

#BehindtheSelfie with... Dillon Warren

 By Leigh Andrews

5 Dec 2018

This week, we go behind the selfie with Dillon Warren, founder and financial director at above-the-line and below-the-line creative agency, The Brand Cartel.



Warren captions this: "The work never stops at the Brand Cartel."

1. Where do you live, work and play?

I work and live in Brand Cartel's office, on the roof of Bryanston Shopping Centre. In my free time, I play with the dogs, which also live in our office.

“





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Our Managing Director catches quick naps throughout the day to stay on track with his busy lifestyle. #YesHesADog #BostonTerrierBoss #TheBrandCartel

A post shared by [Brand Cartel](#) (@thebrandcartel) on Jul 4, 2018 at 6:31am PDT

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2. What's your claim to fame?

I can lick my elbow. Other than that, I'm a pretty good cook.

3. Describe your career so far.

Starting Brand Cartel at the age of 23 with no experience in agency life was either very brave or very dumb – I'm still not sure which.

The first three to four years were extremely tough, not only from a financial perspective but from stress and mental health perspectives, too.

“



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You might see a familiar face (or three) in the November issue of Entrepreneur Magazine on shelves now. #BrandCartel #EntrepreneurMagazine thanks for the awesome shot @devinlesterphotography

A post shared by Dillon Warren (@dillonwar) on Oct 25, 2018 at 9:13am PDT

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my partners and I toughed it out and in time built an incredible team around us. Since then, we have been growing from strength to strength.

4. Tell us a few of your favourite things.

A good joke, trustworthy people, and a glass of wine at the end of the day.

5. What do you love about your industry?

“ Marketing is one of the most technical and scientific business processes, in my opinion. Getting it wrong can be devastating, but getting it right can be oh-so-rewarding. ”

Being an agency allows us to consult and learn from multiple wins and losses simultaneously, across multiple industries and platforms.

“



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behind the scenes: LCN tea party #creativeagency #lcn #nails
#photoshootbehindthescenes #clientphotography @lookinggoodlcn

A post shared by [Brand Cartel \(@thebrandcartel\)](#) on May 11, 2018 at 12:31am PDT

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This means that every single day is a new challenge. It's not for the faint hearted, but for easily bored, adrenaline junkies it's absolutely thrilling.

6. Describe your average workday, if such a thing exists.

I'm a bit of a Jack of all trades, so it's hard to pin one activity down.

It's usually a jumble of brainstorming, client “problem-solving” meetings, tracking the performance of campaigns, developing strategies and playing with our resident Boston terrier and pug.

“



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It's Thursday, or as we like to call it: day 4 of the 'hostage situation'. What are you planning for the weekend?

A post shared by [Brand Cartel \(@thebrandcartel\)](#) on Jul 19, 2018 at 7:00am PDT

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7. What are the tools of your trade?

I studied business management, law and economics but eight years down the line, I would say it's actually people skills, mixed with search engine optimisation, digital advertising platforms and website user experience – and my trusty MacBook.

8. Who is getting it right in your industry?

It's a tough question because the industry is so broad, and many brands are winning in different ways.



Insurance rivals go head-to-head in aid of charity

13 Mar 2017



I would say King Price is doing a great job from a humour angle, Virgin Active Red from a positioning perspective and FNB from a customer experience perspective.

9. List a few pain points the industry can improve on.

“ The one mistake brands do make is misunderstanding who their customers are, or what they want. Making one of these mistakes means that the basis of their marketing strategy is misdirected, at a fundamental level. ”

Often agencies would rather appease the client by running with a flawed campaign than to risk damaging the relationship by telling the client that they are wrong.

10. What are you working on right now?

Personally, we're launching a number of websites and the ensuing “go-to-market” strategies.

“



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We recently hosted local and international chefs for a private dinner on our roof top garden. International chefs, Dennis Prescott, Michael Elgebde, Elijag Addo along with local culinary superstars, Noni Macombuka, Vusi Ndlovu and many more were treated to a local food experience provided by Organic Emporium -

Natural and Whole Food Emporium at @Bryanston Shopping Centre Photo cred:
@alexi_wolf

A post shared by [Brand Cartel](#) (@thebrandcartel) on Nov 30, 2018 at 7:44am PST

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From a Brand Cartel perspective, with December already underway, we are currently battening down the hatches and getting ready for the retail season.

11. Tell us some of the buzzwords floating around in your industry at the moment, and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself.

Buzzwords: Trackability, cost-per-conversion, user behaviour analysis.

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Art looking at art.

