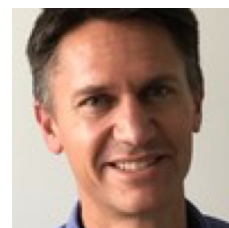


RICHARD POOLE

Curriculum Vitae



CAREER ASPIRATION

I am proud to have led a New Zealand business that over a 13 year period went from seed idea at a local café, to external investment (Sentinel/Seniors Money - 20%); to buy back and independence; to JV (Yellow - 60%); to buy back and independence; to then sale to one of the world's largest companies (Cigna - 100%). The past two years since the sale in April 2016, have been spent working in a transitional phase with the corporate owners, whilst doubling the size of the business in many key metrics. My fulltime contracted term comes to a close shortly, with the handing over of day to day operations.

I am seeking the next challenge to assist other businesses & organisations similarly develop themselves, across some of the areas that I've been fortunate to be immersed in over the past 23 years, in order to help them achieve meaningful growth. Those areas in recent years have focused on developing a content-led business, growing a large on and offline community, delivering a great online customer experience that attracts a large monthly traffic volume, managing & leading a 24/7 operation, leading local and remote teams, together with actively changing lives & creating opportunities for New Zealanders and their families.

KEY SKILLS AND STRENGTHS

Proven business builder	Disciplined operational focus	People person & connector
Strategic marketer & thinker	Understanding markets and relevant content required	Specific mature demographic sector experience
Excellent communicator	Deal maker	Commercial acumen
Builder of large on-line communities	Leader of large data, customer & revenue projects	Broad Technology/innovation sector understanding

CAREER SUMMARY

GM GrownUps New Zealand (A division of Cigna Life Insurance) 2016 – 30th June 2018

Founder/MD GrownUps 2005 - 2016

Special Projects KEA New Zealand 2014-2015

Strategic Partner & Start-Up Investor Pixel Fusion, AdHub (Now NZME), GetFrank 2007-2009

Founder/Principal Co-Pilot Marketing Partners 2002-2006, 2018 -

Marketing & Info Systems Leonard & Dingley (Family business, sold to Toll Holdings) 1997-2002

Product Manager/Marketing Asst (Employee of the Year): Mercedes-Benz NZ (1995-1996)

EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

NZ Direct Marketing & NZ Marketing Awards Judge, 2017/2018

Attendance at Digital Day Out, AI Day, TechWeek, Tech & Marketing Association events

Finance for Non-Financial Managers Exec Short Course (University of Auckland), 2017

BCom - Marketing & Information Systems, 1994

CAREER HISTORY & COMMENTARY

At 45, I feel fortunate to have experienced taking a business from idea generation, through to leading a **sale to a Fortune 100 company**, Cigna Insurance, after they approached us to sell.

GrownUps is the **largest online lifestyle magazine, social club, brain training hub and relevant products & services offering, for the 50+ demographic and their families.**

The website has operated since 2006 and is an advocate for all (slightly!) older New Zealanders and their families, seeking to make the most of everyday. I am very proud of what we've achieved and the feedback that we have **changed many, many lives around NZ for the better.**

The roller coaster ride from finding an undeveloped impending business niche (50+ demographic), to starting-up, to creating a content-driven website with **9000 live primarily unique articles**, to growing a **monthly audience approaching 200,000** mostly New Zealanders & a community membership **base of over 140,000**, to **managing projects** across a myriad of online developments and data requirements, to creating and delivering on **pioneering revenue channels**, to forming, managing & **leading teams** of various sizes over 12 years, and **leading three different commercial deals**, culminating in a 100% sale, has been a journey that has required persistence, resilience, foresight, mental strength, determination & a personality!

Since the purchase of the business in late April 2016, as an independent business unit for most of the past two years, we have successfully, **doubled monthly traffic; grown membership 75%; doubled weekly newsletter subscribers; grown content items (mostly unique articles) by 80% and doubled revenue.**

At the same time, I have initiated or worked on large scale projects including; **Membership growth strategy; Customer/User Experience CX/UX (Customer Journey); Marketing Automation; Creating a single view of the customer; large scale Research & Insights projects.**

Ideas, strategy, execution and working with passionate, smart & genuine people to make stuff happen, are the things that I get excited about.

During 2014/15, I assisted **KEA New Zealand** a couple of days a week on Special Projects including attracting some new commercial partners for sponsorship & advertising.

Prior to GrownUps, I founded **Co-Pilot Marketing Partners**, then over a 4-year period, worked on **strategic marketing projects & web builds** with a mix of **commercial & non-profit** organisations. This was very satisfying and during the earlier days of online projects & websites.

Commercial Projects included; **Mercedes-Benz/Giltrap North Shore, Enterprise Motor Group, Wild Appetite, Retail Holdings/Mission Bay The Promenade, Naked Organics, Evolu skincare, Orams Marine.**

Non-Profit Projects included; **Hospices of Auckland, North Shore Hospice, Eastern Bays Hospice, RSA, Marist School, Rotary Clubs of Auckland**

Prior to Co-Pilot and travel, I worked in our family business, **Leonard & Dingley Stevedoring**, for 5 years. This work included **introducing the company to several new technology** as well as **marketing initiatives** and starting a subsidiary, **Cruise Line Services**, to service the growing cruise market. We had a staff approaching 100 and with Union involvement, made life interesting.

Mercedes-Benz was my first role out of University, working on product launches and marketing initiatives for the new Ssangyong brand, Mercedes Trucks & the new E-Class at that time. This was part of the **Giltrap Group** of companies (German Motor Distributors) at that stage.

