

#BehindtheSelfie with... Ryan McFadyen

 By [Leigh Andrews](#)

11 Sep 2019

This week, we go behind the selfie with Ryan McFadyen, co-founder and head of strategy at HaveYouHeard.



McFadyen captions this: "Our Saturday morning ritual, croissants and starting the day in Green Point Park."

1. Where do you live, work and play?

I'm fortunate enough to live work and play in and around the city centre of Cape Town, but have the luxury of also getting to play and work in incredible places like New York, London and Paris, amongst others.

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💎💎PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT: This is no throwback, because it's happening live - our co-founder Ryan McFadyen is at DNA Paris today presenting his innovative thoughts 💎💎💎💎💎. Stay on our page to follow the latest updates of the day. #Innovation #dnaparis #summerdesignconference #TheMindOfRyan #hyhGlobal #ParisianPresentations #Design

A post shared by [HaveYouHeard Marketing \(@haveyouheard_agency\)](#) on Jun 27, 2019 at 1:58am PDT

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2. What's your claim to fame?

Surviving three boys under the age of five while building a house and an agency. Although, truth be told, my wife did all the hard work.

3. Describe your career so far.


It's been a constant journey of exploration and learning. From working on the client side to starting a business, to starting an agency, to growing an agency... it's been lots of fun, heartache, long hours, stress and proud moments.

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50 shades of green  #Green #AgencyThings
#ColourOfTheWeek #HYH

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I've also been extremely lucky to learn from and work with amazing people, who are much smarter than me.

4. Tell us a few of your favourite things.

I love spending time with my incredible wife, Nicky; playing non-stop with my boys; drinking champagne; eating good food and exploring, whether it be new cities, ways of thinking or new skills. I'm currently trying to improve my cooking skills...

5. What do you love about your industry?

No two days are the same. We constantly get to explore, create and come up with an endless list of what-if's.



HaveYouHeard's new identity offers a more holistic approach to advertising

Juanita Pienaar 1 Sep 2017



Most importantly, we get to actually try some of the crazy what-if's we come up with.

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

As with my home life, I'm incredibly fortunate to have found an amazing partner who does all the hard work.

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(H)ave (Y)ou (H)eard? Our new rebrand is officially lit! 💎💎#hyh

A post shared by [HaveYouHeard Marketing \(@haveyouheard_agency\)](#) on Jan 25, 2018 at 6:39am PST

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So, my average day consists of understanding our clients’ major pain points and figuring out innovative ways to help them address those and build their businesses.

I’m also fortunate to do so with an incredible bunch of highly-talented people, who never allow me to settle or sit down for too long!

7. What are the tools of your trade?

Our most critical tool currently is our in-house insights department. It allows us to constantly be immersed within culture and the minds of the consumers influencing it.

We utilise these insights to build strategies that effectively influence behaviour and place our clients at the forefront of culture.

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To the team of two who started the magic that is hyh, happy birthday! Here’s to 10 more years 💎💎💎💎💎!! #AgencyThings #10thBirthday #HappyBirthdayToYa

A post shared by [HaveYouHeard Marketing \(@haveyouheard_agency\)](#) on Oct 10, 2018 at 7:31am PDT

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We’re also experimenting with behavioural psychology, behavioural economics and redefining influence theory.

8. Who is getting it right in your industry?

I'm a huge fan of the work Wieden & Kennedy are doing. They consistently produce work based on insights that tap into the cultural *zeitgeist*. BETC in Paris are also doing some cool things.

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

I think there are two main pain points:

The **billing structures within advertising** need to be relooked. Currently, we sell hours, where our real value is in the ideas we generate, and the impact these ideas have on our clients' businesses.



Billing on outcomes versus hours

Phillip Britz, Urban Espresso 10 Aug 2017



At the same time, a more effective way of **measuring the impact of these ideas and accountability** would assist in justifying a different billing structure.

10. What are you working on right now?

We're currently working on a couple of very exciting global projects across various sectors, from alcohol to energy, as well as some local projects across disciplines with some very exciting new sponsorship-thinking rolling out.

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

Influencer marketing is still a key buzzword flying around both locally and globally, but there seems to be a significant lack of understanding of how it works, the value it can add and how to do it properly.



Give the people what they want: How influencer marketing is changing

Babalwa Nyembezi 29 Aug 2019



We prefer to talk influence marketing and how you can use the power of influence to effect real change and have a significant impact.

Within the agency, we're also utilising **social herding**, **choice overload** and various other behavioural economics lingo, along with some neuroscience, which is making our creative brainstorming really interesting!



The decoy effect: how you are influenced to choose without really knowing it

Gary Mortimer 17 Apr 2019



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

Always in the shower... not sure if it's because it's the only time I get some quiet time, as a young dad, or if it's the sound of the water.

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

I can pick up a wine bottle cork or champagne cork from the floor without using my hands or bending my legs.



McFadyen captions this: "Friday night weekend celebrations with champagne and 'kiddie champagne', more commonly known as Appletiser."

14. Are you a technophobe or a technophile?

Definite technophile... I love playing with the latest gadgets and, for that reason, it seems that I'm the go-to IT guy in my family.



WOM campaign increases brand engagement

8 Nov 2014



I do find myself asking them to switch it off and on again a lot!

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

Loads of downloaded TED talks; podcasts; episodes of *Paw Patrol*; and numerous random photos taken by every member of my family, including my one-year-old, Finn.

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

I believe curiosity is the key to success within this industry.

“ Constantly keep trying to understand consumers better, understand the trends that are influencing them and explore new techniques that challenge the traditional advertising approach. ”

Simple as that. Follow McFadyen on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#); and HaveYouHeard on their [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) 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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