

We want brands that care for the community and the planet

By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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Radio and digital marketing boffin Karabo Ntshweng has worked at Primedia in the branded content producing field in radio for many years but more recently she joined 5FM, landing the 4-6am weekday slot at the station.



Karabo Ntshweng.

We chatted to Ntshweng to find out how she juggles working on branded content within the digital marketing space while still managing her own brand, and she tells us what is key for brands to keep in mind when marketing to the youth.

■ Tell us a bit about yourself and your background.

I'm a media professional working in the radio and digital space. I have 10 years of radio experience working on-air as a radio presenter and as a branded content producer, which is essentially creating digital content for brands. From websites, to social media content to podcasts.

Before radio, I did television presenting for a number of years. I've got an undergrad in Psychology from Wits University and am currently wrapping up my Honours degree at Vega in Brand Strategic Communications. I'm passionate about telling stories, whether it's on-air in my broadcasting capacity on 5FM, or helping brands communicate with their digital audience in authentic ways.

“ We're on!!!!!! Good morning!!!! [@5FM](#)  [#EarlyMorningsWithKarabo](#) Day 1 pic.twitter.com/ZrAhmpPrUS— Karabo Ntshweng (@KaraboNtshweng) [June 8, 2020](#) ”

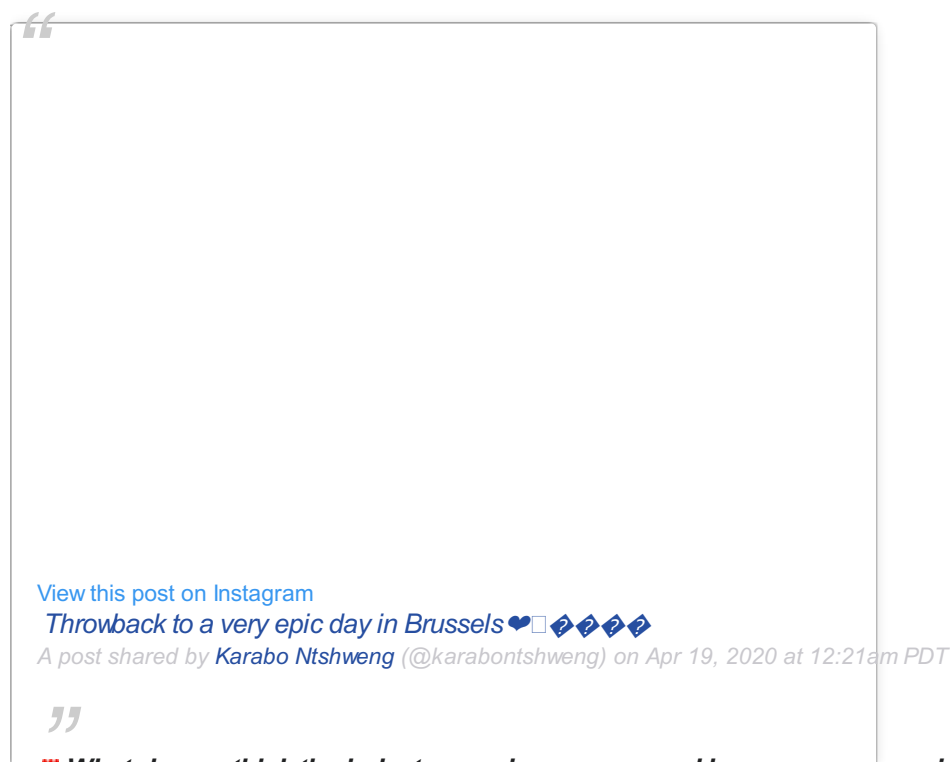
■ How do you juggle working on branded content within the digital marketing space and managing your own brand at the same time?

Making sure I give my best to client work, but without neglecting my own personal brand. Because the two exist in the same space it's a lot easier to juggle. It's about making sure I also stay in touch with the latest trends in the digital and brand space. I keep upskilling myself and applying my learnings into both aspects of my career.

■ What are some of the highlights in your career so far?

There have been so many but I'll mention some recent ones. When Covid-19 hit South Africa, we managed to quickly turn around an amazing portal with informative news about the virus and well as entertaining content to help our digital audiences navigate this new way of living. I was also recently the digital lead on an incredible campaign that helped raise over R1.2m towards small businesses during lockdown.

I'm really passionate about meaningful brands. So my favourite campaigns to work on are definitely ones where we make a positive difference in people lives. Working at the Intercontinental GT Challenge in Belgium was definitely a highlight for me last year and really challenged me as a content creator. Then, my current highlight has definitely been landing the weekday 4-6am slot at 5FM!



[View this post on Instagram](#)

Throwback to a very epic day in Brussels ❤️❓❓❓❓❓

A post shared by Karabo Ntshweng (@karabontshweng) on Apr 19, 2020 at 12:21am PDT

❏ **What do you think the industry can improve on and how can young voices help bring this change about?**

“Brands are very quick to jump onto the activism trend. I think it's incredible to show solidarity towards movements, but it's so important to walk the talk. So instead of just having a campaign where you take a stand for or against something, it's important to actually make sure your business practices reflect what you are saying in your communication.”

So if you're supporting #BlackLivesMatter, for example, make sure your business is really transformed. If you're shouting women empowerment, it shouldn't be on women's day only. Are you paying women in your business what they deserve? Is there enough representation of women in management? Do you deal with sexual harassment cases appropriately? Many brands are doing extremely well in making sure that their actions match their words, but there are certainly more brands that can do better, and that's what I think we can improve on as an industry.



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Why do you think it's important for brands to support and collaborate particularly with young creatives?

Young people are the future of our industry. They are the very same people we market to. How can we not support them? If we're going to keep our industry alive and thriving, young people need to certainly be given space and a voice in decision-making rooms. They need to be given the opportunity to be heard because they are also the very same people who are actually in touch with young consumers, so they absolutely cannot be left out.

What do you think is key for brands to keep in mind when marketing to the youth?

Be authentic. Young people can see right through gimmicks. Brands need to remember that young people expect a lot more from them these days. We want brands that care for the community and the planet. We're not going to buy your product based on your attributes alone. How are you positively contributing to making this world a better place, and are you believable in your actions? People before profits, and if you act irresponsibly or inauthentically, young people will call you out on it, which will ultimately affect your bottom line and how young people perceive your brand.



Purpose must come before profit... and before anything else too

Mike Freedman 19 Sep 2017



Who are some of your role models?

In the digital space, definitely Janine Jellers. She comes from a magazine background but has really claimed her position in the digital space. So proud to have worked under her a few years ago. She's unapologetic about what she stands for and it's always evident in her work. I look up to other female radio presenters like Anele Mdoda and Stacey Norman who are hosting breakfast and drive time shows and are such powerhouses. And, of course, Oprah Winfrey. I mean who doesn't look up to Oprah?

What advice would you like to convey to all the newbies trying to crack into the industry?

The creative space is so cutthroat. Your talent is not enough. There are too many other talented people out there. Be reliable, work hard, constantly upskill, be humble and respect the people you work with, because this is a collaborative industry. You absolutely won't make it on your own. You need other creatives to create magic! One more thing, if you have the opportunity to study, do it. People can take away opportunities, jobs, money and so many things from you, but never your education. Always stay hungry to learn.

You can catch Ntshweng weekdays on 5FM during the 4-6am slot and follow her on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

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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