

Mogorosi Mashilo, founder and director of TrendER

 By Evan-Lee Courie

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This week I chat to Mogorosi Mashilo, founder and strategic director at [TrendER](#), a 100% Black-owned market research and ad agency.



■ ***As founder and strategic director at TrendER, could you briefly explain what your role entails?***

My role entails various aspects of the business. Firstly, I am always researching to find new creative methodologies and resources so that we can unearth deeper consumer insights for our clients, to create relevant and meaningful creative ideas that relate to their consumers.

Secondly, running of the business and being a visionary to both clients and colleagues in making sure that TrendER as a market research and ad agency is a trend setter and thought leader in the advertising industry.

Lastly, I am a strategist at heart and as per my advertising profession, so I do roll up my sleeves to craft brand and communication strategies for our clients.

■ ***What's really behind your mask - literally and figuratively speaking?***

Behind this mask is a young looking individual that has a big smile and full of life. Deeper than that is an ambitious young at heart, always willing to learn and help to grow other people. Someone who is always out of their comfort zone which makes me really scared at times but I never let my fear get the best of me. I strive to always push towards the next milestone.

■ ***Growing up, what did you want to be?***

Truly speaking, before embarking on my studies as in advertising strategist, I was studying analytical chemistry. Cooking up some compounds in the lab to make people happy. So, being a scientist and an officially recognised geek was my dream. However, I found that advertising also makes people happy without them needing any compounds. So, I am a very analytical thinker and that has helped me in my current career to go deeper and analytical than what is expected, which

has meant real value for our clients.

■ ***How did you end up working in communications?***

There is a fundamental belief I have about advertising and communication; I believe our industry has one of the smartest people on this planet. Chemistry and disciplines such as finance and other conservative professions, one always applies the same formula and all you basically do is substitute of numbers to a formula that has been created centuries ago. To me that was not intelligence but basic substitution.

So, I needed something where I could think on my feet which for me is communication and understanding the consumer.

“ *With the ever-changing world we live in, we constantly have to develop new methodologies and approaches to keep up with consumer changing behaviours and needs.* ”

That is where advertising and consumer research came calling and I knew that was my destiny.

■ ***What excites you most about your career?***

Pitch nights and going to the pitch hungover the next day, but you still kill that pitch presentation on the day. Nothing can ever match that rush of excitement!

■ ***Where are you based during lock-down?***

Currently based at home and my home is the centre of my planet earth. From home, I am still connected to everyone and everything happening in the business and the world. I do occasionally go to the office to have a chat with my business mentor Paul Jackson who always stimulates my mind to think outside of lockdown.

■ ***When you're not busy working, what do you do? How do you socialise these days?***

With the ease of restrictions now, I play five aside action football and grab a beer or two with the gents afterwards to catch up on the social aspects of my life. It really is social fitness.

■ ***What's the one thing about you that not many people know, but shouldn't ?***

I consider myself an open book, I don't come with any surprises or baggage lol.

■ ***Are you watching any series? Reading any books at the moment?***

I am currently reading *Shoe Dog* by Phil Knight which I would recommend to anyone that has not read it yet. I am also an animé fanatic, so I watch a lot of animé, as I really find Japanese philosophy very profound. Currently, I'm watching one of my all-time favourites *Attack on Titan*, the final season.

▣ As we settle in to the "new normal", What's next for you?

That is a very good question and as I mentioned earlier, my passion for advertising is derived from the ever-changing dynamics of human society, behaviours and the ability to constantly adapt and apply myself to this dynamic world. So I will work and strive to create more relevance and resonance to my clients and consumers in this “new” world we're living in.

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