

Kevin Ndinguri, UM's new MD

 By Jessica Tennant

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Full-service media agency UM recently appointed Kevin Ndinguri, who has spent the last year as client managing partner at UM Africa, as MD of the local team.

Ndinguri has a decade of media strategy and digital experience, having worked on brands such as SA Tourism, Nedbank, Johnson & Johnson, Investec, Pernod Ricard, BlackBerry, Renault, Spotify and Emirates.

Commenting on his new role, he says, "I'm grateful to Brad [Brad Smale, MD of IPG Mediabrand] and the IPG Mediabrand leadership team for their continued support, and look forward to growing and building one of the best media agencies in South Africa, while attracting the best authentic talent that lives and delivers against our proposition of using better science and better art to drive better outcomes for our clients."

Here, he tells us what he means by this and how having worked in both offline and online media has stood him in good stead to be able to have a holistic media conversation with a client - something he believes has led him to this point...



Kevin Ndinguri, managing director at UM

■ ***Congrats on your appointment. How do you feel about it?***

Thank you. I am extremely excited and humbled at the opportunity to lead one of the global IPG Mediabrand's flagship brands in Africa. UM has been doing some great work over a number of years in the market and we have a really competitive offering. I am looking forward to contributing to that.

■ ***What excites you most about the agency and where it's going?***

The opportunity we have to shift the needle with clients from a focus on scale to strategic capability. UM is uniquely positioned to do that with the capabilities we have from a data, tech and research point of view, and most importantly through our people.

■ ***Explain your proposition of using 'better science and better art to drive better outcomes'.***

At UM we are committed to proving that media is a top-line growth driver for our clients as much as an efficiency play. We deliver better science through the power of business analytics and data intelligence to identify the audiences we should be talking to on behalf of our clients to achieve their business objectives.

We then look at better art by identifying the moments that matter to create relevance for our clients' brands, and the interplay between better science and better art is then delivered through our proprietary tools to drive better outcomes for our clients' business.



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Kevin Ndinguri 6 Sep 2016



■ **What do you love most about your career in media strategy and digital/client management?**

The people. Those I have been fortunate to work with that are titans of this industry as well as future titans that are making waves in their respective roles.

■ **Greatest learnings in your dealings with clients / building agency-client relationships? Pick up the phone or meet face to face. We all too often get lost in the convenience of sending emails and forget that while we are focused on business, we are still interacting as humans.**

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

Becoming MD of UM definitely tops the list at this stage. There is no greater highlight for me than the opportunity to lead and shape this organisation into the future.

■ **Tell us a bit about your experience and how this has equipped you for your new position.**

I have been fortunate enough in this industry to have gained knowledge and experience in both the offline and online media space. I started my career in offline media when online was still very much in its infancy in South Africa, but I was given an opportunity to learn digital very early on and this stood me in good stead to be able to have a holistic media conversation with a client. I believe this and my willingness to take on new challenges and strive for better for myself and my clients is what has led me to this point.

■ **What are you most looking forward to?**

I am looking forward to growing UM into a leading media and marketing consultancy in South Africa and attracting the best talent this country has to offer in order to do great work and deliver superior outcomes for our clients.

■ **What's at the top of your to-do list?**

Ensuring we keep delivering for our current client base going into 2020 and beyond as well as growing our client portfolio.

■ **What are you currently reading/watching/listening to?**

I am currently reading a book by Ray Dalio called *Principles*. I am finding it to be a really engaging read with some great nuggets for both work and life.

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

I can speak three languages.

For more, go to Ndinguri's [MyBiz profile](#), [UM's website](#), [IPG Mediabrands DNA's website](#) and/or follow him on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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