

RICHARD RODGERS

Strategy Director

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SUMMARY

I'm currently the Head of Strategy at INVRSN, a creative agency in Cape Town, South Africa. Over the past five years, I've led diverse projects across health and fitness, online betting, entertainment and insurance. I've worked with South Africa's top political figures and consulted for the largest independent financial advisory and lending organisation in the country. Building INVRSN's strategy department from the ground up has been a taxing, yet rewarding journey, and now, as a director, I'm dedicated to driving our vision while supporting a talented team. Outside of work (I do have a life beyond strategy...), I co-founded Smalltown Beat, a electronic and live music festival that has quickly become a household name in South Africa's underground music scene.

EDUCATION

Stellenbosch University 2014 - 2018

Bachelors of Commerce,
Financial Management

IIE-Vega 2019

Post Graduate in Brand
Management
***National 2019 Brand
Challenge winner*

ABILITIES

- Presenting and writing strategic narratives.
- Moderating and creating brand and campaign strategy workshops.
- Extracting insights & new thinking from research.
- Fostering effective collaboration across teams.
- Leading client relationships at a day-to-day level.
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities to expand client scopes and services to drive business growth.
- Building relationships with senior clients.

EXPERIENCE

INVRSN Agency, Cape Town

Strategy Director (Head of Strategy): Jan. 2019 - Present

INVRSN is a medium-sized 360° brand & communications agency that believes strategically-led, creatively-inspired marketing builds brands that drive business momentum. As Head of Strategy, I steer a team of three strategists (Ian, Amy and Modjadji). My mandate encompasses guiding all strategic initiatives, fostering business development, and crafting agency processes. I've highlighted a few notable brands I've led projects for below. These examples represent just a few of the 40+ brands I've worked with in various strategic roles across different categories and markets.

Notable Projects

Viva Gym [Health & Fitness]

Qual Research, Brand Positioning, Comms Planning, Go-To-Market

In a post covid world, Viva Gym memberships and brand perception were on the decline. Using key insights gained from in depth research—412 survey respondents, 6 interviews, and 1 focus group—I redefined the brand positioning, developed a new proposition, and co-created a hyper targeted go-to-market plan by leveraging Viva's existing customer database. This led to a 31% increase in memberships over the course of a 6 month period.

Mmusi Maimane, BOSA [Politics, 2024 National Elections]

Brand Positioning, Comms Planning

Defined a new brand positioning for Mmusi Maimane, former leader of South Africa's Democratic Alliance, for his new party BOSA. The project involved conducting in-depth interviews with Mmusi and his current and former political advisors, analyzing the complexities of the South African political landscape, and developing an appreciation for his proposed policies. I subsequently delivered a communication strategy highlighting key messages and audience opportunities. Mmusi is running for president in the 2024 elections.

Allianz [Insurance]

Digital Strategy

I developed a localised digital strategy for the 2024 Road to Paris campaign, where we utilised a limited budget to implement geofencing and location-based advertising. By creating virtual perimeters around key industry events with the highest ICP density, we achieved a 12% increase in leads over three months.

SMALLTOWN BEAT FESTIVAL

Jan. 2018 - Present / Co-founder

Smalltown Beat was born out of the necessity to provide a platform for creative talent. A platform for them to share their work and for our audience to discover new sounds, faces and names. Since 2018 Smalltown Beat has played host to a diverse range of nearly 30 collectives and over 200 artists. Originating from corners all across Cape Town, these collectives and artists are connected by a consistent thread – a passion for music and an uncompromising commitment to quality. Inspired by this collection of people, Smalltown Beat's mission mirrors that commitment, aiming to deliver the very best in electronic and live music Cape Town has to offer. Always intent on exposing our local scene to new sources of inspiration, a complement of top-flight international bookings is forever the cherry on top.

See link: [stb instagram](#)

OTHER INTERESTING FACTS

Played in a psych-rock band for three years. Wrote and released a couple of singles along the way.

Link: [Spotify](#)

Bet.co.za [Online Betting]

Qual Research, Creative Strategy, Campaign Planning

Bet.co.za is one of South Africa's leading online betting platforms. I was responsible for developing and overseeing all strategic initiatives, including the creative strategy and campaign planning. These strategies were formulated based on a thorough research process, which involved interviews with key stakeholders, as well as existing and prospective punters. As a result, sign-ups increased by 6%, and revenue grew by 11.5%.

Tyson Properties [Real Estate]

Proposition, Brand Narrative, Campaign Playbook

How do you develop communication that acknowledges a multitude of stakeholders across 26 offices, while still winning over your audience? The project involved understanding the complexities of Tyson Properties real estate business, key stakeholders, and its diverse audience. The result? A unified brand narrative—giving all stakeholders a role in the story—while also delivering on a compelling single minded proposition.

Merchant West [Finance, Lending]

Strategic Marketing Consultancy

Merchant West, South Africa's largest independent financial advisory and lending firm, faced the challenge of uniting 8 business verticals and 17 budget-focused directors. This project aimed to secure the boards buy-in to a brand-centric approach to marketing and guide them on strategic communication investments, despite the difficulty of calculating ROI. I developed a 36-month brand plan and leveraged evidence-based marketing science to clarify the ROI component.

Other Notable Brands:

Bybit, Reckitt, Tab South Africa, Durex, BetJets, Ezaga Bank, DIFX, Pearson, Takealot, Disprin and Nurofen.

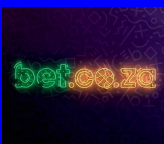
CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- 1.) I built INVRNS's strategy department from scratch, turning it into the company's main revenue stream, generating over 50% of annual revenue. I established agency processes for research, data, strategy, communications, GTM, and campaign management, developed products based on these processes, and built a network of data and media partners, along with a collective of award-winning freelancers.
- 2.) Invited to join the board as a director with a mandate to grow the business and develop core operations. I work alongside former managing directors from global firms like FCB and Saatchi & Saatchi, focusing on profit margins, growth opportunities, and business strategy.
- 3.) Secured INVRNS's largest outside investment to date, enabling the agency to make strategic decisions regarding growth in people, operations, and technology.

LINKS TO EXAMPLE PROJECTS



Marathon Revolution
Brand Strategy,
Comms Planning
2023



Betcoza
Creative Strategy,
Comms Planning
2022



Mmusi Maimane
Positioning Strategy
2022



Viva Gym
Creative Strategy,
Comms Planning
2021