

Chaz and Motso: (00:00)

Do better be better.

Motso: (00:02)

Welcome to the Spitfire podcast, Take Flight. We're your hosts Motso and Chaz, Inbound Marketing Specialists at Spitfire Inbound.

Chaz: (00:10)

In our first Woman in Marketing series, we chatted to a few of our team members about what it means to be a woman in marketing and more specifically, what being a woman at Spitfire meant.

Motso: (00:19)

Today, our Spitfire CEO, Darren Leishman will also be speaking to Kate Stubbs, on what it means to be a woman in marketing in 2021. We'll find out more about her position, challenges and why she thinks that diversity and inclusion are so important for business.

Chaz: (00:36)

Kate Subbs is the marketing director at Interwaste. She is driven by a passion to make connections between people, ideas, and concepts. She enjoys distilling corporate and marketing strategies into key messages and the challenge of communicating these messages to different audiences.

Motso: (00:52)

Without further ado, over to you, Darren.

Darren: (00:54)

Kate, thanks very much for joining us; really excited to chat to you today. If you wouldn't mind to just give us a quick overview of your career so far, the journey that you've walked, and where you are today and how you got there.

Kate: (01:10)

Yeah, thanks for having me, Darren. It's exciting to be able to chat with you. I haven't had, I suppose, a traditional career, as many as have had. I left school and worked, and then, spent eight years overseas working in the hospitality industry, first in Germany and Austria, and then, moved to London where I had my first foray into database marketing at the time. And then I moved back to South Africa, with the intention of really seriously focusing on building my career. And so I started off in marketing and sales in the logistics industry and studied at the same time. And I was incredibly fortunate in that I was part of a business in which we were building and I really enjoy growing businesses. And so, through my marketing sales and operational exposure, I was part of a team that was able to build a business both organically and through acquisition. And I also worked with very diverse teams, both locally and internationally, which gave me a lot of

exposure to understanding people, cultures, and businesses in different countries and how to leverage the potential of a lot of teams and capabilities to build a business, to grow a global footprint.

Darren: (02:22)

So, I'm going to interject there with the question, because like you said, it's not a traditional route to market and I think many marketers experience that. So when did your interest in marketing really sort of take root? Or would you say that that was always there lurking in the background?

Kate: (02:39)

I have some natural tendencies that pushed me in the direction of marketing. I like being on the front end. I'm fascinated with people. I enjoy engaging with people. And I suppose I've always enjoyed understanding brands and understanding a lot of what they stand for. But yeah, I think my real passion for marketing did start, probably even waitressing, I have to say when you're trying to understand people and serve them and give them experience and delight. And I think that's probably a part of marketing that sometimes we get too technical, but it's about actually understanding people's needs and then creating a solution or a package or an experience that really creates delight with them, which builds into a longer term relationship. But I actually didn't, I'm not a trained marketer, so I didn't even study marketing. When I studied, I studied a Bcom, first logistics and then business management. And so I always have this tendency of mixing between marketing and sort of general management. I love understanding how businesses work in working across teams. And I think that's quite an important part of marketing and that marketers need to understand, is we need to work with the business and understand whatever business you're working in, how it works in order to bring a proposition to life.

Darren: (03:51)

You mentioned business a few times and growing business, and I think that's such a valid point. So how do you go about that particularly and, you know, the theme of this podcast is talking around women in marketing. Now, you're a woman in marketing, you've been in logistics, you are currently in waste management, typically non-traditional female endeavours. How has that impacted on your career? And you know, could you explain a little bit about how you've managed to end up in those industries and how you think it's been an advantage for you to be a woman and what are the disadvantages for you being a woman in those industries?

Kate: (04:32)

Yeah, that's a good point. I mean, my marketing experience has been traditionally in service industries and more industrial type, more hardcore, industries where women weren't typically found. I think my first real, real job, or back in South

Africa, certainly, I was the first woman who wasn't PA or receptionist and engaging with the guys at the time, you know, their standard question would be, "Can you make some tea or do some photocopying?" and navigating that shift of "Sure!" I mean, I'm always willing to help and it's important to remain humble, but then also starting to show your value. And there's been many a challenge there. I think the stereotypes were hard, much harder a long time ago. They're still there in business. But, I mean, what's really exciting is the business has evolved a lot and particularly also in waste management, they're more operational businesses where you have typically found a lot of men specifically then also in the leadership positions. The pros and cons of being a woman...

