2015: What are your plans?

Small Business Connect spoke to heads of industry and entrepreneurs about their 2015 business resolutions. This is what they had to say...

Christine Buchanan, who co-owns organic beauty product manufacturing business Oh-Lief with Louiza Racaman, says: “Keep it simple and stick to the basics. We will be focusing on executing each project we take on this year in a simple approach and keeping to the basic principles of business which is product quality, client service and excellent administration. The pair recently won the Standard Bank Think Big reality TV challenge which aired on SABC3.

Matsi Modise is the executive director at the South African Black Entrepreneurs Forum. Says Modise: “This year we resolve to start the digital revolution in the townships of South Africa. We resolve to advance township entrepreneurs to take up technology to promote efficiency. We also resolve to facilitate more Start-Up weekends in underserved communities so that we can unleash innovations that would never have been otherwise discovered.”

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Neil Du Preez, creator of electric taxi MellowCabs says: “My vision for 2015 is to bring Mellowcabs to every major city in South Africa. I would like to create prosperity for our people and to provide real, efficient transport. We will also be working hard on refining our vehicles, and expanding to our African neighbours.”

Du Preez has won several awards for his invention. His Mellowcabs were also listed as one of the seven most innovating inventions from Africa.

Ruth Masokoane is the chief executive of the South African Women’s Entrepreneurs Network. “We will be adding two new offices in two provinces in the new financial year so as to expand our limited infrastructure and reach thousands more South African women entrepreneurs. To do this, we are hoping to partner with government business support agencies such as the Small Enterprise Development Agency,” says Masokoane. Watch this space!

Pictured here with Small Business Connect’s Gcobani Ntabeni Minister of Small Business Development Lindiwe Zulu. “We must intensify our collective efforts to build a nation of entrepreneurs and not a nation of job-seekers. This requires that we embark on a massive entrepreneurial drive. Supporting small businesses and co-operatives will help unlock the country’s economic potential. Join me in 2015 as we embark on a sustained entrepreneurial revolution!”

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Centres to train owners

BY DANIEL BUGAN

The launch of two Centres of Entrepreneurship in October last year has kickstarted the Department of Small Business Development’s (DSBD) drive to open 20 such centres in a bid to foster entrepreneurship across the country.

The department plans to provide aspiring and established entrepreneurs with business skills training and support.

In her address at the launch of the Enterprise Development Academy at the Wits Business School in October last year, Small Business Development Minister Lindiwe Zulu, said a shift was needed to promote entrepreneurship as a viable career path and that the ministry would create 20 centres of entrepreneurship to facilitate this.

“Entrepreneurship education curricula reform at various levels of training, including Further Education and Training (FET) and university level, is needed to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship within the education system. We have already begun a strong relationship with FET colleges,” Zulu said.

Nombantwana Dumani, programme manager for the programme at the department, says the centres are aimed at students from various institutions of higher learning and at aspiring and practising entrepreneurs. The centres will be hosted in partnership with FET institutions.

“The aim is to target graduates for inclusion on the entrepreneurship training programme so that they can start their own businesses rather than go out looking for jobs. But the programme is also open to existing and aspiring entrepreneurs.”

Currently, two Centres of Entrepreneurship operate at Ekurhuleni West College in Gauteng and King Hlatshe College in Butterworth, Eastern Cape. The two will start accepting registrations from this month.

Dumani says the entrepreneurship centres will cover a wide range of subjects which will look at the technical competency of the entrepreneur and at systemic business functions that can prepare them to run sustainable and profitable enterprises. These subjects include business and financial management, marketing, leadership in business training, business planning and help on how to access funding. Two more centres — in Gert Sibande College in Mpumalanga and False Bay College in Cape Town — are set to open its doors in March this year.

However, Dumani could not divulge what the screening process would entail at this stage. However, she encourages entrepreneurs to contact the FET institution for more information. She says there is a small cost to the entrepreneur to attend training, but that the built cost of the investment emanates from the department.

For more information, call Ekurhuleni West Centre of Entrepreneurship on 011 055 5651 or King Hlatshe Centre of Entrepreneurship on 047 401 6400.

Minister of Small Business Development Lindiwe Zulu at the launch of the Enterprise Development Academy.

Rob Davies

Goods need SABS approval

BY DANIEL BUGAN

WITH the introduction of local content verification, businesses in the manufacturing sector will now require certificates from the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) before they are able to supply the government with goods or services.

Local content verification was introduced by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in 2011 as part of the government’s compliance with the Industrial Policy Action Plan intervention.

The intervention requires all organs of state to purchase only locally produced works or goods from designated sectors.

These designated sectors include rail rolling stock, power pylons, bus bodies, solar water heaters, working boats/vessels, canned processed vegetables, and textile, clothing, leather and footwear.

Local content is that portion of goods, works and services that have been generated and produced in South Africa.

Desmond Govender, the head of SABS’s local content verification office, says a local content verification certificate will be issued to a business after it has successfully tendered for government work and complied with a verification process developed by the SABS to measure and verify local content.

“This verification process is made up of two parts. One part will verify transaction documents related to the purchasing or manufacturing of the local content claimed by a supplier.”

The second part is an onsite technical verification of the local content purchased or manufactured,” says Govender.

Govender could not divulge what the screening process would entail at this stage. However, she encourages entrepreneurs to contact the FET institution for more information. She says there is a small cost to the entrepreneur to attend training, but that the built cost of the investment emanates from the department.

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Minister of Small Business Development Lindiwe Zulu at the launch of the Enterprise Development Academy.

Rob Davies

Seize the moment

WELCOME to an exciting new year!

Fresh off the back of the successes of last year and festive celebrations, we are hoping that 2015 is a year filled with opportunity and success.

However, Dumani expected to continue over the next few months, business owners are kicking off the new year at a disadvantage.

But, it’s a disadvantage that can be overcome.

The fact that you are reading this edition is evident of that.

Last month, hit with unscheduled loadshedding the Small Business Connect team had to resort to using a low cost generator to get the newspaper out.

As Benjamin Franklin once said: “By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail”.

Now, as any entrepreneur will tell you, time is money and there is no time to waste. So this is the time to take stock, kickstart plans and strategies for the year ahead and hit the ground running.

In 2015, we look forward to the budget speech that will give us an indication of the various tax implications and budget allocations for small business.

We will see the implementation of changes in the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) and the Factories Act.

At Small Business Connect, we look forward to your continued support by sharing your stories with us.

We will be presenting you with an exciting series of online radio shows with various guests who are important players in the small business sector.

As a ceo-on this show, we hope to expand our relationship with you through these platforms and continue engaging with both loyal and new readers.

As we go forward with a vision in our minds, zeal in our hearts and determination in our step, remember to seize the moment.

Ntsiki Mkhize

Partnerships Manager

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087 150 4710
BY AMUKELENI CHAUKE

A TRADEMARK tussle with confectionary giant Ferrero has left a small South African jam company with a bitter sweet taste in the mouth.

The Italian giant – producer of Ferrero Rocher, Tic Tac and Nutella – launched a bid with the Tribunal of the Registrar of Trademarks in South Africa to have the trademark logo of Roscherry’s, a company based in Montague in the Western Cape, cancelled, arguing that it is confusingly similar to its Ferrero Rocher trademark.

Ferrero reportedly lodged the application in August last year.

Zelda Roscherr, the owner of Roscherry’s, believes Ferrero’s application is unfair, and that the contention that the two trademarks created confusion in the market is baseless.

She says that her company applied to register the trademark “Roscherry” – a family name – in 2011.

“In January 2013 we received a notification from the trademark attorneys that Ferrero Rocher, through their local lawyers, is asking for our voluntary withdrawal of the application,” Roscherr says her company’s application was for a trademark in class 29 which covers jams and preserves, but that Ferrero Rocher is registered in class 30, which covering sugar, tapioca, chocolates and other groceries.

“Theyir contention is that our logo is deceptively similar to their logo and will create confusion and deception in the market. We believe this not to be the case since we make and sell jams and preserves and Ferrero Rocher sells chocolate,” she contends.

She added that the trademarks were visually very different as Roscherry’s was registered in a distinctive logo and in colour.

Roscherr has, in response, lodged a counter application to Ferrero’s original bid, requesting the partial cancellation of Ferrero’s trademarks so as to limit the goods covered by the trade marks to chocolate confectionary.

“Presently, (Ferrerry’s) marks are registered for a whole array of goods, from sugar to spice,” she added. She says Ferrero’s original application has impacted on her company’s ability to market its jams and has lost them valuable time and market growth in the last two years.

“All there claims are spurious in my opinion. I don’t recall ever using cocoa products in any of those. The demands they have made will leave us with no option to ever grow our product range or our business beyond its current size,” she says. After her family moved to Montague in the Western Cape in 2006, Roscherr was introduced to the jam and preserves business that year by the company’s founders, who were planning to retire.

She developed interest in the business, and eventually bought the factory in 2008, which was founded in 1980.

Roscherr says what attracted her to the business was the fact that it made high quality jams using traditional recipes, and that no preservatives, colourants or flavourings were used.

In 2010, with a vision to expand and commercialise the business, she built a new facility.

While she funded her business from her own pocket, she said she also received assistance from the Department of Trade and Industry to get some funding through its incentive the Manufacturing Investment Programme.

Today, Roscherr’s employs 28 people fulltime, most of whom are women from the local community, with the number increasing to 50 during the fruit harvesting season.

Her business is growing, and now supplies its products to about 120 retailers, mainly through the Montague Trading Stores as well as through at select Spar branches.

