

# Rozanne McKenzie on starting a media company and producing her first TV show

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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Johannesburg-based news anchor, presenter, MC, actress, voiceover artist, wife and mom, Rozanne McKenzie recently started a media company called Rozanne McKenzie Media and is currently producing her first TV show.

She's also employed at Via-TV as executive producer and presenter and is the traffic presenter on The Workzone on Jacaranda FM, weekdays from 12-4pm.



Rozanne McKenzie

Here, she tells us more about her new company and show and how she made it in Afrikaans and bilingual media, being a woman of colour...

## ■ ***You're currently producing your first TV show. How did this come about?***

I had the idea of creating a TV show around Jacaranda FM's Good Morning Angels, which is featured on Breakfast with Martin Bester every Wednesday morning, a few years ago. It's been mulling around in my head and last year, I actually sat down and had a discussion with Martin Bester, Dianne Broodryk and the Jacaranda FM team about possibly pitching it to a channel. We pitched it to Via and they were very excited to commission the show. We also needed a sponsor and Roman's Pizza, a loyal supporter of Good Morning Angels came on board immediately.

## ■ ***Tell us more about it.***

*Omgee-engele* is a revisit of some of the incredible stories that listeners have heard on Good Morning Angels over the past few years. Presented by Martin and Dianne, the TV show goes back to the beneficiaries and we chat to them about how it's going with them now and how their involvement with Good Morning Angels has changed their lives. These guests then get the opportunity to identify someone else in need and then pay it forward by making a cash contribution in every episode. This element is a surprise for the recipient. It's absolutely heartwarming to see the reactions.

■ **Tell us about your experience and how it has equipped you for this new challenge?**

I've been involved in media and broadcasting for almost 15 years. I studied Drama and Media Studies at the University of Cape Town before completing my Honours in Drama in 2003. I've had so many great mentors on this journey into producing, including Wim Steyn from Idea Candy. A few years ago, I co-produced on the first series of Sarie Voorbladesig with him and also a few TV commercials and online content projects. I learned so much from those experiences.

■ **Why the cross-over to production, and why TV specifically?**

In 2018, I finally felt confident enough to branch out on my own and I started Rozanne McKenzie Media.

“ I've spent so many years in front of the camera and behind the mic, that now is the perfect time for me to also start creating my own work. I want to be in the rooms where the decisions are made. It is also so important for me to start creating content that is representative of the South Africa I live in. There are not enough women of colour taking up space as producers. It's time to change this. ”

Someone like Rethabile Ramaphakela from Burnt Onion really inspires me. She and her team are creating such incredible work and doing a great job of showcasing our uniquely South African stories to the world.

■ **What do you love most about your career and industry?**

I love that this industry is constantly changing. There is so much opportunity and no one day is the same. It's exciting and challenging. What really excites me about the direction I've moved in now with my company is the variety of stories that are out there to be told.

■ **Any career highlights you're particularly proud of?**

Seeing *Omgee-engele* on a TV screen and sharing that with South Africa is something that I'm so very proud of. We persevered despite losing four weeks of our original production time due to the Level 5 lockdown and having to change some of the stories because of the Covid-19 protocols. The team did the best job of getting the show shot in less time than we had initially and still going out to get the stories we wanted to tell. Despite all these challenges we still delivered a show we can be proud of before our deadline.

Some of my highlights in front of the camera include interviews with Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and John Cleese. Until late last year, I was a news anchor on *Nuusdag* on e.tv, before it was taken off the air. I'd wanted to be a news anchor since I was a little girl and getting to do it in Afrikaans, live every night, is something I will never forget.





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Dreams come true and they also come to an end. Tonight is my very last @nuusdag bulletin. After 13 months on air, the show in its current format ends tomorrow. It's been very sudden and quite a bitter pill to swallow, but I'm smiling because I got to work with these incredible people from whom I have learned so much. I will miss this more than I can say. Tune in at 18:30 tonight on @dstv Channel 195 and @openviewforever Channel 105 to watch me not burst out crying on live TV. 💎💎 #nuusdag #newsanchor #newsteam #ilovemyjob

A post shared by [Rozanne McKenzie \(@rozmckinsta\)](#) on Oct 31, 2019 at 7:55am PDT

📌 ***What did it take to get to where you are today? Has being a woman of colour hindered you in any way and if so, how did you rise above this?***

I grew up in a single-parent household in Bonteheuwel on the Cape Flats. I was very lucky to have a mom who wanted me to have the best education and worked tirelessly so I could have better opportunities than what she had. My maternal grandparents also played a big role in raising me and instilling the belief in me that there is nothing I can't do and I should be proud of where I come from.

There have been times when I have been "too dark" or "too big" or not something enough for a job, but the important thing that I've learned with experience is to just be enough for yourself. There are many barriers to success in this industry and being a woman of colour has meant that I sometimes have to work twice as hard, just to be afforded the same opportunities as someone who isn't. I don't mind that. I'm here to work as hard as I need to if it means women in the future from similar circumstances don't have to work as hard to be given a chance. I have the time and energy to break those barriers down.

📌 ***What is your message or encouragement to aspiring and/or fellow women in business?***

It's ok to take your foot off the accelerator sometimes. We as women, especially in this country, are often expected to be superheroes. To fix everything that is broken and work twice as hard for the same opportunities or lower pay. We need a break and it's ok to hang up the superhero cape sometimes and just take a break. There is also no harm in failing. Mistakes are there to be made. We don't have to be perfect all the time. Failing means you've tried.

📌 ***What's at the top of your to-do list (for work)?***

Pitching new work and making sure there is always something happening at Rozanne McKenzie Media. It took me two years to build the momentum that we have going now and I'm so excited by all of it, I just want to keep going.

■ **What are you currently reading / watching / listening to (for work)?**

I must admit 2020 has been such a hectic year for me with all the new projects I have on the go. My reading has really suffered as a result. I do enjoy podcasts and one that encompasses a few topics I love, like pop culture, TV and films, is 'Crushing On'. This is a podcast by journalist Caryn Welby-Solomon. It's informative and fun.

■ **Tell us something about yourself not generally known.**

I've recently taken up pole dancing. It's an amazing way to stay fit and strengthen your whole body. I love it because I feel so empowered and strong. I'm not very good yet because I'm still a beginner, but I'm loving every second of the experience!

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## ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

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