work we do.

By working across the full customer journey, we've built out connections through communication campaigns, e-commerce platforms, content strategies, digital marketing and media solutions.



#BehindtheMask: Helen Ludwig, chief strategy officer at Wonder

Evan-Lee Courie 15 Sep 2021



■ ■ ***If there's one thing you could improve, what would it be?***

We can't really pinpoint one thing but our view is that the company is never complete, we will always be continuing to improve, and through new technologies, tactics and training we will continue to fine-tune and be better.

■ ■ ***What is your the biggest hope for the next year of Wonder?***

We continue to stay on our trajectory, keep to our north star of purpose-led, live our values, remain humble, grow our talent and make a meaningful difference to our clients' business, our partners, employees and community.

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

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