

Debs Okay thank you ever so much, again I can't thank you enough really because I know how busy you are and I'm aware it is getting late so it is even more crunched. But I would like to ask you about how you came to be the Chairman of Hogs Back Brewery?

Rupert Right and this is to just kind of provide a bit of background for this?

Debs Yes, so it's about your sort of internal external influences of how you've become what you are.

Rupert Okay, well I suppose the, why I went into brewing. I left university and went, having done Modern History, so nothing to do with beer, into – and a bit of Medieval History actually – into a graduate training scheme with Bass who were, at the time, Britain's biggest brewer and one of the biggest companies in the country actually. I did quite a few years with them running plants and then running brands and I enjoyed the brand bit; I enjoyed both actually.

I particularly found the building of brands quite challenging and interesting and I moved from Bass to a regional brewer, Moorland, based in Abingdon and again ran their pub estate and then ran the brewery and enjoyed running the brewery and I developed a little brand, it was very small at the time, called Old Speckled Hen, which became quite a big brand.

Debs Oh yes, very much so.

Rupert And then, partly as a result of that we were taken over by Greene King and so I then set up my own business; I tried a management buy out with a venture capitalist called, God I've forgotten who they were called. One of the well-known ones – it will come back to me in a second, Jon Moulton – anyway, and they, who was it, they, it will

come back to me and bought, they had another business, another brewery and I ended up meeting them, getting on with them and they introduced me to the Chief Exec and I bought a part of that other business as a stand alone – it was a management buy in essentially and that led to the creation of a new company, Refresh.

And we bought Usher's Brewery followed by Wychwood Brewery, followed by, we took over the brands of Brakespear Brewery and then we had the rights to Lowenbrau and various other things. So we kind of created quite a big company in it's own right, all of which was focussed on brand development and marketing primarily. It was very successful and I sold it four years ago to Mastertons who were the other major UK brewer, base brewer.

And then did a little bit of, did lots of other things. I did some time at University, well Southampton, which is a School of Art and I was doing Angel investing in various businesses and then one of the projects I was working on was buying some brands from Major Brewer, which we couldn't agree on price and I didn't progress but in the process I had decided I would like to go back in.

I wanted to tackle the London market and I got talking to the buys who own this business and I bought one of them out completely and the other out – 80% of his shares. So I bought most of the business and have been developing it for the last two years.

So this is what we are doing. We are doing things like this – this is our, that is our main brand, Tea, Hogs Back Tea and we then launched a cider, which is this cider, Hazy Hog cider.

Debs That's a really nice name isn't it?

Rupert Yeah and then we've just launched this last week, which is our lager, which is very different. So this is part of the new trend I think that you are just starting to get some of the global brands, people are bored of them and they are going back and saying, we like local ales, so why wouldn't we have local ciders and local lagers. So I think there is a big opportunity there. You can have a local bar and do some of the development work all over the place. Those are really in various stages in the process of developing the lager brand.

Debs So who has been doing these?

Rupert That's an agency called ((Crook Chick?)), they are an ex-, one of the large London agencies. They are based in Brighton and they have done a very good job.

Debs They have it is really nice. They have a nice feel and they've got an old sort of traditional, this one, it's the sketching and the writing and everything else. It's got that really sort of homely old traditional feel to it.

Rupert Yes, and yet it's also quite modern. It's a good balance and that's a difficult balance to strike but it's very much what we were trying to do with all these designs. The whole thing, all the packaging has been re-designed and the brewery has basically, we've doubled the capacity of the brewery in the last year and a half, hired a number of new people, and we are starting to really kind of move the business forward but it all takes time.

Debs It does take time, yes. So I was going to go through these, what led you to doing all of this but you've clearly stated all of that. Why the interest in beer? Is it because the very first instance of going to bat and it's just led you on?

Rupert I was actually interested in marketing and at the time drinks marketing was one of the most interesting areas. It still probably is. It is very challenging, intellectually challenging, and you are dancing on the head of a pin in a way because you are competing with other people who have, are producing very similar products.

I would say it's changed now because they are more differentiated but at the time there was not that much differentiation so you had to build differentiation on the basis of quite a narrow set of parameters and that was challenging, certainly on the brand marketing side.

And then you were going, the whole process of marketing, in a way it's a game. It is a very serious game because there is a lot of money involved but it is, you know you are trying to find strategies to beat your competitors and that is quite interesting. It is a very different sort of business to technology companies. Technology is very black and white. We are dealing with imagery all the time and perceptions and so the perceptions are not by any means objective at all.

Whereas if you are judging a telephone network it is pretty objective; does the phone call get made and how much does it get cost? And if you are doing a mobile telephone, what is the functionality? I mean clearly with iPhone and the like there is a lot of imagery attached but underpinning all of that is real functionality.

Debs It is, the swiping, the ease of swiping and everything else. Everything else just makes it feel nice but the rest of it is, as you say, just technology. But with drink it's the taste presumably?

