

Richard Watts

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BIOGRAPHY – SHORT

Commercially astute and strategically driven executive with over 25 years of leadership across telecoms, infrastructure, real estate, and FMCG. A proven team-builder and communicator with a strong track record of launching and scaling businesses in complex markets.

Currently Chief Commercial Officer at the **International Fiber Alliance (IFA)**, expanding fiber connectivity through innovative open access models in the U.S., Indonesia and other high-growth markets. Regular speaker at international broadband conferences and contributor to thought leadership on municipal fiber strategies. Passionate about digital inclusion, stakeholder collaboration, and long-term value creation.

CURRENT ROLES

International Fiber Alliance (IFA)

Chief Commercial Officer (2023–Present)

- Fronts global commercial strategy for IFA, with focus on expanding open access fiber infrastructure in US.
- Researches and develops opportunities in Indonesia and across the U.S., engaging municipal networks, utilities, and private Investors.
- Represents IFA at major global forums and panels (e.g., Broadband Communities Summit 2025) promoting scalable, inclusive fiber models.
- Writes on the U.S. broadband market, municipal open access, and digital equity.
- Supports member organisations with growth strategy, market positioning, and lead generation.

Charity post:

Chair of the Board of Trustees: Havant and East Hants. MIND (2022–Present)

- Oversees governance, wellbeing strategy and executive support for one of the region's key mental health charities.

SELECTED PRIOR EXPERIENCE

VX Fiber UK

UK Country Manager / Business Development Director (2017–2023)

- Launched VX Fiber in the UK and built its profile as a key player in digital infrastructure.

- Secured major public-private fibre partnerships including with Stoke-on-Trent, Bristol City Council, the MOD and Grosvenor Estate.
- Played a pivotal role in aligning UK operations with international investment strategy (InfraBridge); which facilitated over £175m of inward investment.
- Acted as national spokesperson, driving market awareness and regulatory engagement in the UK's evolving fibre sector.
- Developed and led high-performing business development and sales teams; ensured cross-functional alignment across markets.

Brightmatter Consulting

Founder & Strategic Consultant (2009–2013)(2015-2017)

- Delivers interim leadership and strategic advice across telecoms, infrastructure and consumer sectors.
- Offers specialist support in go-to-market strategy, stakeholder engagement, and business transformation.

Ella's Kitchen (Hain Celestial Group)

Interim European Marketing Director (2013–2014)

- Led marketing strategy refresh and digital transformation following brand acquisition.
- Oversaw ecommerce and digital campaigns across multiple markets; initiated roadmap for marketing of new product development.

ATW IT Systems Ltd

Managing Director (2003–2009)

- Grew startup to one of the UK's top IT and ERP resellers; sold to IRIS Software Group.
- Managed a cross-disciplinary team delivering tech, CRM, Accounting and ecommerce solutions.

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

- **Business Strategy** – IoD / Leeds Met University
- **Behavioural Science in Practice** – Warwick Business School
- Ongoing CPD in stakeholder management, marketing strategy, and commercial leadership
- Trained in commercial real estate valuation, negotiation, and law