

Brian Smith Biography



Brian is Australian born and was raised with an enduring passion for surfing and the surf culture. In his youth, he enjoyed the epic waves on both coasts of his home country. He was educated at the Institute of Chartered Accountants Australia, where he received his first of many business credentials.

After ten years as a public accountant, Brian felt a burning desire to do something that would fit his passion for surfing while looking for a business idea that would allow him to support himself. He turned in his resignation notice, got on a plane to the States, and became a regular at the classic surfing destinations up and down the southern California coastline. He called Malibu, Cardiff-by-the-Sea, and Swami's Beach his "office."

One day, while pulling on his sheepskin boots after a cold surf session, he realized there were nothing like them available in California. He and a surfing buddy shipped six pairs from Australia to show them around, in search of interested takers. It was at this moment that the UGG brand was born.

Brian called on every surf shop up and down the California coast, enthusiastically showing prospective retailers the UGG prototype. Most of the shop owners would deliver the same disappointing reaction: "Brian, we sell flip flops, not boots." Not willing to give up his idea, he then embarked on a laser-focused effort to gain endorsements and support from the surf community of which he was becoming a respected member. Finally, with two young Pro-surfers on "the UGG team," a new cult was born and "UGG" became the cool word on California campuses and beaches alike.

Had he not diligently stuck to his vision, the idea of UGG Boots would never have come to fruition. Undaunted by the surf shop owners' initial rejections, Brian forged forward with his dream and we all now enjoy our much loved and favorite casual footwear—our UGG boots.

After 17 years, Brian sold his company and the brand to Deckers Outdoor Corporation. With their resources, the "casual comfort" segment of the footwear industry came to life and the UGG Brand now garners more than a billion dollars of sales per year, year after year.

Having developed the art of storytelling throughout the years, the stage became the perfect place for Brian to present to business owners the ups—and downs—of being an entrepreneur. He found that he not only enjoyed giving these talks, but his audiences were responding in wide embrace to his stories like he never could have imagined. The size and scope of the audiences grew and now he is one of the most sought-after speakers in the world today. He brings a magical mix of real world street smarts, kindness, compassion, and respect for the entrepreneurial drive—all of which fits business of any size. And, yes, he still continues to surf when he's not on tour.

To book Brian Smith, please contact Kelly at (717) 781-0838 or Kelly@UGGfounder.com.

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