KEY SKILLS, EXPERTISE AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Growing an online community

Starting from two members in June 2006 when we went live, this grew to having 145,000+ members. Through hard yakka and the school of hard knocks, we grew very quickly by contacting networks, groups, sports clubs, charities and other communities around NZ that might have an affinity with baby boomers - this quickly led to word of mouth growth, even before SEO & SEM were acronyms. Personalised communication has been at the centre of all activity and as a result we knew a number of our members via meet ups and conversations over the years. Technology allowed us to further personalise all interactions, even to visitors.

Content-led strategy experience

I developed our content-led online platform from Day 1, listening to what people wanted and where we could gain the most traction from a range of topics that interest the 50+ demographic and their families. We were fortunate to work on what is now referred to as 'native' content campaigns, from the very beginning and recognised the need to *speak with an audience and not sell to them*. The strategy included a myriad of categories, including travel, health & wellbeing, finance, retirement living, recipes/food, gardening, pets, home & family. With 9000 individual & mostly unique articles live, as a mix of video, humour, recipes and advertorial that always focused on how the product or service could genuinely help in life vs a sales-drive. The content also included lively discussion groups, live chat and the weekly newsletter sent to over 72,000 people, consistently delivering 22%+ Opens week in week out. High Click Thru Rates were always gained by offering consistent messaging and a quality product, meeting genuine needs – not click-bait!

Creating Revenue via Diverse Revenue Channels

In the online publishing world, using solely an advertising model isn't the easiest nor the smartest revenue model, if it's 1-dimensional and follows only a traditional path. I'm very proud to have operated a start-up business that was profitable within the first 18 months of operation and then consistently throughout its independence, whilst paying market salaries. Channels included advertorial content, newsletter inserts, solus single-branded eDMs, competitions, indepth research, display banners, takeovers, noticeboards, classifieds, leads generation, affiliate, events, online store sales, remarketing/audience extension, social media only targeting & sponsorships.

Over 12 years of leadership in a sector. Ahead of the curve.

I am fortunate to have had over 12 years' experience planning & growing a business around the 50+ sector in NZ. From a starting point of being laughed at by advertising agencies as they felt baby boomers were neither tech-savvy nor 'sexy', we prevailed over time with a myriad of big brand advertisers, tactfully promoting their wares via a content-led strategy. Through countless talks at SeniorNets around NZ; exhibiting at Seniors Day Out; Lifestyle, Travel & Motorhome expos; media exposure & regular research; we rode the shift to greater audience recognition & respect. Some months almost 200,000 unique visitors perused GrownUps and we trust felt inspired to do more with life. I personally spoke with some members towards their end of their lives and heard the impact that we had on them and their families. This to me is success.

Marketing, Strategy & Action Plans

At my core in a business sense, I am focused on ensuring the very best customer experience. The customer was defined as the visitor to the site, a member of the site and also any advertiser. I enjoy developing Marketing Action Plans that think laterally in their approach and at every opportunity focus on how to get things done for low or zero hard cost. Over recent years it has been very satisfying to be involved in sponsorships of community good programmes like the Heartsaver, Become a Heartsaver where we co-sponsored the giveaway of an AED defibrillator every month to a worthy community organisation. At the same time, a sponsor of the Travel & Leisure categories of both the NZ Direct Marketing Awards & Marketing Awards.

Broad commercial and sector experience

I have been fortunate to work with many New Zealand organisations/online properties and have a good understanding of the many business models & challenges to attract and maintain an

audience over a prolonged period of time, which helps deliver success, revenue & a profit. As the technological landscape has evolved, I've been hands-on across a broad cross-section of technology projects that have allowed me to keep up with the rapid pace of change first hand.

Excellent inter-personal, communication and influencing skills

I am personable, passionate, energetic, engaging, balanced & empathetic. I enjoy inspiring people, am self-aware, hopefully humble & am a good listener. GrownUps has been a very people-intensive business, not only communicating with thousands of members and also advertisers, however also developing small teams both onsite and remotely. In an environment where we have required people to be very flexible and multi-skilled as well as empathetic to our community, we have always delivered. Personally, a passion of mine is connecting people everyday.

Objective, strategic and commercial thinking

I have spent my career to date making daily commercial decisions, seeking to be objective when involving clients, partners, shareholders and staff; weighing competing factors and often making decisions and exercising judgment in very short timeframes, under considerable pressure. I pride myself on being able to take complex facts, assess them rapidly and create commercial solutions.

Financial skills, including negotiating & managing a full business sale process

Managed external investments including a JV and full sales process. Although not directly responsible for the full P&L over the past two years, I have been responsible for delivering the best topline results whilst managing expenses as if it was still our own business. Managing daily cashflow requirements as a business owner has been the biggest challenge for survival at times.

Management of Transition from small business to corporate

I've played a leading role in successfully transitioning GrownUps from an independent business, to becoming a hybrid of both entrepreneurial and corporate culture. Whilst not without its challenges, in moving from complete autonomy to being an employee reporting directly to the Cigna CEO, I feel this has been managed maturely, professionally and respectfully. Throughout this sometimes turbulent transition period, we achieved record revenues, large database & subscriber growth, record traffic, significant content growth, new partnerships & a strong sense of teamwork despite a move to remote workers & corporate colleagues in another city.

Making stuff happen

I'm not one to sit around and wonder what's going on or watch the world just go by. I like to be part of it, thinking laterally and logically, to achieve good things for good people, whilst smiling!

CONTACT DETAILS AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

rich.poole@co-pilot.co.nz

Personal interests:

- family, meeting new people, getting people together and making connections
- tennis, swimming, cycling, running (triathlon), yoga, walks, paddle-boarding, travel
- entrepreneurship, reading/audible books, technology & making life better for people
- writing/blogging (*via co-pilot.co.nz*)

May 2018