

BDLife

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2010



WOMEN

40

**TOP 40
UNDER**



BDLife

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Roiling global economy opens boardroom window for women

Months after the global economy narrowly escaped a complete crash whose roots have been traced to the oversized egos and greed in America's Wall Street, the corporate world has been soul searching as to how best a recurrence of such turbulence can be avoided.

Tones of ink and paper has been spent in the past 12 months examining what may have gone wrong behind the closed doors of financial engineering wizards and the corporate management in general with the consensus coming ever closer to the overdose of testosterone hormones not only in Wall Street but also in the captaincy of the ship of capitalism.

The argument is that because corporate value systems, culture and governance matrix is to a large extent determined by the composition of their management teams and boards, the absence of women in high echelons of management and boardrooms exposes organisations to the risk of missing certain perspectives of governance, social, economic and people management.

Men are being seen to have certain characteristics that predispose them to taking excessive risks in business.

Excess testosterone is being blamed for the generation of toxic subprime products that pushed the global financial system to the brink.

Throughout the world, management experts are intensely examining the emerging proposition that had Wall Street retained within its ranks a sizeable number of women in key decision-making positions, the high level of risk-taking that drove the global financial system to the abyss may have been avoided.

Women who were originally shunned for being risk averse are now being seen as risk aware, opening a window that could pave the way for more women to occupy not only top positions in the financial services sector but also in boardrooms.

In Kenya, the story of financial markets crash, the ensuing global economic recession and its aftermath is unfolding in different ways for women.

It has on the one hand given many of the women sitting at the peak of local corporations and businesses a chance to show that they have what it takes to keep the ship afloat in a storm.

On the other hand, a number of Kenyan women, perhaps riding on the old adage that there is a silver lining around every cloud, saw opportunity in the global economic turbulence and used it to climb the corporate ladder.



In this edition of Top 40 Under 40 are stories of such women who have shown staying power in high positions they hold in the corporate and professional world despite the shake-up of the operating environment in the past couple of years.

But we have also fished out a sizeable number of Kenyan women who have quietly broken into executive suites and boardrooms in the middle of the storm locally or internationally.

As the world slowly emerges from the trenches of recession, it is our hope that the lessons learned will bear fruit in the form of opening more and better opportunities for women in a larger and more efficient economy.

It is important to remind you — our reader — that the goal of this annual report is to celebrate the achievements of people who — behind the glare of the media — are quietly scoring major victories that contribute to our welfare as a nation.

We are conscious of the fact that there are millions of women out there who have won major victories during the period covered by this survey but have not made it to our list.

The Business Daily is however proud to be associated with those who — after a rigorous nomination and vetting process made it to the list.

All we are saying is that rising this high in your careers is a big achievement making you all Kenya's WOMEN TO WATCH.

EDITOR'S NOTE

How the women were ranked

That all rankings are subjective to some degree cannot be denied.

Business Daily has, however, attempted to make the Top 40 Under 40 project more than a list of the best known, most prominent or most influential women in Kenya today.

Top 40 Under 40 has underpinned its choices on the ranked candidates' performance, and durability in the positions they hold.

We have then ascertained each candidate's age, and considered data on the size of the company, or business (turnover or number of employees), its scope and complexity (i.e whether it is a national/multi-national or cross-sectoral operation), and the competitive landscape of the segment of the economy in which they operate.

Women running or occupying senior

positions in companies with a multi-national reach scored higher marks than those in charge of national/local agencies.

In this list are also women professionals such as lawyers, architects, and partners in accounting firms, included purely on the basis of the size (value) of the work they have done.

The assessment of lawyers and accountants is, for instance, based on the value of deals they have handled and how it compared with those of other nominees.

Top 40 Under 40 project has also awarded high marks to women who have excelled in professions that have been and remain male dominated such as software engineering, aviation, medical research and engineering.

This is because the newspaper believes

there should be no gender-based glass ceiling on any career aspiration.

We have also recognised a limited number of women in public service or not-for-profit organisations.

Here, we have considered the scope of the task that is before the agencies they lead and the possible impact of their work on the Kenyan population or economy.

There are also those who have done the country proud through social activities such as sports, the arts, and philanthropy.

It is, however, important to note that the finalists have been picked from a large pool of candidates nominated by our readers through an e-mail address that was open to all.

Ochieng Rapuro, Managing Editor

Top careers that are preferred by Kenyan women

When it comes to careers, some may want a job that would pay them well and give great benefits. Others, on the other hand, go for those that they have interest in, give them time for personal life and are not too hectic

There is a marked difference between the careers that men prefer and those that women opt for. When it comes to top careers for women, some may want a job that would pay them well and give great benefits; whereas others search for those they have interest in, would give them time for personal life, and are not too hectic. There are many good careers for women, which they would find comfortable working in and are also remunerative.

Human Resource Manager

A woman naturally has the capability to manage people, which she can use in the corporate industry to manage employees. Since a career as a human resource manager requires a lot of communication and managerial skills, this is an ideal choice for women. The average pay for top professionals stands at Sh500,000.

Sales and Marketing

Walk into the marketing department of any major Kenyan corporation and you will realise that this is practically a female colony. From the rank and file to the top managers this is the segment of modern corporations where men have completely lost out. This job requires that

one is qualified in marketing, sales and communication. Some knowledge of statistics and the media is also useful. The median pay in this job ranges approximately from Sh250,000 to Sh400,000.

Public Relations Professionals

Are women better spin doctors than men? It all depends on the type of client and nature of the job at hand. Generally, women have held their forte in corporate PR but have yet to break into the minefield that is political spin.

PR is about nurturing and managing public understanding and expectation of a company, an agency or an individual and women have proved to be good at it. Top ranked professionals in this job earn an average of Sh300,000.

The job has increasingly required a proper understanding of the business and legal landscapes making business and law qualifications critical to succeeding in it.

Lawyer/Company Secretary

Another ideal career opportunity for women is becoming a lawyer. Average pay for top paid professionals in this job stands at Sh500,000. But the earning potential also depends on the level of skill and the quality of clients. Qualification in areas such as criminal and commercial law, legal research and labour law is necessary.

IT Professionals

There are some women who prefer IT jobs over any other type of careers. There are many careers in the information technology industry such as computer and software programmers and systems analysts.

The median pay of top ranked IT professionals stands at around Sh300,000 per month. One may have to possess related education or certifications in the field to succeed.

Market Research

The primary job of a market research analyst is to research on the various aspects on the seller and consumer market and derive some understandings that will be beneficial for the employer. This profession, which has only taken root in Kenya in the past 10 years, has proved to be very attractive to women.

One just has to visit Synovate, Consumer In-

sight, Nielsen and Infotrack offices to confirm this. Those interested in this profession may need a degree in marketing and some competence in statistics. The average salary scale for best paid professionals stands at Sh200,000 per month.

Hospitality and Leisure

Women have also come to dominate the hospitality industry. This being another service industry that greatly involves managing people's expectations and relationships, women have beaten men at it hands down.

