



Jim Zulick

New York University, '05



Jim Zulick spent his high school years in Nazareth, Pennsylvania, and headed for New York City after being accepted to NYU. A sociology major with a minor in business, he intended to pursue a career in the business world but preferred this broader-based curriculum for the intellectual grounding it provided. The overlap between the two disciplines has served him well, he says.

Zulick's interest in business included the advertising profession, and he interned at a full-service advertising agency in New York, Badger & Partners, during the latter part of his time at NYU. He learned some entry-level business skills, he reflects — and enjoyed getting his feet wet in a professional, creative environment — but felt something was missing. “I found myself wanting to do something that would produce more measurable results,” he says. He longed for broader, more direct responsibility for marketing, and realized that this meant working on the client side rather than at an agency. Ultimately, the internship experience sparked his interest in entrepreneurial fields.

So Zulick began looking for entrepreneurial opportunities in marketing, and found MBI through NYU's career office. He interviewed, saw promise in the opportunity, and received a job offer. He joined MBI as an Assistant Product Manager in the fall of 2005.

During his first year with MBI, he was assigned to a succession of the company's product lines, including figurines, ornaments, and jewelry. The work afforded him a broad overview of what the company does, and an immersive education in product marketing fundamentals. He has since concentrated exclusively on jewelry, and is currently managing 75 to 80 jewelry products.

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Discussing the particulars of his job, Zulick makes it clear that the ability to think creatively while dealing with the business pressures of marketing is a crucial attribute for success at MBI, or for that matter, any marketing endeavor. As an example, he cites his work on MBI's Diamonesse line of simulated diamond jewelry; Zulick and his boss created Diamonesse as a coordinated advertising and branding strategy for an existing product line, and then

watched as response increased by nearly 50% as a result of its implementation. Keeping an eye on the competition is also important, he says, so he regularly watches QVC, browses jewelry stores and seeks to be on competitors' mailing lists, to keep abreast of design and pricing trends.

On another front, Zulick is eagerly anticipating the rollout of a new product line he is managing. Currently in development, the line is a striking collection of jewelry featuring a synthetic gemstone that is clear like a diamond, but formed from a different raw material. The stone is considered neither a simulated diamond nor a diamond substitute; it in fact has more brilliance than a real diamond, an alluring quality that the marketplace has already begun responding to.

In managing all of this, Zulick spends his workdays giving feedback to product developers, overseeing manufacturing, editing and approving advertising, checking on inventory, analyzing marketing data, and crafting marketing plans and promotional strategy.

He lives in New Haven, and commutes to work by train. In his leisure time, he is literally a World Champion drum and bugle corpsman; Zulick toured the U.S. with The Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps, nine-time DCI World Champions, during the summers of 2001 through 2005. He now teaches the Connecticut Hurricanes, a local corps, on weekends. He also plays on the MBI volleyball team and socializes frequently with MBI associates. A sense of community, he remarks, is part of MBI's culture.