

# S&S Culture fights the good fight

 By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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We are connected on so many levels. From sport, music, friends and experiences, to culture, food and fashion. All of these connective elements are amazing to target consumers, but it is even more important to understand what makes them tick.



Samantha Joshua, CEO and co-founder of S&S Culture

Samantha Joshua believes that too often we use race as a criterion to identify and understand our target markets, but this is not always accurate as the colour of your skin cannot be a deciding factor as to why people love and do certain things.

With nearly 25 years of working in the media and advertising industry, as a media strategist, a planner and a buyer for brands including Takealot, Mr. D, Hunter's, Savanna, FNB, Canopy Growth, Samantha Joshua was encouraged to take her passion and skills and start S&S Culture.

We find out about the core of S&S Culture, how Covid-19 has impacted the creative agency and Samantha's goal of a diverse industry...

## ■ **Can you tell us a bit about S&S Culture?**

S&S Culture offers businesses an omni-channel and creative solution, across all markets and audiences.

*“ I am extremely passionate about pushing the boundaries of media into creative concepts and custom partnerships that are mutually beneficial and have resonance. ”*

My in-depth understanding of the media landscape is what enables me to drive success for my clients' businesses.

## ■ **When, how and why did you get started?**

Well, I have always wanted to have my own business, but fear held me back. Then January of 2019 my partner in life and business asked me what my plan was in this regard. He said that now more than ever was the time to turn my talent, passion and skill into a successful business. Still nervous as hell, but knowing that he was right, I gave it serious thought. A week later, my partner presented me with some papers during dinner and said, here you go, now all you have to do is start.

He had bought and registered a shelf company. Overwhelmed with surprise, gratitude and still fear we started laying the foundation for what S&S Culture would be and represent.

### ■ ***What is the core function of S&S Culture?***

Education and transformation is at the forefront of S&S Culture as an agency. I have been in this industry for so long and have seen how people are put into positions, but never given the right tools and education to fully succeed in those respective roles.

“ Advertising and media, and to a lesser extent marketing, are still industries lacking in real diversity. I am extremely passionate about changing the face of these industries through future education and transformation platforms within the business. ”

My view is that radical diversity is what our clients are expecting from both media and creative agencies.

### ■ ***What are some of the obstacles you've had to overcome since starting out?***

Firstly, being a female in a rather male-dominant industry. There aren't many female-owned independent advertising agencies in South Africa. This is another required aspect of diversity. I have many plans and becoming a mentor to girls who find themselves in disadvantageous locations, with no hope of being able to visualise a successful future, is another passion of mine.

### ■ ***Covid-19 and the national lockdown has impacted many businesses. What impact did it have on S&S Culture?***

It has had a fundamental shutdown of all potential business prior to lockdown, which was dreadful. However, it forced and encouraged me to keep up with educational presentations and sharing key snippets of knowledge.

### ■ ***How did you prepare for the lockdown?***

I don't think any of us could fully prepare or even had the time to prepare for lockdown, especially small businesses such as myself. This said, what I did during the Level 5 lockdown was equip myself with global knowledge and research. I wrote a couple of articles as well as developed a couple of info-driven presentations which I shared on all our social media platforms. Something I called "paying forward".

### ■ ***What's the biggest challenge you are facing during this pandemic?***

I suppose the biggest challenge has been the awareness of our business during a time where basically all services, except for essential services, had to cease all operations. Being a fairly new agency requires consistent recruitment and top of mind awareness, which in our industry is normally done face-to-face.

### ■ ***What sort of assistance will you need going forward?***

Awareness, really. Right now the core focus is to drive momentum in support of this, via these key pillars:

1. Webinars
2. Sharing key content that is not only informative but also useful
3. Articles orientated around narratives that are of interest to brands, products, marketers and consumers.

### ■ ***What have you discovered about S&S Culture during this lockdown period? We are fluid and agile. Our collective knowledge, expertise and insight is our most powerful tools. We have empowered our current and future clients with this knowledge via info-driven emails. We are extremely persistent about keeping abreast of all narratives. For example Covid-19 in South Africa and its effects; Covid-19 Globally and its effects on South Africa, but also what are the learnings or insights and how Covid-19 has changed the media landscape and the consumption use***

*of media, etc.*

▣ ***What do you predict the next 6 months will be like?***

It is going to be tough for everyone! However, now is the time to propel and go full steam ahead, but not without hearing what our clients and their audiences truly need. Being more attentive, reliable and relevant.

▣ ***What has been your biggest lesson from all this?***

Finally giving our clients and audiences what they truly need and not selling/promoting all we can offer. In doing so we build trust through achieving success.

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