The median salary scale for a top manager of a five-star hotel ranges from Sh250,000 to Sh400,000. This is a job many women have confessed offers them a chance to meet and network with people from all corners of the globe.

Corporate Social Responsibility (Foundation) Manager

If you have a liking for social service, you can get into a community service career. Most managers of CSR foundations have a degree in social service, marketing or public relations.

The median salary scale for a community service or CSR manager ranges from Sh200,000 to Sh300,000. This is a job many women have confessed offers them emotional satisfaction even as they reap the financial gains.

Financial Planner

A woman can also get into financial management as a career. Like managing people in companies, handling and planning company finances is a crucial job that women can carry out easily.

The median pay in this job ranges approximately from Sh200,000 to Sh350,000. One can simply join a company as a financial planner, or work as an independent consultant.

Teachers/Educational Administrators

It is true that a majority of teachers in schools and colleges are women. Educational jobs are ideal for women; and consist of teachers, trainers, principals, director of student services, etc.

The nurturing instinct in women has ensured that most easily fit into this profession. The average pay for top ranked professionals stand at between Sh150,000 and Sh300,000 per month.

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Women directors in Kenya: Is the boardroom half empty or half full?

In the aftermath of last year's global economic meltdown, the corporate world has been on the drawing board aiming to craft a new governance framework that will shield capitalism from the ever looming risk of overheating and bursting. The reforms debate has in recent months revolved around the role of diversity in decision-making that has raised the profile of women and the need to get more of them in the boardrooms. **Ochieng Rapuro** spoke to **Njeri Rionge** — who has sat in several boards and is a member of the Institute of Directors — on the value of women directors to organisations and how they are faring in Kenyan boardrooms.

What is the state of boardroom composition in Kenya with regard to male and

female representation? It remains overwhelmingly male-dominated. Listed companies have lately started appointing women to boards for example East African Breweries and the Kenya Commercial Bank.

What in the arena of corporate management can one read from the composition of boardrooms in any country?

That corporate boardrooms are dominated by men largely due to recruitment via old boy-networks. Nominating committees that are recommended by CMA to facilitate objective board recruitment are not functioning as intended.

How has the state of board appointments been evolving?

It's not been impressive. While best practices in corporate gov-

ernance agreed a decade ago to recommend greater diversity in the boardroom, this has not been matched by action. In the UK, of the 2,742 board seats on FTSE 350 companies only 242 are occupied by women. Because the corporate value systems, culture and governance matrix is to a large extent determined by the composition of the board and management teams within organisations, lack of women in the boardroom poses the risk of such a board missing certain perspectives of governance, social economic and people management.

How are women faring in boardroom politics?

Generally well, most professional women do not engage in politics as we know politics, professionalism overcomes other agendas that sideline



Njeri Rionge

core objectives.

Is there something that any woman preparing for a boardroom career should know upfront?

Yes, no woman should apply her feminine attributes better used in the home/kitchen in the boardroom, a woman should bring her professional and management skills supported by her attributes of good communication and nurturing for growth and success of the organisation.

Has the recent global economic crisis affected boardroom women in any way?

If so how do they compare with the men? There has been a perception that men have certain characteristics that pre-dispose them towards taking excessive risks in business.

It is, for instance, said that 'excess testosterone' may have contributed to generation of the toxic subprime products behind the financial risk. Women who were originally shunned for being risk averse are now being seen as 'risk aware' rather than 'risk averse' and this could pave the way for more women to occupy not only top positions in the financial services sector but also in boardrooms.

Is there an organisation or sector that sets the global standard in terms of integrating women onto boards?

There are no international benchmarks set by a single organisation.

It is left to national institutions some with legal mandate and others voluntary. And which organisations have made the most progress in recent times? Nor-

way is so far the only country in the world with a legal mandate for a minimum of women in the boardroom set at 40 per cent in 2020 with the current status being 43 per cent women. France is said to have pending legislation for similar legal mandate.

Are there sectors that have a greater presence of women in management and on boards?

Women directors appear to be doing very well as directors and even board chairs regardless of sector.

What measures should be taken to improve gender equality on boards and in executive management?

Appealing to the conscience and sense of fair play among the males who dominate boards to include more women is unlikely to change the situation. It is for these reasons that countries are increasingly, as in the case of Norway, legislating mandatory quotas, with France expected to follow soon.

How does Kenya compare with other countries?

In the listed company boards women representatives remain the proverbial drop in the ocean. In the public sector, the presidential mandate of two years ago to have 30 per cent representation of women in public entities was more honoured in breach.

In co-operatives management committees and tea factory board's women representatives are noticeably absent, notwithstanding they do the bulk of the physical work in these sectors.

GADGETS FOR HER

Sony Vaio CW Notebook Red:

Epitomising how beauty and technology go hand in hand, this Sony machine sizzles in fiery red. With an elegant, glossy body, the device flaunts a 14-inch LED backlit display, spacious keyboard and wide palm rest. With almost all connectivity options, the device would be a great option even for those into gaming as the Vaio Machine delivers excellent graphics.

The multimedia capabilities of the device further add to the convenience. It delivers efficient performance, powered by 2.13GHz Intel Core 2 Duo processor and 4096MB of fast DDR3 memory. So ladies gear up and make a style statement with the Sony Vaio CW notebook.



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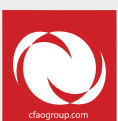


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Getting it right: The role of family life in success at

Why women who get family life right, unlock their potential at work and raise their chances of climbing the often long corporate ladder

BY MWAURA KIMANI

For women executives who know where to look, it is clear that the proverbial glass ceiling that has blocked them from rising in a male-dominated corporate world is cracking.

Women are now making inroads into top corporate positions, balancing work and life and moving into the public domain too.

That is why when Prof Nuria Chinchilla, a management expert from Spain, took the stage at a recent executive training programme for women at the Strathmore Business School, the audience left their breakfast untouched to listen to her arguments on how women hold the key to their own success. She did not disappoint.

Her colleague, Dr Mireia Las Heras, a lecturer at the IESE Business School—in Spain was equally convincing on why work-life balance is central to career growth.

Nonetheless, glass ceilings still exist for most women who aspire, and have the talent, to contribute to their company's highest levels.

Prof Chinchilla and Dr Las Heras argue that effective women leaders experience heavy challenges in harmonising work, family and personal life, and only few attain this.

Yet they believe the possibilities are expanding.

"If a woman gets her family life right, this unlocks her potential at work, although the labour market remains biased towards menfolk," said Prof Chinchilla, who head of Managing People in Organisation Department and director of International Centre for Work and Family at IESE Business School.

"The spill-over effect is that one enjoys their job and are likely to pass this over to other colleagues boosting teamwork," she adds.

And the two trainers were quick to point out that women make bet-

ter and more successful leaders, although they get there the hard way.

"Research has shown that companies with the right mix of men and women tend to perform better than those which are male dominated," said Dr Las Heras, adding: "Women tend to pay more attention to details."

