

Changing Culture

For Gaia and Andrew Grant, helping others achieve success is what life is all about



What's the name of your company, and what do you do?

Our company is called Tirian international

Consulting, and we offer organisational learning and development programs – focusing helping to create a culture for innovative leadership and culture change

How long have you been in business?
20 years this year!

What were you doing before you started this business?

We worked in the education sector and for not-for-profits, mainly on personal development programs and also health education programs. We assisted with some pretty interesting projects, including drug education in the North India tribal area of Nagaland, developing a health education for all schools in the state of Tamil Nadu which then spread internationally (and was targeted to reach 25 million children and

their families worldwide!), and working with the Central Philippines University on improving the standard of the education curriculum.

How did the idea for your business come about?

20 years ago we decided to take a year off from our work as a sabbatical, and to focus on some writing projects and family time (with our then 2-year-old daughter). We found a wonderful thatched hut on a beach in Bali, surrounded by coconut groves and cows, and found we had the inspirational to explore new opportunities. At the end of the year we felt we weren't ready to return to reality, and started considering how we could bring our skills to our new context. We were introduced to some big name corporate companies that came to Bali for their international conferences, and we offered them workshops and keynotes, and before we knew it the word spread and our small husband and wife company

had international offices and partnerships worldwide. We soon focused on bringing a sense of corporate social responsibility to our new clients – marrying the work we had done previously with the new opportunities we had.

What has been the most difficult challenge you've had to overcome?

Running an international business from a traditional thatched hut – our office literally started in an Indonesian rice barn! We had to deal with the electricity suddenly cutting out, an intermittent internet, and roosters crowing in the background on our con calls. Apart from that, we've had the challenges most small businesses face when they start up, of having so many opportunities with so few resources. Working the extremely long hours and trying to cover so many different roles just to get everything up and running. It's exhausting, but at the same time exhilarating.

What has been the most effective form of advertising for your business?

Word of mouth. If people know what you do and love it, they'll tell everyone else about it. Building up a good reputation is critical. It also helps to get new business leads through developing good partnerships, and through being able to be found on the internet.

How important is social media to your business?

We have recently been ramping up our social media presence, realising that it's now an essential part of contemporary business. Social media is such a powerful tool for getting the word out, and it can be a relatively inexpensive method. We now

hire consultants and have people in our team focusing on social media campaigns, so we think it's worth the investment to make the most of it.

What do you think the Federal or State Government could do to help make it easier for small business?


We had some good support when we needed it from the government with inexpensive consulting services, so they should definitely continue these. Any other incentives would help too, such as

What are your plans to expand the business?

We already have offices in 4 countries, and representative partnership offices in

8 more countries, so for now we're happy to maintain what we have and ensure we are able to offer consistent products and services across the key regions we cover. Through our licensing and train the trainer programs we are offering more partnership opportunities, so that is the only area we are continuing to expand in.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

You need to know what sort a person you are, and whether you have the right makeup for the challenges you will face. You have to be incredibly tough and able to persevere no matter what if you want to be an entrepreneur, but when you stick it out it can be an incredibly satisfying experience. 

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