

Lebo Moerane, VMLY&R's new joint head of social and digital

This week we speak to Lebo Moerane who was recently appointed as the joint head of social and digital at VMLY&R.



Lebo Mberane is the joint head of social and digital at VMLY&R South Africa. Source: Supplied.

What do you enjoy most about your industry?

Being in digital advertising holds a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of innovation. What we do creates culture, shifts mindsets and drives business and category growth. I love being a part of that. Social media is the closest thing I'll be to a concert pianist – you get to virtually be in front of thousands of people and aim to entertain or move them in some way.

▣ **What is a typical workday for you?**

Social media management has a lot of moving parts. Strategy, Data, Operations, Community Management, etc, so I start the day with a team scrum to get a view of how we're tracking on different briefs. Majority of my day consists of reviewing creative output, creating content strategies, or steering the ship to stay on strategy, stakeholder management, trouble shooting and mining for moments of meaningful engagement online.

▣ **Describe your career so far.**

My career started in advertising as an art director and then I jumped client side and worked as a marketing coordinator for an engineering company. It was actually there, in a small marketing department in Boksburg, that I fell in love with social media and digital marketing. I spent some time in the start-up world and there I ventured into the world of software development, but always bringing my digital marketing skillset to add value to clients.



#BehindtheSelfie: Stef Adonis, head of communications at Helm

Karabo Ledwaba 24 Aug 2023



Then finally, I sprouted roots at VMLY&R and being tasked to lead the social charge has given me the opportunity to flex my social and digital chops on brands such as Nando's, Standard Bank, Colgate Palmolive, Edgars and a host of FMCG brands – while also being lucky enough to collect some accolades in the process.

▣ **What are you currently streaming/reading/listening to?**

Podcast: *Search Engine* and *Brave Commerce*

Streaming: *The Block* (I love Australian Reality TV)

▣ **What's your favourite gif?**

I know a gif is worth a thousand words but I honestly prefer to reserve my right to say what I mean instead of outsourcing my point to a gif.

▣ **Who inspires you?**

My husband. He's got a strong sense of discipline and duty and is just an overall stellar human being.

▣ **What are some of your best load shedding survival tips?**

YouTube vlogs and a food delivery apps.

▣ **What did you want to be when you were a child?**

I wanted to be an art director. I am a proud alumnus of the SABC 1 *Generations* school of advertising. The *Mad Men* of our time. I can't speak for everyone, but I'm sure a lot of people of colour in our industry watched Archie Moroka stressing about fake briefs at New Horizons and they too dreamt of making it in advertising. I'm proud to say I'm fulfilling my childhood dreams.

▣ **Give three pieces of advice for young people waiting to enter this industry...**

- Social media and digital marketing are constantly evolving – algorithms change, platforms emerge, and the rules

change constantly, so you would do well to have a “Yes” attitude and be brave enough to throw the rule book out the window and start again. Being rigid is a sure-fire way of remaining average in this industry.

- Spend the time to try and understand other disciplines – it will make collaboration easier when you’re in the thick of the work.
- Social media feels like an extension of our lives. We live in a sea of content but try slowing down and interrogating everything you see. That is the building block for growing your social media strategy brain. Ask yourself questions about everything you see – why video? What’s the conversation looking like in the comments section? Would this have been impactful if it was on another platform? Who is this for?

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