Says Roscherr of the dispute: “We can only hope that with the support of the South African public we can make this up so we can continue to create employment in the area and bring great quality products to the market”.

Ferrero Group spokesperson Sima Manana said that the company had unsuccessfully tried to find a solution to the matter.

“Despite having all the elements to oppose the trademark registration, Ferrero has made proposals to the company to continue trading with the “Roscherry” name within the jams, chutneys, preserves and dried fruit categories, but excluding ingredients of Ferrero Rocher. Interactive Trading 716 (PTY) Ltd (Roscherry’s) has not deemed fit to accept any of our proposals.

We have opened an administrative procedure to clarify the issue. We are still available to find a satisfactory solution for everyone concerned,” Manana said.

Local firm takes on global giant

BY DANIEL BUGAN

NEW provisions in the Labour Relations Amendment Act which regulate how business owners make use of temporary workers come in to effect this month.

The director of collective bargaining at the Department of Labour Ian Macun, says the provisions, which were signed into law by President Jacob Zuma and the Minister of Labour Mildred Oliphant on 1 January 2014, aim to extend the rights of temporary employees and regulate current employment practices.

The provisions were to have come into effect in November last year, but were put on hold due to administrative delays. Macun points out that business owners should pay careful attention to a new clause which states that employers would be held jointly and severally liable for cases of unfair dismissal of temporary workers who have been in their employ for longer than three months.

“This means that an employer can cite both the employer and temporary employment services operator (labour broker) that supplied them with the temporary work, in a dispute before the Labour Court and the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA).” A dismissal is automatically unfair if the reason for the dismissal is one that amounts to an infringement of the fundamental rights of employees and trade unions, such as participation in a lawful strike, intended or actual pregnancy and acts of discrimination.

“All businesses that make use of labour brokers should pay close attention to this amendment and ensure that their employment contracts and dismissal procedures are in line with the amended legislation.”

However, Macun stressed that certain small businesses have been exempted from the provisions in the fixed-term contract amendment which makes it obligatory for employers to convert temporary employees into permanent workers after these consecutive months of service as an expectation of permanent employment has been created. These exemptions apply to businesses that have been operating for less than two years with under 50 employees and employers with fewer than 10 employees, regardless of how long they have been operating.

Companies with employees who earn below the current earnings threshold in the Basic Condition of Employment Act, currently at R205 433 per annum, are also excluded from the fixed-term contract amendment. The act also makes provision for a number of justifiable reasons that an employer can use to justify why an employee cannot be presumed to be permanent after three months. Justifiable reasons can include one or more of 10 specified reasons listed in the act, including the temporary replacement of an absent employee, project work which runs for a stipulated period and work for projects that are dependent on funding for a limited period. Macun says the department plans to run a number of communication campaigns to educate and inform South Africans about the amended legislation. This will be in the form of roadshows whose public meetings will be held between January and March.

Labour changes come into effect
SAB winners reap big rewards

BY DANIEL BUGAN

DUBLING her monthly turn-over and boosting her waste management business’s profile are the tangible results which earned Millicent Nyembe the crown of overall winner of the 2014 South African Breweries (SAB) Kickstart competition.

Nyembe and four runners-up were announced at an awards ceremony during Global Entrepreneurship Week at the JSE in November last year.

Nyembe, owner of Pretoria-based Nyembe Waste Management, which specialises in crime scene cleaning and transportation of health care risk wastes, says she is still coming to terms with winning not only R500 000, but also additional business development support and mentorship for six months.

“My aim is to set up branches in all the provinces, but Cape Town and Durban will be my first priority as they are bigger centres with higher levels of crime.”

Nyembe was introduced to SAB Kickstart through the Small Enterprise Development Agency (Seda) whom she initially had approached for funding.

“Seda did not offer funding, but they directed me to SAB Kickstart. I approached them, filled in an application form, went for an interview and was selected to go on the programme. My aim was to access the grant funding which I needed to buy a vehicle and equipment for the business.”

Since participating in the programme, she has received plenty of media exposure which has resulted in her acquiring two more clients and picking up several leads which she is in the process of following up.

Her monthly turnover has increased from R30 000 to R80 000 over the year-long period during which she participated in the programme. Nyembe says the best part of the competition was the mentorship she received.

“The mentoring helped me to improve my customer service, the day-to-day management of the business and negotiations with existing and new customers for long-term contracts.”

The runners up were Chad Petersen, owner of Artisan Research Unit, who received R400 000 in grant funding; Tsholofelo Majeng, owner of Falo’s Wire and Steel, of R500 000, but also additional business development support and mentorship for six months.

Chad and Erin Petersen

Chad and Erin Petersen

Jeffrey Maleka

Reamoge Tshabalala

SAB KickStart 2014 winner, Millicent Nyembe of Nyembe Waste Management, with Noli Mboweni of Vela International (right) and Monwabisi Fandeso, SAB Director Corporate Affairs and Transformation (left).

“SAB winners reap big rewards”

Chad and Erin Petersen

Jeffrey Maleka

Reamoge Tshabalala

Tsholofelo Majeng

The winners were also selected based on how well they had implemented the growth strategies employed during the SAB Kickstart mentorship and business development phase of the programme.

SAB Enterprise Development manager Refentse Shitshesha said the year-on-year increase in the number of jobs created by finalists was an encouraging indication that the programme has the potential to establish strong small businesses.

The top 17 national finalists added 98 full-time and part-time jobs since the start of their participation in SAB Kickstart.

This is 24 more jobs than was created in 2013 when SAB KickStart finalists created a total of 64 jobs.

Power crisis looms for 2015

BY MAX MATAWIRE

JANUARY and February are expected to be the worst months of loadshedding for South African businesses.

This follows several scheduled power cuts late last year, which crippled many already struggling small businesses ahead of the festive season.

At a media briefing last month Eskom chief executive Tshediso Matona blamed loadshedding on human error within the parastatal, old equipment, a lack of maintenance and shortage of funding.

“We asked for a 16% increase in the selling price of electricity for the 2015/16 financial year, but we were only granted eight percent. This was calculated from the period 2013 to 2018,” Matona told the media at the two-hour long briefing.

Eskom has to get the right price so as to operate,” he said. South Africa has one of the lowest electricity prices in the world.

He added that the current blackouts are expected to last for between 12 and 18 months. However, Matona was quick to point out that the country was nowhere near the possibility of a national blackout.

“That’s (national blackout) an exaggeration,” he added.

He called on everyone to plan around loadshedding, adding that it came down to Eskom communicating effectively to allow consumers and the business sector to plan accordingly.

But, businesses are complaining that loadshedding is not being communicated effectively to them so that they can plan accordingly. They say that often find themselves without power even when no loadshedding is expected as per the loadshedding schedule.

“Some of our stuff (goes) bad because we can’t refrigerate it. We are still growing and cannot afford generating,” he commented, while offloading rotten packs of milk from a freezer.

Econometrix economist Azar Jasmine says South Africans agree that the country has some of the world’s cheapest electricity. He said tariffs have been kept low for a very long time and that this has been affecting the supply of electricity as Eskom has not been able to generate any value for money.

New power stations at Medupi and Kusile are only about 18 months time. The South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SacCI) says blackouts are adversely affecting business’ bottom line.

It’s not only the operational impact under threat, but also the security of the businesses as well. Yes, we know big companies can resort to generators, but small businesses cannot afford to. Also alarm systems and other security gadgets are affected and criminals can take advantage of this situation,” says Sacci chief executive Neren Rau.

He added 98 full-time and part-time jobs since the start of their participation in SAB Kickstart.

This is 24 more jobs than was created in 2013 when SAB KickStart finalists created a total of 64 jobs.
Extra electricity charges bolt owners into action

BY DANIEL BUGAN

SMALL businesses are up in arms over a new service fee that the City of Cape Town has levied on small commercial electricity users.

The fee, which came into effect in July last year, pertains to those users that have not switched from credit-based electricity meters to prepaid electricity meters.

The Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry says small businesses in Cape Town have run into “major problems” with sudden increases in their electricity accounts.

Up until July last year, only those businesses that use more than 1 000 kilowatt hours of electricity per month had been required to pay a service fee. Since then the service charge has been extended to include all commercial electricity users.

Based on the city’s official tariff schedule, the daily service charge amounts to R22.25.

The chamber’s president Janine Myburgh says the chamber has received a number of complaints from landlords on behalf of tenants who are small business owners.

Cape Town mayoral committee member for utility services, Councillor Ernest Sonnenberg, says the migration of consumers from the small power user two tariff to the small power user one tariff, where users are charged a service fee, took effect on 1 July last year.

“These changes were motivated by the risk that credit meters pose to the city. The rationale was that should a small business owner wish to access the small power user two tariff, they should have a prepaid meter installed so that they do not fall into debt,” says Sonnenberg.

He explains that the built-in service charge is merely a way to ensure that the costs of maintaining the electricity distribution network are recovered from electricity users.

But, Myburgh argues that the city had failed to communicate the change clearly to small businesses.

“When the new rules came into effect in July (last year) many small businesses were unaware of the change. Suddenly businesses faced a situation where they were required to pay R1 700 for a new prepaid meter, plus installation costs, plus an advance payment for the current month’s electricity.

In response, Sonnenberg says the city had placed full-page adverts in community and daily newspapers informing consumers of the upcoming change in policy.

The city had also in May and June communicated the changes to those customers affected.

