

# Interview for KvK's HALLO!

Alexander Vidakovic



Photo by: *Rodrigo Basaure*, Santiago - Chile.  
Translated from Dutch by: **Gill Taylor**. 22/8/10

Original text can be found at:

[http://hallo.kvk.nl/hallo/groepen/hallo\\_ondernemer/ervaringen/archief/2010/08/16/alexander-vidakovic-eigenaar-van-studio-artist-x.aspx](http://hallo.kvk.nl/hallo/groepen/hallo_ondernemer/ervaringen/archief/2010/08/16/alexander-vidakovic-eigenaar-van-studio-artist-x.aspx)

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## What did you do before you started your own business?

I have had a number of different jobs - simple jobs such as working in a supermarket warehouse before and during my studies, and working as a psychiatric nurse. My last three jobs were in ICT where I worked for a couple of companies as graphic designer and web designer. I was a real 'jack-of-all-trades' for my last employer, working on whole projects from start to finish, from planning and project meetings to dealing with printed matter and its distribution.

## Why did you decide to start working for yourself?

I am naturally creative – I'm also a thinker, a freedom freak, workaholic and a rebel! I also don't react very well to authority. I prefer to make my own decisions and do what I want to do. Not that I couldn't work in a team in the past, the opposite actually. I'm always a great team player in a healthy working environment. But in my last job I did far more than my official job description and my employer didn't want to pay me for any of the extra work I did. I was seriously underpaid and, particularly as a person, very undervalued. I found I was bringing the stresses of work home with me, which, at that time, caused even more stress. I realised that I couldn't continue in this way and, therefore, started working for myself.

Actually I have always wanted to be my own boss but I used to be much too afraid. I thought I wasn't a suitable person to run my own business, and I didn't like the idea of all that paperwork, especially the bookkeeping. When I look back now I see that my last job was a blessing as it gave me the push I needed to make a decision, confront and conquer my fears and just get on with it!

The final motivation to start was no less than: if my mentally deficient boss could manage his own business, then so could I – and do a better job of it!

## **What are the advantages and disadvantages of entrepreneurship for you?**

There are so many advantages they can't be counted. When you start, and at a certain moment the business is going very well, you keep finding more advantages. The sky's the limit! But there is one important advantage, which for me outweighs all the others.

Freedom, in the broadest sense of the word. From getting up and starting work when you want, to doing business in your way. There is no boss to tell you to do something differently. Being my own boss gives me a sense of power and enables me to make my own decisions easily, without being afraid of the consequences.

As with all things there are also disadvantages. You have days when you just don't feel like doing anything, then there is nobody to give you a big kick up the butt. You have to do it yourself and that can be difficult. It's a continuous effort to keep motivating yourself, even when you've been working for yourself for years.

Also, working at home on your own (as in my case, working for, and by, myself) can sometimes be lonely. In a team situation the advantage is that you don't have to search for motivation, it's already there, purely because you are working with other people. And, of course, the social situation of being with other people helps – the best motivators are your colleagues.

## **To what extent and how is digital networking a part of entrepreneurship?**

A great deal actually. My whole existence as an entrepreneur rests on digital networking. This is what I live from. If internet didn't exist I would have to find another job. There are a number of factors in my line of work, which I don't like. If Google comes up with a wrong upgrade of its search engine, for instance, it would have disastrous consequences for me. I can't ignore the fact that I could be out of business in one day because I get a large part of my incomes via internet advertising. As an entrepreneur, I would like to be rid of this kind of dependence. That's why a couple of years ago I decided to develop my artistic side, and I did a makeup course. Networking is a 'must' in that business too, so I'm still dependent, but it's slightly different.

My ultimate dream is to start my own makeup shop, with my own photo studio as part of it. With a bit of luck and a lot of hard work, one day I will maybe produce even my own makeup line.

Whether you use digital networking, or traditional word of mouth, your ambition is your best weapon.

## **Perhaps you have a tip, best practice or some wisdom you'd like to share with others?**

We are living in a digital age. Behave, as entrepreneur, according to the benchmark of this age. Just go for it – don't be afraid of technology but learn all about it and take advantage of it.

Become a member of social networks and you will soon see that advertising for instance, often doesn't have to cost lots of money. And most of all follow your dream. Don't think that things are impossible and don't be discouraged by setbacks. If you want to be original, go against the mainstream. Don't be afraid to experiment; don't be afraid of trial and error; sometimes it's good to fall flat on your face!

Most people have misconceptions about pain, and are afraid of it. But pain in some situations is actually good for you. Besides being a warning at life threatening moments, it is also there to help us eliminate anxieties. And in business it's no different.

Finally, the key is always positive thinking. You are what you think.

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