In Kenya, women's quest to break into corporate management has spilled into the classroom, with the number flocking to business schools for MBAs rising steadily, although still trailing that of men.

Human resource experts attribute this back-to-school wave to a desire by women to grow in their careers and improve their earnings, in a labour market dominated by men and characterised by stagnating salaries. Acquiring specialised skills offers a route to a higher position.

Aware of the prestige, higher pay and in-depth knowledge that an MBA offers, women now make up between 30 and 40 per cent of any class in local business schools.

But "women still have to juggle among issues in a corporate setting that is not ready for flexibility," said Prof Chinchilla.

Nonetheless, this year's Economic Survey shows that women are increasingly making inroads into top decision-making positions in the public sector and in corporate circles.

In 2009, for example, the number of women district commissioners rose to 22 from zero in 2006—a situation that also held in several other public offices.

"However, there has



Dr Mireia Las Heras (left) and Prof Nuria Chinchilla

PHOTO/FREDRICK ONYANGO

» TID BITS 4-1-1

Torn between scents? With these designer fragrances you can't

There is an abundance of designer fragrances today on the market and it can really be very difficult to choose the best one. And what is even harder, after some time, after you have smelled so many different scents, they all just seem to blend together and you now have no idea which one to pick. The fragrance industry, which is growing at a rate of knots with designers, celebrities and trusted fragrance brands, launches new scents on almost a monthly basis. For those women who are not sure what new fragrance to pick, there are some designer fragrances that they just can't go wrong with no matter what.

J'adore:
This mandarin and ivy per-



fume is such a refreshing fragrance that lifts your mood on a gloomy day. J'adore is a really light, pretty and very feminine perfume. The perfume can be worn anywhere at almost any time.

Dolce and Gabbana Light Blue:

A stunning perfume, overwhelming and irresistible like the joy of living. Dolce and Gabbana have done it again, they have created a fragrance that is perfect for any woman.

Ralph Lauren Romance:

This perfume is one that you just can't go wrong with. For quite a while now, Romance is considered one of the top designer fragrances for women and this holds true once again for this



year. Created for the woman who believes in true love, affection, warmth and togetherness, the scent reminds you of tender moments and the simple joys of life.

Guerlain Chamade:

Chamade was created by Paul Guerlain in 1969, and it was inspired by the Françoise Sagan's novel "La Chamade." Symbolising a quick beating of the heart of those in love, "Chamade" is another enchanting name given to the Guerlain creation. The fragrance comes in a pretty bottle in a shape of upside down turned heart, pierced by an arrow - a symbol of surrender to love.

Moschino Couture:

This bold and captivating scent is for the woman who dares to make your own fashion

statement.

Gucci Envy Me:

Envy me was created for the woman who demands attention. The fragrance is guaranteed to make a woman the object of desire.

Bvlgari Blu Notte:

This fragrance from Bulgari is a limited edition perfume for women, introduced in 2004 as a fresh feminine aroma. Mysterious and passionate, Bvlgari Blu Notte is recommended to be worn after dark.

24 Faubourg Perfume for Women by Hermes:



the workplace

been only a marginal increase in the appointment of women to decision making positions and hence the official target of 30 per cent representation of women is yet to be achieved," said the survey, released last week.

During the Strathmore training, women executives drawn from Kenya's leading firms did not hide their frustration at the conflicts between workplace and home, a lag that continued to compromise their chances of rising to the top in companies.

"Most of them said they felt alone in discussing issues regarding work and family with their spouses," said Dr Las Heras.

"This calls for a lot of flexibility for both the menfolk and the employers so as to take care of such concerns, which have the potential of ruining careers."

Moreover, some women still hold back from attending part-time MBA and masters programmes for the same reasons they shun full-time undergraduate programmes.

"They are derailed by family commitments, something that is not a big bother for men," said Prof Chinchilla, adding that women have for years asked for more autonomy both at work and in their families to be able to execute their roles effectively.

However, that quest might be over in the near future.

"With time, it's increasingly becoming clear to many women that there is no glass ceiling, only sticky floors," said Patricia Murugami, the director of Executive Education at Strathmore Business School. "The greatest pull-back has been fear, and people not knowing their purpose," she said.

Dr Las Heras said the ongoing global financial crisis had also made companies re-look at their work-life balance policies.

"Companies are realising that the issue is not the policies' cost, but rather the cost to the firm of not implementing and supporting such policies," she said.

"If companies abandon work-life policies now, they run the risk of de-motivating staff to do their best: Exactly the opposite of what is required of them in the current climate."

» The latest gadgets and how they can harm you

A battalion of scantily clad gladiators couldn't drag you away from your favourite tech toys. But all that button-pushing, controller-swinging, and cell-phone blabbing can lead to an array of cramps, muscle pulls, and -- yech -- back-ear-ia. Still, your precious gadgets don't have to leave you laid up -- some tips about tech safety and a few tweaks to your technique can help you avoid the woes of being wired.



BlackBerry Thumb

"Repetitively stretching your thumb to reach the keys can cause inflammation and pain," says Stacey Doyon, president of the American Society of Hand Therapists.

Prevent it: Hold your BlackBerry in both hands. (Use the stylus only in short bursts; Doyon says that gripping it for a long time is begging for a cramp.) Take a break every hour

to stretch all your fingers as wide as you can. If your thumb starts to ache, ice it for 10 to 20 minutes once a day.

Bluetooth Ear

Looking like a corporate tool isn't the only risk in sporting a wireless headset. "These devices can pick up fungus or bacteria," says James Hall, Ph.D., clinical professor of audiology at the University of Florida.

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go wrong

Named after the address of the Hermès flagship store in Paris, 24 Faubourg by Hermès fragrance for women is a timeless and treasured creation. This lovely fragrance evokes the most intimate aspects of feminine sensuality and sophistication. The perfume is recommended for daytime wear.

L'Eau d'Issey perfume by Issey Miyake:

This perfume is a fresh sparkling fragrance with warm undertones. It awakens a feeling of total beauty. L'Eau d'Issey is a pure floral with musky and woody tones.

Bonus tip:

To make fragrance last long it should be applied to the body's pulse points. These include the back of wrists, behind the ear, crease of arms and knees, and the base of a throat. Pulse points give off more body heat as this is where blood vessels are closest to the skin, therefore continually warming and releasing your fragrance. Never rub, because rubbing crushes the molecules of the fragrance and ruins the scent.

Talent search without gender distinction

Why women favour global policies that promote total participation of women in all aspects of life, including politics, business and the family

Gradually, over the course of the 20th century, many companies and governments around the world developed a new perception of the role of women in the workplace and universities. Little by little, many women have risen to higher positions in academics, politics and the professions. These women are confident that they can be more efficient than men.

As Nuria Chinchilla, a professor at

KNOWLEDGE @ WHARTON

IESE Business School in Madrid, put it: Women are continuing to use their special talents – their “feminine genius and energy” – to transform society and modern companies” during the 21st century. Chinchilla spoke during the second International Conference on “Women, Enterprise, Society in the Twenty-first Century,” held at IESE.