Kate: (05:30)

I think, you know, a lot of it actually always, always goes back down to relationships, about communicating effectively. I think it's important to stay true to yourself, it's not always about adapting totally to act and be like a man, but it is important to understand how men work and think, and then also understanding the value that women bring to the table. We are different. We're not the same. We should be treated equally and not different, but we're not the same type of characteristics. We have different attributes which we bring to the table. So I think from a woman's perspective, we typically are good at doing many things at once. And I don't profess to saying multitasking is the most effective way of managing, but we can handle typically a lot of things at once and managing even some of the egos and the diversity of navigating those relationships, which is, I suppose I've said relationships a lot, but that certainly has been a big thing that has helped me succeed. And I was also fortunate enough to have some mentors and funny enough, most of my mentors have been men who have spent a lot of time guiding me, both through the business capabilities and also relationship and politics; about how to navigate them. So it is important to find a few mentors or coaches along the way to help you navigate difficult circumstances.

Darren: (06:42)

That's really interesting that your mentors have all been, or a majority have been male. Do you think that's because of the industry or just because those are the people that inspired you or were open to it?

Kate: (06:54)

So, to be fair, at the time there were no females to mentor me and there weren't many other ladies or women at the same level. So there weren't many people to bounce ideas off, but they were, I think I've always had a willingness to learn and interest in learning new things. I think that's another attribute that is important for both men and women, but I think through my interest and enthusiasm to do whatever it took to understand a role. And that was time spent often going into operations. If it was driving trucks, working in a warehouse, trying to understand the business that was seen by our leaders at the time. And they were very inspirational men who were, to be fair also, towards the end of their career so that

they possibly had more time, or understood the value of mentorship, in bringing people up from the lower ranks to expose us to different ways of thinking and doing things.

Darren: (07:48)

You've spoken a lot about understanding the business. Talk to me about the importance of understanding the business deeply so that you can articulate the marketing message more effectively.

Kate: (07:58)

Yeah, I feel very strongly about that specifically if you're in quite a technical business, I mean, logistics, supply chain waste management on the outside may look fairly simple, but actually what we're selling and what we're doing is a solution. And you really do need to understand the technical side to understand how it all comes together in order to package a solution that sounds simple to the outside market. It also, in terms of building your presence and brand within the business and relationships, it's an important part of getting operations and the technical side and the experts in the business to work with you; to collaborate in building that solution for the market. So I think a lot of marketers, well marketing, and sadly I think more in South Africa than some of the international places I've worked, are often just seen as advertising or the prettier event, whereas actually marketing is incredibly strategic.

So yes, there's operational understanding, but there's also the strategic understanding of where the business is going and how it's going to get there. And that also involves a certain amount of financial understanding to understand the impact of what you're doing because marketing is painting that vision and that dream, that positioning for the business to lead not only the employees, but to attract the market to your business going forward. So you need... I definitely feel you need that all rounded understanding of how a business operates in order to position it effectively.

Darren: (09:22)

So I'm going to ask you a question, as a woman, do you think you had to work harder to develop that understanding than a male colleague would have?

Kate: (09:33)

Maybe not harder for the understanding. I think we get it; but harder for the recognition for sure.

Darren: (09:38)

That's what I meant right? Did you feel that you had to work harder so that people acknowledge that you had the understanding than potentially a male?

Kate: (09:46)

Definitely. And you know, it's a lot of... I had a lot of self-reflections through it, because it can be incredibly frustrating when you know you're working hard; you know you're often working longer hours just to prove your point to say, "Well, what am I doing wrong that they're not listening?" And I mean, it can be frustrating, but it still happens today. That's not gone and I'm sure, many women have experienced the same. And for many a time, actually, I went through a long process where I didn't like this us and them and I didn't like sort of, I wasn't even maybe proud to be a woman. I just really... my brother always teases me. I always said when I grow up, in my next life, I want to be a man and I think over time, I had to learn that it's okay to be female. It's okay to be a woman and that you bring as much value, but it has been a harder journey, for sure.