He added that city officials had met with the chamber and that they had acknowledged that the change in policy was understandable, but that additional, communication strategies needed to be explored.

But some business owners, like Doreen Februarie, remain unaware of the service charge.

“The rates account goes to the landlord and it was his duty to inform us. He has not done so,” says Februarie, owner of hair salon, Hair at Capricorn. She says her monthly electricity bill had been hovering between R1 500 and R2 000 per month since July.

“For me this is high. I was forced to get rid of my tumble drier as it takes too much power and now wash all my towels at home,” says Februarie. Thanks to additional electricity costs she had to cut elsewhere. “I had to cancel my lease of a coffee machine which is a big blow as I run a high-class establishment. Being without a coffee machine is not a very professional move.” The chamber advises business owners to install pre-paid meters to avoid the extra charges. Business owners can also manage their electricity spend by using electricity sparingly and making use of liquid gas.”

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With Microsoft you can grow your business.
An entrepreneur of all trades

BY YOLANDE STANDER

LAW design, art, hairdressing, social enterprise – there isn’t much that the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s Woman in Business 2014 won’t tackle.

Combining her father’s passion for law and her mother’s love for art has moulded the Johannesburg businesswoman into one of South Africa’s top entrepreneurs.

At the age of 33, Jolène Leeuwner-Maritz is not only a managing partner in a law firm, but also owns and co-owns three other businesses.

However, Leeuwner-Maritz’s journey as an entrepreneur started long before her business’s success. For the businesswoman born in Kroonstad it started in a courtroom at eight-years old while watching her advocate father in action.

“Being a lawyer was a passion and a purpose of mine from an early age. I attended court with my father, for the first time as a little girl and right there and then decided that this was my calling,” Leeuwner-Maritz says.

She completed her LLB degree at the University of Pretoria and passed her attorneys, conveyancing and notarial admissions exams through the Law Society of the Northern Provinces.

True to her dream, in 2008, she established her own law firm, Leeuwner Maritz Attorneys where she is currently a managing partner. “The firm has received numerous awards and accolades over the past five years.”

But, for Leeuwner-Maritz it is not only about business successes. This is why she offers a series of pro bono services to the public in malls.

“We should always be aware of the abilities and needs of the people we uplift. Development does not have the same meaning for all people. While ownership of a business might be a primary priority for some, personal growth or education might be for another. So this is still a process I have to define and refine.”

Apart from her passion for law, she also shares a love of art with her mother who studied art and architecture. Hence, her certificates in graphic design and digital marketing obtained from the University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch respectively. This shared passion also resulted in establishing Jolé Designs – a company that creates, produces and markets handbags, fashion accessories, beauty products, décor items and apparel known to a range of female characters.

“The aim is to export the country’s art and the stories attached to the art to the world. Our first range deals with women of the world. We have 12 fictional ladies with 12 stories of why they chose South Africa as their home even though they were born elsewhere. These are stories that ignite South Africa as a global country of choice.”

Leeuwner-Maritz adds that to succeed as a nation exporting needs to become a priority.

“This means we have to exploit our resources and not just our minerals. We have to optimise every special advantage we’ve got. Our diversity is a wonderful asset. On a business level, we shouldn’t talk about diversity, we should commercialise it. That means creating a face, a story and a product.”

Leeuwner-Maritz is also the co-owner of Bon Jolé Beauty, a beauty salon in Roodepoort, through which she aims to educate and train various underprivileged women.

“I also want to provide them with the possibility of business ownership,” she says.

She is also in the process of establishing Leeuwmar Consult – a business coaching academy through which she will host various business seminars.

Although she is hesitant to label her entrepreneurial journey as a successful one, she believes that persistence and passion are key factors to sustainability in business.

“I believe that any entrepreneur answering this question (about success) while actively involved in the business will do so prematurely.”

Persistence pays off for owner

BY YOLANDE STANDER

A SCRIBBLE on a napkin is how Sibusiso Myameni is the owner of Storo – a shop on wheels for informal traders. The design which was scribbled on the napkin is now a viable business.

Growing up in one of South Africa’s biggest townships, Sibusiso Myamoni never dreamt that becoming an entrepreneur was a viable option for him or his peers. But, that all changed when he flipped through the pages of a business publication 14 years ago.

“I grew up in a home where my parents believed in getting your education and going out and working for someone. My peers and I were also never really exposed to the entrepreneur at school, so I never saw it as a possibility,” says Myamoni, the winner of the 2014 Business Partners Limited / SME Toolkit SA Global Entrepreneurship Week’s Business Plan Competition for Aspiring Young Entrepreneurs.

That was until a high school friend gave him a copy of the Black Business Quarterly magazine to read.

“And there I saw stories about successful black businessmen. The entrepreneurship bug hit.”

However, it was not until two years ago that Myamoni went after his dream. “The passion for business remained and while working in the industrial area in Pretoria, I knew what I wanted to do. Every day I dumped many informal traders on the pavements and I got to see firsthand the struggles they face. One of these challenges is to load all their products every morning so that they can transport it to where they want to sell and then at the end of the day pack everything up again to head home.”

Myamoni knew he wanted to create a product that integrates their need to store, haul and display their goods for retail.

So in 2012, he established a business called Inyanda Innovations to develop Storo – a shop on wheels which is not only a lockup unit, but a trolley that expands as a counter.

“This didn’t happen overnight as I first did a lot of market research and had to find a good support system,” this, he found in the Technology Innovation Agency which offered him a grant through its Youth Technology Innovation Fund. The fund caters for innovators under 30 years old who are not part of the mainstream funding process.

The entrepreneurs are given access to services or resources including business plan creation, testing, incubation and several other services that they cannot afford. And, after about two years of hard work Myamoni is now in the product trials phase and Storo should hit the market early 2015.

Myamoni also realised that informal traders were mostly living from hand to mouth and would not necessarily be able to afford his product. But for this challenge, he also has an innovative solution.

He has been hard at work approaching brands targeting the lower income market and persuading them to buy Storos for the traders as part of their corporate social investment spend. The company’s logo will be displayed on the Storo.

The key, he says, is to be persistent.
Thinking of starting your own online shop?

**BY PAUL CRANKSHAW**

Selling goods online is becoming very popular in countries where most people have computers, internet access and credit cards — and where the postal system is cheap and reliable.

South Africa still has a long way to go in terms of these criteria, so we tend to lag behind with online shopping.

Recently, two of our popular online retailers — Kalahari.com and Takealot.com — decided to merge; the online market in SA was just not growing as fast as they had hoped. Both firms still run at a loss, they said.

However, there is clearly plenty of scope for selling online — as we have all seen, established “brick-and-mortar” retailers like Pick n Pay and Woolworths are strongly pushing customers to buy groceries on the internet and have them delivered.

**TO THINK ABOUT**

Here are some of the things you need to think about when planning an online store:

- Budget for the set-up costs.
- Register your store’s domain name and arrange website hosting.
- The rules and regulations you must comply with when setting up and running an online store.
- Choose the most appropriate e-commerce software.
- Consider the best online payment option.
- Set up your product database.
- Manage suppliers.
- Dispatch and delivery options.
- How to deal with customer support.
- Review the performance of your store using web analytics tools.
- Site security and data backup.

**MAIN COSTS**

Set-up costs can be quite high, so talk to the experts — designers, programmers, etc — and do a realistic budget for the development and ongoing maintenance of your site.

While the initial set-up of the store is one thing, but remember to take into account the ongoing operating costs, such as:

- Domain name registration fees.
- Website hosting and ongoing maintenance.
- E-commerce software.
- Transaction fees.
- Advertising costs.
- Security certification.
- E-commerce software.

**GET THE RIGHT SOFTWARE**

It will usually be more affordable and convenient to use e-commerce software that is ready-made and available to buy off-the-shelf.

You can even find free software, but this might not have all the features you need.

Spend a lot of time searching through and testing what is available out there.

Try www.shopify.co.za and www.3dcart.co.za for starters.

Before choosing a package, make a checklist of all the features and functionality you think you will need. Then compare these against what the different products offer.

Ask these questions when considering each software package:

- Can it be adapted or customised to suit your and your business’s needs?
- Can you search the catalogue?
- Does the package give you statistics on customer usage?
- Does it store the transactions for accounting purposes later?
- Are there extra marketing features in the system?

**COMPLIANCE**

Make sure you get some legal advice on what you must do to comply with the law. There are at least two important laws you will need to understand: the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act and the Consumer Protection Act.

For more articles by Paul Crankshaw, go to www.cobwebinfo.co.za.


**THE BUSINESS PLACE**

The Business Place, an innovative leader in the enterprise development arena, registered professional accountants and tax practitioners, has fused its respective service areas of expertise to bring about The Business Place’s accounting, tax and advisory service offering. This premier agency can meet all your accounting needs, whether you are a small, medium or large business.

As a full-service firm, our expert staff of highly trained accounting specialists will take control of all your accounting needs, allowing you to focus on running your day-to-day operation without any additional stress. Our standard of excellence is evident in the long-term client relationships that our team has built, collectively forging our path as an industry leader in offering invaluable services.

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Learnership helps boost biz owner's confidence

BY DANIEL BUGAN

LITTLE did the owner of a small construction company know that an advertisement for a learnership opportunity at the South African Road Agency Limited would lay a firm foundation for her struggling business.

Sanral finances, manages and maintains the country’s road network and is registered as an independent and statutory company under the Companies Act.

The agency also recruits small business suppliers through its learnership and skills development programmes that aim to develop the business skills of small construction companies.