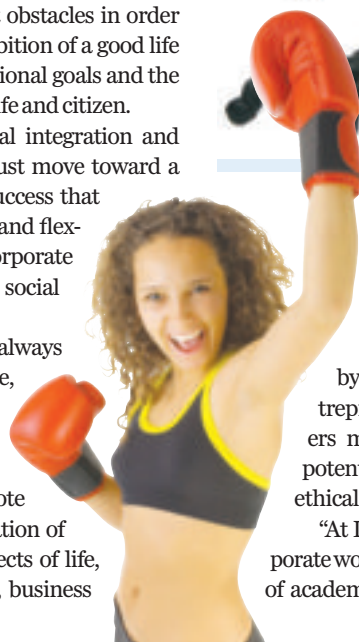
The conference brought together leaders from business, academia and politics, both from Spain and other countries. The participants launched a dialogue about the challenges, achievements and obstacles that professional women face in their working environments.

Several distinguished executives shared their experiences and viewpoints about how they have developed their own careers and achieved professional success.

They also discussed the obstacles that women face in management and the solutions that they have applied at their companies. According to Chinchilla, every woman must directly deal with difficult obstacles in order to achieve the ambition of a good life that fulfils professional goals and the roles of mother, wife and citizen.

To achieve total integration and harmony, they must move toward a new concept of success that involves freedom and flexibility in their corporate cultures as well as social conditions.

Governments always play a helpful role, but the women favour global policies that assist and promote the total participation of women in all aspects of life, including politics, business



and the family.

Juan José Toribio, the professor at IESE who established the conference, began by noting that both entrepreneurs and managers must maximize their potential for humane and ethical behaviour.

“At IESE, we try to incorporate women into the cloisters of academia. One of our main

challenges is to confront every sort of discrimination against women. We are totally opposed to squandering feminine brain power.”

Chinchilla, who has conducted two of these conferences during the past year, says that the current century is a defining moment for women. But if women are to achieve success, “men must [also] play a role.”

According to Chinchilla, women have a much greater ambition than men, “although to achieve success, both genders must work together.”

Chinchilla recalled the words of Alvaro d’Ors, a professor at the University of Navarre (in Spain.)

In place of the revolutionary three-some of liberty, equality and fraternity, d’Ors offered “responsibility, legitimacy and paternity.” Chinchilla noted, “No two people are alike. So why not talk about diversity instead of equality?” She emphasised that fraternity is a term that could refer to either maternity or paternity.



» BRIEFS

True talent makes no distinction

Establishing a culture in which there is a healthy balance between work and family is the main goal of Jaime Aguirre, human resources director of Ferrovial, the Spanish construction company. “Talent does not distinguish between genders,” says Aguirre, a father of five. He agrees that today’s employees become much more productive when they manage to reconcile their family life with their work schedule. Three years ago Ferrovial established a code of professional ethics, which went into effect this year. “We are evaluating the productivity of our employees.” Among the features of this plan are early working hours at the office, intensive workdays that fit into school schedules, permission for breast feeding, and assistance for disabled employees.

In search of personal equilibrium

Success in life is not about achieving your goals in only one area of your life and sacrificing everything else. “Knowing that there is a balance permits me to continue to contribute value, and to feel good about every aspect of my life,” explains Maria del Mar Ares, a partner at Ernst & Young in Spain. She believes that true success means achieving a “life with value.” It’s not about the external factors that people normally identify with success. She also believes that the economy is losing a significant amount of value because many female professionals with experienced positions have a hard time reconciling their working life with their personal life. She says that it costs 1.5 times as much to replace a good professional employee (as it does to retain a current employee.).



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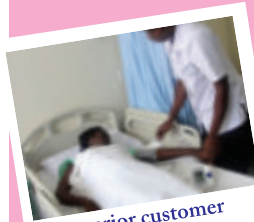
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Top 40 women under 40

Networks that help women understand entrepreneurship

Where budding businesspeople can go for practical advice on wide ranging investment and management issues that are unique to the Kenyan environment

BY JAMES WAITHAKA

In the last few years, there has been a surge in programmes and services for women entrepreneurs. But many women in business are still struggling to overcome challenges, often the product of myths or social hindrances.

Business Daily spoke to Ms Joanne Mwangi, the chairperson of the Federation of Women Entrepreneur Associations (FEWA), who outlined some of these challenges and explained some of the things a woman entrepreneur needs to take into account.

Above all, she says, access to information is hindering the majority of women entrepreneurs. "The level of ignorance is shocking. Women ought to know where to get relevant and helpful information like how to register a business and issues of taxation," she said.

Access to finance and policy-making are also major issues. It is not easy to obtain loans, especially when starting, as women often do not have the collateral required by lenders and decision-making continues to be a man's domain.

One way, she advises, is to "start small from your savings, if you make mistakes it won't be as costly."

Ms Mwangi, also the CEO of Professional Marketing Services Ltd, also urges women entrepreneurs to view financial management as vital, as well as to "think big and market your brand." Most women fail to project their ventures as successful, and do not showcase them as major investments. "Women should move from toiling to thriving, and learn to reward their own efforts," she says.

Partitioning personal life from the business is also necessary. Women need to create a balance and not shortchange themselves.

Ms Mwangi also advises women to enter into partnerships. Coming together gives them access to economies of scale, making it easier and cheaper to do business, on greater pooled capital.

"It is far much better to own 10 per cent of Sh1 billion than 100 per cent of Sh100 million" she said.

For upcoming entrepreneurs, Ms Mwangi points out that a business plan is essential. "It is a map of where you are headed to," she says. "It doesn't have to be complex. Simply capture areas of great potential, projected growth, profit estimates and source of finance."

Also, establish clear distribution channels. All entrepreneurs need to understand their target market, including the logistics, and how to penetrate it.

And: seek the right advice. Associations come in handy as a source for mentorship and access to wide knowledge and the benefits of networking. It is also vital to find out all the legal requirements, and comply. Ignorance will never be a defence.

Ms Mwangi advises every entrepreneur to seek a business mentor in a structured relationship. "It is a confidential agreement that presupposes that a mentor knows a little more than you do," she says.

A mentor will offer unbiased views, assess progress and open opportunities for networking, linkages and possibly new markets.

To cater for most of these needs, women have gone ahead to form entrepreneur associations within many industries, enabling them to develop capacity, pool resources, identify market sources and advocate for favourable policies together.

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Kenya's top 40 under 40 women

JANET KABIRU, 38

Head of Tax & Treasury for Sub-Saharan Africa at BAT

Sending Kenyan students to universities around the globe is the joy of Janet Kabiru. A firm believer in empowering young people through education, Janet is the National Secretary for the Rhodes Trust in Kenya – the local chapter of an international organisation that awards scholarships to students to pursue higher education in universities abroad.

Janet has served in this position for the last seven years – as a volunteer overseeing the process that awards scholarships to two Kenyan students every year.

She was herself a beneficiary of the Rhodes scholarship in 1994, an award that enabled her to pursue a Masters degree at the prestigious Oxford University in the UK.

