

# A rising star in marketing

 By [Beverley Klein](#)

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At the Standard Bank Tshwane Business Awards, the Young Entrepreneur of the Year award went to Lebogang Mokubela, founder of the Lemok Group.

The township-based marketing agency began in 2015 and already has a couple of international clients on board. I chatted to Mokubela about winning the award, what it means to the agency and entrepreneurship in South Africa.



Lebogang Mokubela

## ***How did you get started, and tell us about your agency...***

**Mokubela:** After matriculating in 2008, I started my first business (in 2009) which was an events management business. Together my current business partner (who started off as my PA), we ran dance events in Gauteng. However due to lack of business acumen, the business closed down in 2011. And in 2012, through the connections I had attained at 8.ta (now Telkom Mobile), I was able to land a job as a junior creative at their then brand activation agency, called Perx Agency. I worked hard and quickly climbed the ladder and mid-2013 I was promoted as director of Perx Agency. In 2014, I felt it was time to start my own thing and so I quit my position as director and started Lemok Group as a township-based business.

The first division to be launched within Lemok Group was Lemok Digital Agency, which started off as a design agency then evolved into a full spectrum digital agency.

After five months of launching the agency, we landed a client from Angola and then another client in Florida USA, through the use of social media marketing.

Currently Lemok Digital Agency has an array of digitally-inclined services, but we place immense focus on social media marketing, graphic design and explainer videos. After 15 months of running the agency, we now have a team of five employees with a 400% increase in turnover as compared to our 2015/16 financial year.

## ***What does it mean to you to win Entrepreneur of the Year Awards?***

**Mokubela:** To be honest, I wasn't aware that I was nominated in that category; we were actually notified that we were nominated as Company of the Year. So to my surprise, I hear Lemok Group being mentioned as the winner of the Standard Bank Tshwane Business Awards Young Entrepreneur of the Year award. I am still shocked but I'm equally as grateful. We took a bold step when we branded ourselves as a "township-based business with international credentials" when everybody told me to place my business in a Rosebank or Sandton for 'credibility'. So to win this award, proves the notion that entrepreneurs are truly meant to challenge the norm - we will build a 'BidVest' of a business in the township and compete against the mainstream guys.

## ***Is there a trend towards entrepreneurship in South Africa? Elaborate..***

**Mokubela:** Yes, there are quite a few trends. For one, in the past five months I have noted an increase in government's willingness to support and fund businesses. We also got some assistance from the NYDA. This is very reassuring for those who are growth-centric entrepreneurs.

On the other hand, I have noted that as much as entrepreneurship is on the rise, the level of ideas or innovation is still lacking. I blame this purely on the notion that business isn't perceived as a problem solving vehicle but rather as a means to

wealth attainment. This leads to people starting conventional businesses such as catering, clothing labels, night clubs, etc.

### ▣ ***What advice do you have for young entrepreneurs?***

**Mokubela:** For one, I believe the basis of business is solving problems. Entrepreneurs should stop pursuing business ideas based on making money but how best to serve their clients. Secondly, I believe the best route to success is through a niche market - focus your attention on a small market to learn, pivot and grow. And lastly, building a great team should be the main focus for anyone wishing to build a sustainable business. No great business is built by one or two people, you need a team of individuals that are accountable for the growth of each element of your business.

### ▣ ***What's next for Lemok in 2017?***

**Mokubela:** We are growing our team firstly - by June, we will have a team of about 10 people. We will be launching a new division within the group that will specialize in brand activations in the township space (with a focus on integrating experiential marketing, social media and the township culture). And lastly, we have also changed our strategy to focus on a certain niche market, leveraging (and combining) the services of each of our three divisions for maximum efficiency and value for clients.

Get in contact with Lemok here: [www.lemokgroup.co.za/](http://www.lemokgroup.co.za/)

## ABOUT BEVERLEY KLEIN

Beverley Klein is the editor of the Marketing Media South Africa section on Bizcommunity.com. With a background in journalism and historical studies, she's dived into the world of industry news, curating content, writing and interviewing thought leaders. She's often spotted in a forest on the weekend and rarely seen without a camera. Follow @BevCPT.  
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