

A marketer with influence joins Humanz: Lerato Sengadi talks influencer marketing

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In what seems could be an industry-shaking move, Humanz has announced the appointment of influential marketer Lerato Sengadi to head up their South African operations.



Lerato Sengadi

The appointment appears aligned to the company's stated effort to grow its innovative, diverse, and influential leadership team and demonstrate its commitment to, and understanding of, local markets, even as it continues its global expansion.

Lerato Sengadi is well known in the South African advertising and entertainment spaces, with over 15 years-experience producing award-winning, ground breaking, culture shifting, narrative changing, and global best practice work for clients that range from grassroots to luxury, artists and events to FCMG.

"With a unique perspective on the content and influencer marketing space from both the client and influencer side, Lerato is uniquely positioned to assist Humanz as it continues to disrupt the traditional value channel," comments Pierre Cassuto, Humanz global CMO.

"Future-forward marketers tap into credible influencers for deep collaborations, where they garner market insights, strategy ideas, creative

work and targeted/impactful reach. Humanz is here to help fast-track this future, a mission which Lerato shares and can help enable," he adds.

Here, in her own words, is Lerato Sengadi's take on the current state of influencer marketing and her excitement as she takes up her new role as General Manager at Humanz South Africa.

On being an "influencer"...

I am a marketer who is influential and not an influencer who is a marketer.

As for becoming an influencer, that was something that happened very organically through simply sharing authentic content that I believed in. It was not something I intentionally sought to become, and that for me sums up what true influence is.

Being on the both ends of the influencer marketing spectrum, (as client and as an influencer) puts me in a unique position with an understanding that most people in the space will never have. These insights have enabled me to create impactful campaigns, foster long lasting relationships with influencers, and create a working environment where both parties are able to put their best foot forward.

On joining Humanz...

It was important for me to join a company that is diverse and inclusive and reflects the diversity of the country we live in so that our voices are heard and represented... correctly. And Humanz is exactly that.

On why there is so much criticism of the influencer marketing space....

Much of the criticism exists because the influencer marketing space is marred with many grey areas and there is still not enough clear understanding of the sector and how it works. It's easy for people to criticize what they do not understand.

Many people, and even marketers think it's just paying a celebrity to post brand content. But there is a whole other ecosystem at play in order to make this kind of marketing work. Like any campaign, there needs to be research to understand your market and your spokespeople, planning and developing a well-timed roll out, development of creative content, and intensive follow up engagement.

Brands need to be less prescriptive in their briefs and need to leave some wiggle room that will empower influencers to create the necessary magic that they can do so well. Brands also need to refrain from viewing influencers as merely "paid for ad space," but must partner with them as content creators and market experts in order to create successful campaigns.

Content creators - influencers- need to also become more professionalized and understand their role within the entire marketing mix. They need to see themselves as more than just digital billboards and understand that while they play a valuable role in the ecosystem, they also need to step-up in terms of professional and ethical behaviour.

On how is Humanz and their tech is improving the situation...

I believe that the role Humanz plays in driving innovation in the social marketing space is essential not just by making credible data available to both influencers & clients, but more than just a data tool, it is also a much needed educational platform for influencer marketing.

Humanz enables their clients to make informed decisions when selecting influencers to partner with on specific campaigns. It has also made it easier for agencies to be able to justify why they chose those partners and back it up with credible, detailed data for the client to view. The reporting tool has also made it easier for clients and agencies to gauge the success of the campaign based on credible and verifiable data.

This data, coupled with understanding of human behaviour, enables both parties to create engaging, tailored and impactful campaigns. Influencer marketing has moved from "the one with the highest following is best for the job" to selecting campaign partners who are best suited, and using credible data to support these decisions.

Humanz has enabled easy access to credible and accurate data from start (briefing), to campaign execution to completion (reporting).

On what the future of the influencer marketing space looks like...

Influencer marketing will not replace traditional marketing, in fact it should be viewed as an extension of the marketing mix. The space is still very new and will keep evolving. Our duty is to stay at the forefront of that change and help brands, agencies and influencers manoeuvre these uncharted waters and create successful work.

To find out more... <https://www.humanz.com>

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