

Today my guest is the most open guest I have ever had the privilege of interviewing so far (68th interview not bad) and because it is so open I am not going to mess round or play the fool, I am sure people will realise why after reading this week's story, so please be upstanding for **Robin Banks**

**Tell me your background, your big break into radio?**

I started when I was 13... pirate radio station in Kilkenny, Ireland where I was born, then to the local licensed station and from there to the Voice of Peace in Israel, Radio Nova, Atlantic 252, Virgin Radio, XFM, Beat 106, Kiss 100, Rehab' (!), Leicester Sound and now brmb, Mercia, Wvvern and Beacon. As with all presenters when I got behind a mic I thought I was great... I listened and I invested in my career. I changed things when I had to and looked at my radio career as a business and not just getting paid for (lets face it) pretty much nothing. The presenters that don't invest in their careers are the ones who are unemployed and blaming everyone else but themselves when they are out of work. If you were a salesperson/teacher/engineer or whatever you'd go on courses etc etc... so why not Radio Presenters? Only listen to those people who have been there and done it and are continuing to 'do it'... cause they know the secret of what it takes.

**You have been and still are one of the biggest names in link up shows across the UK with the likes of the Smash Hits chart show, what's it like**

**broadcasting over 70 stations every week?**

Haha the good old Smash Hits Chart... well y'know the feeling is the exact same as doing it on just one radio station. Personally no matter how big or small the radio station is, the exact same amount of work goes into the show. I was lucky on the Smash Hits Chart to have 2 awesome producers in Richard Porter (HELLO PORTER!!!) and Jamie Wood... they made me sound good on that and made that show completely different to any of the other charts. So much so I was offered Hit 40 UK. I turned that down as they would have wanted me to leave Kiss 100 and Mark Story (Kiss MD at the time) showed me much love when I was there so I was repaying the love with that one.

**You have a great reputation in being a great radio trainer, can you tell us more about this?**

Well I tell ALL my clients not to tell anyone that I coach them. Some are quiet cool about people knowing though and a few have even provided me with quotes for my website (www.robinbanks.com). I really enjoyed helping other radio presenters and did a lot for free a few years ago but to be honest it was taking up so much of my time I decided to charge for it. I have a roster of clients from all over the world and they keep coming back. I deal a lot in the psychology of being on the radio, how to communicate with the audience and how to position yourself as a brand, both within your marketplace and building

the complete package. Those people who I have/am coaching will be nodding reading this, those that have never spoken to me about radio may well be sniggering well my friend look at my CV and then yours... I probably win that one. :)

**You are very open about your drink & drug problem that is in the past, how did this start and how did you hide it when working?**

I had to be honest when I came out of rehab in 2007... honestly I was fucked beforehand and I was convincing myself I wasn't... I spent an horrendous amount of money on screwing myself up... Fun times? Nah, I nearly lost everything... I have since apologised where possible to those people I screwed over and behaved like a dick to... I still have to personally spend some time with Andy Roberts at Kiss, he's a good guy and I was a nightmare towards him in my last few months there. When did it start? Well I was drinking for ages, but the madness started when I was at Virgin and yes it was a laugh... it then snowballed, it was like a stick in the spokes towards the end.

**What was it like when you lost everything, especially your work?**

Well the main thing I lost was the girl I thought I was going to marry... she went to Australia to get away from me. After I got out of Rehab' in July 2007 I waited a few months to get my head together and get off my fluffy cloud before I jumped on a flight to Australia not knowing what would happen. I needed closure of some kind. I married her last year.

**You're now clean and some people say a lot stronger for it, is this true and is it just a new thirst for life that you put into you shows?**

Actually yes... everything is a lot clearer and works better without shit messing up my system and thinking.

**Is it true you have been on Dragons Den and if so what was it like and what happened?**

When I got out of Rehab' in July 2007 I knew that I would never get back into radio because of the crazy reputation that I had both on and off the radio... especially as the catalyst that sent me to Rehab' was me doing an hour of a show on Galaxy Manchester off my head. It wasn't funny and I am ashamed of what I did. But, it was the final straw for me to get myself sorted. Actually that's a lie... I was running away. Anyway when I got back I helped set up a recycled packaging company (The Tiny Box Company) with a girl I met in a shop called Rachel. We kinda thought let's be totally different than every other boring packaging company out there. In fact I used a lot of my radio knowledge on setting Tiny Box up... it worked and within 4 months trading we had clients such as; Google, Aston Martin and the Tate Galleries. I thought that the only way we could get ourselves some top line PR was to take ourselves on Dragons' Den, I applied behind Rachel's back and we were called by the BBC a while later... then we completed the interview stage and a few weeks later we were in the Den in front of the Dragons. We spent an hour and a half in there

and when we left Theo and Peter invested in our company. Actually as far as I know we were the first people to actually get more money than we asked for!!!

**You have also been on TV and was nominated for a children's BAFTA, what was it for and what was your time on it like?**

hahaha yeah I did a bit of TV years ago... I was even given the 'BBC chat' and actually given a special number to call in case I got in any trouble!!!

**You have to have the best tag line to advertise you show "Robin Banks (with his b\*tch) is 'on your box, 7-10 weeknights... so please try to be doing other things when that show is on!" I take it you have great fun on the show, any good stories?**

Anyone who listens to my radio show has to have some kind of upstairs problem, it is my duty to tell people not to listen. Unfortunately as the Rajar figures can attest... they don't listen to what I am saying and they tune in... Freaks! Yes there are stories but what happens in Pakistan stays in Pakistan for at least 5 years.. you understand?

*It may be the straightest interview I have ever done for The Radio Magazine but it is also one of the best, I never thought I would have such open answers and a great laugh too, who knows what next week will bring - coming soon an inside to Metro Radio's Tony Horne's trek to the lost city of the Incas and what it take to broadcast from the back end of nowhere...*