Rupert The taste of course, but it's about quality. Most brewers brew good beer. The number of times now where the beer wouldn't be good are quite thin. So it is about which taste people prefer but then taste is

highly mobile in itself because broadly there are a load of different tastes that people will still buy into. If they like the imagery they will live with the taste. Well they have quite a wide span of tastes that they like and as long as it falls within that span you have a chance of persuading them that you are their preferred brand.

Debs So in some ways it's the same as book publishing in the fact that if you put the right kind of cover on the book people are going to be more attracted to reading that book then maybe the content is? Do you see what I mean?

Rupert I think that's right. I mean I think books in theory are more tangible. I don't think, I would think the packaging for a beer is more important to it's success in relation to all the other things than the packaging of a book because eventually the book has got to be read and consumers, people spend a lot of time on it. So you could argue that the functional element of the book, i.e. entertaining, engaging, whatever quickly overtakes – and actually, in the case of books, things like reviews have a much bigger part to play and reputation of previous authors.

So it is probably less so with books; a closer example would be cigarettes I guess; a lot of foodstuffs. Well, let me think – milk. But then milk is pretty much a commodity market brand; cheeses – other comparables because it's not got a service element to it. It is mainly, it is more about, yes, those are the sorts of areas.

Debs So how often do you actually do a consumer survey then to find out what they are wanting and what their likes are?

Rupert For this business not very much. We have actually just done some consumer research on Hog Star but it's the first time the business has

ever done it. In my past when I used to handle a brand called Carling, which is the biggest beer brand in the UK, we were doing research almost continuously on one element or another. We were testing the taste, we were testing the advertising, we were testing the packaging, we were testing brand-positioning work and it was on going. You would be spending and this was a long, long time ago. We were spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on research.

Debs It's interesting to note that because I was at Apps World on Tuesday and they were talking about marketing and all this stuff and the apps and how to get those apps out there. And also yesterday I was at Cross Media exhibition in London, which is the print and publishing industry, but obviously expanding into all the SEOs and content and big data and everything else and how much the user is considered in getting the information out there, if you see what I mean, to the right person.

It was interesting to see how much emphasis was on content to the people but the way of engaging people with that content was very different and if I translate that to this, your brand labels here, they are the ones that are going to engage the drinker with your bottle of cider aren't they? They are the face because until they open that cap and drink it they don't know do they?

Rupert No they don't. They are prepared, I mean beforehand obviously they've gone into a supermarket or gone into an off license or whatever, into a pub, but obviously in doing so they have placed some reliance on that retailer having preselected wisely. So that gives them some confidence when they go in there. Eventually they will have a lot of brands to choose from and that is when the packaging plays such an important part.

Debs Yes, one of my students, she wants to do packaging for her dissertation because she wants to go into packaging. So although she is a Digital Media student, she is using the tools to create the packaging as it were. But she is looking at milk strangely and the packaging for milk and the fact that it can be, some packaging now can tell you whether it is off or not because it goes yellow or something at the side and things like this.

Rupert Oh right?

Debs So it is amazing the effect that packaging will have on the consumer if it is right or wrong. But personally I really like the way those labels look.

Rupert Do you like the Hog Star label?

Debs Yes, it is very, it looks very American, that is all I would say on that one and – yeah, do you think so?

Rupert Well that's one of the things we were testing and that was one of the things we wanted. I mean these were the previous designs and, well you can see up there, we went down a load of routes and we then settled – so

Debs I like that one.

Rupert Yeah, yeah, well actually if you look at where we've got to, I liked that and so we actually used those colours but we decided to go for something that was much bolder and you are right, in fact we went for that design up there, which was quite English.

Debs This one?

Rupert Yeah, we thought well we'll combine that and the first one and we got to that place there, via one or two developments in between and yes, you are quite right, the danger is it looks American. But then on the other hand, when we did the research some people said it did and some people said it didn't.

Our view is it could look much more so if we had used red, white and blue but we've moved away from that and the star in fact, it might look like that to start with but I think people would get away from that pretty quickly and in fact the response was, yes, some people said it looked American but it didn't matter.

Debs No, it doesn't.

Rupert And in fact if anything it slightly endorses it. As long as people don't think well we're trying it on and at no point are we. They think that to start with. They think there is a kind of quality and a boldness and a freshness about it and a self-confidence and then they actually read that it's an English craft lager and I think they think, well that's okay.

Debs Exactly, but it's also got a very sort of 1920s, 1914s look to it. It is sort of back in the war period almost.

Rupert What would you say does that?

Debs I think it's the colours and the sort of speckled effect of the signage, you know, the sort of break through of the beige through to the blue and the white there. It just sort of gives it that, and also that type of art back then as well. The art style is -

Rupert Yes, well it's interesting you said, somebody actually, it's got connotations of Soviet Russia about it as well. So you've got American and Russian and the Soviet Russia comes from the start and the age

and that very, very strong powerful – but again that is slightly off set by then the logo up there.

