

Peter Birdsall

President Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences, Apeldoorn & Amsterdam, Netherlands, and Vienna, Austria.

peter@wittenborg.eu

Summary

Peter Birdsall is President of the Board of Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences in Apeldoorn. Although small, with around 700 students in 2017, representing more than 100 nationalities in the past 3 years, growth is around 20% per year, and it is one of the most international privately funded institutes in the Netherlands, aiming to become a top ranking institute in the field of international management and sustainable business development.

WUAS is developing 5 schools, currently it offers programmes in the School of Business and the School of Hospitality and Tourism. It has recently been part of a European research project in the field of sustainable energy and is now working on a research project on robotics. It will launch its first management programmes in the School of Arts & Technology followed by the School of Healthcare and the School of Education.

Together with Tim Birdsall, Peter manages WiNet, the “Brand Incubator” company associated with Wittenborg, in which training and consultancy brands are instigated, for the benefit of the institute, involving students.

Peter’s career started at the age of 16 when he started the Tickled Pink Theatre Company, and has seen him involved in concerns that have activities such as running a bar, a restaurant, a cleaning company, importing furniture, China consultancy, website design, as well as various training initiatives and a language school.

Peter has also (once) been 'properly' employed, at a state University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands - between 1996 and 2002, with an aim to bring international education to the institute, which succeeded, but also sowed the seeds for the Wittenborg University (ad)venture. : -)

Specialties:

Entrepreneur

Educationalist

Businessman

Wine-Maker

Gardener

Traveller

Linux & Website Expert

Bookkeeper & Financial Planner

Writer
Marketer
Actor

Experience

President at Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences

January 2016 - Present

Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences' annual 2017 staff dinner, held at Restaurant "De Brugwachter" in Apeldoorn, was attended by around 95 members of staff and partners.

In a relaxed atmosphere, staff enjoyed good food and the traditional speech held by Wittenborg's chair of the executive board, Peter Birdsall, in which he looked back at the highlights of 2016, before presenting the key events planned for 2017.

A highlight of 2016 was when Wittenborg was commended in parliament by the Dutch minister of higher education, Jet Bussemaker. The minister, in an update on her vision statement from 2014 about internationalisation in Dutch higher education for the period until 2025, singled out Wittenborg as a good example of an institute with an unequivocal international character.

Birdsall informed the party that 2017 would see the new School of Education taking shape with the pending validation of a Bachelors' and a Masters' in Education jointly to be developed with the University of Brighton in the UK. The School of Education is expected to launch mid-2017 with classes starting in 2018. Meanwhile, there will also be quality audits of all Wittenborg's Bachelor programmes in 2017.

The key announcement for 2017 was the Celebration Gala that will be held to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the founding of Wittenborg. The Gala will be held at the Apeldoorn City Hall, on Friday 10th November 2017. Another exciting event to look forward to in 2017 is the opening of Wittenborg's Vienna campus in Austria in September. It will be led by Dr Alexander Bauer, currently a senior lecturer based in Vienna. Birdsall also introduced Wittenborg's new interim Academic Dean, Regina Kecht, and its new international sales director, Tim Birdsall.

"There is continued growth in recruitment and new programmes. We now boast 80 + different nationalities at Wittenborg and we made our first investment in student accommodation with a city campus, housing 35 students, in the pipeline."

Chair of the Executive Board at Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences

March 2008 - Present

Together with Maggie Feng, Peter is a member of the Executive Board of Wittenborg University - a small and exclusive state appointed, and state accredited University of Applied Sciences in the central Netherlands.

Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences, is a privately funded, state appointed institution for higher education. This status means that it is permitted to offer accredited higher education programmes under the Netherlands Act of Higher Education (WHW), and that for programmes accredited by the Netherlands NVAO, students are entitled to study grants. Wittenborg's Netherlands Ministry of Education registration number (BRIN) is 25AY It also offers programmes accredited by the German, Swiss and Austrian accreditation agency FIBAA. Wittenborg University is partnered with the University of Brighton and offers Bachelor and Master programmes under joint UK validation.

Publisher 'Whisky Burn'

November 2015 - December 2015 (2 months)

'Whisky Burn' - Distilleries of Scotland by Vespa - the Highlands and Islands

Whisky Burn is a book that will appeal to Scotch experts and novices alike. Read it as an amusing and at times fascinating travel narrative, a useful reference book, or an invaluable guide to distilleries. Whisky Burn is the story of a journey - one man, one Vespa, one thousand miles (1,600km), a lot of distilleries, and a fair amount of rain.

published by Wittenborg University press, Apeldoorn. see: www.whiskyburn.com

Member of the Board - Wittenborg University Trust at Hogeschool Wittenborg - Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences

January 2007 - January 2013 (6 years 1 month)

The Wittenborg University Trust oversaw the development of Wittenborg University in the period from its transition from the Dutch "Hogeschool Wittenborg" to the English speaking "Wittenborg University" that took place between 2007 and 2010. After Wittenborg moved its campus location from the city of Deventer to Apeldoorn, in the summer of 2010, it was decided to divide the governance of the University into two separate trusts. The Wittenborg University Trust became the still independent Wittenborg University Advisory Board, and currently consists of 4 independent members. The directors of the University were brought into the Wittenborg University Executive. This change has achieved a greater level of corporate governance required at this privately funded institution that fulfills a semi-public role.

