

## Packing a lot in, the best 3 in 1 offer around!

Ivan Yardley is not only the MD of Zulu Creative he is also a Lieutenant Colonel in the Territorial Army and to top it all he is a PhD and visiting fellow at the world renowned Cranfield University

In this interview Ivan talks to KPMG Alumni magazine about the road that lead to such an eclectic and interwoven lifestyle.

Ivan worked at KPMG from 1995 to 2002 as the UK Head of Creative Services. Starting with a small team providing design and proposal support to the Birmingham Office the team and role quickly grew to provide brand and marketing support to the whole of the UK with over 75 staff working across a multidisciplinary network.

Working within a large professional services organisation provided Ivan with an invaluable insight to the pressures and challenges within a business context and it was during this period that Ivan invested in his own professional development. First he completed an MBA at a local business school which was soon complemented with an MA in strategic marketing. During this period Ivan was also a serving Officer within the Territorial Army. He served in a number of demanding roles and soon became aware of the similarities of the challenges that face business and military endeavours.

“When leading troops in the military you are having to manage a variety of different factors including risk, culture, emotions and time. However, key is innovation and empowerment: we must work together and trust each other in order to win. ,In business, these principles are just as valid, yet less commonly adopted”

From 2004 to 2007 Ivan led the largest infantry battalion in the British Army . His time at the helm saw his unit deployed to battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan, exposing new dimensions to his own leadership skills.

“Good leadership is fundamental to success. Whether relating to leading troops onto the battlefield or leading employees in business, you need to set the standard, lead from the front and let people understand what you stand for”

In 2002 Ivan left KPMG and established his own company Zulu Creative Limited, a local agency with a growing reputation for delivering innovative and fresh thinking. Zulu provide a range of services from marketing strategy through to integrated implementation solutions such as web sites and graphic design. This wider approach has allowed Ivan to work with a number of different companies providing support and gaining insight into the different challenges facing business today.

# ZULU

---

“Today’s marketplace is global and the ability to adapt quickly is crucial. Good leaders are those who are able to instil this culture of support and innovation within their organisations in order to transpose their skills throughout the management of their business.”

Ivan has adopted many of the lessons learnt from the military and his business experience in his approach to Zulu’s clients..

“The relationship we have with our clients is one of openness, allowing frank and honest communication. We have built very strong relationships with our clients; they trust us and we don’t let them down. Our work comes from recommendation so delivering on what you say you will do is a cornerstone of our approach”

Zulu has continued to grow and key has been Zulu’s client retention and growing reputation. Ivan believes that we are all going through tough times and the next year or two will see even more pressure on business, however he is optimistic about the longer term future.

“In tough times you need a good team and it’s important to innovate and compete to win. There are always opportunities and it’s the team that will make them happen, I believe we have that at Zulu”