

Jola Cronje

STORYTELLING & MESSAGING STRATEGIST SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED

Phone:
+27 (0)73 149 8945

Address
Remote, ZA

Email:
slomkowski.jola@gmail.com

Website:
jolawithaj.com

SUMMARY

Sustainability is complex. Communicating it shouldn't make it harder to understand.

I'm not the one conducting ESIA's, building climate models, or designing management systems to embed gender equity. But I *am* the one helping people talk about that work - clearly, credibly, and without the fluff.

My role is to bring those stories to life in a way that makes them meaningful and accessible, without overselling or oversimplifying what's hard, messy, or still in progress. It also means being honest about trade-offs, constraints, and complexity.

That's where the work gets interesting.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Head of Marketing and Communications The Middle East & Africa **Sept 2024 - Present**
SLR Consulting

At SLR, I lead regional marketing across Africa and the Middle East - working across sectors like energy, water, and infrastructure, and across disciplines including environmental management, engineering, and Sustainable Finance.

A key part of my role has been supporting the Advisory service line, particularly following the acquisition of IBIS, a leading ESG and Impact Advisory firm. I led the integration of the new offering into SLR's legacy technical service lines. This went well beyond brand alignment - it was about clarifying the role of Sustainable Finance within a global, multidisciplinary firm, and using that clarity to support cross-selling, strengthen visibility of our bench, and help internal teams understand how to talk about and leverage the newly acquired expertise as part of a broader service offering.

I work closely with sector leads, technical teams, and leadership and I'm just as comfortable shaping the narrative as I am building the tools and systems that bring it to life.

Marketing and Communications Lead **April 2022 - Present**
IBIS Consulting

Built the marketing and communications function at IBIS Consulting from the ground up, within a fast-paced, entrepreneurial start-up culture. This included leading the development of the company's first marketing materials - from brochures to positioning statements. I facilitated the content development process in close collaboration with technical teams, helping them clarify what they do, why it matters and how to communicate it effectively to clients and partners, most of whom were financial institutions.

I also led the company's rebrand, shaping the identity and messaging that ultimately strengthened brand equity and contributed to IBIS's positioning for acquisition.

Manager, Network Communities**Jan 2022 - Mar 2022***YPO*

Drove member engagement and community-building across YPO's regional and global networks, supporting content alignment and strategic connections among business leaders.

Brand and Communication Consultant**Oct 2017 - Dec 2021***Independent*

Highlights

Asset-Based Communication

Supported stakeholder engagement efforts for Sappi's "Clearing the Smoke" initiative, which involved connecting with tribal authorities and community representatives to help facilitate more open, trust-based dialogue. The project aimed to surface and address long-standing concerns, strengthen local relationships and support Sappi's broader commitment to social performance in its forestry operations.

Destination Marketing

Led project that saw Stellenbosch as first sub-Saharan Africa destination awarded prestigious Safe Travels Stamp by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), part of larger project I conceptualised called Stellenbosch Ready, an initiative supported by Visit Stellenbosch to stimulate town's tourism economy.

Change Management Communication

Contracted to support the effective communication of the ADvTECH Schools Division changing organisational structure.

Marketing Manager, Southern Africa & Mauritius**Dec 2015 - Sept 2017***Lufthansa*

Highlights

Refreshed PR

Faced an outdated approach to PR that was solely travel industry focused. Supported a closer co-operation with a newly appointed PR Agency and took on the challenge of broadening the scope to the Lifestyle Media. Used a personal background in Journalism & Writing to get the right results for the Lufthansa brand in South Africa.

Drove SA Fashion Week Sponsorship

One of Lufthansa South Africa's most successful projects and a highlight event noted by Exco in Frankfurt.

Award-Winning App

After a reduction in sales staff, identified the need to continue to 'talk' to Lufthansa's biggest distribution channel - the travel industry. Developed an award-winning Virtual Reality App (in collaboration with a creative agency) to address the gap - which was a new approach for Lufthansa globally and a first for Airlines in South Africa at the time. (See awards section below for recognition.)

Brand Manager, Sub-Saharan Africa (promoted to Marketing Manager)**April 2013 - Nov 2015***Lufthansa*

Tasked with softening and localising the Lufthansa brand for the South African market - balancing a conservative global approach with the need for fresh, regionally relevant strategies.

Digital Account Manager**Feb 2011 - Mar 2013***WASSP Business Communications and Advertising*

Gained an excellent grounding in the Digital Marketing environment through immersion in many corporate client projects, involvement with industry experts, and in the day-to-day management of campaigns, problem solving and crisis management.

Radio Broadcaster**Jan 2010 - Mar 2013***5FM and East Coast Radio*

EDUCATION

Social Entrepreneurship Programme**2018 - 2019***Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS)***Bachelor of Journalism (Honours)****2006 - 2009***Rhodes University***IEB Matric****2005***Kingsmead College*

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Winner – Impact Investment Advisory*Krutham (formerly Intellidex) Africa Impact Investment Awards (on behalf of IBIS)*

IBIS was selected as a winner in this category, recognising their role in promoting impact investments through thought leadership, project implementation and advisory work.

Winner - Digital Media Awards*New Generation Social and Digital Media Awards (on behalf of Lufthansa)*

- Most innovative use of Digital Media - Gold
- Best Use of Technology - Gold
- Best Use of Virtual Reality - Gold
- The Most Innovative Gamification - Gold
- Mobile Marketing Excellence - Bronze

ASSOCIATIONS

Facilitating with Purpose*Ntinga Transformational Consulting Services (IAF Member)*