Debs Yes, the pig with the house, the barn on the top, so yeah, it's a really nice design. It's really nice. It stands out. It will stand out on the bar won't it?

Rupert I think it will. I think it is going to be very different.

Debs Yeah, so that's really good. I'm going to jump straight from that then; I'm not going to follow this. I'm going to jump to the Talking Walls basically and when we were first introduced through Set Square was it?

Rupert Yeah, I think it might have been David, was it not David himself? I don't know if it was Set Square – I can't remember. Oh it might have been now, I can't remember.

Debs Initially I think initially because they were looking at – they really liked the Talking Walls and – they were, oh we like this and then tried to find somebody who might be interested in putting some money into it to take it further. And I think initially they suggested you but it was then David who also knew me who must have then introduced us properly I think. But can you remember your first impressions?

Rupert Well I remember the first impression was I really liked the idea. I mean this was quite early days for the media and the development of the media. I mean it's moved on so fast since as indeed I think when we started talking we thought it would. We kind of felt that it was almost inevitable that you were going to start to get really content rich guides going along to museums so we talked about how – and I don't think at the time there were any applications like this but it wasn't far away.

We talked about having a pad and you'd look at something in an art gallery and you could pull up the information and that would be a kind of combination of basic information and then it would be multi-layered so it would work, it would communicate, it would have content that was appropriate to all sorts of different viewers and it would be multi-media in terms of it wouldn't just be pictures but it would be sound as well.

And indeed, and then rather than just illustrations you could dramatise and so there were various other things, so we could see how that would work and I thought it was a really interesting idea. Because it was early days I saw how that might be possible to roll that out but then as we talked further it became apparent that it was going, it required an awful lot of time and money to do.

It was, and you were pretty reliant on the method by which the media was delivered. So really you had to start with what technology was out there. You weren't going to be able to design something so it had to be an iPad and I think iPads had appeared by then or they were about to appear.

Debs Just about; it was still Smart phones when it first happened it was only just Smart phones and they were only just coming in and -

Rupert The iPad was just coming in but I think you subsequently used iPads in Beaulieu didn't you?

Debs No, we tried to get some Smart phones for the launch and they wouldn't play so – because Beaulieu only wanted it as a kiosk application so I had done the website and the kiosk application, which was in effect the website, which was on the short-form computer and displayed on two screens and you could interact. It was a flash site.

But getting that flash site to work on the Smart phones at the time, because this is 200-, the launch was 2010 but the application was created 2008/9 and it was, the processors just weren't up to scratch.

Rupert Whereas now the world has moved on and you could do it all yourself and just -

Debs In other ways -

Rupert But then I think what I then felt was actually as I went into it, I thought, I really like the idea and it is obvious how this is going to be used but actually how do you commercialise this? How do you make money out of it? And the problem is because it is so obvious it will be done by everybody and unless you had critical mass and could instantly get in and start talking to lots of art galleries and become the definitive method of delivering this you would have to have something unique that wasn't going to be available to others and the reality is, you weren't going to get that because there was nothing unique.

The only bit that would have been unique is to have had a platform that did something that, what subsequently became the iPads and others couldn't do, well you'd be inventing, you would kind of be going into a completely different area. You are not actually creating an application for a museum; you are going into high tech.

Debs That's right, yes.

Rupert And then the other part of it was actually creating content. Well there is no, there would be no barriers to entry in others doing the content and as soon as the idea was there lots and lot of people would start creating content in a format. So actually there was nothing to my

mind that was defensible as a piece of intellectual property and as a result it wasn't, it wouldn't have been a good investment because we would have ended up doing a lot of work that was being replicated by loads and loads of other people and you would never get a payback on it.

Debs

Yes, I came to that conclusion myself really and even though, even today, there is nothing like it out there, because – and I feel that the reason is because of the amount of work to do those different levels of engagement, you know, the audience engagement and the amount of material that is in there just does take too long. So there are parts of it out there as stand alone bits if you see what I mean.

So for instance the one thing that I saw yesterday, which is going to happen quite quickly now I think and it is the augmented reality. So you've got a poster or a painting of somebody in uniform and, you know, a grand portrait or something and you put your phone up to it and with augmented reality that person then swaps into an actor all dressed up and made to look like the portrait and then they start to talk and they are sipping their wine or whatever and they are just talking about – I think this was Robert Burns that they were showing and then he starts to relate a poem that he has written.

So this is all happening in your phone and yet there's the portrait static and yet you've got this visual imagery going on, animated imagery.

Rupert

And I can see how that – because the phone will recognise the portrait and once it has recognised the portrait it just slips to another piece of pre-prepared material. And that is absolutely happening so if you go into an art gallery now and you held your phone up, I think I am right

in saying that it could recognise a Cezanne. It could recognise which painting it was and then it would instantly, it would tell you all about it. And actually you've got phones now that will, if you key Cezanne in, it will immediately give you all sorts of choices about how to explore his histories, life – so actually the world has moved on so quickly. And I have to say it would have been – it was a wise decision not to invest.