But what keeps the mother of two ticking in corporate Kenya is her rapid rise to the position of Head of Tax and Treasury for Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) at cigarette maker BAT.

That means she is in charge of a territory that encompasses all of Eastern (including Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean islands) and Central Africa as well as South Africa – a position she has held for the last two years.

“Mine is a senior managerial position in the BAT Group. I am a member of the Area Finance Leadership Team and the role covers 39 markets, including a number of BAT’s global strategic markets,” she says.

As Head of Tax and Treasury, Janet has oversight for strategy, governance and management of tax and treasury of all BAT operating companies in the SSA region whose combined gross turnover is \$ 596 million.

“Significantly, BAT is either the largest, or one of the largest, tax payers in every country in which we operate, with a total tax bill annually of roughly \$ 319 million in SSA,” says Janet.

An advocate of the High Court of Kenya and a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Ghana, Janet started off practising corporate and commercial law as well as tax law at Kaplan & Stratton Advocates after graduating from the Kenya School of Law and the University of Reading in the UK.

Janet’s upward movement in the corporate world keeps her in the top 40 under 40 list for the second year running.

The Business Daily’s ranking of young, successful and rising Kenyan females who are tipped to dominate the corporate and professional scenes in the next couple of decades



Janet Kabiru

to. Having to work with directors old enough to be her grandfather, the age difference was intimidating at first, she says.

Showing high level of professionalism and acumen, however, melted away the age issues after the first few months. “I realised that experience is valuable, but nothing beats determination, passion, hard work and self belief.”

MARION GATHOGA, 38

Country director, Cadbury Kenya and East Africa.

As country director of Cadbury Kenya and East Africa, Marion Gathoga has the task of steering Cadbury’s manufacturing plant in Nairobi, with over 300 employees to a new operating platform following the mother company’s merger with Kraft Foods in February.

The combined \$50bn British chocolate maker and American food giant will be one of world’s biggest confectionery companies, following the deal that ended nearly 200 years of independence for the British brand. Kraft’s offer for Cadbury valued Cadbury at £21.8 billion in an agreed offer that ended five months of hostile relations.

Cadbury Kenya & East Africa, which delivers food, beverages, chocolate, candy and gum has been operational for the past 60 years.

In 2008, the company successfully transitioned to the packaging in plastic tins of branded beverages, confectionery and foods and is gearing up for further innovations in the next two years.

Marion, who will steer the operations here in East Africa, joined Cadbury from Zambia where she was commercial director of Circle Pharmaceuticals Zambia. She holds a Masters degree in Strategic Management and a row of marketing, commercial and business leadership positions, spanning 14 years, 10 of which were at Bayer East Africa, first as a product manager, and then the commercial director for manufacturing before rising to the position of general manager.

The 38-year-old mother of one is also one of 10 trustees of the Palm House Foundation—an education trust dedicated to mentorship.



Marion Gathoga

KANINI MUTOONI, 34

Director, Kleinwort Benson, UK

“Women are endowed with a number of qualities that may give them an advantage over men in the boardroom if they utilise them well. We are better risk takers, far better at communicating than men are and we are also generally very well organised with the ability to handle a baby in one hand; a BlackBerry in the other and still be able to hold a rational conversation,” asserts Kanini Mutooni, head of audit at Kleinwort Benson Private Bank, London.

She should know. That’s how Kanini has scaled the financial corporate ladder, seeing her deliver audit services to corporate clients from Nairobi to several European cities.

Kanini was recently nominated for the UK Women in the City Awards 2010, beating hundreds of applicants in the annual awards recognising women who have made an impact in the financial services, and giving an indication of how fast and high the 34 year old has risen. The hallmark of Kanini has been one of setting new records everywhere she goes.

She was promoted to director at Kleinwort

Benson within ten months of joining the firm, “a feat that takes most people ten years or more,” she says.

Besides being the youngest ever director at the bank, the mother of one is the only member of an ethnic minority to hold the position. But it isn’t Kanini’s only meteoric rise. While working in London for Merrill Lynch, she was promoted to vice president just nine months after joining the global financial giant.

Kanini’s pursuit of excellence goes back to her days at Kianda School. “Kianda was an education in learning the value of hard work, ethics and having a balanced life.” A Bachelor of Commerce degree laid the ground work for a career in the financial world, and in 1994, she was declared the best ACCA-Audit student in Kenya.

Her first job was with KPMG Nairobi, auditing financial sector clients, followed by a move to London that set up a stark contrast. Her first job in London was as burger assistant at MacDonald’s. “This humbling experience helped to build up my character and prepared me for the fierce and demanding world of banking.”

Her current role includes giving regulatory and control framework advice to Kleinwort Benson’s Board of Directors and its CEO, who she reports



Kanini Mutooni

Top 40 women under 40

Marion, who is the mentorship director, says she gives her time and energy generously and is passionate about impacting on others' lives, as her own mentors have contributed to her own life.

She has contributed to the development of the trust's strategic plan as well as its mentoring framework.

STELLA KILONZO, 36,

Chief Executive Officer, Capital Markets Authority

Of all the Top 40 under 40 women who attest to weathering a storm in office over the past year, Stella Kilonzo stands out. She was only a few months in office when Kenya was hit by the January 2008 post-election violence that shook the market to its core.

Then followed the turbulent period in Kenya's capital markets, marked most conspicuously by the successive collapse of stockbrokers with billions of shillings in investor funds, and exposed the market's Achilles' heel.

In just a span of about 12 months, the combination of political violence and global recession saw thousands of small investors flee the market, cutting capitalisation from a high of Sh1.2 trillion to just under Sh600 billion.

That left Ms Kilonzo with a lot of cleaning up to do and with speed. As the chief executive of an organisation that regulates the markets, Ms Kilonzo has had to juggle between tackling head-on the sensitive matter of investor compensation even as she oversees the execution of policy and operational plans aimed at preventing future meltdowns and improving the market's integrity.

Her tenure at the helm of the CMA has seen wayward brokerage firms placed under receivership, numerous investigations into dubious dealings instituted, and the passing of radical reform proposals aimed at restoring order and transparency at the local equity market.

Top on the list of reforms Ms Kilonzo has taken is introduction of a requirement that all stockbrokers and investment banks publish their



Stella Kilonzo

financial results to enable the public monitor their financial health.

Kilonzo began her career in capital markets regulation in Chicago where she worked for the Chicago-based American regulator Finra, in the Securities Regulation and Compliance Division after her postgraduate studies.

Her boss at Finra, Mary Shapiro, is facing an equally daunting task of shaking up the US capital markets having been appointed by President Obama to head the Securities Exchange Commission, (SEC).

Ms Kilonzo acknowledges that these are hard times for capital markets, especially in an emerging economy such as Kenya's.

She maintains that her ambition is to deliver results in the long term.

Success in realising this, she acknowledges, depends on getting the regulatory model right and fixing corporate governance among the principal players.

