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SEPTEMBER 2023

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TOYS WITH
ROOTS

Featuring
CHAMAIGN
MAILULA

Young Prince
THEBE
RABOGATSU

*Prudence
Ramatso*

HOW FASHION COMPLIMENTS HER DAILY LIFE

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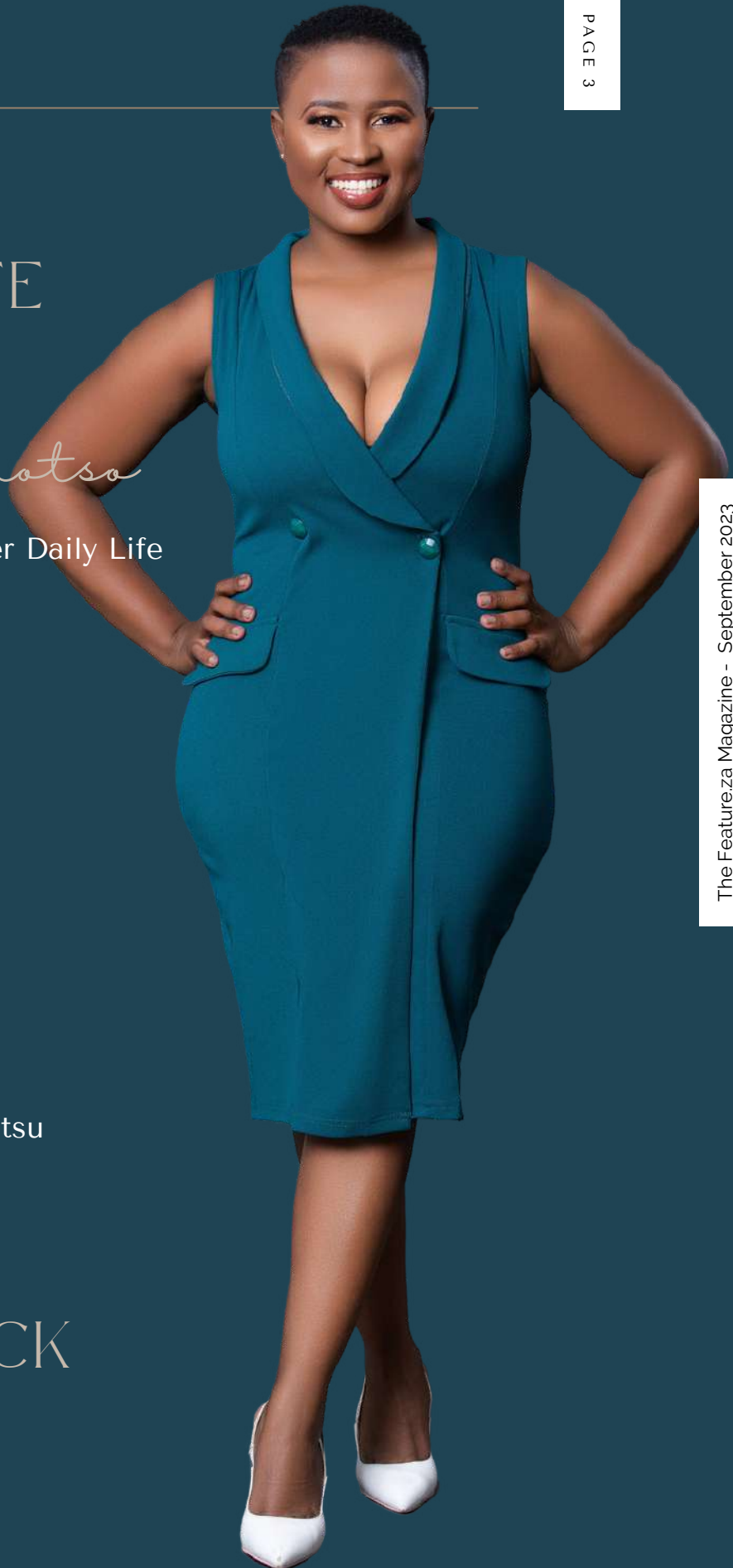
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FOOD 'O CLOCK



The Feature.za *Turns 1*



Dear Feature. Readers

The fragrance lingering in the air serves as a delightful harbinger of Spring's arrival. Flowers are once again unfurling their petals, and you, dear reader, are likely emerging from the hibernation of a long winter. Spring invites us to cast our gaze upon the fertile soil beneath us and sow the seeds of new opportunities. There is always room for improvement in one's life, and you should envision yourself as a seed. Life provides the essential nourishment for your growth, and society acts as the fertile soil in which you're planted. This Spring, I implore you to cultivate every facet of your existence as vigorously as you can. Life is too precious to squander without seeking avenues for personal development. In our interviews this month, we present four inspiring examples of how the pursuit of growth is indispensable for a richer life.

