

# The Platinum Club's fresh and youthful approach gives them the edge

By  Juanita Pienaar

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Fully-fledged boutique PR and digital agency, The Platinum Club has been in business for the past six years, having opened its doors in 2014 and is headed up by industry professionals, Lee Roy Wright and El Broide. The duo has had extensive experience in the print, television, radio and online markets and by being in the media industry, they have built up many relationships not only with influential people throughout the media but with South Africa's top celebrities as well.



Boutique PR and digital agency, The Platinum Club's Lee-Roy Wright and El Broide.

On the digital front, the agency specialises in digital marketing services such as social media marketing, SEO, Google AdWords, internet marketing campaigns, influencer strategy marketing and website development.

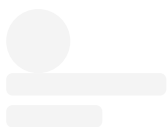
Here, Wright elaborates on the barriers they had to overcome to get the business started, along with some practical advice, and how Covid-19 has influenced the way they do business.

## **What sparked the idea to launch The Platinum Club agency?**

The initial idea actually stemmed from my business partner El Broide. With him coming from a background in journalism, having been the entertainment editor at *People Magazine* for a number of years, and myself, having been in the television and radio industry, we really saw it as a no-brainer to bring our experiences and contacts together to form the company.

Being young and hungry for opportunity, and especially in the field of PR and digital where there aren't many startup costs involved, we knew we had something special together and decided to give it a shot.

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It's been eight months of blood, sweat and tears working on the PR for @mytropika Island Of Treasure Curaçao and tonight, we come full circle as the first episode premiered on SABC 3. To celebrate, we hosted an exclusive screening at Hyde Park with some media, celebrities, the cast, agencies and client AND trended at number one on Twitter. It's been a wild ride and I am so excited to see that the final product is everything we hoped it to be and more!

*A post shared by The Platinum Club (@platinumclub\_) on Mar 3, 2020 at 11:22pm PST*

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■ **How did you come up with the name?**

When it came to deciding on a name, it was somewhat random at first. Between myself and El, we threw around a few ideas but we knew we wanted something 'classy' and that had value behind it. So there was no denying that we would play around with the elements such as gold, silver and so on. We also wanted something that would encompass it all, and that's where the 'club' part came in. Something where one could house it all in and where our clients could be part of an exclusive club.

■ **What barriers have you had to overcome to get your business up and running?**

I could probably go on about this, as there really is no easy way to start a business and get it off the ground, especially in the public relations and digital market where it's already so saturated. In the beginning, we really had to define who we are and play to our strengths, just in order to get us off the ground.

“ *When working and trying to make your business a success, you often find yourself being thrown into the deep end.*

*Although you have a vision, everything is new because your company is new. Finding clients is not easy. One is constantly dealing with pitching for new business, trying to find connections to possible new clients, and that can be somewhat draining, especially when an idea or a pitch does not materialise. But, that's the nature of the beast. One just needs to keep trodding along and move onto the next one.* ”

Costing is also a tough part of a new business. It's important to be affordable but, at the same time, not to sell yourself short purely because you know the value you can bring to another business or client. That was a difficult barrier to overcome, but eventually, you also have to trust in your work and value. Another valid point that I think is so important when starting out is earning the trust of a client. It's always tough to get them to buy into you, especially when you are starting out. That's why it is so important to gain a lot of experience and then use that as a backing.

### ▣ **How has Covid-19 influenced the way you do business and how have you dealt with the challenges?**

There's no denying that Covid-19 has brought about a few extra grey hairs for us. This situation we are in is so unknown, and one seems to carry on, but one is definitely more cautious and aware. Luckily for us, being in a digital space and having specialised in digital PR, we've had a smooth transition into the 'new normal'. With that said, we have a few clients in the travel sectors, such as Air France and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines who have been heavily affected by the restrictions on travel caused by the virus. This has seen us shake things up and really try to find different ways in order to keep our clients happy. One thing we are good at is thinking on our feet and adjusting, and this is exactly what PR professionals need to be.

### ▣ **Covid-19 and lockdown have caused a lot of job losses and unemployment is already spiking. What advice would you give young people with regards to getting a small business off the ground, specifically skilled individuals in our creative industries who has now been left without a job?**

I think the easiest and most productive piece of advice we can offer is to simply get started. Register that company or domain, create a logo, reach out to any contacts you have, spend time refining your idea and come up with a realistic but impactful business strategy. A business is all about the long game but it's important to take that first step. Once things start falling into place, the business machine can start to run and only then can you learn, adapt and put in the work to ensure that your small business becomes a success.



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### ▣ **Tell us more about the business model?**

The Platinum Club is a fully-fledged boutique PR and digital agency. We specialise in communication strategies along with all the digital offerings, such as social media management, paid media, Google Ads, PPC campaigns and digital strategy. We're agile, thorough, detailed and driven by success.

### ▣ **What sets you apart from other PR and digital agencies?**

It's personal for us. What that means is that we really pride ourselves on giving our clients that personal touch. More so, because we're a small agency, we're very hands-on. You won't find our clients having to work through an account manager or middleman. Our clients work directly with us and deal with us on a daily basis, and I think that is so powerful. This is exactly that 'club' I was referring to. Apart from that, we are young, vibrant and we understand the ever-changing landscapes of PR and digital and we are able to evolve and adjust quickly because of that. We're fresh, very creative and we're freaking cool!

### ▣ **What's next for you and the agency?**

For starters, we have just recently launched a new division to the company that focuses on celebrity and personal branding PR. We have seen many of our friends within the entertainment industry struggling during these trying times and, once again, went back to our roots of entertainment to set up this new division that will truly give industry professionals the push and growth that their brands deserve. We have already signed up a few top talents in the country, such as Daniel Baron, Kriya Gangiah and Mmasea PeTje, with a few more to come. Through the years we have really evolved and have found our sweet spot between the entertainment, lifestyle and travel industries.



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Juanita Pienaar 21 Apr 2020



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## ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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