

Gus Balbontin

Investor, Advisor & Keynote Speaker

Gus Balbontin is the former Executive Director and CTO of Lonely Planet. Having led one of the most recognisable brands in the world through significant business transformation, he's perfectly placed to speak about the complexities of running a business, in an ever changing, highly competitive world.

Gus shares lessons that can be applied to businesses of all sizes and from all industries that are confronting massive digital change. Adaptability, transformation and innovation are just some of the key themes he speaks to.

His common sense strategies will surprise you, his practical approach inspire you... you'll leave his presentation feeling informed and entertained.

More about Gus Balbontin:

Gus was raised in the Argentinean Patagonia and he knew, from the age of eight, that he was going to travel the world even though he did not know how to make that dream a reality.

Gus earned a scholarship at 17 that lead him to the other side of the world in Byron Bay. When he returned home, determined to carry on his mission to travel, Gus journeyed South America without spending a cent. Meeting other travellers along the way he discussed amazing journeys and travel guidebook improvements he would share with anyone that would listen.

Eventually, he returned to Australia working in various jobs when he stumbled upon an opportunity with a travel company and he was fated to apply. His lack of experience was no deterrent and against the odds he secured a designer role at Lonely Planet. As far as Gus was concerned, he had landed his dream job, but it was just the beginning.

Fast forward to 2014; Gus completed an MBA, had spent countless hours on planes, progressed through different roles within Lonely Planet and eventually led the company globally. The company went from books dominating the world of travel information to the internet and a mobile revolution few saw coming.

Today Gus Balbontin is involved in the start up scene, as a founder, investor and advisor. He currently runs a small boutique Design and Innovation agency called Roshambo and is the



Entrepreneur in Residence at Victoria University, which keeps him close to large public corporate challenges as well as small business puzzles.

A big thinker, Gus doesn't let life's hurdles get in the way of big solutions. His knowledge and expertise in transformation and digital innovation is genuinely impressive, as he teaches his audience how to navigate the struggles and successes that even the biggest brands in the world experience.

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 amounts 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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