

BEN GRAINGER

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DipIoD, MCIM, BA Hons

Leadership / Strategy & Planning / Delivery of Growth, Change, & Profit

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PROFILE

A commercially focused, strategic, and hands-on leader, with a strong record of creating and delivering successful growth strategies and organisational change in a breadth of leadership and marketing roles.

- An intuitive thinker, able to spot opportunities and possessing the drive and dynamism to bring them to fruition
- A leader and influencer, experienced at Board, Committee, and SLT level, with strong networking and relationship-building skills that win the confidence of stakeholders and enable profitable collaboration
- CIM-qualified marketer, also experienced in change projects, customer experience, operations, IT & HR

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Repositioned organisation, increasing relevance to customer base via branding, product, sales and service channel development, resulting in a 253% increase in Assets Under Management and 42% membership growth
- Proposed, developed, pitched, then led delivery of major transformation project, resulting in improvements in customer onboarding experience, 50% savings on processing time, and increased operational resilience
- Led review of organisational structure, identifying areas for improvement in efficiency and effectiveness, then led their delivery, resulting in savings of over £300k pa of fixed costs
- Created a customer-centric and performance-focused culture ensuring excellent customer feedback, low complaints volumes, and continued delivery of record new business levels YoY
- Led nationwide above-the-line marketing campaign alongside establishing a national network of partner retailers focused on sales and merchandising excellence, resulting in increased sales even in recessionary environment

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Jul 2014 to Dec 2022 Metfriendly

Metfriendly is dedicated to creating financial peace of mind for police officers, staff and their families via savings, investment, and protection products

Chief Operating Officer/Strategic Projects (SMF 3 & 24) - October 2018 – December 2022

Led the professionalisation of the Operations, IT and HR functions, delivering a customer-focused culture, a focus on cost-to-serve, and a step-change in operational resilience. All this was achieved whilst processing record levels of new business and against the backdrop of the global pandemic.

- **Processed successive years of record investment levels:** led the operational function to efficiently process successive years of record new business, returning the firm to profit-making status and increasing Assets Under Management by 57% to £286m (2019-2022)
- **Proposed, pitched, and spear-headed delivery of Transformation Project:** Achieved significant improvements in onboarding experience as well as automation efficiencies of 50%. Increased operational resilience through new, modularised, and more easily evolvable platform, less reliant on key personnel
- **Delivered significant fixed cost savings:** Conducted review of organisational structure to identify changes to improve efficiency and effectiveness, then led their delivery, resulting in savings of over £300k pa of fixed cost base

- **Proposed and delivered programme of organisational and cultural change:** Ensured that the Society's business aims were best supported through a greater results focus, reworked reward and remuneration, light and effective processes, targeted team support, and more
- **Led creation of customer-centric culture:** Optimised customer journeys, introduced target Service Levels, standardised procedures, improved product, service and sales training, and customer feedback mechanisms. This resulted in a Consumer Duty-ready organisation, with consistently strong Customer Satisfaction, Net Promoter, and Customer Effort scores
- **Boosted Operational Resilience:** Strengthened the resilience of our Important Business Services via process mapping, Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plans, cyber security, supplier management, and more
- **Won AFM Conference buy-in for cross-sector marketing initiative:** Pitched idea for partnered marketing initiative to national conference, winning funding from the Board of the Association of Financial Mutuals (AFM)

Sales & Marketing Director (CF 1) - July 2014 – December 2018

Over four years repositioned Metfriendly with new branding, products of greater relevance, and more accessible marketing channels, as well as creating a team focused on results and good member outcomes. This resulted in the turnaround of the firm's trajectory, with year after year of membership growth with record levels of investment.

- **Delivered repeated records in new business investment and reversal of decline in customer base:** Developed marketing strategy and plans, supported by MRS award-nominated research, then led execution resulting in customer growth for the first time in 17 years and year after year of record investment, increasing Assets Under Management by 60% to £182m
- **Rebranded and redeveloped communications to appeal to broader market:** Led brand and communications redevelopment, broadening Metfriendly's appeal, whilst maintaining attraction to traditional base.
- **Developed and launched new, more relevant products:** Based on customer insight, developed new products to closely meet customer needs including more affordable, compelling, and flexible savings and protection products
- **Established high-performing team:** Created a close-knit and performance-focused sales and marketing function, supporting them to deliver ambitious goals and realise their potential
- **Forged successful partnerships:** Led targeted sponsored initiatives with police services, the Police Federation, and many more stakeholder organisations, guaranteeing access to key segments via digital and face-to-face channels
- **Increased effectiveness of marketing channels:** Redeveloped existing channels (DM, merchandising, events, website), applying close ROI measurement and A/B testing to all elements, resulting in continuous improvement,
- **Launched digital channels:** Developed email marketing, introduced blog, social channels, PPC, and SEO, expanding the organisation's reach and frequency of contact and introduced CRM (HubSpot) to nurture and convert leads
- **Created impactful content marketing strategy via digital channels:** Using Metfriendly's expertise in police financial matters drove digital content marketing strategy, to win, nurture and convert email and social contacts

Nov 2013 to Jul 2014 City of London Corporation

Marketing Manager (FTC)

- Created adult learning marketing plan, resulting in an increase in take up of courses and apprenticeships

Jan 2013 to Oct 2013 Stubbs & Co, Andrew Geoghegan

Business Development Consultant

- Researched German-speaking markets, developed positioning, then led pitches resulting in first sales in new region

Jan 2007 to Dec 2012 Platinum Guild International (PGI)

Trade Marketing Manager

A renowned global marketing association in the jewellery sector funded by major mining companies. Overall activities across six years resulted in UK platinum sales growth even in recessionary climate.

- Based on research, managed nationwide ATL campaigns integrated with in-store sales and marketing activity
- Designed and delivered partnered marketing plans via leading retailers, manufacturers and designers
- Created, managed, and delivered digital marketing activities including both channel development (websites, SEO, iframes, email, PPC, and social) and the creation of content (video, photography, training, education)
- Delivered trade show presence and other events and led relationship development efforts

Nov 2005 to Dec 2006 BBC Worldwide

Trade Marketing Executive

- Created and delivered nationwide in-store marketing activities via multiple and independent retailers
- Activities supported record sales of biggest selling magazine issue in UK (Radio Times Christmas issue)

Oct 2003 to Oct 2005 Rainmaker Consulting (*Business Development for Marketing agencies*)

Jul 2002 to Dec 2002 Robert Bosch GmbH, Goettingen, Germany (*Internship*)

CERTIFICATES & MEMBERSHIPS

- Institute of Directors: Diploma (Pass) and Certificate in Company Direction (Distinction)
- Chartered Institute of Marketing: Communications Ambassador for Greater London Regional Group
- Chartered Institute of Marketing: Professional Diploma in Marketing (Merit)
- Chartered Institute of Marketing: Customer Experience Management
- Association of Financial Mutuals: Accelerate Leadership Development Programme

EDUCATION

- Queens University, Belfast (including one year at Bologna University), European Studies B.A. (Hons), 2.1 (2002)
- Languages: English (Native), German (Advanced), Italian (Intermediate)

PERSONAL INTERESTS

I have a huge variety of interests and am passionate about running, rugby, guitar, live music, reading, enjoying nature, travelling, practicing my language skills, and visiting family in Northern Ireland and Germany