Thanks to the training provided by the agency’s learnership programme, Thabile Nkonki who owns Talinko Construction, has managed to increase her turnover by 80% and double her staff.

“Local construction companies and municipalities are always eager to work with me. So opportunities are ample,” she says. Nkonki’s plans for the future is to take her business up another level.

“I want to go from being a sub-contractor to a fully-fledged independent contractor that is involved in the construction of national roads. I would like to attain the highest grading in the sector through hard work and excellent workmanship.”

Sanral offers supplier support

BY DANIEL BUGAN

OVER one thousand small businesses received a boost in the last financial year by tapping into over R2-billion in the South African Road Agency’s (Sanral) procurement spend.

Sanral is a statutory company which finances, manages and maintains the country’s national road network.

In the last financial year (2013/14) the agency invested R2.4 billion in contracts with small businesses, of which more than R2.2 billion went to 1,137 black enterprises.

Through its skills development programme the agency helped train 25,784 people in road-building projects at a cost of about R30 million, of which 1,137 were women.

Sanral’s project manager Martinze Nel-Verwey, says the agency aims to grow small businesses by making use of their services on projects, as well as by assisting them through its learnership training and skills development programmes.

The agency’s training programme includes South African Qualifications Authority-accredited training in construction skills, business skills training such as marketing and business plan writing, supervisory training for persons appointed by the business owner, as well as on-site mentoring throughout the duration of the project.

Sanral procures from small businesses through primary contracts which the agency awards to major engineering and construction companies and by being sub-contracted to routine maintenance projects.

“In each Sanral project, provision is made for the development of small businesses. The training and skills development provided by Sanral add value to the experience gained while working with primary contractors and enables them to grow their business, create employment and work on future projects in construction and related sectors,” says Nel-Verwey.

Small contractors are contracted to complete various services including roadmarking, fencing, grass cutting and earthworks. Sanral’s projects provide opportunities for Construction Industry Development Board grade 1 (entry level) to grade 9 (upper level) construction companies.

Before they approach Sanral for contract work, business owners must ensure that the necessary tax clearance certificates, their bank details as well as a list of previous or current projects with references and the business’ equity profile are in order.

“For more information, go to www.sra.co.za

Sanral with valid tax clearance certificates.

After the successful completion of the programme at the end of 2012, Nkonki was selected as one of Sanral emerging suppliers.

“Since then the growth of my business has been tremendous. My turnover increased by 80% and my workforce has more than doubled – from six to 13 workers.”

She says being a supplier to an established name such as Sanral has created an interest in her work.

“Local construction companies and municipalities are always eager to work with me. So opportunities are ample,” she says. Nkonki’s plans for the future is to take her business up another level.

“I want to go from being a sub-contractor to a fully-fledged independent contractor that is involved in the construction of national roads. I would like to attain the highest grading in the sector through hard work and excellent workmanship.”

“The training helped my business a lot because now I am able to offer quality work and I also know how to market my company better,” says Tonjeni.

Since being involved in the R61 project, Tonjeni’s turnover has doubled, making it possible for him to employ 15 people – 12 labourers, a supervisor, driver and a store man.

“For more information, go to www.talinko.co.za
Dawn of the drone industry?

BY ARTHUR GOLDSTUCK.

DRONE aircraft have been getting bad press lately.

Most often associated with remote-controlled warfare at one extreme and children's toys at the other, the industry has also been besieged by concerns ranging from privacy worries to fears of endangering commercial aircraft. Amid the clatter of raised voices and drone propellers, however, a serious industry is beginning to emerge around UAVs, as unmanned aerial vehicles are coming to be known.

A trade group called Unmanned Vehicle Systems International, predicts drones will become an $82-billion (R915-billion) industry by 2025, employing 100 000 people. Ironically, it is not the technology itself that is exciting investors. The business approach to drones was neatly encapsulated by Lia Reich, director of marketing for drone data capture company Precision Hawk.

“We don’t consider ourselves a drone company. We consider it more as an information delivery company,” she said in a recent interview at the Intel Capital Global Summit in Los Angeles.

When one first encounters the vehicle for this delivery, it’s easy to forget that it is merely a means to an end.

The “Lancaster” looks like a model aircraft with a wingspan of just over a metre and weighing less than 2kg. But, it has features that make it sound like something from Star Trek. Little wonder that Precision Hawk goes to great lengths to avoid the hype often associated with drones.

“We don’t see drones as toys, but as tools,” said Reich. A former sports marketer, she has been with the company for a little more than two years, which would be a short stint in almost any other industry.

In the drone world, she has seen the birth of an industry, and of her company: it was registered only in May 2013.

“I was offered a job at the beginning of the UAV boom. The more positive applications the public sees in this technology, the more their minds will be blown. There’s no doubt it will be used for both negative and positive purposes. All we can do as a society is determine what’s appropriate,” points out Reich.

The investment wasn’t massive by Silicon Valley standards – a “mere” $10-million, invested in partnership with Millennium Technology Value Partners of New York.

The intention was to come in as a partner and help shepherd a promising technology into a global market. And Africa is very much on the radar. “We are working with the United Nations, looking at different soil types to increase agricultural yields in parts of Africa that are very dry,” says Reich.

“We have started looking at projects in South Africa as well, but there is no specific implementation at this point.”

There is no limit to the opportunities and applications, however. As Reich quipped, these are not just flying cameras.

For more by Arthur Goldstuck, go to www.gadget.co.za.
Marketing your craft products

BY NABELAH FREDERICKS

Nadileka Biyo uses business cards and a board that she posts outside her business to market her goods.

Tours guides, business cards and an advertising board outside her studio in the township of Manzimphumelele, Cape Town.

This is how designer and seamstress Ndileka Biyo markets her business Rockaso Designs which specialises in children's clothing.

She admits it’s not much, but that it is a start and it seems to be working too as she has seen an increase in foot traffic passing through her door.

“It’s too early to see the effects on my profits, but there is definitely a lot more interest in my business. Over the last few months I have also been able to comfortably pay salaries to my employees which I previously struggled with,” says Biyo.

The fact that she quit her job and started working in the business fulltime in January last year has also added to the growth of the business.

Biyo believes her passion for dressmaking and design comes from her mother who she proudly says is still sewing today.

“I began an informal business in 1988 when I was 19 years old by renting a sewing machine for R5,” says Biyo.

Within two months her business was bringing in enough money for her to buy her own machine from the money she made from the selling clothes.

However, determined to hone her skills, Biyo planned to study fashion design. But, in order to do this she needed a matric certificate to meet the minimum requirements to be accepted by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), then known as Peninsula Technikon.

“In 1994, a married woman with two children, I enrolled at school and completed grade nine and then in 1995 I got my matric. In 2000 I enrolled at CPUT,” says Biyo.

She received her National Diploma in Fashion Design in 2004.

At that stage, although the business was still in operation, it was still being run informally.

“I used the money to help bring in an extra income and cover household expenses and did not run it as a business should be run,” says Biyo.

But, two years after obtaining her qualification, Biyo registered her business and employed two women.

Times were still hard and she went back to work as a seamstress, while still running her business.

Then in 2009, she heard about the Cape Craft and Design Institute. She visited the organisation’s offices and heard about the various workshops available that craft producers could attend.

“I attended the workshops which I think were very good. It helped me introduce costing into my business and I learnt how to do the books and no longer use the money to supplement my income,” says Biyo.

Since leaving her job, Biyo is intent on making a success of her business.

“I love sewing and I want people to wear my designs overseas and I think with the tours bringing tourists into my business, it could happen. I am hoping that something will happen soon,” says Biyo.

For now, she continues working hard in her business, but cannot always keep up with the demand since she only has two employees and three sewing machines to work with. She plans to get finances to buy more machinery so that she can further grow her business.

And, she is already well on her way to obtaining her Bachelor's of Technology degree in Fashion Design.

“I only have six months and three subjects more to do,” says Biyo.

Designer gets the word out

Turn craft into your income

HOW is it possible to make a living from a craft? Find out by following the nine-part Small Business Connect series “Crafting Your Business”.

PRODUCT

FROSTY TYPING & SAMPLING

MATERIALS

PRODUCTION

PACKAGING & PACKING

MARKETING

SELLING

DISTRIBUTION

FEEDBACK

This is the sixth part of the series. To get the full series go to www.SmallBusinessConnect.co.za/craft.

If you want to create a successful craft business, you need to understand that every product, involves a journey.

In the previous edition, we covered the fifth part of this series, “Packaging & Packing”. The sixth part of this series, featured in this edition, focuses on “Marketing”. Read more on this page about Ndileka Biyo here and how she was able to market her business in a low-cost manner by using business cards and a sign posted outside her business. The Crafting Your Business series is based on the e-book, “Growing Your Creative Business - a guide for craft producers, designers and other creatives” which was commissioned by the Department of Arts and Culture and developed in partnership with the Cape Craft and Design Institute (CCDI).

Visit www.ccdi.org.za or www.dac.gov.za to download a free copy of the guide.
How safe is mobile commerce

BY RAMSEY DALY

As a continent, Africa is witnessing exponential growth in the technology sector, largely due to the increase in cheap smart devices, vast country geographies, very low per-capita income and uniquely African needs.

Mobile commerce is one of the areas within the sector that is exploding across the continent, breathing new life into previously unknown and vastly different payment methods.

A popular emerging payment acceptance model is the mobile point of sale (mPOS). This is a secure hardware device that is plugged into a smartphone allowing a business owner to accept debit and credit card payments anytime, anywhere. It has become increasingly difficult to keep pace with the nuances of each innovation and the associated security risks given recent large-scale local and international breaches.

