

Jay Thomson partners with Urbian

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It's this drive to create a digital ecosystem with innovation at its core that has seen award-winning digital pioneer Jay Thomson team up Urbian, a fintech and digital tech consultancy that helps ambitious leaders to pioneer and innovate in the digital economy.

As the former founder and managing partner of Liquorice, Thomson has worked with top multinationals and South African corporations to develop pioneering digital innovations. Not only has he headed up some of South Africa's leading digital marketing agencies, but under his guidance, global Fortune 500 companies have unlocked innovation through digital products and services across retail, FMCG, banking, insurance and more. Thomson is moving towards what he believes is the new way to help clients increase their pace of digital disruption and consumer-facing digital transformation.

Thomson expounds: "I believe it is time for businesses to take a specialist approach to their digital transformation. Clients need speed and successful business impact from digital projects. Traditional approaches, while valuable for many things, are not achieving what clients need to transform their core digital business initiatives at a suitable pace or scale."

Approach to digital transformation

The client's needs and their view of digital transformation will inform what approach they need, explains Thomson. For instance, if a company needs a digital campaign, a digital agency will best meet its needs. Large enterprise software solutions may need the support of a multinational consultancy. But if a company is looking for breakthrough consumer-facing apps, FinTech, and online services, they need the services of a product studio, or digital product consultancy, like Urbian.

"For clients to get better business results from transformational projects, companies need to stop relying on generalist partners to implement incredibly specialist work. The secret to success lies in the transformative solutions that digital product consultancies such as Urbian produce. They're at the forefront of digital transformation, centred on user-focussed co-creation. They build solutions that transform the business itself, futureproofing it with what end-users actually want to use. I'm excited to be part of this future of digital product innovation," says Thomson.

Urbain is a digital product consultancy that specialises in accelerating innovation, allowing rapid growth and ensuring clients launch consumer-centric products at a rapid pace. While digital marketing agencies tend to be appointed at the brand level and centred around campaigning and brand awareness, a digital product consultancy focuses on discovering and creating digital apps, online self-service solutions, co-creation of products with end-users for innovation that solves business model challenges. This creates revenue streams or cost reductions for the business.

Headed up by Anton Moulder, the consultancy brings together product design, business strategy and lean software development to create innovative products that matter to the world.

"The partnership with Jay will continue building a culture of award-winning digital transformation that puts pioneering innovation at the heart of our work. His experience and passion are essential to creating a world-class consultancy that offers innovative digital products to some of South Africa's and the world's biggest corporate players," says Moulder.

Urbian has scooped multiple Loerie and Bookmarks awards, working with clients such as Sanlam, Santam, Liberty, Distell, Vital health Foods, Investec and UK-based clients.

"Urbian have been flying under the radar and been quietly getting mind-blowing results. For me, it was interesting to see how Urbian intentionally moved away from being a digital agency that focussed on campaigning, but rather doubled down on where clients needed fundamental business model innovation," Thomson remarks.

As that shift occurred for Urbian clients, it helped them build bold new online revenues and new pioneering digital products and services. This led to new signups for clients and better service for current users. Urbian's results for clients have surpassed R1 billion in value.