

Zanusi Brand Solutions CEO Nomahlubi Simamane Top Businesswoman 2009

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Zanusi Brand Solution's CEO, **Nomahlubi Simamane**, was named Top Businesswoman of the Year at the 2009 National Business Awards which took place at a prestigious function in Johannesburg on July 30th.



Ilse Pienaar, Publisher of Topco Media's publication, Top Women in Business and Government, presents the Top Businesswoman of the Year Award to Zanusi Brand Solution's CEO, Nomahlubi Simamane.

Dubbed the "Oscars" of the South African business world, the National Business Awards were first introduced by **Topco Media** in 2002 to recognise and honour the top performers of the year in both industry and commerce, for individuals and companies.

The accolade is a recognition of Simamane's leadership which has seen **Zanusi Brand Solutions** (established in 2001 and a 100% black owned enterprise) register an annual compounded average revenue growth in excess of 30% over the past five years. This has been achieved through brand building strategies and activating plans for a variety of blue chip companies and state-owned entities (including the likes of the Airports Company South Africa (ACSA), Liberty Life Properties, the Film and Publication Board, and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund).

Zanusi Brand Solutions is also increasing its presence throughout the continent by opening offices in Nairobi, Kenya. The company is making its mark working with clients like Zain, a heavyweight player in the telecommunications industry as well as the East African Breweries Limited.

Simamane, a dynamic businesswoman and renowned branding guru, says she's especially pleased to have received the Topco Media honour because it shows that SMEs can operate in the same terrain as big corporates, given the right passion, skills, integrity and commitment. Simamane started Zanusi from scratch nearly a decade ago and the company continues to grow and expand its footprint globally.

"I hope that it provides inspiration to all SME players out there to show that what matters most is not how big, or even how small you are, but the level of professionalism and commitment to worldclass delivery that you bring to any project."

The results of Topco Media's research into leading corporate and public sector performance levels are published in South Africa's Top Performing Companies. Simamane secured the prestigious title of Top Businesswoman of the Year in a category that also included Bertina Engelbrecht (New Clicks Holdings), Carol Weaving (Coca-Cola dome), Geeta Singh (Voltsing Electrical) and Duduzile Maseko (Johannesburg Roads Agency).

The National Business Awards accolade caps an impressive month for Simamane: just recently Zanusi Brand Solutions, with its head Office based in Johannesburg, was appointed to a three-year contract to run the City of Joburg's Arts Alive International Festival programme. Joburg Arts Alive kicks off in September 2009 and Simamane says the National Businesswoman of the Year award only adds impetus to her commitment to deliver a memorable programme of events in September

This emphasis on activating the Arts Alive ethos fits perfectly with Simamane's approach to her business which has seen Zanusi work with some of the continent's most high-profile clientele. Since September 2008, Zanusi has developed the global segmentation strategy for Zain which consists of identifying the similarities between the segments in each of the six

different countries thereby creating a global segment profile and global segment strategies. Zanusi has also developed ACSA's brand strategy as well as the formulation of its brand internalization programme, achieving significant success in both these areas since its appointment in March 2007.

Other companies in its portfolio are Thebe Investment, Creditworx, SABC, DEAT, FPB, Ethekwini Hospital and Heart Centre, The Unlimited Group to name a few.

"It's always a challenge to look at a brand and see its possibilities and then work with clients to make that a reality," says Simamane. "To be honoured for that work is a real thrill and I must thank my staff and clients for helping turn Zanusi Brand Solutions into the success story that it is."

About Nomahlubi Simamane

- Nomahlubi is the founding member of **Zanusi Brand Solutions**.
- She completed an 18 month stint with BLGK Bates, a South African Top 20 through-the-line communications company as Managing Director.
- In addition to extensive local and international marketing experience (17 years in South Africa, Kenya and the USA), Nomahlubi has an excellent track record of building brands within Unilever and British American Tobacco where she was the Marketing Director.
- Nomahlubi has also played an active role in the Association of Marketers in South Africa including judging Advertising for the prestigious Loeries Awards.
- She has served on several Boards including being the vice-chairperson of the Association of Advertising Agencies (AAA), a non-executive director of Primedia Face2Face, Cashbuild, Foschini Group as well as a member of the AAA Executive Operations Committee, ASA's Advertising Properties Committee and the Advisory Committee for UNEP's (United Nations Environment Programme) Advertising and Communication Initiative.
- She was recently invited to the United Nations deliberations on "Promoting investment and sustainable development in Africa with the objective of eradicating poverty".
- She has written numerous articles and has delivered several papers, the latest titled: "Reaching the African consumer - lessons for European brands" presented at the European Association of Communications (EACA) in October 2000.
- She has four children - three boys and a girl - ranging from ages of 19 - 26yrs.

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