
ALL STARS DIRECT & PERSONAL

BY BILLY SHARMA

It is hard to characterize what Peter Mosley has really done for a living until now. He has played so many roles that it is hard to pigeonhole him.

He has been a teacher at a number of Universities and Colleges in Canada, a stage actor, and a publisher.

He has held senior management posts with a number of multi-national advertising agencies. He has worked on the client-side as President and CEO and sat as a member of the Board of Directors of a Canadian public corporation.

Most recently, he was partner, creative director responsible for the brand-building firm USWeb/CKS, but now he runs his own company.

As he explained to me, "I have, for the most part, been a contractor/freelancer and most, if not all, of my jobs have been with great folks. I have been fortunate to have been involved in many different areas. As a creative director I worked with some of the largest and best known brands including, Toyota, Labatt and the Royal Bank.

"And on the business side I have put together some very successful mergers and acquisitions in the advertising and media arena including, Peterson Electronics, A C Nielsen and Arbatron."

Peter is also very active with a number of associations including the CMA and the DMAT. At DMAT, he is not only a Board member but also looks after their website and helps with marketing and communications.

"I also am the MC for many of their events and that I find very rewarding," he said with a big grin.

While Peter may have been jack-of-all trades, today he is a master of one – The Internet and web strategies.

"The Internet changed my life. It is where my focus is now and has been for a number of years.

PETER MOSLEY **MOVES TO THE BEAT OF** **A DIFFERENT DRUMMER.**



It started with the help of a good friend who worked at Apple and in 1985 introduced me to my first Mac. Soon I discovered the online world through Bulletin Boards. Then in 1992 while I was a founding member of MAGIC (Macintosh Awareness Group in Canada) this thing called the web appeared and our group was right there at the leading edge. I had a web page called Ad Rap. MAGIC had a community online in 1992. I understand that it was the 6,000th webpage ever built. It was also the very first advertising related webpage according to AdAge and the University of Texas.

"As the Net grew, so did I. I have been fortunate to work with a couple of amazing internet companies, Mackerel Interactive and USWeb/CKS, two of the leaders and innovators in the field.

"I have a few 'firsts' under my belt and that's cool, but the most important thing to me is that I was able to use every single bit of DM learning online."

As he spoke his eyes lit up, he leaned forward and started talking softly as if revealing a fantastic secret to me. I was all ears.

After a long pause he said, "The big moment was in the mid'90s when I discovered the Cluetrain. The Cluetrain Manifesto: The End of Business as Usual, is a book written by Christopher Locke, Rick Levine, Doc Searls and David Weinberger. It is available on; www.cluetrain.com or on my website: www.themose.ca.

"I signed their manifesto, I was one of the early sign-ups and in subsequent years, I have built a strong relationship with the authors. So much so, that they have even granted me the permission to use the Cluetrain materials for my courses.

"This is fundamental to my philosophy because it is all a matter of understanding the end USER! That is what the Net is all about – the person at the other end.

"It is not about having jumping bunnies and spinning globes on your site, it's about true one-to-one and one-to-few communications. It is a conversation, period."

Then he really got all fired up about the topic of communication. Effective persuasion he told me is communicating like a real person with emotion and narration. It is about telling a story and emotionally connecting with your audience

As I listened attentively to him, I asked him to tell me a bit more about his background.

"Oh, I grew up as a little black girl in Montreal... sorry couldn't resist," he said with a hearty chuckle.

Peter can be just as funny as he is serious, I soon learned.

Yes, I did find out a bit more about his past.

After a school career change from Sociology & Criminology, Peter went to Ryerson College to study Advertising and Marketing. When he

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graduated and hit the job market in 1980 it was smack dab in the middle of a recession. Marketing jobs were tough to find but he did manage to land a job at a small magazine.

“It was the perfect place for me. I learned a great deal about direct marketing and advertising in general and I fell in love with the idea of creating emotional ads.

“My first exposure to direct was while working for that magazine. With a staff of just three, I learned every aspect of the biz. That included using our own database software, subscriptions, running trade shows (pre-registration, etc) and of course ad sales, writing and publishing.”

I also learned that Peter has three other passions. They are music, golf and reading.