So, cast off the remnants of winter's inertia and embark on a thorough Spring cleaning of your life. Just as the buds of Spring beckon with their promise of renewal, allow yourself to flourish into the person you've always aspired to become.

With warm regards,
The Feature Magazine

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Prudence Ramotso

HOW FASHION COMPLIMENTS HER DAILY LIFE

For women, a great pair of shoes has the power to elevate an outfit and, intriguingly, it's a well-documented psychological fact that the first clothing item noticed is often the shoes. A study conducted by the University of Kansas even revealed that shoes can provide insights into a person's personality and taste. Interestingly, high heels, a staple in many women's wardrobes, originally found their place in Persian society during the 10th century when men used them to signify status, increase height, and secure their feet in stirrups when riding horses. It wasn't until the mid-1500s that women decided to embrace the status and influence associated with high heels for themselves.

In contemporary South Africa, names like Louis Vuitton often take precedence due to the prestige attached to the brand. However, as urbanization progresses, South Africans are increasingly realizing that locally produced products can be just as glamorous while contributing to the national economy. Prudence Ramotso, the visionary behind Prudent Shoes, recognized this gap in the market and seized the opportunity. Prudent Shoes isn't merely a business; it's an esteemed brand capable of competing with well-established South African brands like Edgars. Prudence's journey with Prudent Shoes began during her time as a telesales agent, an experience that kick-started her entrepreneurial journey.



She reminisces, "You know, when you're involved in sales and you successfully persuade people to part with their money, it has a profound impact. This experience played a significant role in motivating me to start my brand. I thought, 'If I can do this for different banks, I can certainly do it for myself.'"

Prudence's experiences with four different companies helped shape her business model into what eventually became Prudent Shoes. However, the seed for starting her own brand sprouted from her lifelong passion for shoes. "I've always loved heels. I've often been the shortest one in my groups, and heels have always given me that extra confidence. They still do because I'm still short," she laughs. "I've had the opportunity to try heels from various brands, and I could see what was missing in the South African market."



In 2019, Prudent Shoes made its debut with just two heels in its collection. Unfortunately, that year presented some challenges. "The brand launched in 2019, and the first year was quite a struggle. We operated for three months, and then the following year, the pandemic hit, resulting in lockdowns. So, the journey has been tough, to say the least. During the lockdown year, we couldn't operate at all due to shipping restrictions," she recalls. However, in 2021, the brand made a triumphant return, launching more shoes and sunglasses to a highly receptive target market.

"We (Prudent Shoes) experienced significant growth, thanks to the love people have for the brand. Many people resonate with it because, upon first encounter, they often mistake it for an international brand. I think it's the way we present it. But once they discover it's a local brand, their love for it grows even stronger," she explains.

Prudence Ramotso has demonstrated in the shoe industry that South African brands can compete with international names while maintaining affordable pricing. Her dedication to her craft and commitment to customer satisfaction have earned her international acclaim.

She reflects on a significant milestone, saying, "I was invited to Dubai last year in May. A group of women recognized the brand from social media and invited me to be a speaker. That was a 'wow' moment because I thought, 'So, they've noticed the brand and its impact on social media.' They called me to showcase and introduce the product to Dubai, which was another 'wow' moment. We also have an ongoing opportunity to open a store in Dubai."

Prudent Shoes epitomizes elegance and class, values that Prudence strives to embody in her brand. Currently in its fourth year of a five-year plan, Prudent Shoes continues to evolve in line with its brand name. "The name 'prudent' also conveys a sense of forward-thinking. I started with just two designs, but I always knew we would expand our product range," she notes.

Prudence's next venture is a sneaker line that combines comfort and style in an affordable package. "After launching the sneakers, we plan to introduce more items. The sneaker range will expand our market, and it's not exclusively for women. With the sneaker line, we aim to attract a broader audience. We will also introduce both female and male sneakers," she reveals.