Debs Yes, I know, I know that. Although Beaulieu they are still wanting this but being, all the information that was created but produced in different ways for the visitor to engage with. Some might be wanting to have an interactive tablet. Some might be big images of the Abbey that was done up as an architectural sketch and so on. So the content is going to be re-used but I'm once, I've finished all this, I'm hopefully going to iterate my knowledge, my new knowledge into creating something that can be more commercial.

Rupert Yes, you see I think the learning, I mean it was a good entrée into this because it has sensitised you and made you aware of all of the issues and the opportunities. I think it, what comes out of this is actually you just need people to create content and the thing is to create the content cheaply. So it is actually gathering content that is already there and just putting it into a, the minimum amount of work.

So you don't want to go and – unless there is a specific need you don't want to be getting actors in and writing scripts. You don't want to be visualising, you don't want to be doing any of that, you want to kind of, there will be out there little bits – I'm assuming the issues are copyright but I think you can kind of show 30 seconds or a certain amount of a video before you hit copyright issues so you will just go out and pick pictures, videos and you would make sure that you had kept within the copyright rules and you'd create a story and to be

honest it is something that anybody can do but you can just do it a bit quicker and you know what you are doing so actually your skill becomes almost that of a digital editor.

Debs Yes, very much so, yes, curator/collector/editor. You are editing information that is out there. The only thing that at the time it was very different was the fact that the Abbey was built up in complete 3D so you could walk in and everything else.

Whereas a lot of the 3D models out there for St. Pauls and everything else were sort of cardboard boxes almost with images painted onto them or mapped onto them so that if you went in there it was a flat face and if you were outside it was a flat face and you couldn't really move around a column that easily and all this kind of stuff. It wasn't a true – and also then you didn't have those architectural sketches either.

So what I was getting round to say is the fact that one of the things I saw yesterday was, using again augmented reality, where you've got a drilling rig in the sea and you can zoom into the parts of the rig itself and then have cut throughs and it, you know, for instance with your vats you could have cut throughs and show how that process works.

So it becomes informational and educational rather than something that is just seen at a museum or whatever. It becomes more for education so therefore your target audience might be schools and so on. So you are doing it not for the consumer in the sense of the public visitor to a museum but to school groups as an educational resource.

So yes, so there are things to think about but I wondered about the brand of the Talking Walls because I vaguely remember you saying something about that perhaps it was not the right term, it might not

have been you, it might have been somebody else, but they were saying that maybe it needed another, maybe that could sit up here as an umbrella limited company and then have different titles. But selling the brand of the Talking Walls, if you see what I mean. Do you remember?

Rupert I do. I felt that Talking Walls wasn't a bad, actually wasn't a bad description for what you were doing, part of what you were doing, because you were allowing walls to talk so to speak. The, of course, that is more about trying to give people a sense of what actually happened in that location but in reality what one would want now is something that puts what that, the monastery into context of the Reformation or – you know, it's part in medieval life or the dramas involved around it.

So it is much more than just Talking Walls but I mean what I liked about Talking Walls is that it is quite a memorable phrase. It is a recognisable phrase and it does say what it's about so I don't think I had, I can't remember having -

Debs It might have been somebody else then, yes, it might have been somebody else.

Rupert I do remember making some comment I just can't remember what it was.

Debs Because I was very keen because part and parcel of the whole thing was coming up with the identity for it in order for that to sell. So it's not just being a designer who then goes in and looks at creating the content and how that is going to be navigated through and everything else. We were actually creating the brand and trying to get that out there as well.

Somebody else did say about changing that definitely and talking to sort of get rid of the company and start up another one with a different name and I thought, well no because Talking Walls has been out there now for this number of years and it's been on the lips of some people if you see what I mean?

Rupert Yes, I wouldn't worry about that though because its penetration would be very, very limited. Start again if that's what you felt because it is better to get it right at the beginning and the world has moved on. So it depends what your target market is and what you are trying to communicate. But it's not, if you were trying to aim for art galleries for instance, would that be the best brand name to express what bringing a picture to life – probably not?

Debs No, not at all, no the market for that, or the content for this would always be historical houses. It would never be a museum. It would always be about the time slices of a building and the people that lived there over those architectural time slices and the reasons why the building changed from this to this and so on. And it's about the history around a building at the time and what was happening in order for those changes to happen. So it was always about culture and history of that specific site.

So taking it, I've never, I haven't – I've obviously looked at museums but I haven't focussed on the museum side. I see them as two very separate heritage areas. The museums are about objects taken out of context and put in a glass case or whatever and then the context tried to be replicated for some parts of the dinosaurs or whatever whereas a heritage, a house, a big house has got so many secrets and it is still in context.