Partner

January 2000 - December 2012 (13 years)

Birdsalls Limited is a family organization, although the company has been disbanded, due to the work being carried out independently by BTC in Austria and Wittenborg University in the Netherlands.

Birdsalls Limited in 2010: "We are "educationalists". Our business is learning, training, development, personal growth, qualification. Birdsalls has its roots in the UK, Switzerland and China and currently manages its projects from its base in Austria and the Netherlands.

Birdsalls manages a number of brands. Most are fully functioning business which have kept us and our partners in business for 20 years and counting. Others are ideas in progress. The brand focus also represents the way in which our business grows and develops. Many of these brands have recently been brought under WiNet – the Wittenborg University Network, with an aim to introduce business students to the concept of a Brand Incubator."

Director of International Studies at Hogeschool Wittenborg - University of Applied Sciences

December 2002 - March 2008 (5 years 4 months)

Director of International Studies at the Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences (www.wittenborg.eu), with Business School Bachelor programmes in Deventer, the Netherlands. At this time, programmes were offered in Dutch as well as English. The numbers of Dutch students were around 150 on average during a year and were matched by the same number of international students, mainly from China, Vietnam and South East Asia. At that time, the main programme was a broad Bachelor in International Business Administration, specialising in Banking and Insurance, Hospitality and Tourism, Small Business, Real Estate and Marketing & Communication. In 2007 Wittenborg decided to gradually close the Dutch programmes (Real Estate Management, Banking & Insurance, and Communication Management) and concentrate on building its international programmes and developing a true international classroom.

Peter developed the use of the e-learning platform based on Moodle, (www.wittenborg-online.com) that is still central to Wittenborg's curriculum and teaching management.

His responsibilities / portfolio at this time included: Financial Management, Personnel, Curriculum Management, and Information (also Technology) Management

Director International Office

January 1998 - November 2002 (4 years 11 months)

Hogeschool IJsselmeer was a great medium sized University of Professional Education and supported a small but dynamic and innovative business school. Later, it merged with some school in Enschede, to the East, and it is now called Saxion Universities of Applied Sciences, which is different. In my day it encountered a classic China meets the rest of the world business situation. Worth a book at retirement :-)

Consultant (Freelance) at KPMG

March 1996 - October 1998 (2 years 8 months)

Freelance business case writer for KPMG's Business Performance Improvement department in Deventer, the Netherlands. During this time I was fortunate enough to work with many systems designers and this experience helped me develop skills and knowledge of using Linux systems and early CMS based website systems to manage data. I learnt enough to know that I need to continue learning : -) and even until today (2015) manage a number of complex Linux systems that host a number of complex web-based open source applications.

International Education Developer and Lecturer

August 1996 - July 1998 (2 years)

Lecturer and International Education developer at what was then the "Best University of Professional Education (Hogeschool)" in the Netherlands, as voted for by students.

Employee and Entrepreneur

September 1986 - August 1996 (10 years)

During this time Peter worked sometimes and ran businesses sometimes. Experiences in the UK, Switzerland and the Netherlands include:

Being a social worker for the elderly (10 months)

Helping manage a British Pub at an international hotel in Switzerland (1.5 years)

Helping set-up and run a successful restaurant in the Netherlands (3 years)

Running a green-concept cleaning company (in 1991 - lasted 1/2 year due to lack of interest :-)..)

Single Parent (7 Years) - Peter became a single parent in 1992, caring for his baby daughter, whilst returning to study in higher education in pursuit of a career in education.

the Apprentice

November 1983 - September 1986 (2 years 11 months)

This experience caused the eventual creation of the Birdsalls (un)Limited concept and ensured that both Birdsall brothers became "unemployable" and enabled us to map out the career pathways we have chosen...

Co-Founder

November 1983 - January 1986 (2 years 3 months)

This is where it all started. Learned who we were, and who we weren't. Learned who to vote for and who we didn't. It took a bit of time to learn where we were going though, and some of us are still learning :-)

- Accidental Death of an Anarchist #1 (1983)
- Androcles and the Lion (1984)
- Can't Pay Won't Pay (1984 – 1985)
- The Importance of Being Ernest (1985)
- Accidental Death of an Anarchist #2 (1985)
- Tickling Pink Alternative Cabaret (1984 – 1986)

Education

The Open University

MA Ed, Education & Management, 1997 - 2000

Christelijke Hogeschool Windesheim

BA, Education / English, 1993 - 1997

Eastbourne Sixth Form College

Got a couple more O Levels, 1982 - 1984

Activities and Societies: Cabaret Tour of the Netherlands (Leiden & Amsterdam) and Germany (Krupp's Tennis club in Essen) with a group of College performers ...

Eastbourne Grammar School

5 GCE O levels was my lot ..., 1979 - 1983

Activities and Societies: The Drama Society
Stafford County Junior School (Eastbourne)

Life Sciences, 1974 - 1979

Activities and Societies: Organising theatre and trying not to throw stones in snowballs at a greenhouse (once)

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[Contact Peter on LinkedIn](#)