Anthony Willoughby

Adventure, metaphor and inspiration

One of the minds behind the “Off the Wall Dialogue” was Anthony Willoughby. Here we learn a little about his rather unusual background and where his philosophy of “Territory Mapping” comes from…

Anthony was raised in Africa and vaguely schooled in England and the US. In 1973 at the age of 22, he left the UK with a one-way ticket on the Trans-Siberian Express for Japan in search of inspiration, adventure and opportunities. Over the decades he has built a number of highly entrepreneurial businesses.

After an expedition across Papua New Guinea, where he had 24 bottles of wine and no food, yet one person complained non-stop, he established the first outdoor leadership and team development company in Japan and called it “I Will Not Complain”. In 1992 he opened an office in Beijing and a training centre in an old courtyard house on the Great Wall, which is where the “Off the Wall Dialogue” took place.

Based on conversations Anthony had with tribal chiefs in East Africa and Papua New Guinea about the importance of their territory, he developed a visualizing process called “Territory Mapping”. This is a process which crosses all cultural, hierarchical and language barriers to bring clarity to the most complex business situations. “Territory Mapping” was recently described in the Independent Newspaper in the UK as a process “that enables you to crash through civilization and see where you are and where you are going with new clarity”.

“Territory Mapping” also uses the metaphors of mountains, walls and tribal cultures to bring greater insights to business and organization issues. To make these lessons “real” Anthony often takes executives to spend time with tribes in East Africa as well as to cross mountain ranges in Japan and spend time on the Great Wall of China.

Anthony lives in Japan and regularly gives speeches to organizations in Europe and Asia. He is also co-curator of the annual TEDx Great Wall.

About Omnicom’s “Off the Wall Dialogue”, Anthony says: “I was amazed how participants seemed to embrace a totally new way to look at things, and the humility and enthusiasm with which they embraced their time in the community.”

To learn more about Anthony, please visit www.campfire.me
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I first encountered Anthony Willoughby at an Omnicom Greater China Leadership Meeting in September 2010. I was fascinated with his methodology (based around the metaphor of Hunting Mammoths using Masai Warrior Tribe Maps) and immediately started working with him to put together a Leadership Retreat for my top 30 leaders across TBWA\Greater China, which we did at the end of May. The objective was to figure out what we need to do as a bonded group of leaders to achieve our "Dare to Double" 3 Year Plan - how do we protect our business, which new "Mammoths" are we hunting, what about People and Culture? We met at the IWNC Training Centre 2 hours outside Beijing. Not really a Training Centre but a 100 year old Chinese courtyard building, with 2x10 people dormitories, a large internal shady courtyard where some of our sessions took place, and a fabulous staff who cooked brilliant food. The other sessions took place up on the Wall - there can be no more powerful metaphor for the barriers we face than the Great Wall of China.

We came away bonded as a group of leaders, with some war stories, some legends, some common language, and more importantly a clear plan, per office, of some of the things they need to do to help us be more TBWA; how to build the culture, how to energise staff, how to collaborate, how to make ourselves more attractive to clients and prospects. A huge array of ideas.

Anthony also brought in a Colonel from the British Army who talked about leadership from a military sense (Chain of Command, Serve to Lead), as well as a senior ex-McKinsey guy who talked about priorities in Professional Business Services. Both added a different and useful perspective.

I say "encountered" because that's what you do with Anthony. You don't "meet with him" as you would any other corporate trainer, you encounter him and have a fundamentally transformative experience, if your mind is open to it. His life story alone captivated my team for an hour and humbled us, sitting at our desks all our lives when he's been out there growing up in Kenya, climbing mountains, trekking across Papua New Guinea, sending his kids to live with Masai tribes for a month when they're 16 and many other "out there" experiences.

Net net, this was not some wanky sort of corporate facilitated talking shop - it was a slightly eccentric, provocative, bonding and uniquely "TBWA" experience.