Darren: (10:34)

I can certainly say working with you, I've learned a lot. If you had the opportunity to go back and educate your male colleagues and peers at the time, and potentially even today, what would you want them to be aware of and what would you want them to not do? And what would you want them to do more of in respect to treating and working with you as a woman in the industry?

Kate: (10:58)

I mean, we talk a lot about diversity and inclusion, diversity of representation and diversity is a deep subject, it's complex. And in this sense, we will only talk about diversity as gender, but I do think it always... diversity starts with empathy and understanding. And it is a lot about stepping into someone else's shoes, and the big one of it, is challenging your own stereotypes and asking yourself. And I think, you know, there were women's forums set up and then there were only women in it. It is about the inclusivity of having that conversation with men. I think a lot of it was my experience of a lot of stereotypes where a woman's job was, you know, unfortunately, really just to do the little events, to make the coffee or do the pretty stuff. And that leaves the big business decisions to men.

Kate: (11:42)

I think I was fortunate though, in that as much as I was confronted with those types of stereotypes a lot, I did also have a lot of men who respected me, and you built that respect and trust and delivered on it. I think what I'd like to say to men out there, there's a challenge because a lot of men would say that they don't have a problem working with women or they don't stereotype them, but actually, it goes deep into our history. Did your mother work? What are your real beliefs about where women should be? Because, I mean, when you start thinking about those things, that's when a lot of biases came up. So any type of change actually starts with ourselves to ask, you know, how do I really feel about that? Am I treating them fairly?

Darren: (12:29)

A big part of that is the unconscious bias, right? So myself, over the years questioning my unconscious bias, both. So I would consider myself to not be racist or sexist, but sometimes the subtlety of your conversation is an unconscious bias; something that you're not intending, and is misinterpreted. So you have to reframe your thinking. And I think that that's a big challenge.

Kate: (12:55)

Yeah and a lot goes down to language, you know, where, as you say, your unconscious bias or how you say things, how you refer to people and sometimes in jest, and it's not to say you can't have fun. I've had a hell of a lot of fun. And I love working with both men and women, but a lot of that unconscious bias comes through in how you articulate yourself in the language and referrals you use in all senses. So, be very conscious of how you are expressing yourself in certain situations. Yeah.

Darren: (13:22)

I think that's really important. Another question is what advice would you give to women who are looking to start their career in marketing, or maybe progress their career in marketing, or even transition out of a business environment into marketing or vice versa, particular areas of interest for you, or just general advice that you would give them on how to manage and navigate the situation to achieve the success that they're after.

Kate: (13:51)

That's a great question, Darren, because for many times, and I'm going to say this quite brutally and honestly, and I don't want anyone to be disillusioned by it, but, I often thought, well, why did I pursue marketing? Because it's often not as well paid as friends and colleagues in finance or the other areas of the business. You're not always taken as seriously or seen to add as much value. And for many years, I thought well, I should have just studied finance, but actually as time has gone by, I mean, marketing is incredibly valuable. And I actually have lots of younger friends who are studying or transitioning into marketing now. And I think as a world that's changed, marketing was valuable, it is being seen again in the business. So don't give up. But I think an important thing with marketing is there are many facets of marketing.

Kate: (14:40)

You need to learn them all. As marketers, we are learning every day; I'm learning every day. This transition to digital is huge. I find it exceptionally exciting and it's a great shift for marketers because there's lots of analytics. So don't be scared of the finances. Marketers have always positioned themselves, "Oh, I'm a creative or great at communicating." And they seem to steer clear of the financial side of the business. You have to present budgets as you need to defend your budget and budgets are often investments. So learn the financial lingo; learn the business lingo so that you can communicate your marketing in a way that has a business

tone to it. I think that's really important for me and get exposure to all the sides of marketing. You know, you can then focus. I've been fortunate to have focused and non-focused sides to understand the business.

