

Edinburgh Reporter chats – Marc Jones Icebomb Design

✘ WHO ARE YOU AND WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

I'm Marc Jones, director of my website design company, IceBomb. I'm from Edinburgh and a graduate of Edinburgh College of Art. I've been a designer for more than ten years and some of my clients include NHS Health Improvement Scotland and the Highlands of Scotland Film Commission. I work with small businesses too – not just designing websites, but also helping them keep their sites up to date on an ongoing basis. When a potential client looks at your site, they want to know they're looking at something current. It's key to ensure it reflects your business in the best possible light.

WHAT IS THE BUSINESS BOOK THAT YOU RECOMMEND THAT EVERYONE SHOULD READ?

The business book I'd recommend is Rework by Jason Fried and David Heinemeier Hansson. I like how it challenges the validity of long established work methods, that may be holding businesses back. It's a refreshing read.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE YOUR BUSINESS STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

One of my main business strengths is keeping communications straightforward, clear and jargon-free. I've had a lot of positive feedback from clients about this. My weakness is that I'm a perfectionist – I always want to do the very best job I can.

WHAT IS THE DEFINING MOMENT ON YOUR CAREER PATH THAT GOT YOU TO WHERE YOU ARE NOW?

My defining moment was the point where I decided I was going to set up my own business. I've never regretted it.

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR SPARE TIME?

I'm pretty active – I like cycling and football, but I also enjoy cinema and TV. US dramas such as CSI are favourites of mine.

DO YOU THINK YOU ACHIEVE A GOOD WORK/LIFE BALANCE?

I work from 9am-6pm and usually achieve everything I need to within these hours. I think it's important to keep your weekends free, to relax and unwind – that way you do a better job when you're working. And I recently got married, so I want to be able to spend time with my wife and not always be at my laptop.

WHAT MAKES EDINBURGH THE BEST LOCATION FOR YOU TO LIVE/WORK?

I like that it's a city, but a small one. It's got everything within the space of only a few miles – the shops, restaurants, bars and theatres of the city, as well as woodlands, river, hills and beaches. There are not many cities in the world which have all of this in such a small space. But most of all, Edinburgh is just a beautiful place to live.

WHAT WOULD YOU CONSIDER THE PINNACLE OF YOUR CAREER?

I haven't achieved the pinnacle of my career yet! There's so much more I want to do.

IF YOU HAVE A MENTOR, TELL US ABOUT THEM.

I don't have one single mentor – I consider myself lucky that I have a number of friends whose advice I value. Some of them are in business, some of them are not, but all are a great help to me when I need a second opinion. I also attend The Growth Academy sessions, which I've found useful for pointers on how to grow the business.

WHICH NETWORKING GROUPS IN EDINBURGH HAVE YOU FOUND PARTICULARLY HELPFUL?

I prefer informal networking groups, such as No Excuses and 6 Degrees Networking.

WHO ARE YOUR BUSINESS HEROES?

My business hero is entrepreneur and author, Seth Godin – I like his fresh approach to the whole concept of marketing a business.

WHAT ARE YOUR BUSINESS GOALS FOR THE NEXT YEAR?

My aim is to grow the business and to keep improving my skills. I intend to keep learning, to ensure my knowledge and techniques are always at the cutting edge. Clients don't want yesterday's technologies and abilities – they want what's new, now.

DESCRIBE YOUR TYPICAL DAY FOR US

I could sum up my typical day as a combination of designing websites from scratch, re-designing sites for businesses who have approached me for a fresh eye as to how theirs can be improved and a lot of research.

BEST ADVICE YOU EVER RECEIVED?

Do what you enjoy for a living, or do something else. I've always loved design so running my own design business is perfect for me.