

"I hope to see genuine inclusion in the digital advertising industry," Boomtown's Brenda Ulay

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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As part of our #EvolutionofWork content feature, Boomtown's all-female digital department shares what the future of work looks like from their point of view and how they're navigating the 'new normal' in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic...



Brenda Ulay

With the recent promotion of Cayleigh Zambonini to digital integration manager, Lisa Snyman to digital project manager and Liesl Silverman to digital copywriter, as well as the appointment of Brenda Ulay as community manager and content creator, Boomtown has enhanced its digital service offering to ensure a 'digital first' mindset across the business and for its clients.

The digital department also includes senior social media manager Marion Marais, digital product manager and user experience specialist Helna Brown, art director Tamarin Fraenkel, and digital strategist Lara-Anne Derbyshire.



Boomtown enhances its digital service offering

Boomtown 1 Oct 2020



Boomtown is a creative, fully integrated advertising agency that offers brand design, integrated brand communications and digital marketing. It's headquartered in Port Elizabeth, with offices in Johannesburg. It started trading in 1994 when its founder famously sold his inheritance, yes, two cows, to buy the office's first computer. Today, Boomtown has achieved Level 2 BBBEE status and 51% Black ownership, of which 30% is by a Black women-owned entity. How times have changed!

Here, we chat to community manager and content creator Brenda Ulay...

Congrats on your appointment! When did it take effect and how do you feel about it?

To be honest, I was appointed to my position during a very trying time. The global pandemic had just hit and I saw myself taking on the position at Boomtown as social media community manager and content creator. Receiving the email that

offered me the position sent my excitement through the roof. I was both nervous and determined, but stood strong. Having studied and worked in Port Elizabeth, I always had my eye on Boomtown as it is a prominent agency in the Bay.

■ ***When did you start at Boomtown and tell us about your career trajectory to date, within the organisation and in general?***

My career started off with an internship at a digital agency where I worked as a community manager and junior graphic designer. This position created a solid base for my career and allowed for experience in the field I was still busy studying – BA Media Communication and Culture, majoring in Design. Leading up to my position at Boomtown, I worked on the print design, digital design and social media and marketing for a number of well-known restaurants owned by an umbrella company in the Bay.

Since my appointment at Boomtown in June, I have been able to make use of my holistic experience in digital design, social media and marketing. My position has allowed me to work with so many talented individuals in our digital team - all from whom I am learning so much. An area that I am thrilled to be working more in is conceptual content creation, another skill that I am happy to add to my artillery.

■ ***What do you love most about the advertising/digital industry, your career and/or specialisation?***

I'd have to say that my favourite thing is that the work is never the same, it's never mundane. There are always new ideas to be thought up, new designs that will bring the ideas to life and well-thought out methods to execute the said ideas whether they be digital, print or both!

■ ***Where are you based, at the HQ in Port Elizabeth or at the Johannesburg office?***

I'm based in the Port Elizabeth office. I love it here because it offers an open space for easy collaboration (as well as those 3pm 'I'm restless' antics with your fave colleagues). I would, however, love to experience working at the Johannesburg office, just to grow close with our team members who are based there.

■ ***What does your new role entail?***

My key duties entail the management of our clients' social media accounts ensuring that all queries and complaints are attended to. It also entails the planning, creative conceptualisation and execution of digital campaigns with a focus on content creation, copywriting and creative art direction. Lastly, my role requires me to research and analyse data that comes in after a campaign, to learn and better our future campaigns.

■ ***What excites you most about the agency, being part of an all-women team and your role in particular?***

I love the fact that there are so many different personalities and sets of knowledge within the agency. It means that there is always something new to learn about one another, as well as things to learn about fields that you know nothing about. Plus, it means that lunch hour is never a bore.

■ ***What is your hope for the industry? What needs to change and what do you think needs to happen to achieve this?***

I hope that the digital advertising industry - all advertising industries for that matter - will fully come into the practice of inclusion. I hope to see inclusion within the marketing teams and within the campaigns, because representation matters. With that being said, I wish to see genuine inclusion - not inclusion for the benefit of 'riding a wave' or for the financial benefit of a company, but rather because it is important for everyone to receive fair and just representation.

■ ***Any advice or words of encouragement to the fellow industry folk in navigating the normal or rising above the aftermath of Covid-19?***

I can't explain more how unprepared a number of advertising companies were before the pandemic hit, but what I can say

is this: the digital industry was already booming pre-Covid. Thanks to the pandemic, it has sky-rocketed to new heights (since everyone had nothing else to do but be on their phones and laptops). This has proven that if we are not keeping abreast with the newest digital trends, algorithms and platforms, we will fall behind. I think that the latter is important to remember when navigating the way forward. Keep abreast and, in the words of my fellow Millennials, 'secure the bag!'

For more, visit [Boomtown's press office on Bizcommunity](#) and our [#EvolutionofWork special section](#).

ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

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