

Mzamo Masito, Google's new CMO for SSA

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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Google recently announced its appointment of Mzamo Masito as chief marketing officer for sub-Saharan Africa.

Masito joined Google from Vodacom on 8 January 2018. He will be leading the SSA marketing team from Johannesburg, working to sustain its momentum and capitalise on its successes in the region, increasing access to the internet, enhancing locally-relevant products and content, and helping people take advantage of the opportunities offered by the internet.



"I am excited about working for a company that is so committed to Africa and to making a difference in people's lives," he says. "I spoke to a number of people before joining and the consistent theme was Google's humanity. The focus on teamwork, love of its people and drive to achieve goals. This is why I joined the company. I hope while I am here I can channel my passion for Africa into the work we do."

Here, he goes on to say why he's looking forward to bringing Google's mission to life and how being customer-centric is going to help him achieve this.

What does your new role entail?

Simply put, my role entails bringing to life Google's mission to organise and democratise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful so that we can grow our users and partners and so that our users and partners can grow.

What's at the top of your to-do list?

My priorities are to learn (and where relevant unlearn) from the Google Africa team, and around the world. If I'm going to achieve my overall goal I need to immerse myself in who and what Google is, how it works, what its products are and how they work. For me, the most important element is going to be listening to and observing our users to gain insights into what we do well and where we can better meet their needs. I also plan to meet our partners and learn and grow from and with them.

■ **What do you hope to achieve there? Any short-term/long-term goals? Or what are you most looking forward to?**

I'm very much looking forward to bringing Google's mission and vision to life. Technology is a powerful tool for social change and Google has a number of initiatives geared around doing just that, for example, the [Digital Skills for Africa](#) initiative which will see us train 10 million young Africans by 2022.

■ **Why are you passionate about Africa?**

To quote Thabo Mbeki, "I am an African and something new always comes out of Africa." I believe Steve Biko's prophecy that "Africa will give the world an even more humane face." I also believe in Thabo Mbeki, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Thomas Sankara, Robert Sobukwe and Patrice Lumumba when they spoke about the regeneration of Africa and the African Renaissance saying that the time has come and a new and unique civilisation is soon to be added to the world. Africa desires a change – Pixley argued that Africa already recognises his/her anomalous position and desires a change.

■ **Comment on your previous experience and how it has equipped you for your new position.**

I've been very lucky and blessed that my career has spanned many parts of the continent and multiple marketing disciplines, from market research, data analytics, consumer and market insights to media, brand management, sponsorship, 360 campaign launches... you name it.

The critical skill for any marketer is having an understanding of, and insight into, the consumers his/her brand serves, and an attitude that is consumer-centric. These are the critical skills I bring to this role. Having worked at Unilever, Nike and Vodacom has given me exposure to a fair balance of art (by way of big ideas), science (measurement and metrics) and the revenue aspects of the job.



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■ **What do you love most about your career in marketing?**

I love being able to do good while making a living. I love it when my purpose is aligned with the company purpose and mission, and I love winning – growing the brand, growing users, growing the business, growing people and growing partners.

■ **What industry trends do you predict for the year?**

Consumer-centricity – it's a trend that's always in vogue and ever-green. The consumer decides, she democratically votes with her wallet and eyeballs.

“ Be consumer-centric and remember that your desk is the most dangerous place to view the world from. ”

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

- *The Advertised Mind* by Erik du Plessis
- *Nudge Theory* by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein

■ **Tell us something about yourself not generally known.**

I used to be a boy scout and got my Springbok scout badge. I was also once an altar boy. And my mother is my role model

– from her early teenage pregnancy to working as a cleaner and domestic worker to becoming a Masters graduate and social worker, she broke too many family cycles and set new standards of excellence.

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