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HOW TO *ENGAGE* WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

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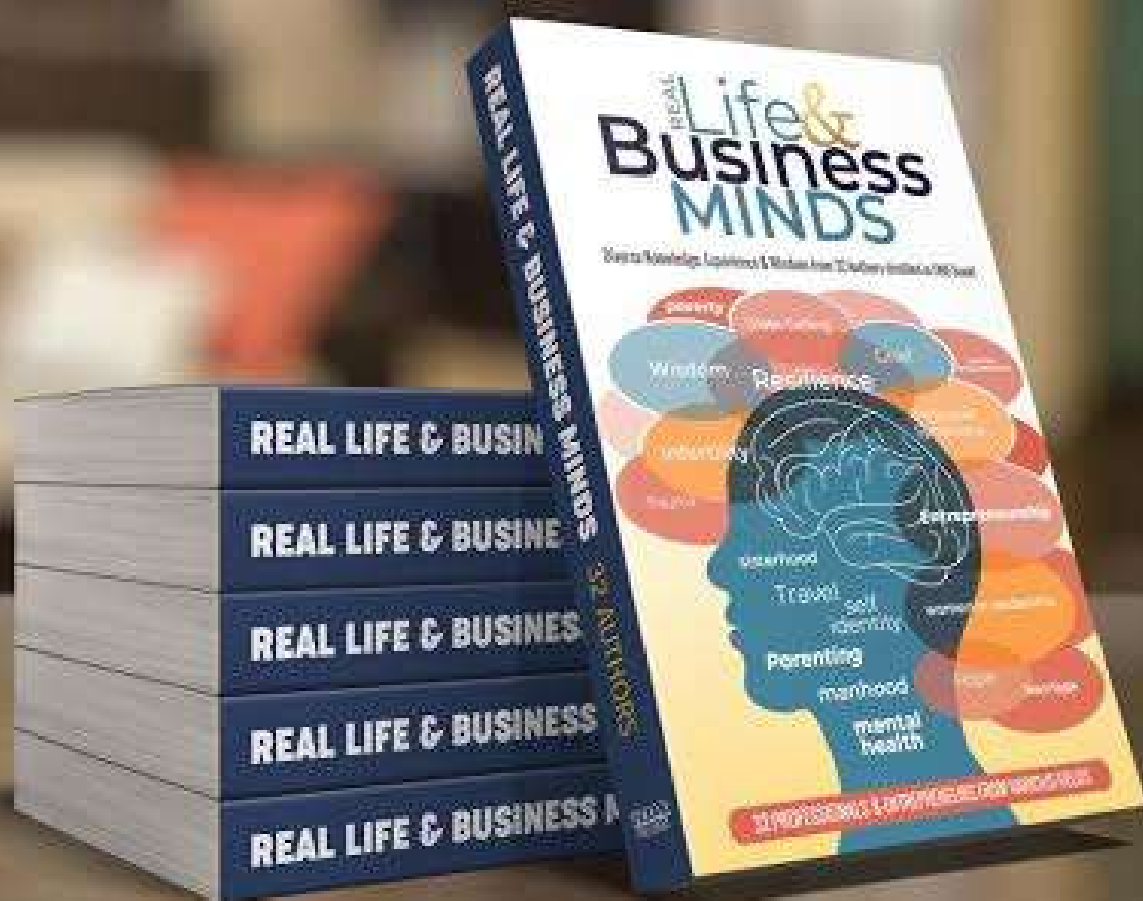
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September 2023
**INTERVIEW
SEGMENT**



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MARCIA MONARENG

OLWETHU MOKONENYANE



SEPTEMBER INTERVIEW SEGMENT

Marketing has undergone a profound transformation from its early days of disseminating information to the masses. It has evolved into a critical element that can either propel or hinder a business. With the ever-increasing dominance of the internet, digital marketing has emerged as the future of this field. According to LinkedIn, digital marketing's formidable presence is driven by high demand and increased consumer awareness. This has prompted many individuals to explore opportunities in a domain that promises to grow alongside them. Marcia Monareng stands as a shining example of this trend. She is the founder and director of Millennial Mindset Media, an organization that wields significant influence and operates at the grassroots level. She describes Millennial Mindset Media as a purpose-driven digital marketing agency, stating, "We're not just about creating aesthetically pleasing visuals. Our mission is to construct meaningful brands and assist them in leaving a lasting impact in the online sphere."

Marcia's journey into this field was rooted in her deep appreciation for media from a young age. She recalls, "I always envisioned myself working at an agency. Ironically, I had imagined myself at a renowned firm like Ogilvy."

Before establishing Millennial Mindset Media, Marcia was steadily employed at a digital marketing agency. However, the onset of Covid-19 led to retrenchments and presented her with a pivotal decision. She reflects, "I faced a choice between dusting off my CV and seeking new employment or taking the leap to initiate Millennial Mindset Media. I chose the latter."