A post shared by [Dillon Warren](#) (@dillonwar) on May 27, 2018 at 6:42am PDT

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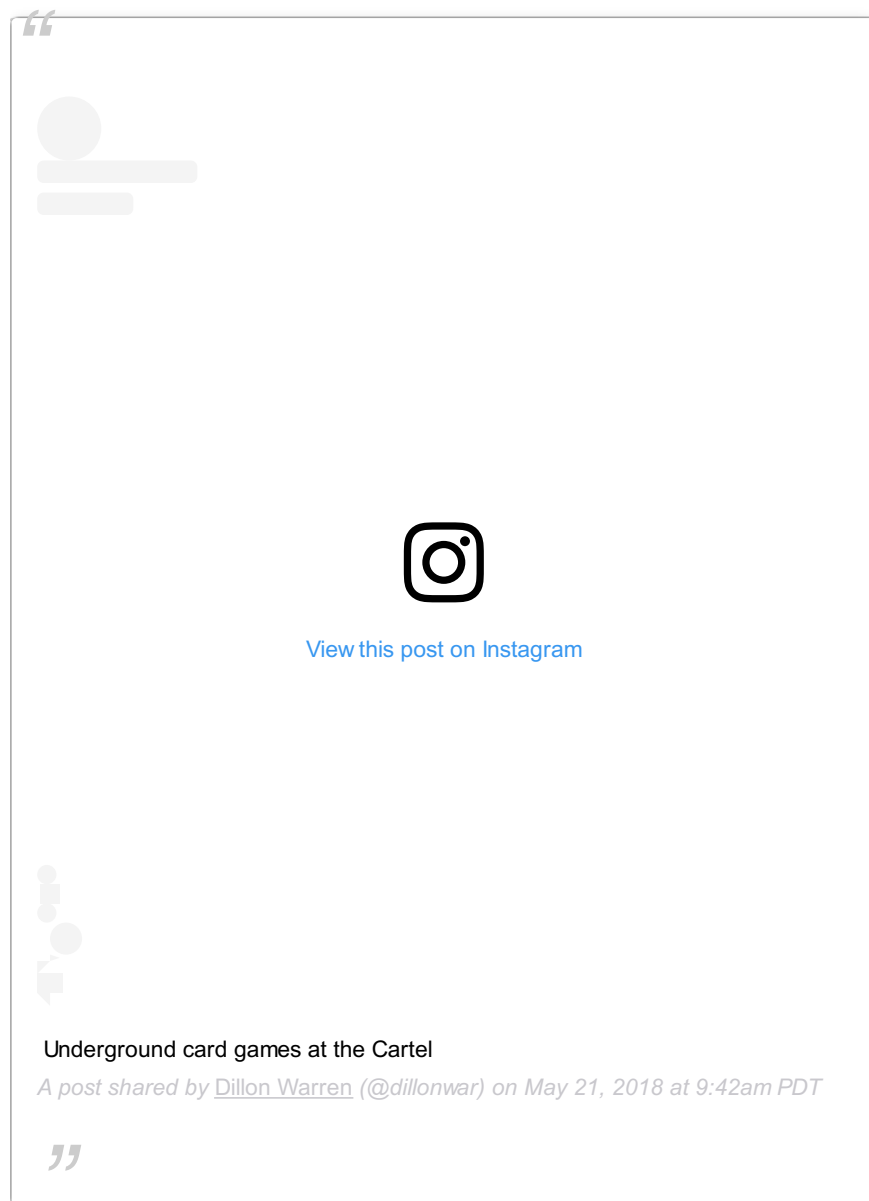
Catchphrases: Our values have become our catch phrases, e.g.: Wag your tail; check it (don't wreck it); put your name to it; keep it real etc.

12. Where and when do you have your best ideas?

Either while working out or in the shower, it's 50/50.

13. What's your secret talent/party trick?

I have a great card trick, after a few tequilas I have also been known to do ‘the worm’.

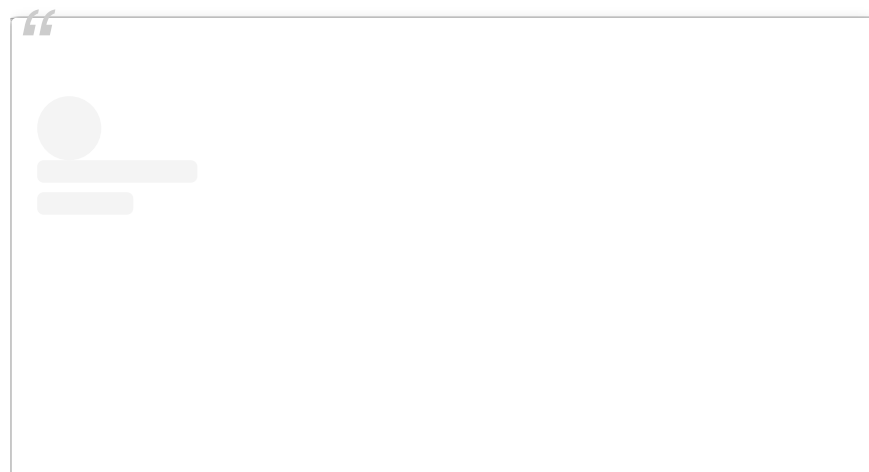


14. Are you a technophobe or a technophile?

100% Technophile!

15. What would we find if we scrolled through your phone?

Photos of my fur-child Baxter in every imaginable setting/pose/outfit, other than that – ideas for designs from the web.





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The best way to spend a Sunday

A post shared by [Dillon Warren](#) (@dillonwar) on Jul 9, 2017 at 4:34am PDT

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16. What advice would you give to newbies hoping to crack into the industry?

You need to be passionate about being creative and want to make it a full-time career, it's not a part-time kind of career.

Simple as that. Visit the [Brand Cartel website](#) for more, and follow [Warren](#) and [Brand Cartel](#) on Instagram and [LinkedIn](#) for the latest updates.

**Interviewed by Leigh Andrews.*

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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