



Heidi Custers

10 Bioksiet Street, Jukskei Park, Johannesburg, South Africa.
T: 082 922 4922 E: Heidi@snowgoose.co.za SM: [@snowgooseSA](https://twitter.com/snowgooseSA) W: snowgoose.co.za

Summary

Heidi, or Snowgoose as she prefers to be called, is a **business polymath**. She has been in the South African Digital Marketing space since its early days in 2006. She currently holds the position of **Managing Director of an enterprise level tech startup called Dali**, targeted at operations management in the marketing agency sector. Let us start at the beginning, though...

She **studied Graphic Design and Multimedia** and started her career as a designer in Standard Bank's Web Channel. Her thirst for knowledge drove her to **study further in the fields of User Experience Design, Web Project Management and Marketing & Communications Management**. This experience helped her move into the Digital Marketing department where she initiated and pioneered the bank's Online Reputation Management program.

A desire to get closer to the "business of business" drove a **move to Quirk Agency in 2009**, where she rose through the ranks from Account Manager to **Business Director in the Jozi office** in only 3 years. At Quirk she sat on the Jozi **Executive Committee**, worked with blue-chip clients, **led the Client Service team** and cemented her profile as a blogger and public speaker. She was promoted to **Head of Search, Media and Social Media Marketing**, but shortly after, fate took her to Cape Town, where she joined the tech startup accelerator; 42Engines, to **start and run the Quirk Group's fledgling Agency Management System**; Dali.

In the last 3.5 years, Heidi has **built & managed the team** developing the software, and **consulted to the Quirk ExcOs** on the group's efficiency in 5 locations, on 2 continents. All while managing her volunteer work as Chair of Umonya Girls, studying to be a Chartered Management Accountant and holding a seat on the Silicon Cape Exco.

Heidi defines herself as the **consummate hustler**. No challenge is too big, no task too small, as long as she's **learning, and part of a team trying to 'make a dent in the universe'**. A lover of business, marketing and gingers (yes, red-heads) she is gregarious, driven, curious... and maybe just a little bit crazy.



Experience

Managing Director (Dali) and Agency Management Consultant – 42Engines

2012 - present

Heidi is the MD of Dali, a business incubated the 42Engines tech startup accelerator. The product is in beta, but operates under a stress-tested environment of ±300 users across 5+ business, 4 cities and 2 countries. Heidi and her team manage the software business from A to Z, and she is accountable for the budgets, product roll-out, people management, strategic business planning and marketing strategy for the business. In addition to this, she handles the reporting and consulting to the regional and group Excocs of the Quirk agencies. Her passion for marketing, business data and her Communications Agency Ops experience mean she has become the go-to person in a large multinational agency when it comes to productivity and efficiency.

Managers: Rob Stokes & Craig Raw, Founders of 42Engines and Quirk.

Business Director & Head of Engage - Quirk

2011 - 2012

Heidi managed a team of 8 in Client Service, representing clients like Sun International, Cricket South Africa, SEACOM, Premier Foods, Nike, Sotheby's and Surf4Cars. She was responsible for the financial management, relationship management, project/campaign management and business development of her client accounts, as well as the recruitment, day-to-day management and career development of her team. She sat on the Executive Committee of Quirk's Jozi office. Her role required strategic and pragmatic thinking, while remaining ahead of the digital curve (especially in the SEO, Paid Media & Social Media Spaces) so she could steer the teams she worked with to deliver results for her clients.

Manager: Justin Spratt, Agency CEO

Account Director, Senior Account Manager, Account Manager - Quirk

2009 - 2011

Over the course of 2 years, Heidi grew from an Account Manager to an Account Director at work, managing the day-to-day operations on accounts like South African Tourism, Virgin Atlantic, Virgin Mobile, Werksmans Attorneys, Nokia and Sun International. She was responsible for managing all aspects on the accounts and reported directly to the Managing Director of Quirk Jozi.

Manager: Mary Mzumara, Managing Director

Online Marketing Coordinator - Standard Bank

2008 - 2009

Heidi managed campaigns for Standard Bank's Personal and Business Banking division. She worked with both bank and agency stakeholders to plan & deliver media and marketing campaigns, report results, manage campaign budgets and communicate day-to-day with the bank's agencies; TBWA\ and Tequila. While in this position, Heidi pioneered the bank's Online Reputation Management programme on social media, personally setting up the accounts on these platforms and responding personally to the bank's fans and followers, pro-actively.

Manager: Bellinda Carreira, Director of Online Marketing

Graphic Designer - Standard Bank

2006 - 2008

Heidi designed assets and did front-end development for Standard Bank's Web Channel across multiple platforms. She was responsible for conceptualizing, designing, developing and reporting on the marketing emails sent by the bank's PBB division, she designed and developed banners and campaign microsites for the bank's website and designed the home page of standardbank.co.za.

