

# The 'constantly updating' aspect of running a digital business

 By Leigh Andrews

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Danny Aaron is Director of 3-Way Marketing, which in turn is part of the Benater Productions Group. He tells us all about the digital businesses under their scope, African expansion and their broad advertising mix - airtime vouchers, anyone?

When your business operates in the digital realm, you need to use databases to optimise your results. Aaron goes so far as to call information the lifeblood of the Benater Group, explaining that they have a team of developers that work with their in-house mathematician to constantly improve the database. This is by no means a one-off, stagnant process as they constantly look at the needs of the business and update their databases, reporting and systems to evolve with our business.

I got further detailed insights from Aaron below...

## ■ 1. Tell us about the company's origins in 2007, and how it sprung from working together at Hollard.



Danny Aaron

**Aaron:** When I was first employed by Hollard, they didn't really have a website or any website marketing. My first task was to find some clever ways to get website traffic and generate leads for the Hollard call centre. Tom was actually my line manager as I joined. Slowly, we started spending some time together and exchanging ideas. Eventually, after 12 months, we both agreed to leave and start 3 Way Marketing. Having worked at Hollard, many of the large media agencies would come and pitch for Hollard's business, promising nothing more than pretty pictures and good Powerpoints. After learning that everything digital is measurable, we started realising that performance-based marketing can be a reality. We left taking Hollard as our first client and, until this day, 3 Way Marketing is still one of Hollard's key performance marketing partners. [Click here for more](#) on 3 Way Marketing.

## 2. How exactly does Benater work, as a holding company?

**Aaron:** The structure is quite simple. Benater holds shares in numerous companies. In some, the shareholding is as little as 10%, whereas in others, the shareholding can go up to 100%. Each of the businesses within the Group have their own Managing Director and staff. Companies are run independently and most companies in the Group benefit from the marketing expertise of 3 Way Marketing, the main trading company in the Group. Benater invests in start-ups, starts its own businesses and invests in established businesses that complement the existing group. Benater also has property investment, which facilitates the existing and new businesses to work closely together and benefit from the expertise the Group has developed.

## ■ 3. Talk us through how you generate high quality leads.

**Aaron:** We make use of numerous channels to gather leads. These include Google PPC advertising, SMSes, Automated Voice Messages (AVM), TV, taxis, airtime vouchers, email marketing, social media and more. Because our business model hinges on offering clients tangible ROI - we don't get paid if we don't deliver - we take a risk with each campaign we embark on. As such, unlike other marketing companies that get paid regardless of the success of their work, we critically assess each of our campaigns. We are confident in our service and are happy to take the risk on each new campaign, knowing that our expertise will guide us in generating the high-quality leads that our clients require.

#### ■ 4. *Interesting. Talk us through the 'risk basis/pay for what you get' model.*

**Aaron:** Traditional marketing firms would usually start work for their clients after they receive a deposit and they only deliver the final product after they receive the final payment. We believe this model shows that these marketing firms do not have faith in their own products/services and that they aren't necessarily able to help their clients with what they ultimately wish to achieve i.e. confirmed sales.



Shot in the Benater offices

3 Way Marketing spends millions of rands each month, without any guarantee that we'll get paid by our customers. Because we are confident in our model, we are able to work almost entirely on risk. We agree on the marketing campaign with our clients and we perform the marketing on their behalf. We use technology to track our marketing efforts and we measure the conversions. We also go a step further and contact certain leads that our clients were not able to convert and we give our feedback to the clients to help them improve their in-house conversion processes. We have learned so much by going through this process to assist our clients that we have decided to use this knowledge to open our own call centre, where we sell some of our clients' products on their behalf.

#### ■ 5. *Elaborate on 3Way Marketing and how it ties the rest together, leading into Joyspring's aggregation services across the continent.*

**Aaron:** 3 Way Marketing is the core of the Benater Group. It employs 120+ staff and continues to grow impressively. 3 Way Marketing understands marketing very well and is in a position to assist other businesses in the Group with their marketing initiatives.

Joyspring is incredibly successful and is expanding its subscription business in Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya and Greece. The model is very simple: We create and obtain content that has a track history of being successfully purchased by consumers and market it to potential consumers, using 3 Way Marketing's expertise. This is a great example of how 3 Way Marketing is able to add value not only to its clients but also to its sister companies.

#### ■ 6. *Does your SA operation then differ from your operations on the rest of the continent?*

**Aaron:** While we have a growing presence in Africa, almost all of our operations are run out of our offices in Randburg. This allows our operations to be very similar, no matter where in the world we deploy our businesses or offer our services. Depending on where we operate, we do, however, need to be cognisant of the political situation, economic factors and legislation of the various countries.

#### ■ 7. *You plan on expanding in Nigeria, Indonesia - what makes these markets stand out?*

**Aaron:** These countries have huge populations. 170 and 250 million respectively. So they both present massive markets with relatively low competition.

#### ■ 8. *Good strategy. Let's end with an overview of your incredible year-on-year growth and what's behind it.*

**Aaron:** Like most success stories, ours is based on employing talented people, motivating them to be their best, creating an environment that is conducive to staff achieving excellence, offering a great service to our customers and most importantly, loving what we do.

They sure do love what they do. View the video embedded below for more insight, and follow [3 Way Marketing on Twitter](#).

## ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh\_Andrews.

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