

# Rand Show appoints Didi Okoro as its new sales manager



By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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Didi Okoro was recently appointed as the new sales manager for the Rand Show.



Didi Okoro has been appointed as the new sales manager for the Rand Show. Image supplied.

With a passion for media and sponsorship sales that started in 2005, Okoro [joins the Rand Show team](#) with 15 years of hands-on industry experience. A founding member of boutique media house Contact Media, she started off as part of the sales team and rapidly rose through the ranks to become head of sales.

Here, she shares more about her career, what she is most excited about joining the Rand Show team and what's at the top of her list of priorities at work.

■ ***Congrats on your appointment. How do you feel about it?***

Thank you so much. I can't remember when last I was this excited about a move in my career. I am as much nervous as I am excited though. When I feel nervous, I don't relax, I always want to push beyond my limits.

■ ***When is/was the effective date?***

I started on Wednesday, 3 July and, three months later, I am just as excited.

■ ***What excites you most about the Rand Show and where it's going?***

Working for an event the size of the Rand Show is exciting on its own for me. It is a show with an established legacy, and occupies a nostalgic and fond place in the hearts of many who have attended the show over the years. Myself included.

I have always had a passion for events and media and sponsorship sales. For me, this is a challenge that allows to stretch myself even more and grow professionally. The fact that I joined at the very time we are re-branding and re-positioning has been a blessing because, this way, I am able to contribute to the new event we are planning for 2020.

Over and above that, working with the brilliant minds I have the pleasure of working with, is mind blowing. I have learnt so much from them in just three months and can't wait to learn even more.

■ ***What do you love most about your career in media/sales?***

I've always said: The adrenalin rush that comes with sales, events and media has always been what keeps me going. However, it is also the process of walking a client through the journey of bringing a concept to fruition, and the value you add along the way. Nothing beats a satisfied client. The bonus is the relationships, you build with people from all walks of life, that stand you in good stead for years to come.

■ ***Any career highlights you're particularly proud of?***

I have been fortunate to be part of the launch team of several magazines over the years. However, working on the *Afropolitan* magazine remains a highlight for me. It is fulfilling to watch a product start from nothing to becoming a globally-recognised brand. Heading up this title opened a lot of doors for me, and increased my confidence exponentially.



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4 Jul 2017



It also taught me how to be resilient and versatile in selling and managing a team.

■ ***Tell us a bit about your experience and how this has equipped you for your new position.***

About 15 years ago, I was the founding staff member of boutique media house Contact Media – I started off as part of the sales team and rapidly rose through the ranks to become head of sales. I had the privilege of launching and managing several high-profile titles including *The Afropolitan Magazine*, one of South Africa's premier black business and lifestyle magazines.



Check out some of our team — with [Contact Media & Communications](#) and 9 others.

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I was lucky enough to have a great mentor in the CEO of Contact Media, Sean Press, who gave me room to grow, helped me articulate my vision and encouraged my creativity. Sean also allowed me to make mistakes. This gave me the confidence to conceptualise, develop and manage Afro Nights – a music-inspired event that celebrated being an Afropolitan, which we successfully ran for five years.



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From there, I would go on to manage several other events for the company. I am now applying a lot of the lessons I learnt over the 15 years, but I am more excited to learn more.

### 🎯 *What are you most looking forward to/enjoying so far?*

I can't wait until show day on 8 April 2020! Hahaha. I am really enjoying working with some really powerful and diverse personalities – who are all geniuses within their own right.

At the moment, I am enjoying my engagements with potential and established clients, sponsors and suppliers... and closing deals! I always learn something new. I'm excited about what's to come and savouring the moments leading up to it.

### 🎯 *What's at the top of your to-do list (at work)?*

The top of my list is always reaching target. I eat, sleep and dream targets. I want to make sure that we deliver a Rand Show that will offer visitors something new, exciting and positively memorable. And one that gives value. We have our work cut out for us. The world of sales, media and events and exhibitions has changed significantly since I started in the industry.

Competition is rife and consumers know exactly what they want. We continuously have to be on our A-game. This starts with my sales team, and making sure that we all understand who we are doing this for, what is required to make it happen and really rally behind making the shared vision come to life.

### 🎯 *What are you currently reading/watching/listening to for work?*

I have recently started reading Michelle Obama's *Becoming*. In our industry, resilience, confidence and tenacity are everything. These are the traits I love about Michelle Obama.

“ Currently reading *Becoming* by Michelle Obama and I just wanted to share this inspiring part about the time she was told by a college counselor that she wasn't "Princeton material". [pic.twitter.com/qVnUdmIctk](https://twitter.com/qVnUdmIctk)  
— Hazel Nutella (@1nutty\_hazel) [27 September 2019](#) ”

📌 **Tell us something about yourself not generally known?**

I am more scared of the spider web than the spider itself. Hahahaha!

## ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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