You go in there and you want to know how the people lived in there. You wouldn't do that in a museum looking at a case full of objects. Do you see that?

Rupert I understand your point. I'm not sure I entirely agree. First of all I think it depends on who your consumer is.

Debs Yes.

Rupert Because you get different people will want different things. So if you are talking about a young boy for instance, he has a limited level, area of interest, one of which is usually fights and killing people and that sort of thing. So if you are trying to connect with him wall histories work extremely well. Now if you went into an art gallery, and that is part of – because what you want is for them both to connect and to start bringing the past to life or bringing the present to life – imparting knowledge in a rich method.

So you would use not dissimilar media, not dissimilar communication messages for both. If you go back to Beaulieu Abbey, if you want that seven or eight year old boy to understand it you kind of have to leaven your information with blood and guts and all of that. Just as the gallery owner has to try and put the context of, I don't know, a great portrait by Turner of the Fighting Temeraire – how would you bring that to life for the boy? Well the two wouldn't be so different.

Debs No, they wouldn't.

Rupert If for that boy you were focussing on areas that were of no interest to him there would be no communication.

Debs That's very true so hence as you know the Talking Walls has the levels of the message for the adult and the child and of course if the child

chose to go in as a child and then chose a character, you would have those blood and guts and those Horrible History kind of moments throughout all the information that they read through.

And I'm not saying that you wouldn't do the same kind of interpretation at a museum, I am just saying that the talking walls is much more about the building itself and what has gone on there and then interpreting that in different levels.

Whereas in the museum you can still do that but there are lots of disassociated objects in the museum so you might have periods like the Bower House or the Pre-Raphaelites and so you have periods of information to be given rather than – so there are time slices there but they are not necessarily all to do with that building if you see what I mean.

Rupert No, so they are not to do with the building but they are all to do with the period or a kind of concept, an architectural style or they are to do with a product, musical instruments over time. But the same principles of kind of rich, well-targeted and crafted communication for that particular target market still applies.

And actually why has Terry Thingy bob of Horrible Histories, why has he been so successful? He has understood exactly, he has found a way of communicating to a group of people more effectively than most people have done before. So he has been able to communicate quite a lot of, Horrible Histories, the concept of that actually is much more than just about history, it goes a lot further than that.

Debs Yes, it does. No, no it does, it was a great idea. I was going on to say that the Talking Walls wouldn't, the actual name of that, the branding of that wouldn't work. I was agreeing with you and the fact that it

wouldn't work necessarily for a museum because it's not the walls that are talking; it's the objects that are talking. So with the launch, do you remember much about the launch itself?

Rupert I do, I broadly remember us just having drinks and canapés and then we were looking around the cathedral and there was a talk and you gave a talk and I think somebody from Beaulieu gave a talk. I'm not sure if Lord Montagu did. He was there I think.

Debs He was there as Chair, yes. Mary, his daughter, gave the talk.

Rupert That's right, yes, and then we looked at the screens because the handsets weren't available and yeah, that's what I remember but I'd of course seen the material before I think.

Debs So you were aware of the material. I think for me, not to put words into your mouth, but it was disappointing because it was just the kiosk and it was just the two screens and there was a queue almost to get on there and use it and even though people were watching back here, it wasn't really what I wanted people to do.

So I came away feeling a little disappointed. The technology had let me down basically and the fact that we couldn't show it on there and I just wondered if you could remember feeling the same way?

Rupert Disappointed?

Debs Yeah, or were you quite pleased with the way it all went.

Rupert No I think I was disappointed probably as well because well it didn't actually, walking away from that you didn't feel that one had made a great step forward. It felt like a lot of museums because it really was essentially a film on a TV and as such, even though there was some

interactivity, it wasn't dramatically different. In fact it was, so I kind of looked at that and thought, well it's interesting but we've not really stepped ahead of anybody else.

Debs No, it had, because it was purely the kiosk and okay yeah, there was a website so you could go away and go on the website and stuff but it wasn't how I really would have liked to have seen that and I had pushed a bit for it to be on handsets but Beaulieu were reluctant, very reluctant to go the handset route anyway.

Rupert I think it was cost wasn't it?

Debs I don't know what it was. They paid for the kiosk itself but that was their involvement really on that, you know, it was all match funded work from me and the handsets we got were from a company called Wild Knowledge, who thought the content might work on them. And then at the time they couldn't get them to work and I couldn't get it to work on there so it was like, ah, you know, right at the last minute.

It was really, really disappointing because all the way along, instead of just designing as a kiosk I had designed it as a mobile at the same time so the content was there. We just couldn't get people like you to see it in the way it should have been so it was a bit of a shame.

So now if we were to re-do it and re-purpose it we've got these, you've got tablets now and it would just be really nice to see maybe a figure coming up in augmented reality and telling you something, you know, a Horrible Histories type of character, coming up and telling you something and it actually being animated like a holographic display all from your tablet or being able to put your tablet up.

