

# Peermont's Sharon De Leur empowers success



By [Robin Fredericks](#)

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Sharon De Leur is the marketing manager for Peermont Group. We chat to De Leur to find out why she chose a career in hospitality marketing, the challenges she has faced and why it's important to have a month dedicated to women.

## ■ *What does a day in your life look like?*

Every day is different in the casino and hospitality industry. I normally start my work day by reviewing the financial and business performance, customer care reports and the competitor analysis. The rest of my day consists of meeting with various stakeholders, agencies, strategic alliance partners and engaging with Peermont resort team members to ensure that our marketing strategy is achieving the anticipated results. Often we have promotional or media events that I attend in the evenings too.



## *What made you choose a career in marketing and then that of tourism?*

I was a corporate marketer for years and was lucky enough to join the hospitality and casino industry when I relocated to Johannesburg. I just loved the pace and variety that the industry offered, it really is about creating magic.

From conceptualising strategies targeted at a multitude of segments to drive hotel occupancy, developing successful loyalty programmes and direct marketing strategies, to positioning restaurant brands, conceptualising effective promotions, to creating a diverse entertainment strategy that appeals to a variety of markets - is most certainly exciting and challenging.

I have been privileged to work with a number of famous people, host major events, work with significant international brands and travel the world. The international exposure and training equipped me with invaluable insight into best practice and international standards across all marketing disciplines.

Creating successful marketing campaigns that deliver on specific business needs and challenges truly inspires me. The satisfaction when results are achieved keeps me motivated! Although this may sound a little contrived, it is a fact that marketing now is more about "the numbers" than it has ever been, our efforts need to move the business needle and not just be pretty. Equally, the learnings from the "not so successful" campaigns are imperative to moving forward, growing and adapting to an ever-changing market, economic and political climate.

“ *Women are the glue that keeps it all together.* ”

At Peermont, I am fortunate enough to get to work with 12 diverse resort brands located in South Africa, Botswana and Malawi, all of which have their own unique business opportunities. More importantly, empowering my team to grow, develop and achieve success by continuously finding ways to evolve, innovate and deliver results - inspires me even more. That is the most rewarding aspect of my role.

Recently, as we were putting the finishing touches to the Emperors Palace 20th birthday celebration campaign, it was a very proud moment to realise that we had given over R380m to local communities in the form of sponsorships, development of small businesses, community infrastructure and youth development from pre-school learning to university bursaries. Knowing that we make a tangible difference inspires the entire team.

### ■ ***Do you think it's important to have a month dedicated to women?***

Absolutely! Women are extraordinary. From being a good mother, wife or girlfriend, friend, colleague, cook, bottle-washer, to a nurse, teacher, career woman, and coach – a woman's work is never done. Women are the glue that keeps it all together.

### ■ ***What barriers did you face, as a woman, becoming successful in your field, and how did you overcome them?***

I wouldn't necessarily call them "barriers" as such. Creating a healthy balance between your family-life and achieving your career goals as a woman, is a challenge and a skill. Getting it right undoubtedly teaches you resilience, flexibility and the ability to effectively manage several tasks simultaneously.

### ■ ***Based on your experience, what advice would you give to women pursuing a career in marketing and that of hotel/ hospitality marketing?***

Believe in yourself. Keep learning, studying and growing. Keep moving forward. Make it your business to know the business. Seek out every opportunity to learn more about the industry, job requirements and plot out your career path. Ask questions. Set goals. Find a mentor. You are in control of your own destiny.

### ■ ***Who is your biggest influence /role model?***

I have quite a few role models, but I will share a little about my top two! Firstly, I would have to say that my Mom is my biggest role model. She has a disease called Retinitis Pigmentosa. By the time I was born – she was completely blind. My mother successfully raised three children, ran our home seamlessly, ran her own small business and is simply an inspiration to all who meet her. She never allowed her disability to stand in the way of her achieving her goals - or doing the things that she wanted to. The most important lesson she taught us, was to never give up. Pure strength and determination!

My second influence is Winnifred Knight, CEO of The Marketing Site, managing director and owner Cube [On the Square] Pty Ltd. I met Winn about 15 years ago, as one of my lecturers. Having access to mounds of research and extensive experience across numerous industries, Winn has certainly been a phenomenal mentor, guide and friend throughout my career. More importantly, she believed in me, and for that, I am truly grateful.

### ■ ***What is your message for Women's Month?***

“ Success isn't about how much money you make, it is about the difference you make in people's lives. - Michelle Obama ”

### ■ ***Any words of wisdom you would like to share with women in the business?***

Invest your time in growing and developing your people. Coaching, providing guidance and growth is really essential in building a solid team of decision makers. Empower your team to achieve success!

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