



RICHARD VAN DER MERWE

Thought Leadership Specialist
Johannesburg, South Africa · 071 208 6373
richardvdmerwe@gmail.com
Visit Richardvdm.com

Great content doesn't just inform—it influences.

My work bridges the gap between complex ideas and practical understanding, creating narratives that resonate with both experts and everyday readers.

With a background in thought leadership and content development, I've contributed to publications that explore pressing industry trends, from economic insights to advancements in technology. My process is grounded in research, collaboration, and an ability to translate intricate subjects into meaningful, actionable material.

Whether shaping long-form reports or quick-turn editorial pieces, I focus on producing work that is precise, engaging, and aligned with strategic goals. Content, at its best, is a tool for clarity and connection—and that's the standard I bring to every project.

WORK EXPERIENCE

December 2023 – October 2024

Senior Associate: Thought Leadership Specialist | PwC South Africa

As a Senior Associate: Thought Leadership Specialist for Internal Firm Services at PwC South Africa, I worked closely with cross-functional teams across PwC's lines of service to lead in the development, writing, and editing of all the firm's flagship reports and other content such as the African Business Agenda, Economic Outlook, Building Public Trust, and more.

My role allowed me to combine strategic thinking with creative execution, delivering impactful, high-quality publications that supported PwC's brand and thought leadership goals. With a strong background in tech copywriting and content production, I specialise in creating compelling narratives that bridge complex technological concepts with business strategies.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Content Development:**
 - Authored and co-authored major publications, including the *Africa Cloud Business Survey* and the *African Business Agenda*, addressing key market trends and business strategies across the continent.
 - Conducted research using PwC's proprietary survey data and external resources to craft insightful, evidence-based reports.
- **Editing and Quality Assurance:**
 - Edited and refined reports and publications, ensuring consistency, clarity, and adherence to PwC's brand guidelines.
 - Served as editor of the *Monthly Economic Outlook* and contributed to other notable reports, such as the *SA Major Banks Analysis* and the *Building Public Trust through Tax Reporting*.
- **Collaboration with Design Teams:**
 - Partnered with in-house and external design teams to conceptualise and execute the visual design and layout of publications.
 - Ensured the accuracy and alignment of visual elements with the narrative, identifying and rectifying design errors where necessary.
- **SEO and Digital Collaboration:**
 - Worked with digital teams to optimise publications for online platforms, enhancing visibility through SEO strategies and digital formatting.

Key Achievements:

- Successfully drove the development and publication of complex reports, such as the *Africa Next Gen Survey*, delivering high-impact insights to PwC's clients and stakeholders.
- Played a pivotal role in fostering cross-departmental collaboration by leading a department-wide educational initiative that included upskilling individuals as well as creating a process map of our Internal Firm Services workflows, platforms and procedures with links to useful contacts or information.
- Significantly improved the quality of PwC's publications through better developmental processes and research,

Skills Utilised:

- Writing, editing, and research expertise.
- Strategic content development aligned with business priorities.
- Collaboration with design and digital teams for report production.
- Proficiency in data interpretation and analysis for survey-based publications.

APRIL 2023 – DECEMBER 2023

FREELANCE WRITER| SELF-EMPLOYED

Since I started freelancing full-time in January 2023, I have completed various internal financial advice playbooks for Liberty (helping their financial advisors understand their investor market), thought leadership articles for private equity firms, and a range of other content for other financial institutions and investment platforms in South Africa, such as Stanlib and Inn8. I was also the lead press release writer for Inn8's latest Investment Summit.

[Link to Summit details]

FEBRUARY 2023 – APRIL 2023

CONTENT PRODUCER| CLICKGUARD

As the Content Producer at ClickGUARD, I was responsible for blog posts, social media copy, mailers, and the content strategy for the company as a whole. I wrote and edited all blog posts from Feb-Mar 2023 on

www.clickguard.com/blog. Some examples include:

- [What is Click Fraud?](#)
- [The Marketer's Handbook to Google Search Ads](#)
- [Top 5 Benefits of Facebook Ads for your business](#)
- [Mastering Shopping Ads: A Complete Guide for Marketers](#)

November 2020 - 2022

Tech Copywriter | Clockwork

I was the lead tech writer at an award-winning PR and marketing agency in South Africa for 3 years, I have had the privilege of writing thought leadership, feature articles, press releases, blogs, and social posts for a wide range of industries and technology leaders. I continued writing for Clockwork as a freelancer after leaving the company in 2022.

At Clockwork, I wrote for industry leaders across a diverse range of industries that include:

Software Development	Cloud Services	Cybersecurity	Mining	Banking	E-Commerce
Business Strategy	Gen AI, AI/ML, Automation,	Consumer Electronics	Mobile services	Gaming	Lifestyle
Sustainability	Conversational AI	ICT Infrastructure	Engineering	CSR	Security and Surveillance

I was responsible for thought leadership, feature articles, press releases, and social posts for the African and EMEA regions of Red Hat, SEACOM, LG, Exxaro, Acer, Tarsus, CM.com, Cisco, Meta, and Axis Communications. For long-form articles, I conducted my own research or hosted interviews with the relevant business leaders.

In addition to my writing responsibilities, I was elected as the president of Growth Lab, a career development program initiated by our CEO. During these 3 months, I worked closely with our CEO to develop a workplace survey for a 1 hour talk session. Nic and I also held a talk about Women in Leadership featuring Karen Nadasen, the CEO of PayU South Africa, to provide our younger staff with valuable insights on the common challenges faced by women in their professional careers.

HISTORY CONT.

2020

Gaming Support agent | 5CA: Psyonix

2019 - 2020

Homeschool teacher | Impaq Homeschooling

2018 - 2019

Direct sales representative | document excellence, xerox

2015 - 2018

Electrician | choice electrical

2017 - 2018

Business manager | canoe concepts

2017

English tutor | university of Witwatersrand

2011

Car salesman | Peugeot

EDUCATION

2016

BACHELOR OF ARTS: ENGLISH AND PSYCHOLOGY | UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSRAND

- NRF Honours bursary awarded

2010


IEB MATRIC CERTIFICATE | HELPMEEKAAR COLLEGE (BRAAMFONTEIN, JOHANNESBURG)

- Five distinctions

Beyond my professional experience, I have a love for rock climbing, yoga, going out with friends, writing comedy, chess and gaming. I also have a keen interest in AI image diffusion and large language models, which I have been exploring as a hobby for the past four years.

I am a passionate writer that loves to be challenged and stay ahead of the curve – especially in technology-related fields that are evolving each day.

Thank you for considering my services



Richard van der Merwe

REFERENCES

- **PriceWaterHouseCoopers**
Rene Welman, Internal Firm Services Director (rene.welman@pwc.com)
- **ClickGuard**
Kate Marsay, Manager (kmsmarsay@gmail.com)
- **Clockwork**
Claire Sebastiano – Content Lead (claire.sebastiano@clockworkmedia.co.za)
- **5CA**
Bruno Soares – Team Leader (bruno.soares@5ca.com)
- **Document Excellence, Xerox**
John Goldie – Managing Director (Johng@docx.co.za)
- **Choice Electrical**
Master Electrician and Company owner: Herman van der Merwe (084 899 5182)
- **Canoe concepts**
Business owner: Chad (082 571 1180)
- **Peugeot Northcliff**
Karl-Heinz Gobel (011 478 1777 for reception)
- **University of Witwatersrand, English Department**
Ms. Moipone Ndala (Tel no: (011) 717-4110 (moipone.ndala@wits.ac.za)