I think the one thing that was highlighted was the fact that you've got that space, that flat space of the Abbey where there is nothing really showing, other than a few stones to show the outline, so there is nothing there to show the majesty of the size the building would have been and on each of the interviews I've asked people who perhaps have gone to heritage sites and therefore Beaulieu how they would think that should be represented; that's been demolished, how would it be, for the consumer, the visitor, to go there and actually experience the height and the size of that building that would have been there – because it's bigger than Winchester Cathedral?

Rupert

Was it really? I'd never have picked that up. I think there is actually a danger with having a, and we are still at the early stages, the iPads have only been around a short time and everybody loves it. It is still a toy and they are very engaged with it but at some point it will move from being a toy to being a tool and just become an everyday part of life and at that point there is a danger that everything is getting over-complicated and I would say, and you know you, even when you get the screens there are so many bars and little, you know, option bars and actually it becomes messy.

Actually the thing about something like a guidebook that is simple and clean is really quite important. There is also a sense in which you don't want, you've got, I think that people will become, will move against iPads and iPods and computer phones after a while and say they are getting bombarded with information and it's too much and they just want to – they want to be part of it and almost there's a quiet contemplation.

If you think about somebody of a certain age and experience, do they, how much information do they want? They want a certain amount but

what is the experience that they are really getting or seeking to get in that cathedral, in those ruins. Well it's somehow them imagining the past and having a sense of the past and a sense of the grandeur and sometimes the odd thing is if you visualise it too much you take away their imagination and they get less from it as a result.

So I think one has to be quite sensitive about these things and you have to ask yourself again what are people going there for? You probably now, I mean at one point we talked about multi-dimensional on a particular media. So you would have five characters to appeal to five different levels of interest or knowledge.

But now you might say there are five different ways of experiencing something and for a young lad who is, who will spend all his time on an iPhone or playing games or whatever, the way to communicate to him is through that media. But for somebody who is much older, who has never felt very comfortable with them, that is not the right way to communicate.

They don't want – and I mean my mother at the age of 90, couldn't possibly understand. She can read a guidebook but if you gave her an iPad, apart from the fact that her fingers are shaking now and she can't press the buttons, she wouldn't have the first idea what to do and it would be – so at a very practical level it wouldn't work.

But more than that she is not used to that media so I would look at that space and I would probably be thinking about actually simple – some boards up there that are probably presented encapsulated that have artists impressions, visualisations. I mean I think just a well-constructed picture of the cathedral as it might have been.

I remember going to Fountain's Abbey and I think they had various pictures up, mainly in the visitor's guide but I am pretty sure there were some boards up at various points that showed what abbey life was like, done so there was just a board there from that particular perspective. And it was I thought pretty effective.

You stood at that particular point and you could see in the background the cloisters and then you could see the visualisation of the cloisters so in a way it is exactly what the iPad could now do. It could recognise where you are standing, in which direction you are pointing. So it could do exactly the same thing.

Would it be as good? In theory it would be far better because you would have so much more information. You could at the press of a button hear the monks chanting or see some sort of animation of activities there or see a bit of a film that demonstrates monks like. Or drill down further and find out, why were they doing that? Why were they there?

All these sorts of questions that are – so it does, the iPad will give you so much more breadth and depth but is it actually the best media? I am not sure. I mean, I'll tell you what the answer is I think very clear is that people will want a number of different ways of accessing depending on who they are.

Debs Exactly yes.

Rupert So and it would be foolish to deny that that is going to be the medium of communication for most people and that technology is nearly there. The applications just have to be written and prepared and they will be used.

Debs Yes, I quite agree because although I'm digital media hat at the university and stuff I am very aware that not everyone is going to want to access digital technology to look at things. They are going to want to go to the abbey and have that peace and quite and just sit there and soak up their imagined atmosphere or the atmosphere that is there.

They don't want to sit there and play with technology or they don't want to look at everything through a screen. They want to be able to touch those stones and do all this kind of stuff.

Rupert And also sit and relax because actually for some people what are they really doing? You've got father, mother, son and daughter – well each of them will walk round there getting different things out of it and for the parents it may just be a bit of peace and quiet from the children and it happens to be a nice environment and they are mildly interested.

We assume that they want to go into it in great depth and may of course, I personally assume that because I am very interested indeed but I get told off whenever I go round a museum with my children or my wife. They are round it like a dose of salts and I am just in the first room and they have finished the whole tour and they get really cross with me and they say, Dad the problem is if we take you there you read everything and you spend ages there and you get completely lost in it. And what's the point of going to a museum if you go and look at it all? So they have very different attitudes.

Debs Yeah exactly.

Rupert And yet they will, my daughter last weekend went to Paris for two days and did everything. Well how could she have done the Louvre in two hours?

Debs I was going to say there is no way you can do that Louvre in two hours.