Millennial Mindset Media doesn't settle for mere online presence; it aspires to create a genuine impact. Marcia emphasizes the importance of intentionality in their work, from strategizing to scheduling.

She states, "When you engage in something, it's crucial to do so with a clear purpose. At Millennial Mindset Media, our content creation is marked by intention, aimed at fostering customer engagement while generating revenue for our clients."

The world has responded positively to the work of Millennial Mindset Media, earning them recognition, such as awards at the South African Social Media Awards last year, a testament to the community's support and appreciation. Marcia's unwavering work ethic and dedication to her industry remained steadfast even in the face of challenges during the business's inception. She relies on self-care and spirituality as anchors to maintain her edge in the competitive field. When envisioning the future, Marcia aims to expand Millennial Mindset Media's footprint. "In the next five years, I envision Millennial Mindset Media having multiple offices in townships where we can nurture and support young talent," she asserts.

Marcia has a compelling message for our readers, a message aimed at propelling them toward a more fulfilling life. "Remember, nothing valuable in life comes easily. We live in a 'microwave society' where we often expect instant results. Social media and the entertainment industry can create the illusion that success comes effortlessly for others. However, we rarely see the hard work, sacrifices, and dedication that lie behind the scenes. I want people to understand that anything truly worth having demands a price, and it's the journey that ultimately shapes us."



CHAMAIGN MAILULA



A woman who understands her worth and harnesses the power of her influence is undeniably formidable. Over time, women have been gradually stepping into their power, recognizing that their actions possess the potential to reshape the world. Champaign Mailula is a remarkable woman who embodies this concept and has transformed it into her personal brand. Hailing from Limpopo, her zest for life seamlessly intertwined with her passion for sports and her gift for communication. Although she initially pursued engineering during her university years, her true essence soon revealed itself.

She chuckles as she recalls, "I thought, 'No, this isn't for me.'"

With the unwavering support of her family, she made the courageous decision to switch her field of study to communication science at the University of Johannesburg. Her profound fascination with media and its intricate nuances was complemented by her practical experiences in the field.

"I chose this field because I believed it resonated with me on a deeper level. Once I delved into the corporate world, I began to witness the profound impact that effective communication can have. It created countless opportunities for me," she articulates.

Champaign's career has spanned nearly a decade, encompassing roles such as Marketing Communications Specialist at E-TV and her current position as Communication Lead at Vodacom, nestled within the Chief Office of Commercial Operations. In tandem with her professional commitments, she is actively pursuing her BTech in Business Management. While she holds a deep affection for her career, her creative endeavors also hold a special place in her heart. She credits her father as her muse and the catalyst behind her online store, Hermands.

She affectionately explains, "Hermands is actually my grandmother's name."

Hermands is an inclusive swimwear boutique, specifically designed to cater to larger women, offering both comfort and style—a challenge she herself once faced. Her journey began by meticulously crafting fabrics that accentuated the curves of her own body. The brand gained rapid acclaim after she shared images on social media.

"People started asking, 'Where did you buy this?' I was conversing with a friend, and she suggested that instead of merely revealing the source, I should turn it into a business," she recounts.

What initially started as a modest vision swiftly evolved into a lifestyle brand. She elaborates, "I design clothing that truly complements your physique, with a focus on resort wear."

Luxury is the hallmark of her brand, and the public has fervently embraced her creations. Champaign envisions a future that includes immigration, while maintaining her passion for both corporate endeavors and her burgeoning brand. Equally vital to her is the prospect of marriage and family life. When it comes to Hermands, she aspires to see her brand featured in mainstream stores.

In parting, she imparts a message to all those reading this article:

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"Irrespective of the challenges life throws your way, always pick yourself up. We often let our traumas define us. Learn to move forward. When I embarked on this journey, fear and self-doubt consumed me, but I allowed myself to learn and grow."

YOUNG PRINCE

Thebe Rabogatsu



Art possesses a timeless allure, captivating the hearts of many and affording individuals the chance to leave an indelible mark. When we contemplate creative pursuits, luminaries like Miriam Makeba and Brenda Fassie often spring to mind. However, a fresh wave of artists has surged through South Africa, ushering in a new era of creativity. This emerging generation of artists has not only carried the torch passed down by the greats but has also transformed the media landscape for the better. Thebe Rabogatsu, known as Young Prince, stands as a prime exemplar of this movement. Young Prince is a multidisciplinary creative who emerged from humble beginnings. A graduate of Fame FET, he has Boity Thulo as a guiding presence, akin to a spiritual mother, in his journey to success. His path into the world of music bears a resemblance to that of Khaya Mthethwa.