Besides heading the CMA, Ms Kilonzo chairs East African Securities Regulators Association (EASRA), the regional club of regulators whose members include Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya.

MARYANNE MWANIKI - GATERI, 35

Head of Stakeholder Engagement & Reputational Risk, StanChart, UK

Maryanne has risen inexorably at Standard Chartered, as General Manager of Personal Loans in Kenya, Head of Employee Engagement and Performance Management in London, through postings in Asia and Africa.

As head of external stakeholder engagement, her role is to support the bank's board in overseeing its sustainability agenda.

In her current role, she has spearheaded programmes that have won the bank - with 77,326 employees in 71 markets - global recognition.

She has been a key player in the UN Global Compact, a policy initiative for businesses committed to aligning operations with principles of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.

During last year's African business awards in London, Standard Chartered Bank won the award for the Best Corporate Social Responsibility in Africa, ahead of other nominees Goldman Sachs, Nedbank, Bamburi Cement, and Rio Tinto.

"The winner has developed a wide range of programmes which have had significant social and economic benefits on local communities and employees. The programmes are having a lasting impact and have high level of replicability," the judges' citation read.

Maryanne is also championing cultural diversity and the gender agenda within the bank. "We need to ensure that women are participating fully because of the multiplier effect it has on society." She holds an MSc from the London School of Economics.

CHRISTINE SABWA, 37

Head of Finance, Cfc Stanbic Bank, Cfc Financial Services & Cfc Holdings

Gifted with both charm and unfaultable efficiency, Christine Sabwa, the head of finance at Cfc Stanbic Bank, leaves no doubt as to why she

is a woman to watch.

In a career spanning 14 years, Christine's steady rise in the world of finance is a hallmark of what determination and the will to disprove myths can achieve. Christine, now 37, is a BComm(Accounting) graduate from the University of Nairobi with 13 years experience in Financial Management, Financial Risk Assessment and Auditing gained at Renaissance Group, Standard Bank and KPMG, where she began as an audit assistant in 1996 rising to senior auditor by 2002.

She then joined Stanbic Bank as assistant finance manager before taking up the position of head of finance and strategy two years later.

In a move that would then set the pace for her growth in the world of finance, Christine moved to Standard Bank in South Africa where she served as senior manager strategic finance, overseeing the finance function of operations in 15 African countries. In 2008 Christine made another game-changing move to Renaissance Group Africa as a director and head of finance, becoming a member of the investment bank's Africa management board. A year later, Christine returned to Cfc Stanbic Bank as head of finance in the newly merged Bank.



Christine Sabwa

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Top 40 women under 40

ADEMA SANGALE, 33

Associate Director of External Relations, P&G East and Southern Africa

Managing external communication for a transnational company with a presence in more than 10 countries should ordinarily be a heavy load on the shoulders of a 33-year-old.

But Adema Sangale, Associate Director for External Relations at Procter & Gamble, has taken the responsibility in her stride.

Sitting in South Africa, Ms Sangale manages the image of the fast moving consumer goods conglomerate across Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania, Namibia, Rwanda and Kenya.

It's a role that puts her at the helm of an elaborate system that takes in all the information she needs to understand the environments P&G is operating in, and which Adema uses to craft communication strategies that give the company an edge over its rivals in the consumer market.

It is a role that has become even more critical in the past two years of global economic recession that withered away a large segment of consumer purchasing power, leaving producers of fast moving consumer goods in a fix.

"Our challenge has always been how to regularly get P&G's products in the consumer's shopping basket," she says.

"That challenge only became more daunting with recession, when both incomes and purchasing power fell significantly." P&G is the world's number one FMCG company with an estimated daily turnover of \$3 billion daily.

Its range of products includes sanitary pads, diapers, detergents, hair and beauty care products.

A graduate of USIU and the UK's Oxford University, Adema began her career in the corporate world as an assistant brand manager for Pampers and Always in Kenya. She worked for P&G in Nigeria and Poland as a brand manager before taking up her current assignment.



Adema Sangale



Captain Irene Mutungi

CAPTAIN IRENE MUTUNGI, 35

First female pilot at Kenya Airways

For Captain Irene Mutungi, the cockpit of a 737-300 is as familiar as her living room. For Irene became the first female airline captain in Africa and the first female pilot at Kenya Airways when she was just shy of 30 years.

When Irene took control of the cockpit for

the first time, she admits feeling a great sense of achievement and responsibility. "However, more importantly my thought was what this meant for our country and continent, where women had always been relegated to the back seat."

She needed 3,000 flying hours to make captain, and currently has over 8,000 hours on the Boeing 737. Last year, she was awarded the prestigious African Legend of Travel Award for her contribution to the growth and development of travel in Africa.

"I am acutely aware of the fact that each and every citizen of this country must contribute to improving our nation. Everybody has a role and we all have specific strengths to chip in towards a strong and prosperous Kenya. As far as I am concerned, I thrive to hold high the flag of women empowerment.

I want to make sure that whenever someone looks at me, they understand that the cliché of the weak and ignorant African woman has no place in Kenya. Kenya must lead Africa in that way too. That's a dignifying message our country should take to Africa and to the world."

The stars have never been out of her reach. Her fascination with flying began at the age of 8, sitting in the flight deck with her captain father on a flight to London. It was at this moment that her dream to become a pilot first took root.

"Research has shown that we are usually aware of the opportunities available to us, but unless we give real life examples of women who have actually achieved feats in their careers, young girls cannot imagine themselves doing what they dream of."

Irene reckons that a successful pilot needs to be alert, and calm under pressure. The ideal pilot should also be detail oriented, punctual, able to multitask and skilled in communication.

For Irene, it's all about having a positive out-

look on life. "If you look at yourself as successful in all you do, then you will indeed succeed."

DEBRA MALLOWAH, 36

Marketing Director, EABL



Debra Mallowah

As marketing director of East African Breweries, 36-year-old Debra Mallowah holds one of the most influential positions in Kenya today. EABL is a Sh108 billion company (by capitalisation) – the second largest in Kenya among listed firms at the Nairobi Stock Exchange.

Although she has held the position for just two years, Debra has deep roots within the group, having been appointed to the directorship after a three-year stint at Diageo Plc's head office in London.

In Debra's stable is a range of beers that include Tusker, Tusker Malt, Pilsner, White Cup and the latest kid on the block, Senator, as well as one hustler in the non-alcohol market called Alvaro. The group also produces a range of spirits including Johnnie Walker, Bailey's and Richot.

The past two years have certainly been tough for Debra, with staying power emerging as her corporate hallmark. She has faced a turbulent market in the grip of an economic slowdown that has eroded consumer buying power and combined with the entry of new players in the market.

In this environment, Debra has had to find the right marketing mix, aggressive enough to grow sales, while avoiding the many legal obstacles that have been placed in the paths of alcoholic beverage makers in the past couple of years.

Debra's mettle in the world of marketing will be proven by how far she can get EABL in riding the recovery wave from here to accelerated revenue growth.