There is one basic question that any business owner should be asking when considering a new payment acceptance solution. Is it safe and secure? At iKhoKha.com we understood that security had to be at the forefront of our system architecture and thus embarked on an 18-month journey to become the first Payment Card Industry-accredited African mPOS solution.

These global standards are identical to the larger traditional card machines that are in operation today and govern the storage and transmission of all sensitive card holder data.

Our biggest challenge was shrinking the hardware to the size of a matchbox yet still incorporating all security elements.

The risk associated with a card transaction arises from fraudulent card payments or consumer chargebacks (a chargeback occurs when a consumer disputes the charge indicated on the card and requests a reversal from the issuing bank - this can take place up to six months after a transaction). On the condition that the merchant has not sold fraudulent goods, each of these instances can be successfully defended only with merchant proof of a successful Chip and PIN transaction. What many people do not understand is the inherent safety of a “card present” Chip and Pin transaction given that the processing unit complies with the abovementioned set of global standards.

Where a PIN is entered successfully into an accredited device such as the iKhoKha Edge it means that liability shifts away from the merchant and to the bank that has issued the card to the customer.

This protection does not hold true for swipe and signature transactions or “card not present/e-commerce” transactions where no PIN is entered.

Stefano Guidotti

Know your rights

SMALL business owners are often faced with a lack of knowledge of consumer rights and as a result have to fork out thousands of rands. Basing buying decisions on sound knowledge and an understanding of consumer rights and responsibilities can help ease emotional and financial strain.

For instance, you have to agree to buy the product in the second hand products to the consumer know of all defects and to ensure that they are able to stand for themselves, demanding that they fully benefit from consumer rights as listed in the Consumer Protection Act. The two areas highlighted above are but a few of a multitude of rights that the consumers have to demand in their daily lives.

BUYING ON LAY-BY

The customer agrees to sell goods to a consumer, keep the goods but not pay for them within the agreed time frame. The supplier is usually entitled to charge interest. The consumer on the other hand, is entitled to cancel the lay-by if another supplier offers a lower price for the goods. The supplier on the other hand, can end the lay-by agreement if the consumer does not pay for the goods within 60 days after the expected date of completion. The supplier has the right to charge a penalty of 1% and refund the consumer the balance.

Rise of startup trend

BY CHRISTOFF OOSTHUYSEN

CONFERENCES can be a bore — and mostly they are. But, not this one, where venture capital financiers and startup businesses came together for a vibrant day, filled with insightful discussions. This was the 3rd U-Start Africa Annual International Conference, held in Cape Town — itself a city that is positioned to promote the rise of a strong startup trend.

Clearly, in South Africa venture capital and the startup industry is in its infancy, but something is on the breeze! And the broomsters are getting more confident!

Opening the conference, Stefano Guidotti, U-Start chief executive explained that there is a shift happening away from the collection of startups around just a few geographical locations worldwide and that African locations are indeed becoming more and more attractive places where great companies and products are born.

“Today, talent is everywhere, and opportunity is everywhere,” he said.

In addition, emerging markets and growing economies, rather than in mature ones, create opportunities for diversified investment portfolios with the potential to leverage off the unique features of the various local markets, said Guidotti. The 300, or so, people who filled the City Hall, where the conference was staged, could take great value from the panel discussions and presentations by fund managers and entrepreneurs who concluded exit deals successfully.

One such presentation was by Hannes van Rensburg, who not so long ago started and then sold Fundamo to Visa. He spoke about his experience and how key people he had as his “support team” helped him in creating value.

He learnt key lessons from this “team”, even though at the time he thought they were his detractors.

For instance, you have to understand that when you approach potential clients, the focus should not be on your product, but rather on their situation and their needs, van Rensburg said.

Another pointer is that while you grow your business, you’ll be well served to give attention to governance and management systems, even if it is not always easy, since at the time that you are ready to deal with investors or sell the business, the process will be a breeze.

It is, said Van Rensburg, sometimes hard to hear when you get feedback on things not going your way, but if you can use feedback to direct you in making changes, you are more likely to create something of huge value.

And lastly, he said, you will get far if you work with and set up relationships with those who share the same vision as you, specially the party you are eventually selling your business to.

The next U-Start Africa conference will take place in November 2015.
Beware of 'double jeopardy'

BY BARNEY JORDAAN

WITH strict labour legislation, there are so many things for employers to consider to ensure that they do not contravene any laws.

One such instance is to follow the right processes during disciplinary hearings.

And, if unhappy with the outcomes of the hearing, can employers intervene in disciplinary hearings where they do not agree with the chairperson’s decision?

For example, the chairperson in a disciplinary hearing finds an employee not guilty of a serious transgression while senior management believes the person should have been found guilty. Or the employee is found guilty but, contrary to what the employer expects, is given a sanction short of dismissal.

May management interfere and, for example, conduct a fresh hearing before another chairperson? May a sanction less severe than dismissal be increased and, if so, must a further hearing be held before this can happen?

The starting point in answering those questions is the principle applicable in criminal as well as employment law, that once the chairperson has made a finding and decided on a sanction that he or she deemed appropriate, the hearing is complete and the chairperson becomes what lawyers call, “Bucctus officii” i.e., the matter is closed and neither the chairperson nor the employer has any further powers to change what has been decided.

This ensures certainty in decision-making as it would be unfair to leave employees guessing about their lot. At the same time, however, it has been recognised that it would be unfair to saddle an employer with the outcome of decisions that have an ongoing adverse impact on its business. So, clearly, a balance needs to be found between the interests of the employee and the employer.

As will become clear below, the courts have provided guidance in this regard.

The “double jeopardy” rule covers three situations: it prohibits re-charging an employee for the same disciplinary transgression after a finding of not-guilty; an employee may not be re-charged on the same grounds after a prior finding of guilty; and an employer may not impose multiple sanctions for the same transgression.

However, as is the case with most rules, the double jeopardy rule is not absolute. For example, if the decision of BMW v Van der Walt is not only applicable where someone is found not guilty and re-charged, but also to the situation where successive punishments were imposed, i.e., first a lesser and then a more severe sanction for the same transgression. In NUMSA obo Walsh v Delta Motors Corporation a supervisor took informal disciplinary action against an employee who allegedly perpetrated serious misconduct. The employer was dissatisfied with the supervisor’s informal approach and took further disciplinary action based on the same allegations by conducting a formal enquiry. The employer’s decision was upheld.

What is clear from those and similar cases, however, is that courts and arbitrators will only permit interference with the decision of a chairperson of a properly constituted disciplinary hearing in exceptional circumstances.

These include situations where the employer reconsidered a disciplinary penalty and substitutes it with a more severe penalty; and then a more severe sanction for the same transgression therefore is not unfair in itself as fairness may justify a second enquiry.

The same principle applies where the employer reconsiders a disciplinary penalty and substitutes it with a more severe penalty.

In Branford v Metrorail Services an employee was dismissed for dishonesty after receiving a slap on the wrist from his supervisor for receiving payment from rail passengers without issuing tickets to them. The court held that the principle established in BMW v Van der Walt is not only applicable where someone is found not guilty and re-charged, but also to the situation where successive punishments were imposed, i.e., first a lesser and then a more severe sanction for the same transgression. In NUMSA obo Walsh v Delta Motors Corporation a supervisor took informal disciplinary action against an employee who allegedly perpetrated serious misconduct. The employer was dissatisfied with the supervisor’s informal approach and took further disciplinary action based on the same allegations by conducting a formal enquiry. The employer’s decision was upheld.

What is clear from those and similar cases, however, is that courts and arbitrators will only permit interference with the decision of a chairperson of a properly constituted disciplinary hearing in exceptional circumstances.

These include situations where two or more employees are treated inconsistently by one or more chairperson(s) for the same transgression, without good reason, cases where a disciplinary decision was induced by corruption (i.e., the chairperson was bribed by the employee or his/ her representative), if the non-compliance is a relatively blatant departure from the accepted standards and norms with regard to sanction (e.g., the employer’s consistent zero tolerance approach to shrinkages was ignored by the chairperson), or if the initial hearing was not in compliance with the employer’s disciplinary code and the facts involved were not properly caravaned.

Employees should ensure that chairpersons are properly trained

Double jeopardy does not arise when an employee commits a new offence to cover up the first. This happened in Kenya Revenue Service v Commission for Conciliation, Mediation & Arbitration & others where an employee, who was originally found not guilty of dishonesty, was later charged with new allegations of dishonesty (involving her covering up the first instances of dishonesty), based on information later received from the employee’s former husband.

The rule also does not apply where new and material information comes to light which was not in the employer’s possession at the time of the first enquiry and which, if true, would materially have altered the outcome of the disciplinary enquiry. Does it make any difference if the employer’s disciplinary procedure makes specific provision for management’s power to override a chairperson’s decision? Or if it states that the chairperson’s findings are just recommendations and not final decisions? The cases seem to suggest that such provisions will certainly assist an employer who wants to re-open a case, but they are not in themselves sufficient to render interference fair. The employer would still have to show that exceptional circumstances exist and that it complied with the rules of natural justice when it imposed a different finding.

In other words, apart from being forewarned that a disciplinary decision might be reviewed, the employee in the specific case should be given an opportunity to make submissions – verbally or in writing – why this should not happen in his or her specific instance and, if these submissions are not accepted, the employee should be provided with plausible reasons for this. Failure to do this will render the second decision at least procedurally unfair.