Rupert But as far as she was concerned she was very happy with that and that was her usage of the Louvre and we must recognise that is the difference.

Debs The generations nowadays it's snacking everything. It is a sort of immediate soak up of information and move on.

Rupert And collecting and ticking boxes and not, almost not living anything.

Debs But it's almost to be able to talk about it with somebody else rather than to actually accept that information. And therefore the content that you are producing has got to factor that in. It has got to be almost a couple of lines of information and that's it.

And then if someone like yourself wants to know more than you can click for more; if you were going to use digital stuff. But yeah, it is, you know one of my questions would have been is there too much choice? But there is not enough choice really because -

Rupert I have to say I think museums are getting so much better.

Debs They are getting much better.

Rupert Oh much, much better and really some of them are outstanding now. Now I'm trying to think -

Debs Yes, museums are way ahead of heritage houses and sites; they are way ahead of being able to interpret information. I'm within various Linked In groups and stuff and museum groups and listening to them talk about what they are doing and stuff, some of them are way ahead, especially America, are way ahead of us.

Rupert You look at somebody like the British Museum and I suppose they are quite cutting edge with their exhibitions, which are kind of big, mega blockbusters. I didn't go to Pompeii the last one sadly but it was – I went to the Egyptian one, Book of the Dead, and it was very, very well done. And you know really carefully curated, really carefully thought through.

Actually though, funnily enough, I thought it was a bit dull for all of that. I think it was really carefully curated but probably too academic for most people and it didn't actually in an odd sort of way – it was quite rarefied. It was hard because I mean there was just a lot of, and you had to read into it, it probably didn't bring it to life. It was very well done but it probably didn't bring it to life for very many visitors. They would have walked through that and thought -

Debs Too much information.

Rupert Well – and of the wrong sort. It assumed too much. And again to go back and funnily enough it is a very valid point, you go back to, they can only communicate at one level so, and yet the people that are visiting are multi-layered.

Debs That's exactly right, yes.

Rupert So I think the flexibility of communication is very important. So I don't think the need has gone away.

Debs So in that instance then, I am conscious of time, but in that instance of the Book of the Dead, I didn't get to it but I did go to when Tutankhamen, I did go to that when it first happened. But the Book of the Dead maybe they had pitched their level of information and the way they had done that to the professorial or the academic level maybe or assumed too much knowledge for the adult visitor.

Maybe what they should have done was actually have the lower adult/higher child information there, if you see what I mean, to engage those people and then the sort of more academic would be more interested anyway so would then search out more information. So they could have a more button kind of thing to go and find out more.

Rupert Yews, you could have very simple things like you have in a newspaper. You have the kind of first paragraph that has to say the key things and then there's a second to the fifth paragraph that gives a lot more detail and then if anybody wants to read on there's a page supplement that actually gives a lot more detail still.

So you could have colour coded for instance. Just simply the black and then there's blue and then there's the light blue that each is telling more information and you can also have – well we know it's rather like a tree isn't it that there's the core bit of information and then that leads onto well tell me a bit more about the person or tell me a bit more about the event or tell me a bit more about the location? So very quickly out of that one exhibit a whole load of questions are asked and can be answered.

I think some of that can be done simply with boards at the display; so I think probably they didn't get it quite right and I went to the Enigma

exhibition not so long ago with Alfie, my son, near Milton Keynes, Bletchley. And they are doing a lot of work there to bring that to life and I think they've done that well. That was good.

Debs Yes, I think you could interact with some of the code couldn't you? You could -

Rupert I think you could do that, there was quite a lot. Yeah, it's good and they are putting a lot of – they are building a completely new museum so they are doing it very well and there was a good. You did get a sense of what was going on. It was good.

Debs Okay, so taking that back to your beer here, or rather your cider, how do you – who is your drinker on this? Do you see what I mean? So when – is that a teenager or is that?

Rupert Who is our target market?

Debs Yeah.

Rupert For that it's, it would be 25 – 45 year old, more mature, more sophisticated, slightly more up-market person who has gone beyond, who has gone beyond first -

Debs Drinking for drinking's sake.

Rupert Yeah and is, because they have to pay more for it and they don't get as drunk so if they are drinking it for effect that's not the brand for them. It's for flavour and it's, yeah, that's it.

Debs So that's been carefully considered in creating that?

Rupert Yeah.

Debs Oh yeah. So it is important isn't it, looking at the consumer/user/visitor, it is very important to look at who your target audience is first before you then create -

Rupert Absolutely for any product development it is about your target market. What is it you are trying to deliver and to whom?

Debs And I think museums and cultural heritage sites perhaps have a more difficult time of it because they can't just direct it at one target audience can they? They have got to be encompassing, so yeah – that's really. It really does the job doesn't it? It's really nice.

Right, I'm going way over time. So out of, just the last question, I will leave this here with you so you can see all the sort of things I was thinking of but we've covered quite a lot and it's been very valuable. Out of all the things that you've done and out of all the things that you are currently doing, what is the role that you would consider you are most satisfied with or you are most engaged with?