Manager: Stephen Lerche, Head of Web Channel

Marketing Manager - Browns

2005 - 2006

Heidi was the Marketing Manager at Browns of Rivonia, where she conceptualized, designed and coordinated the restaurant's advertising, website, activations, media, events and PR activities. Heidi also performed event management, front of house management and wine tours for Browns, one of Johannesburg's finest restaurants.

Manager: Dion Poeggenpoel – Owner



Other Experience

2000 - 2005

Designer at Ponytail Express Print, Waitress at Browns Restaurant, Design Internship at Allen International Design (London), Subscriptions Manager at TopCar Magazine.

References will be supplied on request.

Education

CIMA - Chartered Qualification in Management Accounting	In Progress
Red & Yellow School of Marketing – Certificate in SEO	2012
GA - Google Analytics Individual Qualification	2010
Quirk Education – Certificate in eMarketing	2009
UNISA – Certificate in Marketing & Communications Management	2008 - 2009
Britefire – Certificate in Web Project Management	2007
Human Factors International – Certificate in User Experience	2008
New Horizons – Certificate in HTML & CSS	2007
Cape Wine Academy – Diploma in Viniculture & Viticulture	2004 - 2006
Design School of South Africa – N.H.D (BA) in Graphic Design	2002 - 2005
Bryanston High School – Matric w. Exemption (2 Distinctions)	1997 - 2001



Speaking Engagements

- Celebrating Women in Tech - Conference** 2014
Heidi was chosen as a speaker at the inaugural conference in Johannesburg. She spoke on the value of educating young girls in the ICT sector, and changing the face of tech.
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology – WTF Media Conferences** 2011 -2013
Heidi spoke at, and then was invited to be Master of Ceremonies at this conference, hosted at the Belville CPUT campus. The conference featured speakers such as Melissa Attree, Rich Mulholland, Mike Sharman, Kate Wolters, etc.
- The Road to Miss South Africa – TV Show on Mzan.si Magic** 2011 - 2013
Heidi spoke to the Miss SA Semi-Finalists about how to profile and protect themselves on social media during the reality shows that led up to the Miss South Africa pageants over 3 years.
- Harvey World Travel International Travel Symposium** 2011
Heidi spoke on Social Media’s effect on the travel and tourism industry at this international symposium of over 100 Harvey World Travel Agents.
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology – Media Conference** 2010 & 2011
Heidi spoke on SEO, Social Media and Online Reputation Management at the 2010 CPUT conference and on SEO at the 2009 conference to over 200 delegates, other speakers included Dave Duarte, Andy Hadfield, Mike Stopforth, Tyler Reed, Sheena Gates, Tim Shier, Danielle Neville, Matt Visser etc.
- AAA School of Advertising - Johannesburg** 2009 - 2011
Heidi was invited to be a guest lecturer on numerous occasions to teach Social Media, SEO, Online Reputation Management and the principles of User-Centred Web Development to the 2nd year Advertising students, as well as the students of the AAA Digital Marketing course.
- Internal Marketing & Communications Conference** 2010
Heidi spoke to the communications managers of companies such as Mr Price, The Presidency of South Africa, ABSA, Deloitte etc. about using the principles of Social Media for internal marketing.
- eTourism Africa Summit** 2009
Heidi spoke to more than 100 travel professionals about using Twitter for tourism businesses at the 2008 eTourism Africa Summit.

Articles & Achievements

- Featured: Powerful Young Women Under 35 – Destiny Magazine** July 2010
- Featured: SEO made sexy by Snowgoose - Cape Times** August 2009
- Hosted: A Geeky Education – Podcast by Mail & Guardian at the Inaugural GeekRetreat** July 2009
- Featured: 300 Young South Africans You Should Take To Lunch – Mail & Guardian** June - 2009
- Authored: When Revamping Your Website, Remember Your Users – GottaQuirk** June 2009
- Featured: Ten Young South African Digital Citizens to Watch – mikestopforth.com** January 2007



Skills & Beliefs

Heidi is known primarily for her knowledge and interest in Tech Entrepreneurship, Business Efficiency, and Digital Marketing Strategy. She is passionate about the power of data to drive business decisions and enjoys educating people, both in the corporate sector and students. She has a passion for operations and communication and takes a keen interest in the financial management and strategic growth of companies, which led to her being voted the President (honourary board member) of the Quirk Group in 2011. She quite likes fine wine, writing and gadgets (although seldom at the same time) – so she wrote for the GirlGuides Gadget Reviews (now: Hypertext Women) and the RealTimeWine websites.

Heidi is nothing if not passionate. She's opinionated about the state of the ICT industry and women in tech. This drove her to chair the NGO, Umonya Girls in 2010 - 2012 (we teach girls to code), and then head up the Student and Careers Portfolio on the Silicon Cape Exco in 2012 and 2013. She believes in taking a holistic, long term approach yields the best ROI for businesses, rather than an episodic, reactive approach. Businesses who are successful in this space take data seriously, they care about their people, their communities and their products.

If you want to learn more about her, catch her on twitter or give her a call to chat. Warning, you may not be able to shut her up.

"Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."