

'Think Big' entrepreneurial TV series announces winner

The 'Think Big - Building Business Champions' 10-week TV series featured 12 SMEs, drawn from hundreds of enterprises operating in different sectors of the economy, competing in the Standard Bank and SABC3 reality show. The winners are Cape-Town based entrepreneurial sisters Louiza Rademan and Christine Buchanan of Oh-lief Natural Products who won R1 million.



"The Oh-lief story is inspirational. These two dedicated women, who translated their love of pure, organic products into hand-made balms and lotions for babies and adults, are worthy winners of the 'Think Big' 2014 series. This was demonstrated through expansive and innovative thinking to take their business to the next level," said Ravi Govender, Head of Small Enterprises at Standard Bank.

"Uniquely, the show concentrated on the broader SME sector, with the objective of identifying, uplifting and growing SMEs that had already shown that they had what it took to build successful enterprises."

Traditionally, programmes for SMEs have concentrated on the 'how-to' aspect of starting up a new business, as well as the risks and trials involved.

"This series differed in that it attracted entrepreneurs, who had already achieved some success, but needed a 'boost' to grow their businesses. Adding more value to the programme was the participation of presenters and a board of directors comprised of reputable, experienced businesspeople. We watched how they assessed and guided all the businesses featured. Moreover, existing and aspiring SME owners, across South Africa, had the opportunity to tune in and tap into hundreds of hours of expert business advice."

R100,000 boost part of competition

At the halfway point in the competition, six of the contestants were given R100,000 to take immediate steps to improve their businesses. The use of these funds was monitored by the board, which considered this when deciding on the grand prize-winner.

After an exhaustive process, including presentations to the board, reporting on the investment of their R100,000 and pitting themselves against other worthy entrepreneurs, it was the 'Oh-lief sisters' who impressed with their passion and determination to grow their brand into an international phenomenon.

"We want Oh-lief to be the leading certified natural and organic brand in every house, not just in South Africa but also internationally. We also believe in supporting other SMEs in South Africa - most of our local suppliers fall into this space. Standard Bank and SABC3 not only afforded us the opportunity to grow our business dream, but enabled other enterprises to do the same," said the sisters.

TV milestone

Aisha Mohamed, Head of Bouquet: SABC3 said that the programme marked a milestone in the broadcasting of a business show on the channel. "As a public broadcaster, we are always on the lookout for potential projects that can add value to the lives of our viewers. This was an interactive, pacey series that involved our audience in the search to find a business worthy of winning R1 million."

"The series set a new standard for programmes focused on small business. We were proud to be associated with Standard Bank on the project, which we have no doubt will inspire others to become entrepreneurs."

While the series has concluded on TV screens, the episodes can still be viewed online at www.standardbank.co.za/thinkbig. For an array of additional tips and tools on how to start, manage or grow a business, go to bizconnect.standardbank.co.za.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>