

Q&A with MD, an uncommon entrepreneur with milk of service in heart

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We go behind the scenes with Major Daughter (MD), founder of the proudly South African media not-for-profit organisation that delivers global news, documentaries, and analysis.

Q: Who is Major Daughter?

A: I'm a woman of faith, first and foremost. I'm also a work in progress. I'm a minister of God, a speaker, an author, a coach, a philanthropist, and now also a media boss, having stepped out on my own just a few years ago to become a media entrepreneur.

Q: Tell us about your business?

A: Sound business analysis usually shows that in this media terrain, it takes a person with a lion's heart to fish in this water. In some instances, it takes a few years of consistent fund inflow and good management to break even. A longer break-even point in the future signals a strong risk.

In this business, when one runs with sturdy men, weariness often sets in early on. And, while there was already generous public sector financing for a similar business, I did not despair or give up.

In the media channel space, the internet, coupled with a vibrant social media, raises the bar. Globalisation also creates a ripple effect that has both pros and cons, and competition becomes stiffer. However, I decided to run with horses in a bid to reach 'the people with service'. My passion simply took over.

Ultimately, running a media outfit as a non-profit is not the most exciting for the lily-livered; there are several high-cost centres in a technologically-driven venture such as this.

Q: Where did the inspiration for MDNTV come from?

A: Knowing that the media channel was to ride on a non-profit platform, I did not want a flash in the pan of a business, so I took my time to fine-tune the modalities for operation.

An SME setting requires the consideration of several options for funding. In a manner akin to the writing in the Holy Scriptures that says 'firm faith that trusts God exercises the virtue of patience', I confidently and sure-footedly finally launched in 2019.

Stepping into a male-dominated business world needed inspiration and determination to become a successful entrepreneur in the media world. If I focused too much on the competition in South Africa, where the state-run channel and other well-established private ones hold sway, I would have recoiled. The matter became even more complicated with the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic that swept the world.

Q: What is the FOYA challenge?

A: The usual style of old for organisers of many business awards is to seek brands or personalities that have been on this familiar path for a long time. This gives little or no chance for any 'greenhorn' walking the red carpet of honour at the end of



the day.

However, FOYA Southern Africa, an awards organisation, which set sail in Nairobi, Kenya in 2016, emerged to upturn the status quo; it settled for a fresh approach to recognise and to reward SMEs.

Now, it searches for young founders and their startups.

It believes that encouraging and rewarding entrepreneuring would positively rub off on the economy of the nations. With a burgeoning youth population in Africa, FOYA agrees that properly channeling their energies is a step in the right direction.

In a nutshell, job creation for the youth is the key to growing and sustaining the economy of nations on the continent.

Q: Tell us about MDNTV's effect on job creation?

A: Despite running MDNTV as a non-profit, it has created jobs for several people directly, in both the technical and non-technical areas. The professionals are as varied as can be: writers, editors, authors, artists, presenters, graphics gurus, freelancers of sorts, engineers, and technicians. There are also marketers, delivery personnel, and accounts.

No doubt, the collective spin-off is a contribution to the nation's GDP one way or the other.

Q: What tools do you use to help you succeed?

A: Visibility, networking, and empowerment. I believe that being a fresh entrant into the space calls for networking and the sharing of rapid changes occasioned by technological development. The business environment also creates room for on-the-job training and manpower development.

Skill acquisition is commonplace in-house, therefore there is empowerment for the youth in videography, video editing and several others.

In a prevailing knowledge-driven economy, networking with others in the industry can never be out of place. Technical symposiums, conferences, workshops and training have become indispensable for growth and development of the sector.

Founders and startups are at the heart of FOYA, which is interested in giving room to best practices, helping businesses (SMEs) improve performance in their sector and pointing clients and investors to them.

FOYA Southern Africa is an organisation that has come with its own contribution to up the game. Ultimately, it will be a win-win situation at the end of the day!

Q: What advice do you have for aspiring entrepreneurs in the media space?

Keep showing up!

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