

# Victoria Skye Grulke - Career Highlights

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## Founder, Firebird Futures (Global)

October 2019 – Present

- Having the courage to believe in myself and create my own future and follow my true passions in business and life.
- Closing clients in my first month of operation, without any formal launch or paid marketing.
- Co-founder of an innovative social commerce platform, currently in negotiations to be white-labeled by one of the largest FMCG brands in the world.
- Relaunched a global Nordic network, that had gone dormant after Covid, now actively engaging with over 800+ members.
- Head of Global Growth for a world-leading nano influencer platform, after three months managing to launch in 6 new countries, with active negotiations in 2 others ongoing.
- Integral lead of the team that achieved over 1,000 new global members of a high value online subscription business worth over \$4M, over a period of 8 months. At the same time managing the 2x growth of the cross-continent internal team.
- Achieved the highest grossing months (R8M+) for an NPO crowdfunding platform and laying the foundations for the business relaunch later in 2023.
- Relaunching an online retailer who then generated more revenue on their launch weekend than they had in the last few years combined.
- Mentoring multiple business executives and supporting them in realising their goals.
- Supporting the launches of an online wellness business (with a difference), an online acting school and a virtual tour business.
- Confidently knowing that all my existing and former clients are building brighter, more profitable futures for themselves as a result of our partnerships.

## Director, Girl Pride Africa (ZA, Cape Town)

January 2018 – Present

- Giving my time, experience, soul, love and energy to a group of woman that give everything to save lives and rewrite futures.
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## Personal Property Portfolio Manager (ZA, Cape Town)

September 2017 – Present

- Making the decision to leave the corporate world and go out on my own, spending some time with one of my greatest passions, all the while building our future wealth.
  - Developing a plot of land for resale, setting up a student housing business in Cape Town and managing my personal rental property portfolio at the same time.
  - Educating myself on an industry I knew little about and making some incredible investments along the way.
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## Chief Operating Officer & GM, Cognician Software (ZA, Cape Town)

October 2013 – July 2017

- Helped grow Cognician Software from a zero invoicing business, to a Million Dollar + business, with a set target to reach \$20M + by 2020, which I know they will exceed now that they have the right foundations in place.
  - I reconfigured and built up a team of roughly 40 people globally, as well as several freelancers & external third party partners, to service our business and clients, almost 24/7. I not only worked on the organisational design, but also coached many individuals, some of which I still coach today.
  - Worked with Fortune 1000 companies in many sectors, in almost every time zone: Accenture, EY, Western Union, Lloyds Register, De Beers, RMB, California Department of Public Health, and more. All of my clients left me with incredible endorsements, which are available upon request. My favourite one being from De Beers: 'We felt like your only client' – what more could one ask for?
  - One of our products, Leadership Accelerator, won best soft skills development tool at DevLearn in Vegas. I also personally one many 'in house heart awards' over my time with the company. The staff & Exco team vote for these & they are awarded to people who achieve excellence in any area.
  - My chapter at Cognician allowed me to connect with my authentic self and realise where my true value lies: in excellence (polishing the diamond), in people (developing relationships & people), and execution (in getting stuff done).
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## Volunteer, Homestead (ZA, Cape Town)

July 2013 – October 2013

- Spending time with brave woman, who in most cases are the major bread winners and helping educate them on basic skills that we take for granted, that enabled them to get jobs they could never before have dreamed of.
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**Client Service Director & Business Director, Quirk/Mirum (ZA, Cape Town).**

**June 2011 – December 2012**

- Quirk won Best Agency of the year at the Bookmarks in 2011 and Best Contribution to Digital Marketing in 2012.
  - Lead team to generate the highest grossing revenue months in Quirk's history, reaching & exceeding the Cape Town revenue target of R55M.
  - Consistently exceeded Client Service business unit revenue and profitability targets.
  - Ensured large-scale projects were being run efficiently and were profitable, such as the Woolworths & Pam Golding site rebuilds.
  - One of the best contributors at Agency Exco, taking ownership of many projects, always resolving challenges effectively and efficiently.
  - Assisted in the rollout and adoption of the new agency structure Think, Create, Engage and Optimise.
  - Developed many agency processes across the business such as: complex website builds, managing invoicing, inter-agency relationships, trafficking, dealing with negative PR, etc.
  - Built meaningful relationships with marquee clients, including Woolworths, Unilever, Pam Golding Properties, Capitec Bank, MWEB, Distell, Col'Cacchio, etc. (30+ brands), delivering customer satisfaction scores all above 75% against target of 70%.
  - Helped map out the future of the Quirk Media business, now generating a higher percentage of overall agency revenue.
  - Built a cohesive team and managed the successful promotion of several team members to Account Managers, Account Directors and Business Directors.
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**Consultant, FutureWorld International (ZA & UK)**

