

Joanna Oosthuizen



By [Louise Marsland](#)

23 Jul 2014

The future of communications is content and speed, says the new Ogilvy & Mather Public Relations National Managing Director, Joanna Oosthuizen.

Oosthuizen was promoted to national MD of Ogilvy PR South Africa earlier this month. She was the MD of Ogilvy PR Johannesburg prior and will continue to report to Abey Mokgwatsane, Ogilvy & Mather South Africa CEO.

She is described as "an experienced and high-impact leader, who has championed the transformation of a classic PR and reputation consultancy into an offering that includes cutting-edge social media practices and a dynamic, responsive content hub".

Oosthuizen is also credited by Ogilvy & Mather SA as having built the public relations discipline of O&M South Africa into one of the country's leading reputation and communications agencies, while still playing an active role across every client within the business.

"Joanna is a great asset to our company, to our clients and to the PR industry as a whole. Her vision of what the future reputation company can offer is inspirational," commented Mokgwatsane.

Public relations has become wholly about reputation in the communications mix these days, Oosthuizen says.

"Our ability to influence perception is the single biggest contribution we can make to brands. Brands are taking this far more seriously than they ever have before."

She believes the future of the public relations industry is about responsive content.

"The future of our industry is in content and speed. We have built a deep ability inside our agency to deliver this to clients at scale and pace. We are seeing it benefit clients measurably."

Oosthuizen's vision is to lead the way from a social and digital perspective as Ogilvy PR South Africa, and aims to continually innovate the PR landscape. Carol Gallarelli, MD of Ogilvy PR Cape Town, will continue to drive the Cape Town-based office.

ABOUT JOANNA OOSTHUIZEN



zen has been promoted to national MD of Ogilvy PR in South Africa. Previously she was MD of Ogilvy PR Johannesburg and is credited with growing the Johannesburg office by over 600% in the past three and a half years, making it the second largest office in the EAME region, with London being the largest. In addition, she launched the Social@Ogilvy practice in 2012, followed by the Content Factory in Johannesburg in 2013. Oosthuizen most recently started the Ogilvy PR offering in the O&M Durban office.

Q: What is at the top of your to-do list?

A: Building a national PR business, which starts with a strong senior leadership team. Linked to this is a common set of practices and procedures that apply across all three of our PR agencies in South Africa. For this truly to come to life, we need to focus on driving how public relations and social media innovate in delivering world-class work for all our clients.

Q: What is your main business challenge?

A: Delivering at the pace our clients demand, while at the same time staying relevant, impactful and creative.

Q: How will you make an impact?

A: Constantly reinventing ourselves ahead of the curve is where the opportunities are. More and more we are seeing ourselves becoming a content business and I think my role is to drive this at a national level and to create the space for all our teams to do great work.

Q: Most important attribute needed to do your job?

A: Hard work and a sense of humour.

Q: The biggest trend to note in your industry?

A: Content is no longer king, it is *everything*. Our ability to create, curate, and promote relevant content is how we can bring the type of impact our clients and their brands are looking for.

Q: What change would you still like to see in the industry?

A: Talent is a huge concern. The biggest change we need to see in this industry is an improved pipeline of talent across all levels. This is becoming urgent.

Q: What inspires you?

A: The people I work with every day.

Q: What are you currently reading for work?

A: *Neuroscience for Dummies* by Frank Amthor.

Q: What do you do for fun?

A: I escape to the bush.

ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

Louise Burgers (previously Marsland) is Founder/Content Director: SOURCE Content Marketing Agency. Louise is a Writer, Publisher, Editor, Content Strategist, Content/Media Trainer. She has written about consumer trends, brands, branding, media, marketing and the advertising communications industry in SA and across Africa, for over 20 years, notably, as previous Africa Editor: Bizcommunity.com; Editor: Bizcommunity Media/Marketing SA; Editor-in-Chief: AdVantage magazine; Editor: Marketing Mx magazine; Editor: Progressive Retailing magazine; Editor: BusinessBrief magazine; Editor: FMOG Files newsletter. Web: www.sourceagency.co.za.

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