

The power of 2: Motau reflects on Think Creative Africa's journey

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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Nkgabiseng Motau, chief creative officer for Think Creative Africa, was recently named as a judge in the D&AD and One Show. Not new to judging, she has served as judge for the AdFocus Awards and Cannes Young Lions in 2021 as well as Pendorings and Loeries, and has just concluded the Creative Circle judging, while juggling a family.



Together with Mukondi Kgomo (CEO), they launched Think Creative in 2016. Motau says that when they started the business it was a steep learning curve.

“Previously we had worked as creatives in large ad agencies. These were large ships, and we did not grasp what it took to run these.”

Doing all the work

She explains that they struggled to manage the sales pipeline while delivering on jobs. “Working in the business makes it difficult to work on the business, and in the beginning, we did everything and some of these tasks took more time and energy than they should have,” she says.

“In the beginning, we were a team of two,” recalls Motau, with a chuckle. “We would make up different email addresses – like accounts@thinkcreative – but it was all us. All those email addresses were managed by us!”

But she says in the end this was all-important to understand and learn first-hand. “As time passed, and we were able to hire new people, they brought new skills into the business and gave us back some time and capacity.”

Doing the hard yards also helped Kgomo and Motau develop a shared understanding of where we wanted to take the business.

“Looking back now, while it felt wild at the time, it was a slow steady journey with moments that led to each new growth point,” she adds.

Putting in the hard work

“We have had moments of success, but we didn’t always realise it and I remember seeing our first TV campaign out there and hearing positive feedback from family and friends.”

That’s changed in recent years as the agency has been recognised in industry awards shows and that has caught the attention of clients that hadn’t considered Think Creative before. “The biggest of these moments was winning Vodacom alongside VMLY&R,” she adds.

While the agency is now recognised, what drives Motau has not changed. “We bring ourselves and all our stories into the work. We are super obsessed with insights and getting to know audiences very well before designing solutions for them. I think that obsession can be felt in the work,” she says.

An obsession lived

This obsession could stem from a long list of what Motau wanted to be when she was little. “I wanted to be so many things - some of which I recognise in my current work - from acting, singing, to being a scientist, a gynaecologist, an engineer and even a fashion designer.”

More recently her list of ambitions expanded to include motherhood. “With Kgomo also pregnant at the same time, it was tough to juggle two pregnancies, maternity leave periods and new little ones, but I think the little ones come pre-packed with magic dust full of superpowers to sprinkle on their mamas.

“Having a baby reminded me of all my strengths (and weaknesses) and created new confidence for me. It is all about moving forward imperfectly for me,” she says.

And that explains her motto when it comes to working and achieving success? “The body can achieve what the mind believes. One’s state of mind can be the difference between just making it strapping by and giving up,” she states.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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