**November 2009 – January 2011**

- Successfully launched The Futures Forum, enabling users to get real value out of all their IP, as well as creating an open dialogue between the gurus and their clients.
  - Mastered skills in dealing with highly successful business men and women, with strong opinions on how things should be done.
  - Got exposure to some incredible minds, inspiring me to do more.
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**Regional Executive, NBC Universal (USA)**

**December 2007 – October 2009**

- NBC News (online) became the number 1 news site in the USA for 12 consecutive months in 2008. This was a massive achievement for my team, beating CNN & Yahoo News, during one of the most historic years in USA news.
  - Reached and exceeded the West Coast msnbc.com advertising budget, approx. \$22M annually of an \$80M+ business.
  - Managed communications, processes & account strategy with a Microsoft sales team of over 200 people, (msnbc.com is the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest ad revenue driver for Microsoft in the USA).
  - Voted best Microsoft Partner in 2009. Countless internal & external product teams call on the MS Sales Team in the USA. msnbc.com was voted the best partner on the West Coast (my sales region).
  - The first to monetise the new non-disruptive video ad formats in partner with T-Mobile, with such success, that the account grew over 600% YOY.
  - Launched the msnbc.com clickable video platform, by selling 4 seasonal shopping guides to Best Buy for over \$800k, eventually growing the account by 174% YOY.
  - Spearheaded one of the first msnbc.com cross-media efforts, by selling the franchise, 'The World is Flat, with Thomas Friedman', which spanned online, mobile, broadcast, cable & outdoor. This led to a YOY account growth of over 190%.
  - Worked with NBC Universal traditional media teams, to grow cross-media accounts, with an average YOY growth of 100%.
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**Strategic Account Manager / Executive, Microsoft Limited (USA)**

**October 2006 – November 2007**

- Won several Microsoft best practice awards in 2007. Specifically for various processes I created to assess/track customer satisfaction. These were then shared with the entire USA account management team.
- Maintained & grew over \$5 million in revenue, (display & search).
- Successfully managed strategic relationships with AKQA & AARF, key brands being Visa, Washington Mutual, Palm, Apple & Shutterfly., achieving the highest customer satisfaction scores at hosted quarterly review meetings.

- Sold the first original video program to Visa Signature, 'The Ultimate Getaway', worth \$740k. I was personally responsible for managing over 10 virtual teams, equating to over 50 individuals & managed to successfully launch the show, on time, within scope & on budget.
  - Managed the successful promotion of several account managers and university graduates.
  - I was meant to have a senior Executive working with me in this role, but managed it successfully on my own.
  - I was poached by MSNBC.com from this role, as they said they had never seen business and projects managed with such efficiency and drive for results.
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**Senior Account Manager, Microsoft Limited (UK)**

**July 2004–October 2006**

- Achieved the Microsoft Sales Team's highest customer satisfaction scores in 2006.
  - Winner of best Microsoft Account Manager Award in 2005. The award was based on revenue retention & growth, customer satisfaction, innovation & teamwork.
  - Maintained and grew over £4 million in revenue, (Display & Search)
  - Successfully managed tier 1 clients, EGG, Insurancewide.com, Reuters, etc.
  - Utilised the power of MSN Messenger & MS Bots to create the UK's first online doctor, in partnership with Insurancewide.com.
  - Successfully managed relationships with internal & external creative, editorial, technical & product teams.
  - Delivered the highest levels of customer satisfaction, with scores all above 9/10.
  - Maintained +/-2% forecasting accuracy & 100% CRM data accuracy
  - Managed the MSN Direct Response Program for the UK Revenue team.
  - Involved in the new employee induction program.
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**Operational Account Manager, Microsoft Limited (UK)**

**April 2003–July 2004**

- Winner of the Microsoft Outstanding Achievement Award in 2004. This was awarded for going above & beyond my role, during a time of enormous pressure.
  - Winner of the Microsoft Customer Satisfaction Award in 2003. For being able to not only successfully manage & grow one of the most complex client accounts, but for also turning them into an MSN advocate.
  - Maintained and grew over £6.5 million in revenue, (Display & Search).
  - Built framework for better creative and campaign management process.
  - Member of the new ad-serving platform virtual team, involved in scoping, testing & launch phases.
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**MSN Shopping Manager, Microsoft Limited (UK)**

**October 2001–April 2003**

- MSN became the first profitable regional portal in the world, even ahead of the USA, which was in part driven by the success of MSN Shopping.
  - Maintained and grew over £4.5 million in revenue.
  - Managed 16 strategic partners, such as Amazon, HMV & Dell, growing accounts an average of 50% annually.
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**Web Coder & Account Manager, Fish4 Limited (UK)**

**October 2000–August 2001**

- Having the courage to know that I was not meant to be at university at this time and within two weeks of leaving, securing a job with one of the most innovative businesses at the time: a search engine before Google.
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**Web Designer & Account Manager, The Internet Solution (ZA)**

**November 1998–October 1999**

- Being thrown in the deep end and swimming! It was wonderful to learn by doing, realise I can do anything I put my mind to and that I love working hard, with good people, on innovative projects.