

Toby Donaldson

Title - Associate Strategy Director

Company - Radley Yeldar

Current salary - £80k

Expected salary - £80k

Notice - 1 month

Profile

Toby has a fantastic blend of brand strategy and upstream integrated thinking gained in his most recent role at Radley Yeldar where most of his work has been on behaviour change and sustainability. He's been leading on Syngenta, Shell, GSK/ViiV, BAT, Wood Group, WRAP, HS2.

Toby's got a proven track record delivering strategy across a range of channels, including content, digital & social comms.

He enjoys managing junior team members and prides himself on his ability to motivate and develop those around him.

He started out at Zak as a Junior Planner, learning the foundations of the planning discipline and supporting the team with research and insight generation.

He later joined MRM McCann, starting at the agency in 2017, he quickly moved up the ladder from Junior Planner where he worked on TSB Bank & Pernod Ricard on brand and integrated comms planning to a Mid-Weight Strategic Planner in June 2018, here he worked on integrated campaigns for TSB again but also Cisco, Vauxhall, GSK and Macmillan.

I like Toby's approach to solving client problems, he is passionate about strategy and understanding what makes consumers tick!

Why Digital Natives

Toby is really passionate about this opportunity, he is looking for a chance to develop as a senior strategy candidate, to lead a team and really make a difference and a name for himself in a growing agency

Competency Questions

Tell me about a time when things didn't go as planned, what did you do to get back on track?

Firstly, when do things ever go as planned?!

I always ask the same set of questions when a project gets lost in the swirls:

We are doing...

Because we see the problem of...

We know it's a problem because...

If we don't fix it...

We'll know we've fixed it when we get...

Rolling yourself (and your clients) backwards a little (back to 'what are we really trying to achieve here') helps you get out of the weeds and back on track.

Tell us about a recent campaign, how did your brief lead to creative excellence

Insights are to some degree fetishised in planning and I don't believe they're always vital (depending on the work). But sometimes one comes along which helps you see things in a completely new way. I worked with the Bible Society (I know.. strange), and we based our campaign on the insight that people aren't actually getting less religious in the UK, they're becoming more spiritual. From that we positioned Bible stories more as spiritual parables than dogmatic religious lessons. More Marcus Aurelius than Mark the Apostle. A very odd project but a fascinating one.

A time when your insights & strategy demonstrated effectiveness / ROI through social campaign (business focused)

Measuring effectiveness is an art in itself. The trick is to target something really small and measurable to show you have had your desired effect. I worked with WRAP a lot in the past, trying to get the UK to waste less food. We really boiled down our approach (as the client budget was small) to one tiny little measure - in this case turning down your fridge temp. 80% of UK fridges are set too high and this means we waste enough food to fill the Albert Hall each month... Targeting peoples fridge temperatures was specific enough to land brilliantly, and was incredibly effective to the overall objective. All because of a bit of smart thinking.

Describe a project where you were the strategy lead that was social-first

For me, social is a tactic. Much like digital. Strategy starts further upstream (not with the medium) - so almost every project I've led on has social as a deliverable, but we start with the diagnosis, the direction and the actions before we get to 'what shall we do on social'. The vast majority of advertising on social media is so bad because it doesn't have a strategy - people jump straight to Insta - without a plan. An idea works in every medium, if it doesn't - it's not an idea it's an execution.

Describe a time when your leadership skills motivated a team to deliver great work

I've always seen the role of a strategist to keep people inspired. Nothing we work on is actually that boring, and people don't actually get bored - they get uninspired. It's the job of the strategist to make things interesting (and there's nothing that isn't). If people are interested, they'll give themselves to a project and deliver great work. Light a fire in people, not under them - as they say.

How have you demonstrated growing brands over a specific time through strat

I suppose we need to define what we mean by 'growing brands' here. I've brought in measurable commercial improvements for all of the brands I've worked on, I've helped them achieve their business, marketing, and communications objectives. There's a question behind the 'growing brands' statement here which needs to be answered. If you want to grow your brand - 'what for?'. Grow your business, grow your margins, grow your customer base, grow the value you deliver. A brand is a tool to do all of that.