



industry people

Daniel Macaulay

Marketing is a dark art.... to the average windsurfer, what happens behind the closed doors of the international windsurfing brands is as intriguing as it is mysterious. Originally hailing from Cork in South-West Ireland, Daniel Macaulay has grown up in the windsurfing industry and had jobs that most of us only dream of such as that of European Marketing Manager for the Global surf brand, O'Neill. A fanatical windsurfer himself, Daniel now owns his own action-sports marketing agency, Brandwave which quietly handles marketing for leading brands such as Neil Pryde, Quiksilver, O'Neill, Animal, Fat Face, and Henri Lloyd, Windsurfer International caught up with Daniel to ask, "What the hell went right?"

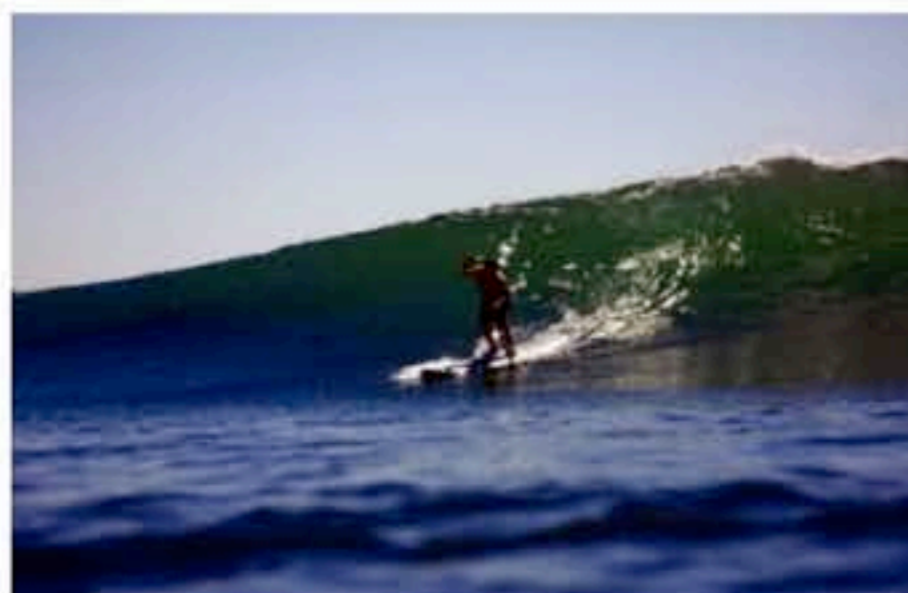
Note: All names and places have been changed to protect the innocent.

How did you first get into windsurfing? I grew up in Oysterhaven bay where windsurfing was pretty much the be all and end all of everything... when I was kid; I used to teach at the Oysterhaven centre and compete in all the Irish racing and wave events. The windsurfing scene is huge over there and still has a massive following. Windsurfing and surfing is still a really big part of my life. I'm just getting back into slalom racing again and my friends, work, and travel all pretty much revolve around the sea...

So, growing up on the beach, did you always plan on a career in the industry? No, not really... when I was younger, I didn't really have a clue what I wanted to do for a living. The first time that I really considered it as a possibility was when I became friends with Chris Martin from Neil Pryde... I remember thinking "that kind of job is a hell of a lot more appealing than anything that my careers councillor showed me in school!"



Above: Damned wave for Brandwave. Dan deals with some pre-race shorebreak photo Will Blair.



Right: Paddlesurfing Baja pic Solosports

Tucking in at Gnarloo
pic Simon Moss





We've heard that the 'surf' industry is notoriously difficult to get into, how did you go about it? There are loads of different ways to get into the industry... some of the most successful guys that I've worked with have had no formal qualifications whatsoever. They started as a sales rep or agent and worked their way up once they learned their trade. I was always fairly interested in marketing so I did a marketing degree and followed it up with a one-year MBS. When I moved to the UK and began working with O'Neill, I was relatively young and inexperienced for the role... it was my dream job at the time and I somehow managed to wangle my way in!

So why did you move on to set up Brandwave? We wanted to set up marketing agency to deal exclusively with the action sports market... in that sense Brandwave is unique. I'd had a lot of experience working with larger commercial marketing agencies in the past but none of them seemed to 'get' the surf industry or the mind-set of the customers. All the Brandwave team come from a core action-sports background and we knew that we could simply do better...

What kind of clients and projects do you guys deal with?

We deal with all kinds of action-sports brands from surfing hardware and sports fashion to mountain-biking and winter-sports. Brandwave is a full service agency, which means that we deal with all aspects of the marketing mix from strategic marketing consultancy to brochures and photo shoots. It's really exciting because every day is different ...one day we'll be working on board graphics, or a new advertising campaign, the next we could be on location for a photo shoot.

Cape Town Fun
Pic John Carter



Above:
Sharing a wave with
'Cisco in Mexico
Pic Solosports



Who would you consider your biggest professional influences? Dee and Peter Caldwell from O'Neill have been a huge influence. They're both professional windsurfers from back in the day and they've both managed to turn their passions into very successful careers. Francisco Goya is also one of the most inspirational people I know, not only for his windsurfing and business skills but also for his whole outlook on life. We've done a lot of trips together over the past few years and I always come back with a more balanced perspective on life.

So, has turning your hobby into your career put you off windsurfing at all? No way, I'm more enthusiastic than ever!!! I love meeting my childhood heroes and you can't knock calling a trip to the beach 'work'. I also get to work on things like the Miss Reef contests and FHM High-street Honeys events which is pretty entertaining! Some people don't like all the travelling but I just feel like a kid in a toyshop most of the time...

Lucky you!!! Have you had many weird experiences on the job? I can think of plenty of 'weird experiences' but none that are suitable for a respectable magazine!

Sounds interesting... Maybe we could get a few more of those stories out of you down the pub! What advice do you have for those looking to

get into the industry? You won't see most of the surf industry jobs advertised in the local newspaper... it's really important to get to know as many people working in the business as you can and get to the word out there. I think that it's also really important to be friendly and have a positive attitude. I think that genuine enthusiasm can take you a long way!

Well, it looks like it helped you a lot ... Any up-coming projects or trade secrets that you can let us in on? Ha ha.. I could tell you but I'd have to kill you!!

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