

Gareth McPherson, CEO of Wonder

 By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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This week, we spoke with Gareth McPherson, CEO of Wonder, the country's newest CX-specific agency that was launched recently...



Gareth McPherson, CEO of Wonder

■ **Could you briefly explain what your role entails?**

I'm the co-founder of Wonder. A customer experience agency. Being a creative at heart, my day-to-day involves engaging with client partners and helping solve business challenges across their customers' journey.



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

Evan-Lee Courie 19 May 2021



■ **What's really behind your mask - literally and figuratively speaking?**

Literally a smiling face. I always try and approach every situation with a glass half full mentality. We are all in challenging times, but to try and keep a positive mindset and upbeat approach has been key to my own wellbeing and also trying to support others.

■ **Growing up, what did you want to be?**

Batman. However, when I found out that wasn't a career, it shifted from being a physio to advertising in the later part of schooling.

■ **How did you end up working in digital marketing?**

My career started when digital wasn't really a thing. Social media never existed. As new technologies were being introduced and marketing started to embrace digital channels and behaviour, I started to upskill and experiment more in digital and new technologies.

I was part of a creative studio that started to pioneer digital campaigns and sell solutions to clients that utilised technology. We won South Africa's first Gold digital award at Cannes in the branded content category for a unique campaign: Send your Facebook profile to Cape Town, for Cape Town Tourism. From there I joined a startup digital design studio called Big Wednesday, which then formed into Machine. We had an amazing run as a leader and front runner in digital marketing.

■ ***What excites you most about your career?***

People. Connecting brands/products/services to customers is all about understanding people and their behaviour. Also, the creative environment is stimulating as no day is ever the same.

■ ***What has been the highlight of your career?***

I had the opportunity to lead a dynamic company, Machine_, for two years. It was made up of 120 talented people across two cities. We continued to build on the strong legacy of its creative culture and we had fun whilst doing it. It made work not feel like work. That path led me client-side for a stint, working on an incredible brand, Virgin. Through both these journeys, it cemented my dream of founding a business in an industry I love, working with partners, clients and people who inspire me and most importantly are friends.

■ ***Where are you based during lockdown?***

We have office space in Cape Town and Johannesburg, but I'm currently at home. I have a study that is set up as a fully functional satellite office – it has fast internet, a fish tank and an overworked coffee machine!

■ ***When you're not busy working, what do you do? How do you socialise these days?***

Our socialising habits have definitely evolved. Virtual hangouts and meetups out in the open seem to be the norm. We've had to keep our circle of seeing people small... but have managed to try to be connected and have downtime. Checking in with friends and family is super important in a time like this.

▣ ***What's the one thing about you that not many people know, but should?***

I have a South African Comedy Award... people don't think I'm a funny guy.

▣ ***What's your favourite meme/gif of all time?***

There are too many, the internet is just the best. Some Sunday mornings, I lie in bed and scroll through TikTok... I get sucked in for an hour or so... people are so creative and funny.

▣ ***Do you have a theme song for 2021?***

The Rocky Theme song comes to mind... we just need to get up and keep pushing forward. Look out for each other and work to overcome challenges and obstacles.

▣ ***Are you watching any series? Reading any books at the moment?***

The Heist currently. I watch loads of documentaries and enjoy biographies.

▣ ***What's next for you?***

A zoom call :) No seriously... a zoom call to discuss setting up an internship programme at Wonder. Watch this space :)

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