



A CIMBA Spotlight with Mauro Simioni, MBA Class of 2002

- *Mauro, tell us more about you, about your current and past jobs.*

I am from Treviso, CIMBA MBA class of 2002. Right after graduation I worked in Milan for 5 years in advertising, for DLV, BBDO, the Italian agency of the BBDO network, part of the Omnicom Group, one of the largest groups in the industry, worldwide. I was an Account Manager in the international office, also thanks to the CIMBA experience that surely gave me a boost. When video-consumption over the web exploded (the early years of YouTube), I moved back to Venice area, working as Senior Manager in a start-up based in H-Farm, a venture Incubator. My experience as an entrepreneur started from there because I realized that our industry had changed forever and that my ideas were often different from those of my boss ... and I found I really liked it!

I founded my own creative agency + video production company (morethan30seconds.tv), basically challenging the main agencies in Milan, but with a different model: I had the opportunity to observe how TV production companies worked and I attempted to apply the same open model to advertising. That means not having a “creative superstar” anymore, but a mixed team of filmmakers, graphic designers, writers ... now working with data scientists, analysts, web marketing managers.

- *How did you choose CIMBA? What led you to choose an MBA?*

Before my graduation in Italy, I was writing my thesis at Diesel, the fashion brand. The marketing director at that time told me: “Go there! And then stay abroad as much as possible”. I am still not sure if he told me that because he didn’t like me.

- *Reminiscences of your experience in the CIMBA program. What are some of the things that changed your way of thinking?*

CIMBA is more than a program. It was an exceptional year, literally “out of the ordinary”: I guess It will not happen again in my life to be able to spend 1 year studying, in a beautiful environment, with people that are still – after almost 20 years! – part of my life.

I went to Canada for the wedding of one of my classmates and he came to mine in Venice. It is several summers in a row that we now meet in Croatia with our wives and 4 daughters.

After the graduation, I travelled by car from Kansas City to Las Vegas (3 days + motels!), the same day that Vanguard Airline went into bankruptcy because of Sept. 11 (at that time the CIMBA MBA program was with KU). We were 4 classmates and we didn’t even complain with the flight attendant, and immediately rented a car. That’s the CIMBA spirit.



I also remember Dr. Ringleb asking the class during the statistics course: “What is the probability of you getting a job by just sending an e-mail?” Most of the class were not sure but said about 20 maybe 25%. He shouted, so strongly that I nearly jumped from my chair: “ZEROOOOOO!!”. That taught me the importance of personal relationships, to develop the business behind the PowerPoint slides. (Ps. By the way PowerPoint is dead.)

➤ ***What was your favorite moment in the CIMBA MBA Program? Favorite class? Difficult moment?***

I had difficult moments at the very beginning of the program with the statistics and accounting classes because my educational background was different. But statistics really surprised me, I liked it a lot in the end. My job in advertising is now much more about data interpretation and analysis. Think about the decision you can take to improve the customer journey, by knowing how to manage the incredible amount of data we now have (website analytics, social media, online store) and how you should match or use them to create a seamless experience in a traditional store. Especially after this global Covid-19 emergency, knowing your customer almost at a personal level to guarantee the best “service” will be just as important as the product you sell.

➤ ***What was the impact of the program on your life and career ?***

CIMBA helped me to take a continuous approach to learning and to address my career in the right way. It is crucial to address as early as possible your passion and career path, in order to gain work experience and to be “consistent” with your choices. We need to be useful, for clients and for employees and vice versa. Otherwise it is not a job; it is a friendship.

➤ ***Looking back at your professional career, is there something you regret?***

If I say “yes” I would regret the answer.

No, off course not! We need to create new opportunities every day. I pitched our agency for some projects where I saw nothing but the opportunity to show our work.

Now we work for several prestigious, international brands such as De’Longhi, Kenwood, Coin Group, Scarpa, Veneta Cucine, to name our latest projects.

➤ ***What advice would you give a current or perspective students?***

To a perspective student I would say that from day 1 you will have an immersive experience. The intensity and quality of the learnings are very impressive.

To a current student I would say: don’t worry to ask questions, to go deeper in every subject. Ask for private meeting with Dr. Ringleb and the other professors; “steal” as much as possible from them!

➤ ***Can you share a dream/future goal?***

I would like to reinforce our office in Milan and to integrate with other international networks to gain more international exposure.

➤ ***What is your favorite movie? Favorite book?***

Movie: “Barney’s Version”, with Paul Giamatti and Dustin Hoffman (actually it is also, first and foremost, a great book!). A beautiful story of friendship, love, and trust.

Book: “Sapiens: A brief History of Humankind”, by Yuval Noah Harari. The feeling you could have by reading this book is to have a “fear of heights”, as I had.

➤ ***What inspires you?***

Lot of things. But people, first: my wife, our 5-year old daughter, my family, my friends, our clients too!

➤ ***Is there something else you would like to add?***

Brava Cristina! You are the “fil-rouge” of CIMBA, the one who collects ideas and people... even if it is impossible to get in touch frequently! Thank you for your e-mails, competence, and positive attitude. I really appreciate it.



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