To summarise: even where an employer reserves the right in its disciplinary procedure to intervene with the decision of a disciplinary chairperson, the intervention must, nevertheless, be justified.

Identifying exceptional circumstances is not an easy task, in view of the test of fairness. Employers should therefore ensure that their chairpersons are properly trained and supported in their decision-making by knowledgeable internal or external advice.

For more labour advice, go to www.labourwise.co.za

Barney Jordaan

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Barney Jordaan

Follow the right process during a hearing

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Double jeopardy does not arise when an employee commits a new offence to cover up the first. This happened in Kenya Revenue Service v Commission for Conciliation, Mediation & Arbitration & others where an employee, who was originally found not guilty of dishonesty, was later charged with new allegations of dishonesty (involving her covering up the first instances of dishonesty), based on information later received from the employee’s former husband.

The rule also does not apply where new and material information comes to light which was not in the employer’s possession at the time of the first enquiry and which, if true, would materially have altered the outcome of the disciplinary enquiry. Does it make any difference if the employer’s disciplinary procedure makes specific provision for management’s power to override a chairperson’s decision? Or if it states that the chairperson’s findings are just recommendations and not final decisions? The cases seem to suggest that such provisions will certainly assist an employer who wants to re-open a case, but they are not in themselves sufficient to render interference fair. The employer would still have to show that exceptional circumstances exist and that it complied with the rules of natural justice when it imposed a different finding.

In other words, apart from being forewarned that a disciplinary decision might be reviewed, the employee in the specific case should be given an opportunity to make submissions – verbally or in writing – why this should not happen in his or her specific instance and, if these submissions are not accepted, the employee should be provided with plausible reasons for this. Failure to do this will render the second decision at least procedurally unfair.

To summarise: even where an employer reserves the right in its disciplinary procedure to intervene with the decision of a disciplinary chairperson, the intervention must, nevertheless, be justified.

Identifying exceptional circumstances is not an easy task, in view of the test of fairness. Employers should therefore ensure that their chairpersons are properly trained and supported in their decision-making by knowledgeable internal or external advice.

For more labour advice, go to www.labourwise.co.za.
Book Review

A simple idea to make you great

CHRISTOFF OOSTHUYSEN reviews “Good To Great - Why some companies make the leap... And others don’t” by Jim Collins, published by Random House (2001).

IT is mostly the simple ideas that help in building successful businesses. This, I found to be specifically true for the ideas offered by Jim Collins in “Good To Great.”

One of these ideas he calls the Hedgehog Concept. But, before discussing this, let’s look at how Collins developed these ideas.

Unlike many other “success gurus”, Collins did not “think it up”. He based his findings on solid research of 1 450 Fortune 500 companies. In the late 1990s, he and a research team spent four years analysing information about American companies that showed the best financial returns.

They set out to offer answers about what it is that allows some companies to show great performance over a sustained period. And, they made some startling findings...

For instance, they found that great performing companies had reserved leaders and not “huge personalities” as is often portrayed in the media.

They found that these leaders first put the right people in the right positions, before they figured out what the focus of the business should be. They remained firm in their belief that success is possible, while also remaining realistic in confronting the realities.

These companies have a shared culture of discipline and use technology to support, rather than drive, change.

The finding that I find most interesting is that what he calls the Hedgehog Concept, specially since it offers entrepreneurs a tool to help define what it is that they should be focusing on. The “hedgehog” refers to the way great companies find their focus. This, Collins explains by drawing three circles alongside each other, each circle overlapping with the next one, and in the centre all three interlock.

Not only does this resemble the shape of a hedgehog, but as Collins explains, great companies understand that it should focus on the area in the middle where the three circles interlock.

This, he says, is similar to when a hedgehog faces danger -- it knows that its best defense is to curl into the most secure position.

The three circles represent the three most important aspects of defining the best focus. They are (using my preferred terms):

- Passion - that which deeply motivates
- Proficiency - that which you are really good at.
- Profit - the market opportunities you can generate income from.

When I use this model in my coaching work, I ask my coaches to think of the area where the three circles interlock as their Purpose - this is what you are meant to do, where all the aspects of your bigger intentions come together.

Great export opportunities are offered by the dti

The Department of Trade and Industry is mandated to promote South African exports to the international market. the dti is actively involved in funding International Trade missions to promote South African goods and services.

Do you:

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- Have the manufacturing capacity to export?
- Comply with international standards and regulations?

the dti can help you take your goods and services to the international market.

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Province honours top WC businesses

BY NABELAH FREDERICKS

Six business owners received top honours at the second Premier’s Entrepreneurship Recognition Awards, which saw the number of entrants triple from the inaugural competition held in 2013.

The competition forms part of the Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism’s enterprise development programme. The event aims to recognise inspiring, high potential entrepreneurs in the province.

Entrants competed in one of five categories and the winners were announced at an awards ceremony held in November at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

The best emerging business prize was awarded to the online educational platform, Fondo.

In the established business category Okuhle Media and Elgin Free Range Chickens shared the top prize.

The green business award went to Washub Industrial Laundry Service.

Khayelitsha Cookie Company won the social enterprise category and Lumkani the best innovative student idea category.

Jeanne Groenewald from Elgin Free Range Chickens walked away with the overall prize as Entrepreneur of the Year. Groenewald started her business in 1997 because she was worried about the impact processed food had on her children.

Her business currently supplies 80 000 free range chickens a week to retailers and is a major employer in the Overberg.

Speaking to Small Business Connect at the ceremony, Groenewald says she was not expecting to win the award.

“I thought one of the other winners was going to win. I am shocked. I am still in shock,” were the first words that popped from the mouth of Jeanne Groenewald, overall winner of the Premier’s Entrepreneurship Recognition Awards and joint first place winner in the established business category. Owner of Elgin Free-Range Chickens, Groenewald says she will use the money to build an educational centre to help her staff members obtain their matric qualifications. She is pictured here with Premier Helen Zille and Minister of Economic Opportunities Alan Winde on either side of her.

Emerging business

Kennedy Kitheka created Panda – an educational online platform. Kitheka added the top emerging business award to his trophy cabinet that already boasts quite a few other awards.

Innovative student idea

Francois Potousis and David Gluckman’s Lumkani - a heat detector that alerts shack dwellers to potential fires - beat two other businesses to the best innovative student business idea title.

Green business

The best green business award went to Washub Industrial Laundry Service’s Shamsom Kamanzi. It is one of the fastest-growing and most innovative laundries in the country.

Special award

Premier Helene Zille congratulated the winners on their achievements.

“The winners of this year’s awards are all exceptional leaders who have demonstrated that through innovation and hard work, starting and growing a business is not only possible, but a fantastic career choice. Through the enterprises they have established, these entrepreneurs are driving growth and new jobs in our province,” she said.

• For more information on the winners and their businesses, go to www.wcpremiersawards.co.za.

Established business

Trigger Fish Animation, won the global reach award. It has made two major Hollywood movies, Khumba and Adventures in Zambezia.

Okuhle Media’s Paula Brown and Vuyokazi Matu won joint first place in the established business category.

Social enterprise

An elated Adri Williams and Eunice Nyobole of Khayelitsha Cookies Company scooped first spot in the social enterprise category.
Applications for finance now open

BY NABELAH FREDDERICKS

A LOCAL business owner’s turnover may have dropped almost fourfold following a slump three years ago, but he remains confident that things will improve after the National Empowerment Fund approved a R12-million loan to help him out.

The loan forms part of an initiative in operation since 2012 between the Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism and the National Empowerment Fund (NEF).

Under the joint initiative, which has seen over R40 million being paid out to small business owners since its inception, the NEF pledges to lend out R1.50 for every R1 the minister’s call for applications to a commercial bank for further funding to buy four trucks to expand his business.

“Applications hit a brief hitch with the NEF’s moratorium on lending, which was lifted in April last year and which resulted in applications being held up for nine months. Only applications that had been approved before the moratorium began were still being serviced during that time. Applications for funding however have since reopened,” says Mthwa.

By 2008, his business had grown so much that he was able to successfully apply to a commercial bank for further funding to buy four trucks to expand his business.

“My business was growing well and we had a turnover of R35 million in 2010,” says Mthwa. But, then the 2011 recession hit and by 2012 his turnover had dwindled to R6 million. Last year his annual turnover stood at R10 million.

However, early last year Mthwa bagged a R76-million contract with the City of Cape Town for waste removal services and he is now confident that he can build his business back up to its former glory.

“I applied for a R12-million loan in April (last year) after hearing about the NEF during a small business workshop hosted by the department. The application process was simple,” says Mthwa.

In the meantime he was forced to secure interim funding through other channels to ensure that he was able to deliver on his contract with the City of Cape Town.

“The contract was supposed to kick off on 1 July, but because I had no funding we only started work on 1 October,” says Mthwa.

He then applied for R4 million funding from Anglo American to assist in paying salaries and costs.

“One time the transaction is made, I will settle the debt from the other funding I received and we will use the rest of the money towards my cashflow,” says Mthwa.

He currently owns six trucks and hires another eight, but once he has the money he plans to buy an additional four trucks to grow his fleet. Assistant director for enterprise development at the department Peter-Jon Thebus says his unit has received more than 100 applications for funding since the inception of the joint initiative with the NEF in 2012.

Thebus pointed out that both startups and existing businesses can apply to the initiative. To qualify for funding business owners will need to have a registered company or co-operative that is at least 51% black-owned and have an updated business plan. Applicants should be able to demonstrate commercial viability as well as the ability to repay the loan.

