

All about Antoine Bona, Executive Sales Director, Essence Corp



Antoine Bona with his adorable new born baby boy Remi Jacques

We visited Essence Corp.'s offices and had the pleasure of asking Antoine Bona some light-hearted questions to get to know him a little better.

Q: Where were you born and raised?

I was born in Paris, France but I was raised between Panama and Miami - mostly in Miami as I have been living there for 30 years. I moved to Miami when I was ten.

Q: What motivates you in life?

Being around good people and nice weather. I do enjoy some luxuries like travel, good food and good wine but, to be honest, if you have nice weather and good people around you that is the most important. I think as humans we like to be around people.

Q: What's the best thing that's happened to you this year/month/week?

This year my son was born - our first -and it is a bit of a cliché but it was really an amazing

experience. He was born on February 3 so he is an Aquarius like me which is nice. He was a surprise because we didn't know the gender and I was excited that it was a boy - as any man would be. In May he celebrated his third month and was finally allowed to swim which is important for a city like Miami. His name is Remi Jacques.



Q: What would you choose as your last meal?

I love seafood so it would be a combo of oysters and stone crab, which is a local speciality, perhaps caviar - definitely something seafood-oriented.

Q: What's your favorite '90s jam and why?

I love 90s rock. I listen to Satellite radio in my car and there is a station called Lithium; it's non-stop 90s grunge like Pearl Jam, Soundgarden and Soul Asylum. I like any Red Hot Chili Peppers' song and my favorite is probably Smells like Teen Spirit by Nirvana.

Q: How would you rate your memory?

I would say I have a good memory.

Q: What were you like in high school?

I was athletic, kind and social. I swam, I played water polo and my passion was surfing.



Enjoying a long-time passion for Antoine Bona – Surfing!

Q: What do you think about when you're alone in your car?

I listen to music and podcasts but to be honest I don't do much thinking in the car. I do more thinking in the shower. I have to take a hot shower in the morning; its like my morning coffee and I start thinking about my day and different strategies.

Q: Are you more of a hunter or a gatherer?

I have never thought of that. I guess the cool answer is to say a hunter and I guess I am a bit of both.

Q: Do you prefer country or city?

City.

Q: What is your favourite city?

One of the most amazing cities in the world is New York – Manhattan - where you feel stimulated, everything seems new and is dynamic. It is one of the most stimulating cities and anything that is cool originates from there. I look at Miami or Tokyo and if there is a trendy pop-up bar it probably started in Manhattan first. Paris is the most beautiful city and so is Rome, but in terms of energy and stimulation it has to be Manhattan.

Q: What do you work toward in your free time?

Now I spend a lot of time with my baby and my wife but we are all fitness-oriented: yoga, stand-up paddle boarding, surfing and I love to travel. I like to go to different restaurants with my wife. We are pretty active – we don't stay home and watch TV.

Q: What is your favourite place to vacation?

I love the Mediterranean in the summer. I love swimming in the Mediterranean – something about the cool, crisp water; it feels like a recharge, a rebirth, almost like a baptism. Something that is needed. Also I love the seafood in Greece, Spain, France!

Q: What in the world would you most like to change?

I wish we would protect the environment more and be more conscious of that because I wonder what the future is going to hold for my son. I got to enjoy all these places in the world that weren't polluted and the clean oceans.

You get to see it less and less. There are swim advisories in Miami which weren't a thing in the 80s. I don't know if it was cleaner or we just didn't have the data, but it is something I grew up with and it's a shame that the next generation is not going to get to enjoy it as much as we did.

Q: What about yourself would you most like to change?

I think I would like to be more poised at all times. If I get frustrated, I internalize it and I would like to be able to leave it and just move on.

Q: What is the most important piece of advice anyone ever gave you?

Two things: one is to be impeccable with your word - really to say nice things; and I do believe in karma, and what goes around comes around, so do nice things and be kind.

Q: What is something about you that most people would find surprising?

I am an avid surfer. Also, after college I did an internship in Australia for six months and the following six months I hiked, hitchhiked and camped along the entire south-east and south-west coast of Australia.

Q: If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?

As you know I am a new father so everything revolves around my son.

I would like to know what the future holds for my son and what the world is going to be for him. I know the way my parents worked in the past; they worked extremely hard but there was more of a

balance between work and play. It is partly because of the speed, the data, the technology and I wonder what it is going to be like for the next generation. My parents say they don't envy us workwise.

But generation Z is supposed to change the world; they are fed up and it's a rocky environment in terms of wars and climate. They are more conscious of that and it is much more important to them.

I got to enjoy college and enjoy the good old days when I started working and traveling and being less tied to my emails. I remember traveling in South America and you could do three weeks and there wasn't a need to head back to the office and report to finance or catch up with

emails. Those were the good old days. I do enjoy my work now - I am motivated and challenged and I learn every day - but I wonder if they will have that. I am sure my dad had good old days and my grandfather when he started the company he traveled for three consecutive months out of the year. What kind of adventures did he get into!

Q: If you had the opportunity to meet one person you haven't met, who would it be, why, and what would you talk about?

I think I would like a sit down with my grandfather who passed away when I was ten so I didn't get much time with him. On my mom's side my grandfather passed away recently. I would like to hear

more about what things were like back then. Especially my grandfather on my dad's side who founded the business - how did the business come about, how were these markets in the Caribbean, in Central America, the free zones. We always think about it as the 'wild west' but I would like to get his point of view.