

Adidas SA's Estee Jardim fuels a positive brand attitude

 By [Lauren Hartzenberg](#)

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As one of the world's most prominent sports apparel brands, Adidas needs little introduction. Relishing the opportunity to oversee the company's brand functions in South Africa is Estee Jardim, whose role as brand communications director at Adidas SA sees her managing the strategy across the brand, PR, digital marketing and sports marketing.



Estee Jardim

Jardim is equipped with a Media and Communication qualification from the University of Cape Town, and spent more than a decade working across global and local sport and fashion brands in retail management, product buying and planning, and visual merchandising positions.

In her current key position at Adidas South Africa, Jardim says she aims to find creative ways for marketing spend to positively impact local communities, fulfilling her passion to root the work she does in purpose. Adidas has always contributed to the narrative that sports is able to change lives, and its recently revealed 'Impossible Is Nothing' campaign highlights this belief.

Told in the documentary style of home footage, the Impossible Is Nothing series of 20 films provides a previously unseen side to some of the most documented individuals in the world, showing how optimism and action have shaped their lives as trailblazers in sports and culture. South Africa's very own Siya Kolisi is one such trailblazer featured in the series, alongside the likes of Beyoncé, Tifanny Abreu, Mo Salah, Paul Pogba, and more.

In light of Bizcommunity's [#BehindtheBrandManager](#) focus this month, Jardim chats to us about her fulfilling career with Adidas South Africa, and why 'Impossible Is Nothing' is a statement the brand stand by.

■ ***What does your role as brand communications director at Adidas SA entail, and what does your average workday look like these days?***

I like to think I have the best job at Adidas as my role is to set the brand communication strategy for Adidas South Africa across brand activation, PR, digital marketing and our sport/influencer portfolio. Ultimately my team and I make sure we land every brand and product campaign with impact and relevance to the local consumer and we get to work with the best athletes, creators and product at the same time.

I am fortunate to work across all brand functions and categories within Adidas so my days are really varied. It could be anything from setting the brand strategy for the new season to planning an upcoming launch.

■ ***What's it like working on such a well-known apparel and footwear brand like Adidas?***

I feel so fortunate to work for the best sports brand in the world! The company's purpose is built on the belief that through sport we have the power to change lives, and we really focus on bringing this belief to life. We work with the most incredible local athletes and partners to positively impact local communities, and this is why I enjoy my job so much – everything we do is rooted in purpose.

■ ***How has the pandemic and related national lockdowns affected your work, and the general marketing strategy for Adidas?***

At Adidas we have a very people-centric culture. This culture helped us to navigate the pandemic, so even though we weren't physically together, we were still able to function as one team albeit a remote one.

Right from the beginning, we focused on our communities and collaborated with the Kolisi Foundation and other NGOs to support the incredible work they were doing. In addition to this, we were aware of the long hours being put in by frontline workers, so we donated product to thousands of healthcare professionals to make their shifts a little more comfortable.

Once the country was allowed to exercise again, we enhanced our virtual offering and encouraged people to stay active during Covid, and to look after their health and mental wellness.



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■ ***We love that Siya Kolisi is part of the new global Impossible is Nothing campaign. What are the qualities that Adidas looks for in its brand ambassadors/campaign partners and why was Kolisi a good fit for this particular campaign?***

Impossible is Nothing is more than a campaign – it's our brand attitude. Seeing possibilities with optimism is key to achieving our purpose of changing lives through the power of sport. This attitude is what inspires us every day and is pushing us to build the future.

Sport is an agent of possibilities. With a rebellious spirit and determination to drive change, we always strive to expand the limits of human possibilities, to include and unite people in sport, and to create a more sustainable world. We do this by seeing possibilities and inspiring with this attitude amongst our communities and beyond.

Who better to show the world how this is done than the trailblazers of sport and sport culture that have paved the way for tomorrow's gamechangers to go further – those who inspire others to create a better tomorrow for themselves, their communities and the world.

Siya Kolisi, our first Black captain of the South African rugby team, saw the possibilities to lead his nation to victory at the 2019 World Cup, securing a win that stretched beyond the rugby pitch of Japan and touched the lives – and hearts – of all South Africans and people from around the globe. From humble beginnings in the townships of Port Elizabeth, to becoming a global icon, no one represents the possibilities of sport better than Siya.

Siya's childhood presented many challenges but he saw possibilities. He was raised with a strong sense of community and this feeling and value continues today, driving him forward to build a better life not only for himself but the community that raised him through the Kolisi Foundation.

■ ***What have been some of your favourite Adidas campaigns to work on, and why?***

The reintroduction of our brand attitude, Impossible Is Nothing is definitely my favourite of all time. For Adidas, Impossible is Nothing is an attitude, a way of shaping a better future with rebellious optimism, and seeing the world with possibilities where others only see the impossible. This has never been more important than now. Considering what the world is going through right now, we all need something to believe in and work towards.

Impossible is Nothing features over 20 global partners such as Beyoncé, Mo Salah and our very own Siya Kolisi. Told in the documentary style of home footage, the series provides a previously unseen side to some of the most documented individuals in the world, enabled via a powerful narrative delivered by friends or fellow athletes, and animated via resurfaced footage from the archives.

Featuring previously unseen intimate moments, it follows stories in sport and culture, showing how optimism and action has shaped their lives. Exploring the future they imagined for themselves and making it a reality, the series celebrates the trailblazers that have made history on a global stage. More importantly, it aims to inspire others, empowering them by this collection of very human stories as a powerful demonstration of what optimism can achieve.

We have also had the privilege of featuring local talents such as fashion designer Thebe Magugu, national rugby player Zinhle Ndawonde, Paralympic athlete Anrune Weyers and our national football captain, Thulani Hlatshwayo.

■ ***What skills and qualities do you feel are key to being a successful brand custodian?***

- Agility - this is an ever-changing environment and you need to be able to adapt quickly and effectively.
- Passion - for the brand and for people. If you love what you do and who you do it with, you are able to create inspiring work.
- Curiosity - to learn and grow. The consumer, the world and the marketing environment is ever-changing. You must be curious and learn as much as you can.

■ ***Could you share some career advice for aspiring young marketing and branding professionals?***

Believe in the talent and abilities of the South African people and showcase these. The world is turning to Africa and we have the opportunity to inspire from here. Be obsessed with your consumer – everything we do has to be rooted in what our consumer wants or needs. If it does not resonate with the consumer, we have not done our job.

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