Kate: (15:26)

And we spoke about that earlier. I think it's always important, no matter which company you're marketing, make sure you spend the time to get into the business at all levels, but the career opportunities are big and also global. I think it's one profession where, yes, you've always got to move and you've got to then understand that new market. But you have those natural abilities as a marketer, you're naturally, or are either taught, you have that natural interest in understanding your markets. And I think it's a really interesting and fun space to be in. And I mean, you need to love your job. And I think I love that, with marketing, every day is different. There's very little routine in what we do. And so if you're that type of person then marketing is a great career to pursue.

Darren: (16:10)

Cool. So you spoke earlier about empathy and ego. Ego is typically something much more strongly associated with men. But also something that can get in the way of marketing, right? Because marketing requires empathy. You said earlier that it requires listening; deep listening with intent to understand. How do you believe that marketing will change over time? You've mentioned analytics; you've mentioned digital. Do you think that's getting easier or harder?

Kate: (16:42)

Sure. There were many questions in that. So I'm going to start with the easier and harder of the digital. It's a transition, but it's an interesting one. And I think it makes our job actually easier because we have faster access to insights. You need to have the ability to analyze those insights. There's lots of information out there. So I think that you just need to make sure you have the ability and the interest to look at those insights. But what it does give you is material that provides really valuable strategic insights for business. So I think the digital side is great for marketers.

The ego empathy thing is interesting, and yes, women also have egos. And I've had to question myself too many times. Sometimes in men, it just presents itself much more strongly, but often that ego comes out when we are also feeling insecure.

Kate: (17:28)

So it's also understanding the human dynamics of that. But where the world is - and we've been through a lot of change already in the last 18 months, the empathy side, and the understanding side, talks to understanding your buyers, your market, the shifts that are happening. So it's almost that psychological anticipation of understanding what's really happening? What are people looking

for? And then taking your business marketing knowledge and positioning it in a space because if you're not connecting with people you're not communicating and you're not going to do business. You're not creating that relationship. So there's a deep need to find connections, especially in a world with people having so much change and so much access to information. It's even more important to really hone those skills of empathy and understanding and market analysis in order to connect and grow your business and find a space for you that's different.

Darren: (18:18)

Kate, thanks so much. We've got some really great insights from you. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us in closing before I get to my final question and we wrap up, but are there any parting words of wisdom, thoughts where you see your career going? Anything that you'd like to add before we wrap up?

Kate: (18:38)

Yeah. I think my biggest... I mean, we've had some time for reflection over the last while. You know, we always say to our children and when we're growing up, "What do you want to be?" I think it's important to also say, "Well, who do you want to be?" You need to understand who you are and believe in yourself. We all actually have whatever we need to achieve our dreams. I think a lot of our schooling system kills our creativity and we know that; there are scientific stats for that. So don't be scared of the word creativity and be creative. Think big, don't lose sight of your goals... and challenges will happen; obstacles will come in your way. There's a lot of adversity you have to overcome, but don't give up. Don't ever give up. I think resilience is a big thing we all need to grow. Be creative. Be conscious. We are in a world now where being aware and conscious is incredibly important. And let's never forget that. I mean, one of the biggest powers of marketing is about connection and using our tools to connect with people, be it digitally or in person, that relationships matter. And so you should always be channeling your energy. And I suppose my last one is, never stop learning because that's how you succeed. You've got to never stop learning.

Darren: (19:45)

Well, thanks for that. I mean, quotable quotes there; we could build a series of memes just off that. So thank you for that. We've spoken about your inspiration and you've inspired us. If in closing, who inspires you, are there one or two people that you could mention who have inspired you along your journey and who you read or listened to on a regular basis that you would recommend others listen to as well?