“On the music front I have been a professional drummer for almost 40 years. I play, write and record regularly with a number of ensembles. I also teach a number of youth groups and marching bands primarily helping kids 10 to 18 years old.”

He enjoys all kinds of music, from jazz to hip-hop.

He has played drums and percussion professionally and has toured and performed all over the world. When I asked him to elaborate on music, he simply said, “Still love it!”

“Golf is a hobby I have enjoyed since I was very young. It’s an amazing game where you get to meet people. I have worked on my game for years. I love to practice and I’m never surprised at what you can learn about yourself, and what you can learn about others! That’s Part of the game.” He said with a grin.

“I am also a voracious reader. My diet is at least a book or two a week. I love to read mysteries.”

What else did I learn about Peter?

That there have been two people that he credits as his mentors; the first is his Uncle Lorne, a simple man who worked for the TTC.

“He taught me never to procrastinate, to work hard and to be true to my instincts. I learned self-confidence from him. As far as personal growth goes, he instilled curiosity and spontaneity in me. I became one of those kids who loved to take stuff

apart and see how it worked.

“He would often get in the car and ask me and his wife to hop in. When we inquired as to where we were going, he would just say, ‘Let go north.’ So, with no fixed destination in mind, we would land in Montreal or somewhere when he felt like finally stopping. He was a great guy and my first true friend.

“Then there was Wayne Hartford during the time when Peter Zarry, David Foley, Wayne and I were partners. Wayne had the greatest effect on me. He was an amazing example of under-promising and over-delivering to clients. Now, it is my mantra.

Peter Zarry’s once said to me “It ain’t what ya don’t know that will get ya – it’s what ya know that ain’t so.”

Peter as you may have guessed by now is very outspoken, and if he feels strongly about something, he will not hesitate to tell you so.

Here are two things that make him feel sad.

“First, when it comes to business we are experiencing ‘Death by PowerPoint’. I am a trainer and lecturer in creative development, effective communications, and effective persuasion and presentation skills, among others. Yet most, if not all, the presentations I see, and I see literally hundreds a year, are truly horrible. They are remedial reading sessions.

“I believe our dependency on PowerPoint has hurt our ability to tell compelling stories, find emotional context with our audiences and to be human.

“It is laughable, and because people predominately use this presentation tool to communicate with – it is getting worse.

“I understand there are 125 million PowerPoint decks built every 15 minutes in North America. Well, we have simply lost our minds on this one.”

He also feels badly about the next generation.

“The thing that makes me increasingly sad is the powerful effect TV is having on kids. What concerns me most is that their self-images are out-of-whack. I see 10-year-old girls who want to go on diets. I see kids more interested in dreams about being discovered on Canadian Idol than wanting to be

better, smarter and more evolved people – that is just downright wrong. Their value systems are out of line. Sometimes TV is an open sewer in our living rooms and we allow our youngest and most precious amongst us to sit in front of it for hours.

“Teach them to talk, to converse, to ask questions. Or simply read a book!”

Finally, here are his views about what makes him happy.

“I have always believed that the definition of success is measured by the opportunities you afford others. And, it has been in the small measure of help I have given other folks where I have found my true joy and satisfaction.

“I love my work, but, seeing a bright youngster who you helped, end up as a VP at a huge company or president of an agency – well that is what I remember most.

“Yeah – I would definitely be happiest helping folks get what they want. Happiness is having told the truth and having lived the truth. Years ago, I made a pact that I will never do three things: Lie, Play Politics or Gossip.

“Besides, with a horrible a memory like mine, you simply cannot lie; you have to tell the truth because I can never remember what I said!” He roared with laughter.

Before, I met Peter Mosley I emailed him and asked him where he would like to meet. He emailed me back suggested a small restaurant on King Street run by a friend of his and since it was convenient for both of us, we decided to meet there..

I got to the restaurant a bit early and as I walked into the restaurant, I first mentioned to the waitress that I was meeting Peter Mosley, knowing that since this restaurant belonged to his friend, the staff working there would know him quite well.

“Is he here?” I asked.

“No,” she replied, “but believe me, when he does arrive you will know. He is larger than life.”

Now, after having met Peter, I certainly agree with her.