Regards,

Ian Thubron
Group President
大中华区集团总裁
Territory Mapping Participant Comments

“There is so much information here that we would never have captured in any other forum. Many thanks for sharing your life experiences and providing us with the opportunity to try out the village maps in identifying our own challenges within the department”. Pauline Wyatt-Ingram, HR Director, CMS Cameron McKenna

“I would like to thank you for your incredible contribution to making our event a success. Your journeys and learning’s provided a great link to what we in IBM are also aspiring to achieve. The clarity you gave linking leadership, team contribution, community, self and achievement provided a great framework for our teams as they enter into a period of great challenges and growth”. Steven Daskalakis, Marketing Communications, IBM Asia

“For me, Territory Mapping is a totally new, exciting and fun approach to business planning. It enables the user to benchmark where their organisation or team is and explore where they want to be: what the goals are and who the target clients and partners should be. It’s a methodology that can be applied bottom up/top down in any organisation. Everyone’s views are important and mapping your work territory with pictures is something anyone can do. It’s fascinating how everyone’s maps are so different; pictures are evidently more successful in articulating views more accurately than words!” Leanne Marr, Manager Tourism South East UK

“Territory Mapping helped us to develop a clear sales strategy with our client partners, and we become the most successful joint sales team for our region by quite a margin. I believe Territory Mapping played an important role in enabling us to achieve that success”. Damian Powell, Thomson Financial, Japan

“The great value of Territory Mapping was that it gave people who know each other quite well the opportunity to look at the issues through a different lens. I found the mapping process really short circuited the conversation and got to honestly much quicker”. Nick Kitchen, Global HR Manager IT, Unilever

“The Territory Mapping session gave us time to reflect and plan a map of our vision. The key issues were surprisingly simple, yet had not before been acknowledged. Like most things in life once one has diagnosed the issue it is relatively easy to deal with them” Dr. Julia Riley, Consultant, Royal Marsden Hospital, London.

"I am delighted to say that every comment about you was outstanding, brilliant, inspirational etc. - you are a star. Thank you so much for making it work so well. I am absolutely delighted, and will be very happy to use you next year.Prof, Nigel Nicholson, Organisational Behaviour Department, London Business School. Sloan Programme

Warrior School & Great Wall of China Participant Comment.

“I cannot recall any other occasion when all involved derived so much benefit personally and professionally” Andrew Finney, Managing Director, Countrywide Mobility

"Certainly a life changing experience for me both from a personal and business perspective. “Mike Loftus, Clydesdale Bank

“The technique of Territory Mapping provided participants with a facility to undertake fundamental reviews of their individual businesses and plan for the future. Overall – a totally constructive experience.” Bob Helsby, Managing Director, Document Despatch Ltd

“A very different approach to compiling a modern business strategy and plan by considering how tribes defend and expand their territory in remote locations. The setting of the course on The Great Wall of China was simply magnificent. This added considerably to the whole success of the course by allowing me to free up my mind entirely which helped clarify my own business problems as well as helping others with theirs. The personal experience of walking and sleeping on the wall will not be forgotten.” Richard Moakes, Clydesdale Bank
Welcome to our first Omnicom Greater China newsletter, the latest stage of an overall initiative that began last month with the “Off The Wall” Omnicom Greater China Management Dialogue in Beijing.

It is impossible to ignore the strategic importance of Greater China and much of what is happening here is increasingly having an impact on the way the world will look, behave and consume in the future. The directors of Omnicom arrive in Beijing this month to hold our Group’s first board meeting in Asia.

As China’s importance continues to grow for our clients and our agencies, it becomes crucial for us to be better informed about what is happening within our immediate network. For all of us at the 30 + fast growing Omnicom agencies in Greater China, working collaboratively with a shared vision is a unique opportunity to further motivate our outstanding workforce, and to continue to attract the brightest and most creative talent in order to keep providing the exceptional quality of service our best-in-class agencies are known for.

In this first edition of “Off the Wall”, you’ll find news about our agencies’ latest activities, CSR and award wins. Look out for strategy and thought leadership pieces.

We bring you a snapshot of last month’s “Off the Wall Dialogue” meeting, which was held at the Great Wall and brought together the heads of our companies across Greater China. Several of our executives told us that it was the first time they truly felt part of the Omnicom “family”. We also take a look at our involvement with the World Economic Forum in Davos and Tianjin.

I am always happy to hear from you, whether it is about the newsletter or to discuss business opportunities, so please email or call me with any ideas, suggestions or comments you might have.

Together we are stronger. It is that simple.

Serge

OFF THE WALL....

September saw the first “Off the Wall Omnicom Dialogue” at China’s Great Wall. The event inspired this newsletter’s name and is planned to become an annual event. 50 leaders from over 30 Omnicom agencies in Greater China met for 2 days of dialogue and brainstorming. The event was humbling and refreshing. We stayed in dormitories, there was no internet access, and hot water and electricity were sporadic. It allowed everyone to disconnect properly from the outside world and engage with each other.

The event was masterminded by Anthony Willoughby from IWNC (see profile article Page 3). Participants were given a lesson in “Territory Mapping”, inspired by the Masai tribe.

Continued on page 2