

## Getting business to take off

LISA ISAACS

THOMAS Kritzer is managing director of Sky Messaging (Pty) Ltd.

**What does your job entail?**

Even though I am the managing director of Sky Messaging, the company is unique in its structure in that we wear many hats. The one side of the spectrum entails developing and putting into action strategic plans pertinent to our three bases in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, and the other side involves daily management, comprising client management as well as marketing of our product – namely sustainable aerial advertising that predominantly focuses on the gridlock traffic audience.

**What is your background?**

After high school I completed a BCom degree in marketing through Unisa, which gave me the opportunity to work full-time on the side, gaining invaluable experience from the outset. After completing my degree I lived and worked abroad for three years, before returning to the Cape in 2008. Shortly after that, in 2010, Sky Messaging was born. Marketing and business development have been my strengths from the word go, and these are two vocations I still thoroughly enjoy.

**Describe a typical day:**

Each day differs from the next, which makes this job exciting. I liaise daily with my general manager of operations, Phillip Kent,



**NO LIMITS:** Thomas Kritzer is taking advertising to new heights at Sky Messaging.

whose job it is to ensure our four aircraft are impeccably maintained, pilots trained and flights scheduled. Client flight schedules are reviewed daily to ensure they are carried out at the requested times. I liaise personally with existing as well as potential clients, creating tailor-made solutions for each of them, and assist our sales team with the same. We review each flight performed on Sky Messaging's in-house developed Flight and Business Management System to ensure flights were executed as promised, that the correct route was adhered to, and analyse flights

to ensure we overdelivered.

**What are the biggest challenges you face at work?**

While many would think weather is a major hampering factor, we have always been able to accommodate our clients in one way or another. The biggest challenge is convincing clients and media agents that aerial advertising is a viable and sustainable marketing platform that works better than a host of other media. That has been proven over and over again with case studies. While most media agents agree with the findings and the medium, many are

apprehensive, presumably out of fear of trying something new.

**What are your major rewards?**

Seeing our clients' banners in the sky is very encouraging, especially when most new clients revert, saying they are elated to have tried something new, especially since the medium delivered what was promised. Another important reward is being able to work with a young dynamic team that is always thinking one step ahead.

**What do you need to succeed as a managing director?**

Passion for the mission is vital. If the heart is not in the project, job or company, the MD cannot add value and grow the organisation. That being said, a successful leader must also be able to view the organisation objectively and with impartiality. Leadership is naturally a key ingredient for success. However, the strategic short, medium and long-term blueprint needs to be well understood and adjustments made accordingly. Lastly, a sense of humour helps while getting your hands dirty with the team.

**What are the minimum educational requirements?**

A marketing and aviation background are advantageous. But it's common sense, aptitude and hard work that will lead to success.

**What is the starting salary?**

Enough to survive... but work hard and the salary will follow.

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## Who's where



Michele Ongley, head of institutional business development, 10X Investments



Gerhard Klinger, employee benefits specialist, 10X Investments



Joanne de Wet, spa manager, Twelve Apostles Hotel and Spa



Ryan Nelson, partner, banking and finance, Webber Wentzel

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