

From blogger to PR agency founder: The inspiring journey of Siki Msuseni



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12 Mar 2024

In anticipation of International Women's Day which was held last week on 8 March, we spoke with Siki Msuseni, the founder of Amplified PR. Msuseni's passion for storytelling ignited a journey that began with a blog highlighting creative voices. This passion transformed into a thriving PR agency.



Image supplied. Siki Msuseni, Founder of Amplified PR.

Msuseni's experience as a blogger and collaborator with other PR firms led her to envision a distinct approach. "Fueled by this vision," she says, "I launched Amplified PR, an agency dedicated to crafting positive brand reputations and fostering brand communities."

The journey of an entrepreneur

Running Amplified PR for over five years has been a rollercoaster ride for Msuseni. “It’s been a journey of ebb and flow,” she reflects, “It has its ups and downs, the losses are horrendous and the wins are at an all-time high.” Bootstrapping the business has presented challenges, particularly in securing funding.

However, the rewards of entrepreneurship – location independence and time freedom – are significant for Msuseni. “These were two factors I was seeking,” she explains, “As I am big on spending time with my family, cherishing every moment with them, I am able to spend time with them and still get to work.”



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Challenges and overcoming obstacles

Leading Amplified PR hasn’t been without its hurdles. “The biggest challenges I’ve encountered are securing new clients and also managing cashflows in business,” Msuseni shares. She acknowledges that overcoming these challenges is an ongoing process. Finding the right clients can be tough, but Msuseni emphasises perseverance: “One needs to keep on pushing and aiming high for those clients.”

The broader South African economic climate also presents difficulties. “When I look at the unemployment rate in South Africa and the tone-deaf advice that one should start a business in this climate, I often think it’s irresponsible advice to tell the youth to start a business when they are unemployed,” Msuseni observes. “We are not all made for entrepreneurship, and that’s the reality.”

The rewards of amplification

Despite the challenges, Msuseni finds immense satisfaction in her work. “There are just too many to mention,” she says, “but one that stands out for me is collaboration, seeing the work that you have worked with others coming to life.” Collaborations with emerging agencies that align with Amplified PR’s values have been particularly rewarding for Msuseni.

“There’s beauty in collaboration of teams for a sole purpose of amplifying young voices,” she beams. “I’ve contributed to youth culture through the work that I do, most importantly collaborating with emerging Creatives for commercial gain (to earn an income through their talent).”

Looking back and moving forward

If Msuseni could go back in time, she would offer her pre-startup self a critical piece of advice: “You can never go wrong with a spoonful of confidence,” she asserts. “As a creative entrepreneur, you need to believe in your own creative ideas and that requires a lot of confidence in yourself. And also confidence will give you a seat at tables you never thought you could occupy. Entrepreneurs need to adopt a high level of confidence, belief in themselves and their ideas.”

Reflecting on the valuable lessons she’s learned as an entrepreneur, Msuseni emphasises the importance of social impact. “My contribution is not just a small one but one where society needs to thrive and what I mean by this is that I should not be driven by selfish reasons but rather always impact the society I operate in,” she explains. “Entrepreneurship is not easy and it is most rewarding when you contribute to change in society.”

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Balance and well-being

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is a priority for Msuseni. “I won’t compromise on a good night’s rest and family time,” she declares. She incorporates simple strategies like avoiding screen time before bed to create boundaries. “A simple activity such as no screen time before you go to bed,” she advises. “The aimless scrolling on social media can be a trap of comparison as to what your peers are doing and where you are in life.”

Taking time for self-care is essential for Msuseni. “I always take time out for myself to pour into my cup in whatever way that looks like,” she says. This could involve a working holiday or simply cycling in the Western Cape’s scenic Winelands. “Anything that refreshes my mind,” she adds. “I always find small pockets in my day to step away from the laptop and connect with others, I love a good coffee meeting at a contemporary coffee shop in the neighbourhood.”

ABOUT NTANDOKAZI NTOZAKHE

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