

# SIMON WOODROFFE

- Founder of Yo! Sushi

LONDON  
SPEAKER  
BUREAU



## Topics

- Creativity
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Motivation

Founder, owner and creative driving force behind all things YO!, Simon Woodroffe left school at the age of 16 and spent 30 years in the entertainment business. His production companies in London and Los Angeles designed and staged concerts for many artists during the 70s and 80s, including The Moody Blues, Madness, Rod Stewart, Stevie Wonder and George Michael. In the 90s, he spearheaded the development of television deals to show huge international rock concerts worldwide, including Nelson Mandela concerts and shows for Amnesty International.

In 1997, Simon founded YO! Sushi, a conveyor belt sushi bar. The concept was to make eating a complete entertainment experience and featured call buttons, robot drinks trolleys and Japanese TV. The first restaurant opened on London's Poland Street and became an overnight phenomenon. Today it continues to expand both at home and abroad.

In 1999 Simon won the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award and became part of the CBI/BCC Ambassador of Entrepreneurism campaign, with which he is still actively involved. In 2001 he was awarded the accolade of Best Venue at the Retailer of the Year Awards. In recognition for his contribution to hospitality, Simon was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list 2006.

Simon has further developed the YO! brands including YOTEL, the world's most revolutionary hotel that opened in 2007. YO! Home: Simon's re-invention of the city apartment launched at the 100% Design event in London in September 2012 and YO! Zone: part spa, part cafe, part bar and part nightclub is in development.

His television appearances include the BBC 2 Dragons' Den as one of the panelists, who make and break the dreams of would-be entrepreneurs as they pitch their business ideas for financing, Discovery TV's VIP Weekends with Ian Wright, ITV's Homes & Property and ITV's The Millionaire's Club.

Simon is in great demand as a speaker at corporate events talking about entrepreneurship, customer service and creativity, and has shared the inspiring story of his entrepreneurial success worldwide.

## AWARDS

- 2001 Retail Interiors Awards Best Food & Supermarket Design for Edinburgh
- 2001 Retail Interiors Awards Most Outstanding Retail Experience for Edinburgh
- 2001 Theme Best Marketing Award
- 2000 Group Restaurateur of the Year
- 1999 Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year
- 1998 Marketing Week Design Effectiveness Award

## TESTIMONIALS

"The most honest and human presentation from a person of great maturity.

'Brilliant' 'Passionate and Refreshing' 'gave me loads of inspiration'" – Enterprise Masterclass

"Wonderful presentation – motivational, educational and radical" – Accenture

"Great approach – good mix of people stuff and business stuff" – Merrill Lynch

"I was very pleased with Simon and I look forward to working with him in the very near future." – Paver Downes

"Your presentation was absolutely superb and thoroughly well received.....a great inspiration!" – Banks Sadler

"You were fantastic! A big, big thank you from the Hallmarks team" – Hallmarks Business Development

"Our sincere thanks – your presence really helped pull the theme together!" – Yellow Pages

"His inspired, passionate speech literally gave me chills down my back." – Branding America

"The best speech I have heard in this building in ten years." – Institute of Directors

"A huge thank you for your talk. It was highly inspirational and exceptionally well received from discussions afterwards" – Sainsburys

"High rating – unscripted from the heart – very powerful" – Caradon Trend

"Very down to earth and inspirational" – Institute of Management

"Extremely interesting liked the personal approach" – CIPFA

"You have inspired a lot of people to grab opportunities around them and have the courage to think outside the box" – GlaxoSmithKline