ALFETTA MUNGAI KOOME

CfC Stanbic Bank, regional head of debt capital markets

Voted the investment banker of 2009, Alfetta embodies the unshaken resolve and determination that has become the corporate woman of today. A wife and a mother, the regional head of CfC Stanbic's debt capital markets office debunks the myth that running both a home and high profile job is an impossible endeavour.

For if 2009 goes down as a record breaking year for debt issues in the local capital markets, it is CfC Stanbic Bank that will take the trophy for its prolific involvement in almost every bond issue last year. A key architect in this milestone was 35-year-old Alfetta Mungai Koome.

As joint lead arranger and sole arranger for most of the region's largest bond issues, span-

Top 40 women under 40

ning telecoms companies, banks, industrial companies and NGOs, Alfetta was instrumental in the market.

Yet she points out that it has taken considerable effort and sacrifices to understand the industry, identify and learn the ropes from the investment banking moguls and eventually adopt and engage in a male dominated sector.

In her own words, she has swum with the sharks, and successfully managed to navigate the often rough waters, which Alfetta believes is

as a result of focusing on the goal at hand.

Her rise to prominence follows her early move into banking and credit analysis.

After finishing at Kerugoya Girls High School, Alfetta left Kenya to read her BA degree in business administration at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, where she stayed for four further years working her way up the professional banking ladder.

She returned to Kenya in November 2003, and joined NIC Bank, before moving to CFCStanbic

in June 2005.

"The fulfilment I get as a woman is to know that I have achieved all that I have, while loving and enjoying my time with my family, which is enough to drive me to attain the 'next big thing'. As a woman, understanding and successfully managing a comparable work-life balance has been a key strength to what I deem as my success," says Alfetta.

SUMAYYA HASSAN-ATHMANI, 39

Deputy MD, National Oil Corporation of Kenya



Serving as deputy managing director at the National Oil Corporation of Kenya, has enabled Sumayya to play a pivotal role in shaping up Kenya's emerging oil industry.

The UK-trained lawyer initially served as Nock's company secretary and legal manager before expanding her role to include strategy, earning her the promotion to deputy MD three years ago.

In this capacity, she is a member of the National Fossil Fuels Advisory Committee, which advises the Energy Ministry on oil exploration in the country, and is currently spearheading a review of Kenya's laws governing petroleum revenues (Production Sharing Contracts).

Sumayya has handled multi-billion shilling deals covering some 22 leased blocks with 13 prospectors operating on them. One offshore well costs \$100 million (about Sh800 million) while one onshore well costs \$20 - 30 million. In the pipeline are additional commitments worth tens of millions of dollars, she adds.

She is also responsible for Nock's plans to venture into oil exploration by having its own blocks. She is project leader for Nock's Rapid Results Initiatives (RRI) under which the company sets key targets to achieve within 100 days. The RRI spells out an aggressive expansion plan, which should

see an increase of the firm's current petrol stations to 60 nationwide and double its current market share to 15 per cent in the next three years.

With an annual turnover of Sh22 billion, a fully automated petroleum terminal in Nairobi, and a geo-chemical laboratory for analysing oil exploration samples, Nock is currently Kenya's fifth biggest oil marketer, selling an estimated 250 million litres a year.

Prior to joining the oil industry, she had stints at various Nairobi-based law firms as a commercial and conveyancing lawyer. Married with two children, Sumayya earned her law degree and a Masters in Commercial Law in the UK and holds an Advanced Management Diploma from the University of Oxford's Business School.

CAROLINE JEBET KIGEN, 38

CEO, ICPAK & Secretary to the council

As the chief executive of the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK), Ms Caroline Kigen is charged with maintaining high ethical standards among Kenya's 6,000 registered accountants and auditors.

The 38-year-old former commerce lecturer at the University of Nairobi moved up to become the overseer accountants in 2005 with a full in tray.

Her tenure at the accounting regulator has seen wayward audit firms blacklisted and some suspended. She has also stepped up investigations into dubious dealings involving accountants and presided over the passing of radical reforms aimed at enhancing order and transparency in the profession. More recently as cases of fraud rose in corporate Kenya, accounting has been on the spot turning the spotlight on ICPAK and Ms Kigen. As



Alfetta Mungai Koome





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Top 40 women under 40

she was settling into the job, the changing needs of corporate Kenya and deepening of Information Technology was redefining the role of traditional accountant commonly known as CPA—making a strong case for review of training.

“Education and maintenance of high accounting and ethical standards has been top of our agenda in the five years,” says Ms Kigen. “We have not only suspended and shamed audit firms but we are doing the same to individual accountants employed in firms.”

Ms Kigen was instrumental in last year’s review of the accounting training syllabus aimed at keeping the profession in step with the evolving needs of the corporate world. Ms Kigen’s next assignments is to make Kenya’s CPA as a globally recognized certificate to allow locally trained accounts get jobs overseas.

She holds Masters degree in Accounting from the University of Nairobi and has also enrolled for a doctorate.

SUZANNE KILOLO-KADENGE, 33

Investor Relations Manager, Safaricom

Handling relations with 800,000 shareholders is not an easy task, as Suzanne Kilolo, Investor Relations Manager at Kenya’s biggest mobile company knows. Before Safaricom’s first AGM, last year, her department had to come up with a cost effective way to distribute the company’s annual report and dividends to so many share holders. And it did not disappoint.

Together with her two colleagues, Kilolo came up with the solution of paying dividends through mobile money transfer, M-pesa, and distributing the annual report by mail, with hard copies available on request.

The initiative, now being replicated by other companies, yet again put Safaricom on the global map as the first company to pay dividends using mobile money transfer service.

The investor relations department was established after the IPO to enable Safaricom to engage with its shareholder base both locally and abroad. It is also tasked with the management of the AGM and dividend payments.

“Safaricom is the first company in the world to disburse dividends through the M-pesa to 180,000 of its shareholders and the IR department was integral to this project” said Ms Kilolo.

Kilolo, a mother of one, is currently enrolled at the Edinburgh Business School, an MBA programme. Before joining Safaricom, Ms Kilolo had worked for Africa Alliance Kenya Investment Bank and earlier at Stanbic Investment Management Service where in both companies she held the position of Investment Manager.

SUZANNE MUTHAURA, 33

Managing Partner, Muthaura, Mugambi, Ayugi & Njonjo Advocates



Suzanne Kilolo-Kadenge

Suzanne Muthaura holds a vantage point in the world of deal making. As a specialist in corporate law, she is one of the few women who are making a mark in this male dominated and lucrative field of legal work.

From her perch as the managing partner of Muthaura Mugambi Ayugi and Njonjo (MMAN), she is not only in charge of capturing deals for this six-year-old legal house, but leading a young and aggressive team of eight corporate lawyers.

While she has kept a low profile, the 33 year-old already stands among Kenya’s new oligarchs in the lucrative corporate deals market, shepherding multi-billion shilling contracts and earning millions of shillings in transaction fees. Deals bearing her signature include several for the acquisition of aircraft by the national carrier, Kenya Airways, and infrastructure financing.

