

with... Jordan Rittenberry

This week, we find out what's really going on behind the selfie with Jordan Rittenberry, [newly appointed](#) managing director of Edelman South Africa.



Rittenberry, keeping in front of the news...

1. Where do you live, work and play?

Rittenberry: I live in Craighall Park and work in Blairgowrie. We just moved to Joburg from Chicago at the beginning of the year and haven't had much time for fun yet, but are open to suggestions!

2. Describe your career so far?

Rittenberry: My career has been far from typical. I began working for Edelman PR nearly a decade ago and quickly learned that you constantly have the opportunity to reshape your career and choose new paths. I've been fairly entrepreneurial over the years, from launching our start-up practice and playing a lead role in our data security and privacy group, to running a large corporate affairs team and now our office in Joburg.

3. Tell us a few of your favourite things.

Rittenberry: I'm a sports fanatic, anything I can get my hands on. I love watching soccer and am on the hunt for a club team to root for. They still don't make sense to me, but I can't wait to learn rugby and cricket.

4. What do you love about your industry?

Rittenberry: It's challenging. Every day is different. You get to work with amazing people and in the end, feel like you've made a difference.

5. Describe your average workday, if such a thing exists?

Rittenberry: One of the reasons I went into public relations is because there is no such thing as an average work day. We do quite a bit of crisis communications, so each morning when I wake up and check my email I have no idea what surprises await.

6. What are the tools of your trade?

Rittenberry: The internet. We consume a lot of information in order to truly understand our clients and their stakeholders. Regardless of hardware, connectivity is a must.

7. Who is getting it right in your industry?

Rittenberry: I'm biased working for Edelman, where our global CEO Richard Edelman is one of the true pioneers of the field. At the recent World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland he released the firm's 16th annual trust and credibility survey. The response, as always, was overwhelming and I look forward to sharing the results here soon.

8. What are you working on right now?

Rittenberry: I'm settling into my new role here in South Africa and doing a lot of listening. I've spent a lot of time with clients, prospects and of course, team members as I get up to speed.

9. Tell us some of the buzz words floating around in your industry at the moment and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself?

Rittenberry: Public relations is full of buzz words and acronyms. My favourites right now are "decisional analytics," "snackable content" and "co-opetition."

10. Where and when do you have your best ideas?

Rittenberry: I run...a lot. I regularly run ultramarathons and find that running is where I'm most relaxed. Once I get into a rhythm the ideas start flowing.

11. What's your secret talent/party trick?

Rittenberry: At all costs, I'm able to avoid dancing at parties and any other public functions.

12. What would we find if we scrolled through your phone?

Rittenberry: More news apps than any one person should have. I'm a junkie!

13. Are you a technophobe or a technophile?

Rittenberry: Definitely a technophile. I've spent a lot of my career working with technology companies so I've developed a passion when it comes to tech.

14. What advice would you give to newbies hoping to crack into the industry?

Rittenberry: Motivation and enthusiasm cannot be taught. Show that you're eager and we'll teach you the skills necessary to succeed.

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**Interviewed by [Leigh Andrews](#).*

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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