Young Prince recounts his early foray into singing, saying, "I entered a singing competition when I was just 12 years old. It was a competition back in my homeland, Botswana, and I made it to the Top 50, though I didn't reach the finals. That's when my journey in music began."

While many might have been discouraged by such an experience, especially at such a young age, he discovered the depth of his talent during high school and resolved to nurture it into what it has become today. "That's when I realized my own potential and thought, 'Why should I hold back?' That's when I recorded my first song," he reflects. Determined to build a versatile creative portfolio, Young Prince delved into various facets of the entertainment industry. "I'm not just a musician; I'm an actor, a performing artist, a voice-over artist, and a model," he confirms.

His musical prowess defies genre boundaries, although he personally gravitates toward Hip-Hop in his leisure. Each of his songs serves as a personal diary shared with his fans. "Every song I record holds a profound meaning. It's a reflection of my experiences and emotions. I want people to connect with my music on a personal level," he emphasizes. Looking toward the future, Young Prince envisions a global presence for himself. "I see myself as an international sensation, making waves across the globe," he says with a chuckle. Young Prince offers a resounding message of encouragement. "Believe in yourself and recognize your inherent talent. Don't allow naysayers or the world's negativity to deter you from your path," he urges.



TOYS WITH ROOTS

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Representation has been a prominent and ongoing conversation for quite some time, with a growing demand for increased visibility of individuals from diverse backgrounds. While various sectors have strived for more inclusive representation, one area that has been making strides is the toy industry. Notably, South Africa has entered this thriving market with Toys With Roots, founded by Thabo and Mpumi Motsabi in 2015 as a heartfelt tribute to their African heritage.

Reflecting on the inception of Toys With Roots, Thabo shared, "I believe it was in 2015. We couldn't find toys that accurately represented our children. Our kids used to mimic putting towels on their heads to mimic long hair, similar to the dolls they had. My wife and I felt this was not right."

With a background in content production, Thabo decided that change was necessary. He explained, "It wasn't just about toys; it extended to the TV shows they watched and other aspects of their media and entertainment. Their entire environment lacked characters that resembled them, from Barbie dolls to other toys. We felt the need to create toys that celebrated our children."

Initially, Toys With Roots emerged as a solution to a personal problem and was not initially conceived as a formal business. Thabo recalled, "Once we discovered someone who had started a similar venture, we bought two dolls for our kids, thinking that if we faced this issue, perhaps our friends did too. We purchased 200 dolls and sold all of them through Facebook."

It wasn't long before the founders of Toys With Roots realized they had inadvertently entered a lucrative market driven by the demand for Afrocentric dolls. For them, representation holds immense significance for the younger generation. Thabo emphasized, "We realized that many people embark on a journey of self-discovery later in life. Understanding who you are should begin at a young age. People often say they want to reconnect with their roots and learn about their ancestors. We believe this occurs because there isn't enough emphasis on self-identity at a young age. Additionally, representation is crucial because the world is becoming increasingly interconnected."

Toys With Roots is founded on a vision of self-acceptance and nurturing self-love from a young age. The dolls and the emotions they convey have resonated positively with the public. Thabo stated, "We've received incredible feedback and experienced robust sales. Our journey began in 2015 and witnessed significant growth. People are genuinely encouraging us to keep moving forward."

Looking ahead, Toys With Roots envisions expanding their product range. While they initially started by selling toys, they have since ventured into toy creation and aspire to secure intellectual property licenses. Furthermore, their goal is to promote representation in various spheres, including school bags and stationery. Although entrepreneurship can be challenging, Thabo shares a message of perseverance: "You must remain tenacious, stay committed to your vision, and be adaptable to changing circumstances. Keep learning and evolving."





FOOD 'O CLOCK

By Kgopotso Boshomane

Ingredients:

1 cup peanut butter

1 egg

1/2 cup oats

2 tbsp of raw honey

Instructions:

In a large Preheat oven to 200 degrees.

Mix all ingredients together in a medium bowl.

Roll into 1-inch balls

Press the tops of the cookies with the back of a spoon

Bake about 10 minutes or just until the tops start to look dry.

Cool 1-2 minutes on a cooling rack

Happy Heritage Day



Celebrating Diversity and Unity

