



**DANIELLA SHAPIRO (25),  
ENTREPRENEUR**

Shapiro's never been afraid of a challenge. In 2009 she bought and rebranded the City2City marathon and, in three short years, increased participation in it 10-fold. She's involved in all things brand-related, from web engineering to planning corporate events and developing her own condom brand, Loveglove, which comes in 12

distinctive colours and flavours, aimed at different "personalities", including the chocolate-flavoured Ninja and the banana-flavoured Handyman. Loveglove will soon be available in Dis-Chem, Pick n Pay and Spar outlets.

Shapiro attributes her achievements to her proactive and tenacious approach. "I'm not afraid to step out of my comfort zone," she says. If she had to sum up her philosophy in one word, she says, it would be "disruption". "For entrepreneurs, the hardest part isn't necessarily creating an idea. It's getting that idea noticed in a cluttered market."

This innovative speaker with fresh, forward-thinking ideas is determined to push boundaries and take companies to the next level. With marketing strategy clients who include Anglo American, GEMS, Standard Bank and Eskom, the projects she's been involved in have helped increase brand awareness in order to maximise brand value. Never one to sit still, Shapiro has recently joined CliffCentral.com, where she hosts a weekly programme interviewing business people. Her advice to entrepreneurs is: "Bet on yourself, invest in yourself and own yourself" – HG



**ZANDILE NKONYENI  
(34), HEAD OF PR: SABC TV**

Amid the constant woes dogging the national broadcaster, Nkonyeni's role is to establish and maintain effective communication between the SABC TV network, the media and viewers.

"Due to its fast-paced setting, working in broadcasting is a daily challenge.

My focus in the past year has been on creating an effective communication plan where SABC TV is perceived as a network with channels that offer complementary programming, rather than individual channels that compete with each other. So I've had to be clear about my vision and pass it on to the team," she explains. She gained her communication experience from working in print media, agencies and broadcasting. In the past, the three SABC TV stations each had a Head of PR and when Nkonyeni took over, she had to combine teams who were accustomed to working independently. "One of the key business lessons I've learnt is that leadership is a service, rather than a position. I've had to learn new skills and shift from being a consensus-builder who liked having everyone on the same page to working with a big team. To get valuable input from them, I had to strengthen our collaboration and our communication."

In the future, she sees herself in a training role advancing the communication industry. She'd like to coach up and coming communicators, especially those from underprivileged communities. – AM

are the times I wasn't [at my best personally]. If I'm positive and at my most energetic, clients book appointments and my staff are more motivated. But the moment I lose sight of my priorities, everything else drops. You make your own business," she says.

She's currently focusing on growing the footprint of her internal training academy at Wyatt and is enjoying exposing other salons and hairdressers to her inimitable techniques and colouring expertise. – Sheena Adams



**MAHLOHONOLO  
MAJA (36), FOUNDER  
OF NRW LOGISTICS**

A former Project Manager for the Tourism, Hospitality & Sport Education Training Authority (Seta), Maja used to watch her engineer husband dabble in

commodities trading on the side and was piqued by the profit potential.

So in 2009, after giving birth to her last-born, she applied for a trading licence in wholesale petroleum – which she got a year later.

"Within a month after I'd resigned from the Seta, I met an engineer who was contracted to the Medupi Power Station and who told me they were looking for a female supplier. I registered on their database and the rest is history."

NRW Logistics is currently turning over R30 million a month, based on a trading volume of three million litres of petroleum. Maja's licence

allows her to trade in all petroleum products, including diesel, gas, jet fuel and industrial lubricants. She buys in bulk from oil majors like Engen and Sasol and then sells it on to bulk-end users. Her clients include mines, power stations and large-scale farmers, but she's also got long-term gas supply tenders signed with Transnet and SA Breweries (SAB).

"When we started five years ago, our turnover was R20 million per annum – now we're doing more than that in a month. Profit margins are 3-5%, depending on the product, although margins on gas are around 10%," she says.

As it's an exceedingly lonely industry, especially for a woman entrepreneur, Maja's enrolled as part of the Acumen mentoring programme with Raizcorp, which has helped sharpen her focus.

"I'm currently outsourcing the logistics side, but looking at getting my own trucks which will be contracted to Sasol and not limited to my Transnet or SAB tender.

"I want to diversify further in the next few years by acquiring our own filling stations to positively impact our cash flow," she says. – SA