

(left to right) Mike Marriner,
Amanda Gall, Brian McAllister,
and Nathan Gebhard.



ROADTRIP NATION

written by **Britt Brown** photographed by **Joe Schmelzer**

The roots of Mike Marriner and Nathan Gebhard's unlikely empire are very, very normal. They were just some water polo-playin' Pepperdine juniors overwhelmed by the prospect of graduating from college and entering career tracks largely designed by academic advisors and parental pressures. Then they had an epiphany: "We just snapped over at the surf one day, and we're just like, 'This isn't right, you know.' And we got out of the water and we're just like, 'We gotta do something about this.'"

Like so many dissatisfied and restless American youths have done before, they bought an \$8,000 bright green RV, video equipment, and piled in for a summer roadtrip (picking up comrades Amanda Gall and Brian McAllister on the way out of town). Instead of just smoking pot and taking wacky pictures at national landmarks, however, this industrious Laguna Beach crew cold-called quirky CEOs and other successful

individualists, then interviewed them about how they found their calling and came to be where they are today. By summer's end they compiled a web page full of documented personalities, each of whom demonstrate the Roadtrip Nation philosophy that "success is people who found their open road."

These Beats of business soon found the sweet smell of success themselves, as both Nike and Apple boarded the bus as sponsors, facilitating multiple book deals and the production of their documentary. As for the future? They're hoping to pass along the torch to the younger generation of roadtrippers, and maybe just work behind the scenes at their production company. Retire at 26? Who knew dharma bumming was so lucrative?

For more information, www.roadtripnation.com.