

Gus Balbontin

Investor, Advisor & Keynote Speaker

Born and bred in wild Patagonia, Gus Balbontin never allowed his small town and humble beginnings get in the way of his big dreams. A healthy disrespect for authority and a severe case of fomo (fear of missing out) landed him in Australia at the young age of 17.

By the age of 22 he had dropped out of uni, hitchhiked South America, set up his first business and landed his dream job at Lonely Planet.

Fast forward a few more years and he was leading the company globally, working with companies such as Google X, Nokia and Amazon on the latest technology, creative cultures and high performing teams.

Seeking a change from corporate life, he hung up his boots as the Executive Director and CTO of Lonely Planet and decided to move back to his entrepreneurial roots, becoming an investor, founder and mentor across the start-up ecosystem in Melbourne. He loves sharing a story, he loves even more, knowing those stories make a difference to people, helping them in their own business and life.

Over the years Gus has presented to audiences across regional Australia and New Zealand, North America, Europe, South America and Asia. To him there's no difference. Small, large, private, public, board room to mail room, his lessons hit a chord, his simplicity disarms you, his energy infects you and his counterintuitive way of looking at the world will motivate you to do things different.

Often thought as futurist, not because he predicts the future, but instead because he helps you focus on what you can control to deal with any future. Still want to talk trends? Sure! He loves as much as the next person trying to imagine a world run by AI, but he warns that getting too distracted with future guesses will only take time away from you and your company to actually do something about the future.

Gus Balbontin speaks about:

Adapt: A presentation on the lessons learnt from decades of market disruption and business transformation in the media industries. This presentation is relevant to all size businesses from all industries, private and public as it focuses on simple yet powerful concepts of change,



adaptability, transformation and innovation. It applies to individuals and teams at all levels, from reception to the executive team and boards. How do we survive and thrive in this ever-changing market?

Team: A presentation focused on building high performing teams and cultures able to deal with disruption and succeed against the odds. How to treat people like adults and give them the necessary autonomy? How do we outperform our competition? How do we get the most from this ever-changing workforce? What is the future of work as millennials and centennials enter the market and companies operate globally?

Customer: A presentation focused on developing products and services to fix customer problems rather than business problems. How do we stimulate the entire workforce to focus on fixing customer problems? How do we empower everyone from finance to marketing? How do we go from just ideas and conversations to action and experiments? What should my Innovation Portfolio look like to ensure the longevity of my business?

Travel Talk: An after-dinner presentation full of travel stories - from contrabanding goods across South American borders, to doing business naked in Finland to drinking unreasonable mounts of rice wine in China. Stories will get the audience talking about their own experiences travelling and sharing with each other some of the happiest memories we have. Puts the audience in a good mood!

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