

What are your company's core activities, products and services?

Differ is a management consultancy focusing on brand strategy to drive innovation. Increasingly innovation is a core need for business growth. We believe that innovation can come through harnessing intangible assets such as brands.

Is your company listed on a stock market? If so, where?

No.

How has your company reacted to the cooling in the investment climate over the last few months?

What an opportunity! In a climate where sources of investment are scarce then the need for a well defined and clear strategy is extremely important (and that's where we come in!).

Do you believe dotcom companies are being let down by the financial markets?

No.

What do you believe to be the strongest Internet growth markets of the next five years?

Intelligent software is going to be huge over the next few years. Companies such as Autonomy and other producers of technology which help us manage information and develop knowledge will be huge. Also professional services businesses I think will do well because businesses now are requiring specialists and learning the benefit of focused thinking in one area.

What is your company doing to position itself to best take advantage of these opportunities?

We are working with a couple of businesses which have intelligent agent technology and we of course are a professional services firm focused in the brand strategy and innovation niche.

Do you foresee market consolidation in your sector in the immediate future?

No.

What are the characteristics you look for in an employee?

We believe in hiring for attitude and hiring for skills. We have a strong culture so people who fit and have the right skills do well quickly. We also always ask the question – how do you differ?

How would you describe your company's corporate culture?

Sexy and Swedish, intrigued by knowledge and ideas.

What was your first job ever and how old were you?

My first job was operating rides at a theme park called Chessington World of Adventures in Surrey. At 16 working on roller coasters and fairground rides was fabulous and taught me how to deal with people in the most bizarre situations!

How and when did you get into ecommerce?

I first got into the e-revolution on a working basis with a marketing consultancy which I worked in. We worked on large and small companies and brands – inventing new ideas for brands using well proven thinking. It was a great time learning about creating revolution.

What would be your ideal job? (in or out of the ecommerce field)

UN Head of International Development – rewarding and challenging.

Would you describe yourself as a nerd or an ebusiness visionary?

At times I am a complete nerd – I still get excited by communicating in meetings through my PDA's infrared port with friends across a table (geek? No, not me!). However this nerdishness helps me to describe future visions of business in the network economy for virtually anyone who will listen.

Bill Gates – hero or villain?

Hero – he has created unbelievable growth both financially and emotionally for all of us. Obviously when you touch so many people there will always be downsides which get blown up by the media and create monsters out of business leaders. His charitable foundation is a bold statement that business can be a driver of emotional growth from financial growth.

How far can you throw a Frisbee?

Across my office.

For what do you use the Internet? (personally rather than professionally).

Almost everything I can: shopping, chatting, learning, gaming...

Where do you want to go today?

To somewhere new – imagination is our most powerful ally.

Could you live without the Internet?

Of course – however life would be poorer for my head, heart and pocket.