For more information, go to www.nefcorp.co.za.

BY NABELAH FREDDERICKS

FIFTY business owners will have the opportunity to pitch their business proposals and funding requests to a panel representing the country’s major funders at the Western Cape Funding Fair in March 2015.

Western Cape Minister of the Economic Opportunities Alan Winde launched the Funding Fair - a first for the Western Cape - in November. The event is a partnership between the province and Deloitte. In a recent announcement, the Western Cape government said that through assisting entrepreneurs in the province, 30,000 jobs had been created. This is in line with the National Development Plan’s goal to create 500,000 jobs through small businesses by 2030.

At the launch, Winde added that the focus of the fair was to assist business owners in commercialising their ideas and to create jobs and economic growth in the province. He said that applications from across the province would be welcomed.

Marius Alberts, Deloitte Western Cape regional leader, echoed the minister’s call for applications saying business owners from all sectors in both urban and rural areas are encouraged to apply.

He points out that there is no cost involved for entrepreneurs who wish to apply for funding, but businesses need to meet the minimum criteria of a funding proposal for more than R10 million and be based in the Western Cape.

“Businesses need to explain as clearly as possible the reason for the funding,” advises Alberts. For example, in the case of startups, it is critical for the applicants to explain the business concept and their projections need to be realistic. In the case of established businesses, where the application is to grow the business, business owners need to clearly explain and show what the funding is required for. Once all applications have been received, 50 applicants will be chosen to pitch their proposals to funders at the fair.

“The final decision is up to the funder. We could even end up with 50 bankable projects, but the decisions will depend on the quality of the pitch and the business concept,” says Alberts.

But, he says, it is not only these entrepreneurs who will benefit from the event.

All business owners are invited to attend the fair on 18 March which will boast top commercial banks, seed funders, venture capitalists and developmental finance institutions. Aside, from a host of exhibitors who are all to attend the fair on 18 March which will boast top commercial banks, seed funders, venture capitalists and developmental finance institutions.

All business owners are invited to attend the fair on 18 March which will boast top commercial banks, seed funders, venture capitalists and developmental finance institutions.

Aside, from a host of exhibitors who are all to attend the fair on 18 March which will boast top commercial banks, seed funders, venture capitalists and developmental finance institutions.

Applications to pitch at the fair close on 31 January 2015.

• For more information, go to www.westerncapefundingfair.co.za.

One of the diggerloaders owned by Matanzima Mthwa. With the added funding, he hopes to acquire four more trucks to grow his waste removal business, Masiqhame Trading.
Do we need a state bank?

BY STEPHEN TIMM

SETTING up a state bank may be too premature for South Africa, without the government first looking at other means to get banks to lend more to small businesses — as a number of its emerging economy peers currently do.

However, the debate over a state bank is hotting up since economy peers currently do. — as a number of its emerging
to lend more to small businesses
looking at other means to get banks
without the government first
too premature for South Africa,

SETTING up a state bank may be
THE CHANGE AGENT SBU004
BY STEPHEN TIMM

THE CHANGE AGENT

– as a number of its emerging
to lend more to small businesses
looking at other means to get banks
without the government first
too premature for South Africa,

2009, following privatisations:

There is some concern too that

state banks often funnel loans
to political connections. Another
is that these banks operate less
effectively than private banks do.

Economist Eduardo Levy Yeyati
and his colleagues argue in a
2004 report that state ownership
of banks can benefit growth, but
only in countries with highly
developed financial systems. They
believe this is because countries
with well-developed financial systems are better equipped to
deal with the distortions that arise
from government ownership
of banks. South Africa fits this bill.

A better idea may be for the state
to rather use various carrot and
stick methods to get private banks
to increase their small business
loans.

Here are three. The first
involves the state covering
some of private banks’ risk of

One can opt to impose
on bank lending to small businesses with fines for those
that don’t meet these. An ideal
place to put them would be the
Financial Sector Code.

In India banks must channel
40% (32% for some foreign
banks) of lending to priority
sectors, which includes small
businesses and the agricultural
sector as well as others.

These banks that do not reach
these targets are penalised by
having to deposit the shortfall
in a fund for rural development
– which in 2013/14 saw a mere
R13.8 million go to 21 firms. In
comparison, Chile’s Pogepa lent
out $1.4 billion (R15.6 billion) to
48 489 firms in 2013.

Another way to improve
loans to small firms is for the
state to improve ways to
calculate and report on the risk
of small businesses for banks.

Malaysia has been able to boost
loans and lower default rates
through the introduction of a
credit bureau for small businesses
and a credit reporting system.

Since the implementation of the
system in 2001, outstanding loans
 grew at an annual average rate of
nine percent to 2012, while the
overall impairment ratio showed
a significant decline from its peak
of 10% in 2001 to 2% in 2012,
according to the country’s reserve
bank.

With a national footprint of 8 incubators across the country, in
7 of the 9 provinces, our incubators are ready to receive your
enquiries. Alternatively apply online.

To find out more about how your business can benefit and to
find your nearest incubator,
visit www.shandukablackumbrellas.org.

Entrepreneurship creates employment

Shanduka Black Umbrellas believes that supporting
entrepreneurs will help solve South Africa’s unemployment crisis.

By gearing small businesses toward success, we are encouraging
job creation through supporting black entrepreneurs as their
businesses grow.

Qualifying businesses will be primed for sustainable
growth through the provision of office space,
support services, mentorship, training and access
to markets, finance and networks.

With a national footprint of 8 incubators across the country, in
7 of the 9 provinces, our incubators are ready to receive your
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To find out more about how your business can benefit and to
find your nearest incubator,
visit www.shandukablackumbrellas.org.
Sustain your purpose

BY NABELAH FREDERICKS

BY building a viable business that offers specialised consulting services for corporates, a social enterprise is able to fund its social purpose without relying on grants.

Greater Good South Africa Trust was started in 2004 with the purpose of connecting social enterprises with potential funders through an online platform – the South African Social Enterprise Exchange.

Initially, the organisation was to a large extent dependent on grant funding. However, in 2008, Greater Capital was started. The latter offers consultancy services on how to incorporate social impact purposes into a business’s strategy.

Salma Seedat, managing director of Greater Good South Africa Trust and Greater Capital says, the organisation was forced to earn an independent income following the global crunch in 2008.

“At the time, we believed that funders would no longer have money available for a corporate social investment budget and we would therefore need to be self-sustainable and so we launched Greater Capital,” says Seedat, who has been with the organisation since 2009.

She says that Greater Capital started as a type of evaluation on proposals for funding and then grew from there on.

Seedat points out that the idea was always for Greater Capital to earn a sustainable income. “The last grant funding we received was in 2011. Essentially, the trust and Greater Capital are self-sustainable,” says Seedat proudly.

But, there have been a number of challenges that had to be overcome first.

“We needed to get people to understand the work we do. There is a perception that because we are a social enterprise, we don’t have to charge the same fees as other consultancies do, but we operate the way a business does and we employ experts and this is not a cheap resource,” says Seedat.

However, she says, with the introduction of the Black Economic Empowerment codes and with many corporates having to report on their corporate social investment spend, there is a lot more understanding.

“Social enterprises are no longer perceived as pet projects, but are being tied in to a business’s strategy.

“In our work as consultants, we find that more and more corporate clients are becoming aware of this and there is a definite shift,” says Seedat.

This shift has been good for business and has contributed to the sustainability of Greater Capital.

Seedat says: “We are no longer bound to the direction of donors who sometimes have a specific agenda.

“Social enterprises are no longer perceived as pet projects.”

- Salma Seedat

This often proves difficult when we do our research as we had to struggle to retain an independent analysis.” Since being independent, corporates now the value in this research and as a result this brings in repeat business, she says.

Seedat advises other social enterprises to always look at their businesses in such a way so as to try to understand how the business can be made sustainable.

“Think how you can become sustainable in what you do. This only ever benefits your own business. Grant funding is not always sustainable,” says Seedat.

• For more information on Greater Capital or Greater Goods South Africa, go to www.ggsa.co.za or www.greatercapital.co.za

Talking social enterprise

SOCIAl ENTRePREneurs have a new platform to learn about successful social enterprises.

This follows the launch of Talking Social Enterprise, an online “talk network”, hosted on the third Wednesday evening of each month at 7:30 pm.

It aims to stimulate debate amongst social enterprise entrepreneurs and is hosted on the Google Hangouts platform.

• To listen to the show, sign-up by registering via www.TalkingSocialEnterprise.net.

Don't just rely on grant funding

NON-PROFIT organisations (NPOs) should try and earn an income instead of relying on donations to cover their costs.

This is the sixth principle in our Think Like a Social Enterprise series.

Individuals, businesses, charitable foundations and government departments give a significant amount of money to the NPO sector each year.

For example, in the 2012/2013 financial year, companies gave an estimated R7.8 billion to charity by way of corporate social investment.

This may seem like a lot. However, when you divide this equally amongst the 30 000 NPOs accredited by the South African Revenue Service to receive tax-exempt donations, it works out to only R260 per organisation.

A similar result is achieved if you divide up the R6.5 billion that the Departments of Social Development intends to spend on NPOs in the 2015/2016 financial year.

This shows that there are insufficient donations to go around. Some NPOs win, others lose.

But, this is not all. Here are four reasons why a reliance on donations can increase business risk.

• First, donors don't like NPOs spending their money to build reserves, so NPOs never have enough emergency funds.

