

Hanno Botha, Ford SA's marketing communications manager

 By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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Meet Ford Southern Africa's marketing communications manager Hanno Botha. For Botha, the automotive sector isn't just about cars; it's a world of boundless opportunities driven by emerging technologies, global outreach, and a relentless pursuit of innovation.



Hanno Botha is Ford SA's marketing communications manager. Source: Supplied.

■ *What do you find most enjoyable about your industry?*

It's an industry that I find compelling for several reasons. Automotive is currently positioned right at the leading edge of many new and emerging technologies, ranging from EVs to new materials and manufacturing techniques. The industry is disrupting itself in ways not seen in a century.

Also, it is a truly global sector, with manufacturers, suppliers, and customers spread across multiple countries. From a marketing perspective, this means being alive to the needs of different cultures and customers. Lastly, it's an industry that provides opportunities for those who are really keen and motivated by innovation, technology, and change.

■ *What is a typical workday for you?*

My job is largely about two things – building affinity for the Ford brand in South Africa, and converting this into leads for sales. Practically, this involves developing and executing customer communication strategies and campaigns with the internal marketing communications team and our agency partners, managing our production and media budgets, analysing and improving our performance against business and marketing objectives, and, of course, collaborating with our other teams across the business to ensure our marketing activities support their respective business objectives.

■ *Describe your career so far*

I was never one of those people who just knew what it is they wanted to do from the get-go. The early part of my career was a process of discovery, starting in social development, then advertising, and on to brand marketing at Nando's. I think, though, that my MBA really helped me understand what I was good at and what I enjoyed most. I returned to Nando's as executive assistant to one of their divisional CEOs, before Ford approached me to take on the role of executive assistant to

the MD for Southern Africa.



#BehindtheSelfie: Tinashe Manyanya, digital marketing manager at Wonga

Karabo Ledwaba 22 Jun 2023



An EA role is quite unique for the scope it provides – it gave me a bird’s-eye view and insight into the workings of a multinational corporation. It exposed me to all parts of the business and, even more importantly, provided me with the flexibility to become more deeply involved in those parts that I found interesting. After three years, marketing called me back and I’ve been with the Ford SA marketing team since – first as digital marketing manager and caretaker eCommerce manager, and then as marketing communications manager since 2021.

What are you currently streaming/reading/listening to?

I’ve always loved reading. Recent highlights include *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese, *Outlive* by Peter Attia, and Helen Thompson’s *Disorder*. I’ve also just started Walter Isaacson’s biography of Elon Musk. Describe yourself in one word. Curious.

Who inspires you?

People who are focused on moving us forward as a society, through their innovations, their viewpoints, or their research.

What did you want to be when you were a child?

Architect

Give three pieces of advice for young people waiting to enter this industry.

1. Don’t ask yourself what job you want to do – rather figure out what problem you want to solve.
2. You’re going to engage with many different people from a variety of disciplines, companies, departments, etc. – understand that priorities differ and engage with everyone from their perspective, not yours.
3. Listen to understand, not to respond.

ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

Karabo Ledwaba is a Marketing and Media Editor at Bizcommunity and award-winning journalist. Before joining the publication she worked at Sowetan as a content producer and reporter. She was also responsible for the leadership page at SiMug, Sowetan’s lifestyle magazine. Contact her at karabo@bizcommunity.com

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