

## Simply Black appoints first COO, Stephanie Thomas

Stephanie Thomas has been appointed Media agency network, Simply Black's first chief operating officer (COO).



Media agency network, Simply Black Media, has appointed Stephanie Thomas as its first COO (Image supplied)

The agency has some 250 people in 37 wholly-owned offices in Africa.

“One can’t say it often enough – Africa isn’t a country,” says Thomas.

She adds that the continent’s markets are exceptionally diverse.

“Simply Black has spent the last 10 years investing in home-grown talent in local offices and this helps clients navigate these markets and craft campaigns that generate a measurable return on their efforts and investment,” Thomas says.

### **True to founding principles**

“My focus is to ensure we remain true to our founding principles of ‘Brilliant at Basics’ and ‘Expert Executic

“However, as we build our business, my role will be to develop the tools and processes to support our teams in accessing our deep experience, specialist knowledge and local market networks, in a unified

framework.

“The goal is to make it easier for clients to get the insights they need – fast, consistently and reliably,” she adds.



MEDIA

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## Challenges on the continent

Data is the new business gold, and that’s particularly true in the African media space, where there is not the same level of hard information available as there is in South Africa or in the developed world.

Over the past 15 years Simply Black is unique and has built up a rich and multilayered data set about the media landscape and consumer behaviour in the various African markets in which it operates.

It has also created tools to leverage this data to deliver actionable insights in conceptualising impactful media campaigns.

“One of the big challenges when it comes to media campaigns in African markets relates to confirming the placements are made as planned,” Thomas says.

“Thanks to our network, we can do this – it’s part of our offering to clients wanting to win on the continent.”



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## A critical milestone

“Thomas's decade-long dedication to Simply Black Media equips her with unparalleled experience and insight, making her the ideal choice for COO,” says Carine Haffejee, CEO.

Haffejee says that Thomas’s appointment is a critical milestone in Simply Black’s growth into Africa’s expert agency of choice.

“Our experience across Africa’s diverse media markets, and the data we have accumulated, are invaluable enabling the proper planning and execution of campaigns in these markets,” she says.

“But it is people that are the real secret to our business success. Steph is a perfect example of this.

“Her strong values, grit and perseverance, as well as her obsession with delighting clients, make her the obvious choice to take us to the next level.

“We are optimistic about the future of the continent and the talent in the markets in which we operate.

“With Stephanie’s lead, we believe we can achieve our goal of creating client experiences that deliver a

tangible return on investment while creating moments of client delight at every interaction.”

Thomas holds a BA degree in Marketing and Communications from AAA. She has been in the industry for more than 12 years.

She has extensively travelled the continent and is passionate about people and her pursuit of allowing them to spend time on things that make their lives easier.

Thomas says her focus will be on enhancing the already robust operations of the agency and driving the consistent adoption of Simply Black’s unique operating culture and ways of working.

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