



SIMON NORTH
Creative Director
JUST ASSOCIATES

I graduated from Medway College of Art, University of Kent, with a degree in visual communications and was very lucky to begin my advertising career as an Art Director at **McCann Erickson** one of the most creative advertising agencies in London.

Working with Creative Director Andy Rorke on the **Levi's Jeans** campaign I was even more lucky to be given responsibilities beyond my experience, working with an international creative group, ensuring that the Levi's campaign we were developing had a broad appeal across Scandinavia and Europe.

This campaign went on to win the **Golden Lion** at the Cannes awards.

I was transferred to Oslo as Creative Director and worked there for two years on the Levi's account and other local accounts including **Esso** and **General Motors**.

I returned to the London office and became a roving creative on international business for McCann Erickson.

After meeting Kurt Plattner at the London office, I was offered the opportunity of working as an Art Director for McCann Erickson in Vienna.

I felt extremely honored when the **Austrian Art Directors Club** voted me president of the newly formed Art Directors Club Austria.

During this period, I was still able to work on international business and developed together with creative director David Leddick the *'Because You're Worth It'* campaign for **L'Oréal Paris**.

I also worked in the Frankfurt office on the **General Motors** account developing numerous campaigns for the German speaking market.

I left McCann Erickson and started the agency Hofbauer North & Partner, in Vienna. Here we proved that a small startup agency can succeed with big ideas and we went on to win numerous awards and pitches against the goliaths.

I also developed a communications strategy and creative campaign for **Almdudler** soft drink which was hugely successful and is still running today!

Wikipedia – 'The original Almdudler is a sweetened carbonated beverage made of herbal extracts. Almdudler has been called the *"National Drink of Austria"*. Its popularity in Austria is second only to Coca-Cola. About 80 million litres of the beverage are produced per year. Almdudler is currently bottled in Austria, Germany, Croatia, Belgium, and Switzerland. It is further exported to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, the Netherlands, Romania, Australia, and the United States. The Almdudler advertising messages succeeded in passing on a kind of Heimat emotion standing out from "global" beverages. The slogan of a widely known advertising campaign, in the local Austro-Bavarian dialect, has become a well-known phrase in Austria: Wenn de kan Oimdudla haum, geh' i wieda ham! (Standard German: Wenn die keinen Almdudler haben, gehe ich wieder heim! English: *'If they don't have Almdudler, I'll go back home!'* This advertising concept was written by Creative Director Simon North, an Englishman' <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Almdudler>

This was an exciting and vibrant time but I wanted to develop my copywriting skills in my mother tongue so I returned to McCann Erickson as a global concern once more to help me achieve my ambitions.

I moved back to the London office again, working on international accounts.

A brief came in to develop a TV campaign for a client of **McCann Erickson, Kenya**, which I presented to them in Nairobi.

This became an award-winning commercial in East Africa.

To my delight I was then asked to go out again to **Kenya** as Creative Director for McCann Erickson and to be based in Nairobi for some very happy years.

Working on **Kenya Breweries, General Motors Kenya, Coca Cola, Gillette** and ongoing accounts.

I got involved in the *'Out of Africa'* lifestyle and the experience will rest with me forever.

I was privileged to build a close contact with Dr Richard Leakey and did communications work for the **Kenya Wildlife Service**, raising funds with a video he took to the USA bringing back over one million dollars in funds for the KWS.

I helped the KWS get global attention by pulling off various gorilla stunts such as the burning of the tusks by **President Daniel Arap Moi**.

I have been made an honorary elder of the Maasai tribe for the support I have given them.

I will never forget working with the Anti-Poaching Unit in the Tsavo East game reserve. During a General Motors presentation on lake Kisumu, I collapsed and had to be flown back to Nairobi with malaria. It took me five weeks to recover.

Whilst recovering I was head hunted for a position in Dubai with Memac (Ogilvy), UAE.

This was a fast, exciting market and a very cosmopolitan city where I stayed for three years. At this point McCann London contacted me once more and I was offered the role of Regional Creative Director Africa with the newly formed McCann Erickson Africa.

Based in Johannesburg; I organized creative workshops in McCann offices around the continent, travelling almost every week to a different part of the continent.

My responsibilities also included being creative director on the **Coca Cola** account in 39 countries. Working on the creative for Gillette Africa.

On a trip to Lagos for Coca-Cola I was attacked and shot at by an armed gang together with the Coca-Cola marketing director. He was badly injured but we both survived due to quick thinking of our driver and a strong creative strategy!

Other responsibilities, apart from saving the clients lives, included creative work for Gillette throughout Africa, extensive T.V. production as well as projects for the Johannesburg office. I worked for three years as regional creative director McCann Erickson Africa.

Fadi Salameh, the director of Afkar Promo Seven (McCann Erickson) in the Arabic speaking Middle East offered me a regional creative position based in Jeddah. I decided to take up the challenge, and stayed there for three years, working on regional new business pitches as well as ongoing accounts.

At this point I was contacted by David Warden, CEO of McCann Erickson in London about coming back to Europe and was placed in the Vienna office for one year to restructure the creative department.

After leaving McCann Erickson Austria I worked on an art project for the Braille Institute in Vienna. This culminated in an art exhibition to raise funds for this well-known charity for the blind.

Since returning to England in 2007 I have been working as a communications consultant with various clients and have completed three documentary films on the Thames sailing barges. (traditional sailing craft) One being funded by a **National Heritage** lottery grant. Winning the Literary Award 2019 by the Society for Sailing Barge Research.

Most recently I worked as creative coordinator on the **Kenya Co-operative Bank** TV commercial 'Roots' for Kenya.

I also re-positioned the **Lidl** brand UK and created their line '**Big on Quality Lidl on price**' broadening their main target audience to include AB groups.

I am a team leader enjoy challenging projects producing innovative solutions and have an extremely creative mind. I have many years' experience in management, communication, social media and film production, winning many creative awards throughout my career.

I speak three languages fluently; French, German and English.

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