Rupert Is that in – how does that relate to -

Debs Not with the Talking Walls – this is more about you and your personal interests and what has driven you to where you are now really and what you want to continue doing based on all of your experiences? Because part of the PhD is the fact that experience builds knowledge and knowledge builds experience kind of thing.

Rupert Yeah, well I mean I do know if you are talking about my professional life or personal life but from a professional point of view I guess -

Debs If you knew you only had say it sounds awful this but five years to live, what would you drop, what would you slough off to then be able to make the most of those five years? What would you really want to

do? Would it still be brew beer? Would it be the medieval history?
Would it be something completely different that you've picked up
along the way?

Rupert

Well that's a slightly – the reality is that once you have a limited time
your perspective changes and we do not think, we do not live and we
couldn't live – I mean the reality is for most of us there is only a
limited time because we will only have a certain amount of energy
and in practice there probably is only four or five years more
professional life.

But you don't want to go through life thinking like that and then you
start, it raises all sorts of philosophical questions, which I am sure is
not what your dissertation is about or your PhD. In practical terms,
dealing with this business and my business interest in drinks, I guess
what I'm doing – it's having had a degree of success but also made a
lot of mistakes along the way is trying to learn from those and do it
again and do it better and do it differently.

And the satisfaction comes from creating a business and making
change and changing a particular, in my case a small segment of an
industry but, you know, there is no doubt I would say that one or two
of the things I've done in the past has changed things a little bit.

You know, the launch of Old Speckled Hen, which very quickly became
a best seller, grew a whole sector that has meant that the whole
premium bottled ale sector suddenly became – well it was coming to
life but it really accelerated it and the marketing of the brand changed
the way other people thought about marketing.

And so I think part of it is just about having some impact within a
limited area and for me it is about doing some of the things I didn't do

before in my old company, which I should have done. So launching the lager is very much something I intended to do and it is very much work that is in the very early stages.

But then I am looking at developing an adult soft drink, which will, which I didn't do last time and which I intend to do. This time round I am just going to do it whereas last time I danced round it for ages and thought, how am I going to do that? I shall at some point just have a go because it is creating something. It is creating something from nothing and it moves things on a bit.

And it is also I suppose visualising a way of running a business that's a little different from other people. So with this business a proportion of it's distributed profits go into a charitable trust, which is quite significant. 10% of the profits and that is different. And what that does is engages, it should start to engage the community in a whole different way and I am interested in how an approach like that disaccommodates some of the competitors because they can't do it for a whole variety of reasons.

And how you could exploit that to cause them real discomfort to the point at which it forces their hand in a little way.

Debs To do the same?

Rupert To, well they wouldn't do the same but to do things – I mean they are already doing it. People are much more aware of – these big companies are now much more aware of their kind of all the stakeholders, we are all more aware of all our stakeholders and more aware of the need to be good community citizens than they used to be in the past.

But some of them can't because they are large global businesses and of course the game is all about, and it is a game in a way, is about finding what your competitors are doing. Identifying obviously, respecting their strengths and then trying to tease out where the weaknesses are and exploit the weaknesses because that is actually the business equivalent of Darwin's survival of the fittest.

And the environment constantly changes but the thing is, in this case, we can change the environment by taking innovative steps that the consumer likes and forces our competitors to do something different. So here, for example, this is aged for five week, which is four and a half weeks longer than the major brewers are and that is very expensive. It takes a lot of time and it costs a lot of material. Now where this will lead us I am not sure but eventually our competitors simply can't match that.

So the game here is can we play that hard enough that it actually makes a difference and achieves a premium and what will they do to respond to that?

Debs Yeah, interesting, very interesting. So it is a business end that really drives you I would have thought then from listening to you. It's, your personal interests seem to be very tied up with the business aspect of looking at marketing and seeing what your competitors are doing and looking at their weaknesses and everything and driving your business to feed them in all these aspects. So it is the competition factor.

Rupert Yeah, it is. It is competition. As I say it's a kind of game in a way. It's more than a game because it's a living for a lot of people. It is very important and actually it's quite a big financial risk so it isn't really – that's not quite the way to characterise it but equally when you play a

game, if you are at international rugby level there's a lot more to it than just a game and yet eventually it is just a game.

Debs Thank you very much, that's very, very interesting. I knew it would be interesting talking to you from our previous discussions. But thank you ever so much.

Rupert That's a pleasure.

Debs And as I say if you have time to have a look through that then that would be great.

Rupert Okay, there's nothing you want me to do with it then?

Debs No, I'll stop this now but I will – I may come back to you at some point when I've transcribed all of this and done my analysis. It's because I'm doing this via action research so I want to come back and make sure that I am not biasing the analysis with my own interests. So just to make sure I've interpreted what you've said correctly.

Rupert Yes, okay, no -