Kate: (20:13)

Yeah, whew, I'm inspired by many people. I think a lot of my inspiration and probably where I'm at now is from people, typical stories of people, ordinary people often overcoming adversity, either at a health or a violence or just a

difficult circumstance, but I'm also inspired by nature. I think as humans, we've totally disconnected ourselves from our natural world. And so, some of my passion over the last two years, I've been studying biomimicry, which is a practice of learning from nature. Obviously in my role in the waste management industry, it is to protect our environment for future generations. So I'm inspired a lot by one of the greatest ones, she's a South African woman, there is Claire Janisch. She heads up Biomimicry, South Africa, she is a chemical engineer, who left the big, big industrial business of, as she said, killing the planet, to find innovative solutions, natural solutions of bringing nature together.

Kate: (21:05)

So, in general, I am... actually Darren, the other day, I watched a Netflix series of Inspiration4. Now, I'm not a huge, big sci-fi person, but, Elon Musk, it's from space X where they sent the first space shuttle to space with non astronauts. There were four people that went up in September. And if anyone hasn't watched that series, it's a five part series, Inspiration4, four ordinary people going up into space and they were representing leadership, hope, generosity, and prosperity. And I think, as much as Elon Musk is quite a controversial character, I mean you hear different things about his leadership style and that, what I love is he thinks and dreams big; bigger than often that we believe is possible and he is achieving the impossible. And I love that, I am a person who needs big vision and purpose. And what he's also done is there's always purpose. He brings meaning and vision and purpose together. And I think that's what we need. So at the moment, that was something that really stood out for me recently, where just his big visioning, but also the four people who were on that space shuttle each had their own story of overcoming adversity and were inspiration themselves. So if anyone hasn't watched it, it's really worth it.

Darren: (22:16)

Kate, that's a great way to end. Thank you so much for your time. We really appreciate it. And we hope that everybody that listens is inspired by your story, and goes on to do great things. And once again, thank you and looking forward to our journey together.

Kate: (22:30)

Thank you, Darren.

Chaz: (22:35)

We all know that the digital landscape is constantly changing and that HubSpot is a pioneer of these changes. That's why we have this segment to share the latest HubSpot updates we think you should know about. Today we're talking about the color picker, but before we get into it, here's why it's exciting. Your brand corporate identity, also known as a CI, is made up of your logos, typography, colours, packaging and messaging. Branding is important because it's what helps customers identify your brand and helps distinguish yourself from competitors.

Basically it attracts new customers to your brand, or making your existing customers feel at home. It allows your customers and clients to know what to expect from your company, Inbound Marketing needs just this, brand consistency to succeed, because it's all about building trust and relationships. If your branding is all over the place, then customers will feel like your products and/or services are as well. Hence why HubSpot has Brand Kits. You can load your brand kit by going to Settings, Account Defaults and selecting branding. You can customize your company logo, default colours, and company information that displays on all HubSpot content, including emails, blogs, sales, documents, quotes, et cetera. If you've known this all along, HubSpot's update is that you can now easily access your brand default colours while editing content. The brand colours that were previously set in the brand settings will now appear in the colour picker within the page editor. No more copying and pasting hex colours everytime you create a new piece of content or needing to micromanage other department's use of branding because no, Sally from Sales, ruby red is not red red neither is it maroon or dark pink. Hubspot's colour picker coming to the rescue in more ways than one.

Chaz: (24:11)

We hope you enjoyed our second Woman in Marketing episode. If you missed out on the first one, please catch up and let us know your thoughts on the topic. Be sure to check out the blog posts connected to this episode at Spitfireinbound.com and subscribe to the podcast wherever you get your podcasts.

Motso: (24:26)

We'd love for you to like, follow, and subscribe to our podcast and for you to leave us a review and share this episode,

Chaz: (24:35)

In our next episode, we are excited to announce that we have Lemay Rogers, lead marketing manager for the rest of world region at Rentokil Initial and our Strategic director Alison Leishman, lined up to close off our Women in Marketing Series for the year.

Motso: (24:48)

Please leave us a voice note on Anchor, or a comment below, and we'll send you a shout out in our next episode. Remember all the links are in the description below. Thank you again. See you soon. Bye,

Chaz: (25:00)

Bye.