• Second, many donors are picky about the expenses they are prepared to fund. This limits the ability of NPOs to build their infrastructure and exploit strategic opportunities.

• Third, donors don't like profit margins. This means that NPOs are forced to sell their products at cost price – something that businesses rarely do.

• Fourth, donors can be unreliable. An NPO might receive funding one year and not the next. This makes it difficult to build a stable organisation.

“Learning how to earn an income is the only way that many NPOs will survive and expand their social impact. There are many options available.

For example: Oasis Association sells recycling services; Greater Capital sells research and due diligence services, Shonaquip sells wheelchairs; and Open Africa consults to the government on rural tourism strategies.

These social enterprises are able to build reserves and enjoy strategic flexibility: They have social impact as long as they have customers. To earn an income, NPOs first need to decide who their customers are. These are the people or organisations that pay an NPO for its goods and services. Your customer could be your donor or beneficiaries. Then package your goods or services into a product that appeals to your customers and provides them with value.

Ensure that the price of this product is a true reflection of the costs involved. Add a profit margin and integrate this in your budget. Finally, when you pitch to your customers, sell the social impact of this product.

NPOs must sell the social outcomes (for example fully functioning clinic or successful rural businesses) they achieve, not the activities that they are involved in.

They must demonstrate that they are able to provide better value for money than their competitors.

Stop hunting for donations to cover your costs. Rather see the world as being full of potential customers that are prepared to pay for the good work of your NPO. Pay attention to how businesses develop and market their products. It will take time and effort to acquire the skills you will need.

Use these skills to increase the social impact of your NPO and help it to thrive into the future.

• Marcus Coetzee is a strategist specialising in social enterprises.

Join the online discussion

Sustainable and so we launched Greater Capital, we therefore need to be self-sustainable, says Seedat. Greater Capital managing director Salma Seedat (left) pictured here with junior consultant Carmen Coetzee.
Building a firm base for small businesses

TRUE to its name, Lepharo – meaning ‘foundation’ in Tswana language – has laid the basis for about 40 small businesses in the engineering and manufacturing sector in Ekurhuleni to thrive. Small Business Connect spoke to incubation manager Zenzo Nkomo to learn more about what the incubator does and how business owners can benefit from its services.

What is the name of your incubator and the meaning behind it?

The Small Enterprise Development Agency (Seda) Ekurhuleni Base metals trading and manufacturing sector.

How would you describe your focus?

The identification and training of entrepreneurs to create new businesses in the engineering and manufacturing sectors.

Where are you based and from which areas do you recruit new incubatees?

We are based in Springs, Gauteng and recruit from the Ekurhuleni area.

Which businesses are best suited to join?

Any engineering or manufacturing small business in need of business support and skills development can apply.

How does one apply?

Business owners can apply via Lepharo’s strategic partners – the Small Enterprise Development Agency, Impala Platinum, Exxaro and Ekurhuleni municipality. Via the website www.lepharo.co.za or via its office.

How long have you been going for?

We officially launched in 2011.

How many businesses have been incubated with your support?

Currently we have 40 handpicked businesses on the programme and our first five businesses will graduate when they complete the programme this year.

How many incubatees are simultaneously in your programmes?

There are presently 40 companies in the programme.

What are your fees?

We do not charge any fees.

What commitments do incubatees make before they enter your programme? And what commitment do you make to them?

Incubatees must commit to engagement meetings, progress reports as well as to successfully completing the incubation programme.

What are the average sales of your incubatees over a year in your programme? After two years? After three years?

This depends on the nature of the business.

What is the best thing you heard someone say about your incubator?

The best thing we have heard is that we mean business.

And the worst?

Incubatees say that the incubator is too strict.

What would you suggest be added or changed to make the programme better?

We do not charge any fees.

What is your biggest wish for the support to entrepreneurs?

A formalised link between our retainership procurement support (from government and the corporate sector) and the development of our incubation programme.

The failure to expand our premises in time and sync with the growing demand for our services.

Why are you involved in supporting new businesses?

It’s what we do best.

What is your biggest wish for improving the support to entrepreneurs?

A formalised link between our retainership procurement support (from government and the corporate sector) and the development of our incubation programme.

FOUNDED in a home garage by two women who spent 20 years in the fibreglass industry. Makisha Projects is now a flourishing business that has grown so much that it occupies two work spaces at Lepharo Metal Base Incubator. Small Business Connect spoke to Sikhumbuzo Monaledi who co-owns the business with Nomubelo Shazi, Ntomibozwa Mashabane, Lorato Makita and Ntomibiyisse Mosikare.

How long have you participated in the incubator programme and when will you exit?

Makisha Projects has been in Lepharo since March 2013 (20 months) and will be exiting the program in 16 months (2016 March).

By how much did your turnover and profitability grow after joining?

This was largely due to the fact that Makisha Projects realised that the business needs to have sound understanding of what it is and what it does. This meant many months of no sales and fixing the faulty foundations.

Now the business understands well what it wants to achieve.

What are the biggest benefits you’ve received from the programme?

Without the assistance of Lepharo, Makisha Projects would not have achieved its full potential and would not have developed systems that now guide the business into the future. Compliance is at the top of the list of benefits. The company realised that to be a major supplier it needs to comply. Office space is also another one of the major benefits. Makisha currently occupies two workshops at Lepharo.

What is the name of your incubator?

Makisha Projects is now a flourishing business that has grown so much that it occupies two work spaces at Lepharo Metal Base Incubator.

How many incubatees are you recruiting this year?

Any engineering or manufacturing small businesses from Ekurhuleni area.

Which areas do you recruit from?

Small business owners can apply via its office. www.lepharo.co.za and Ekurhuleni municipality, via the website www.lepharo.co.za or via its office.

How long do businesses stay in your programmes?

Incubatees stay in the programme for a maximum of three years.

What are the two key elements of your support that sets you apart from other incubators?

Lepharo’s focus on industrial regulatory compliance and procurement support sets its services apart from other incubators.

What are your average sales of your incubatees?

The company made about R12 000 in the last financial year and no profit during the previous financial year of 2012-2013. This was largely due to the fact that Makisha Projects realised that the business needs to have sound understanding of what it is and what it does.

What is your biggest wish for the support to entrepreneurs?

A formalised link between our retainership procurement support (from government and the corporate sector) and the development of our incubation programme.

For a comprehensive list of incubators, go to www. SmallBusinessConnect.co.za/...
Readers of the month

Michele King
Muzi Busi
Vanessa Naidoo

Michele King

Muzi Busi says reading the stories in Small Business Connect keeps him motivated.

Vanessa Naidoo

SHE has not seen the hardcopy of Small Business Connect yet, but reading the stories online has assisted Vanessa Naidoo in better understanding the issues that affect her business.

Connect with us

EACH month the team at Small Business Connect posts questions and advice on its Facebook page to engage readers on hot topics that affect small business owners. With almost 16 000 Facebook members, the discussions are very engaging.

In October last year, we posted the following:

“If you were given five minutes to the small business development policy colloquium, what would you most important point be?”

The colloquium took place in October and was hosted by the National Small Business Institute (NSBI) in partnership with the Department of Small Business Development. Over 1 788 people viewed the post, with some 20 people taking part in the discussion to share their views.

Mashuda Mahenga said that South Africa does not have an unemployment problem, but rather a skills and education problem.

In October and was hosted by the National Small Business Institute (NSBI) in partnership with the Department of Small Business Development. Over 1 788 people viewed the post, with some 20 people taking part in the discussion to share their views.

Mashuda Mahenga said that South Africa does not have an unemployment problem, but rather a skills and education problem.

Thandi Khale felt that businesses needed to be supported in a practical manner.

The aim was then to use the document as a masterplan on solving challenges small businesses faced.

To join the Small Business Community on Facebook go to www.facebook.com/SASBconnect. You can also add us on Twitter via www.twitter.com/SASBConnect.

Join the discussion on Facebook www.facebook.com/SASBConnect

“Small Business Connect is a must-have paper for SMMEs and any startup business because of its valuable links!”

Trevor Stander

Small Business Connect Champion

NTOMBIFUTHI Mavundla

Small Business Connect is a business coach to the clients who walk into the Ilembe Chamber of Commerce and Industry offices in KwaZulu-Natal.

Mavundla, who has been employed at the chamber since 2013, says copies of the newspaper are scooped up within two weeks of receiving the bulk order. She says entrepreneurs eagerly await the next edition once they have finished reading the current one.

“It is a motivational tool and an inspiration to entrepreneurs. They love reading about other entrepreneur success and the content is very useful. They love the fact that it does not concentrate on one sector or province, but all sectors. It also keeps us informed on the latest legislation,” says Mavundla.

She adds that one business owner even thanked her for introducing him to the newspaper and says he now wants to get a business partner after reading about it in Small Business Connect.

Mavundla says: “One of the chamber’s offerings is the Human Capital Development, Business Support and Entrepreneurship programme. In line with this the Chamber provides free professional services to anyone interested in starting a small business or improving or expanding an existing small business, and who would not ordinarily be able to afford the services of a private consultant. This newspaper has contributed positively, especially the business service directory.”

Mavundla runs the helpdesk and points out that the majority of entrepreneurs in the area do not have access to the internet and so rely on hardcopies of the newspaper.

“Entrepreneurs have re-quested for information on grants and competitions to be listed in the newspaper that are available to small business owners, excluding the ones already listed on the directory.”

For more information, go to www.ilembechamber.co.za.