

Business sustainability

 By [Glenn van Eck](#)

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Reflecting on 35 years of Magnetic Storm, our journey continues to amaze me. From humble beginnings to the team and talent we have today, to the dreams we have for tomorrow. And it's in this reflection I can see what has enabled us to grow, and what makes for a sustainable, growth-hungry business.

Every entrepreneur wants to see their business grow, yet few understand the significance of sustaining that growth. We all know the right ingredients include the right intellectual capital, talent pool to deliver, strategic partnerships, and products/services with high demand. But you need to look beyond the fundamentals to sustain this momentum, and as an entrepreneur you need to create a solid foundation:

Get the right people

The challenge lies in sustaining growth. Jim Collins coined the phrase “get the right people on the bus”. Business is about people. So if you're looking to go to the next level, it could be worthwhile assessing your talent and asking yourself how you are currently offering value to your clients and if your team is delivering to this expectation.



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Do you have the right talent in the right roles? A small shift of key areas could revolutionise your business. Is your team able to identify the right opportunities to create/sustain growth? Are you continuously improving internally to ensure delivery is at an all-time high?

Ensuring operational efficiencies

If you are efficient, your costs of operations are lower. Instill a culture that sensitises people to costs, and encourage them to seek ways to streamline. You need to drive efficiencies by design, not by accident. This helps to ensure that your internal processes are in line with business/consumer needs, and that they allow you to create and sustain growth. Operational efficiencies have a direct and significant impact on the bottom line.

Approach the right clients

Embrace an entrepreneurial attitude when prospecting clients, you want to ensure the business not only grows, but sustains

itself over time. So look for and seize opportunities previously unseen or that others don't see at all. As Simon Sinek says, "Do business with people who believe what you believe".

Embracing an entrepreneurial attitude allows you to see beyond the obvious and spot the best clients in support of your business model. This keeps acquisition costs low and assures client relationships are mutually beneficial. It's about doing the right business, in the right way, with the right people.

Great leadership

The most successful leaders have a clear direction, are decision makers and cast a vision internally and externally to excite and motivate all stakeholders.

Being in the events business I have made millions of decisions, and have become almost immune to pressure situations and am intuitive about casting strategic, long-term plans for the future. To sustain growth, you need to be confident in your decisions, and be able to see the glass as half full. However, the key to growth is to ensure you cultivate this skill and talent within your leadership team so that it does not rest with one person.

Take risks

To sustain growth, you must embrace the idea of risk, and be comfortable with taking calculated risks. When we opened the Cape Town office, it was a risk. We are well known but competition in Cape Town is fierce and awareness of our brand was low as we are based in Port Elizabeth. Yet there was an intuitive belief that we could create a successful offering to a large consumer base. Therefore it was a calculated risk and one that I am proud to say has paid off.

Sustaining growth requires you to share your momentum with others: employees, suppliers, customers. You, as an entrepreneur cannot drive sustainable growth alone, you need a strong, collaborative team.

When sustainability becomes part of your organisation's fabric, you're not only able to grow but you become ahead of the competition. As leaders we need to be pioneers, push the boundaries and create new paths.

I'm proud of the team we are cultivating at Magnetic Storm. We live our values of integrity and excellence daily, and our current focus is building that, as well as creativity.

ABOUT GLENN VAN ECK

Glenn is a true entrepreneur. From the age of 16, he has been involved with Magnetic Storm, initially by assisting his brother with the setting up and de-rigging of AV equipment and thereafter maintenance of equipment; and at 25 years of age Glenn purchased Magnetic Storm. Fast forward to 2016 and Glenn is still at the helm of the business, and has grown a two-man disco to a full-service events and tech company with offices in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, servicing the entire country.

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