Media shy Suzanne was further thrust into the public limelight when her firm won the advisory work for the Sh50 billion Safaricom IPO in 2008.

However, the deal, which marked her entry to the top league of corporate legal work, had its share of controversies on claims of potential conflict of interest, as the daughter of the current Secretary to the Cabinet, Francis Muthaura.

Nonetheless, the firm was eventually allowed to offer the services after consultations between the AG’s office and Treasury.

Last year, the firm advised Simba Energy, which is linked to investment firm TransCentury on the Sh7.5 billion (\$100 million) construction and operation of an electricity generating plant in Mombasa. At present, the firm is involved in legal work for the privatisation of Consolidated Bank and National Bank of Kenya.

“Suzanne Muthaura is the driving force. She is very good,” said a commentary in the Inter-

national Financial Review 1000 (IFRL1000)—a global research firm that ranks law firms based on the value of deals handled.

A graduate of Warwick University and London School of Economics, she is tipped to be a top lawyer in coming years, and with age on her side.

CAROLINE MBUI, 33

Group Business & Strategy Director, Ogilvy East Africa

For many topline managers, balancing the changing needs of clients and the ongoing requirements of staff can be a daily battle. For Caroline Mbui, the Group Planning Director of Ogilvy, it is a business critical mandate – as is convincing companies to spend money in a recession.

When the advertising industry was hit by the turmoil that followed the 2007 elections, Ms Mbui was tasked with increasing her firm’s profits while ensuring its operations ran smoothly.



Caroline Mbui

Ms Mbui’s work has seen Ogilvy successfully get KPLC to its stable – after winning a locally and internationally contested re-branding project – as well as securing the business of agency first-timers such as AccessKenya, PSI, Hass Petroleum and National Oil.

Ms Mbui heads a team that is charged with planning for the group, and oversees five senior managers directing the strategy of the business and managing over 100 employees. From this position, Ms Mbui crafted the strategic thinking that saw the company leverage growth to 18 per cent in 2008 and to 40 per cent last year.

She is a graduate of Communication from Daystar University, and has an advanced diploma certificate in Communication Studies from CIM UK.

SHEILA ATIENO-YIEKE, 37

General Manager, Legal & Corporate Affairs, Kenya Investment Authority



Sheila Atieno-Yieke

Sheila Yieke thought the worst was over when she was hired as general manager of legal and corporate affairs at the Kenya Investment Authority on March 15, 2008 – just days after the post-election violence that shook the entire nation.

She was wrong. Soon after, the ripple effects of the global financial crunch hit home and investment took a back seat as Treasury juggled quick policy options to take the country back normalcy. “After several meetings with Treasury, our annual budget was raised from a traditional average of Sh100 million to Sh400 million, but the most important lesson that came out of the difficult period was how important local investors are to our economy,” she said.

Sheila markets Kenya to both local and foreign investors such as Virgin Atlantic, Delta Airlines and Nokia.

The last born in a family of three, Sheila abandoned her childhood ambition to become a veterinarian when she was selected for a joint programme between the Ministry of Education and India that enabled Kenyan students study in India at concessionary rates.

In 1996, she returned home with a degree in international law from Nagpur University. She is an advocate of High Court and has since set up a law firm, which is run by other lawyers. Before her appointment to her current job, Ms Yieke worked as legal officer for several organisations, including the National Council of NGOs, Sotik Tea and Sotik Highland companies.

In 2005, she graduated with an MBA in finance and investment from USIU, is a Certified Public Secretary of Kenya and also holds the Chartered Instituted of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS UK) as well as being an associate member of the Kenya Institute Management.

Top 40 women under 40

CIRU MIRINGU, 39

General Manager-consumer healthcare, GSK



Ciru Miringu

January 2009 is not a month Ciru Miringu, the General Manager of Consumer Healthcare East Africa at pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) wants to forget.

First, she was appointed to head a division in charge of operations in seven countries and three islands, rising from her previous position of a marketing director for East Africa, and becoming the first woman to occupy the position of general manager at GSK in Africa.

She also picked up the mantle when the effects of the global economic crisis and a weak-

ening local economy were on the roll to hurt businesses.

Her instructions were simple--to grow the business--at a time when consumer spending was sharply declining.

Ms Miringu, who sits on the GSK's local board, is responsible for Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Malawi as well as three islands off the east coast: Mauritius, Madagascar and Seychelles.

It's a post she holds after 14 years at GSK, having joined SmithKline Beecham in 1996 as a medical representative in the Pharma division, before moving to the Consumer Healthcare division as assistant brand manager.

Over the years she has served as brand manager, group product manager and was posted to GSK South Africa for a three-year stay in a senior marketing role. On returning to Kenya in 2007, she was picked as marketing director for East Africa.

ANANYA SENGUPTA, 39

Director, PricewaterhouseCoopers

Ms Sengupta would be a social worker today if she had followed her childhood dream. But she changed her mind, studied engineering, and now holds PwC on top of the rigorous world of corporate finance, where for two consecutive years the market has nominated her as a woman to watch in the rapidly growing world of mergers and acquisitions.

"There is no glamour in this job - just hard work lasting longer hours each day and this is

where people skills come in handy to make it enjoyable," she says.

Armed with just three years of professional finance gained from an investment bank in India, Ms Sengupta joined PwC in 2001 as a consultant, or freelancer in her own words.

When the company carved the corporate finance division out of its Corporate Management Consulting division, she was hired as an executive and later promoted as the manager.

By the time women started making real inroads into corporate finance five years ago, Ms Gupta was already an experienced hand and was promoted to become an associate director in the division before eventual elevation to her current position as director two years ago.

In an advisory firm such as PwC, directors are the senior most employees, sitting just a heartbeat away from partners (firm owners). As lead transaction advisers, directors propose, evaluate and negotiate deals for their firms.

Ms Sengupta's appointment as a director coincided with the global financial crunch that stifled mergers and acquisitions the world over.

But she successfully navigated the hard times, clinching several mega deals worth between Sh770 million (\$10 million) and Sh1.54bn (\$20 million) in the agriculture, manufacturing and financial sectors.

She holds a First Class Bachelor of Engineering degree (Electronics and Telecoms) from the University of Pune, India.

In 1999, she graduated again as a top student at the ICFAI Business School in Mumbai, for which she holds a medal - one of her most treasured possessions.



Ananya Sengupta



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Top 40 women under 40

PATRICIA MURUGAMI, 33

Director of Executive Education, Strathmore Business School

Patricia Murugami is a busy woman and not just because she has to come up with competitive talent development programmes and execute them for her employer, Strathmore Business School.

The trained marketer, auditor and management expert also has to keep an eye on Kenya's multi-billion shilling wedding industry where through Elegant Brides and related businesses, she does a range of activities tied to wedding planning. With all these chores on her hands, the married mother of one still considers her family her most important job.

"The biggest lesson I have learnt is that if one gets things in the family right, the rest including career and business will flow," she said.

At SBS, she heads a team of eight executives charged with running executive programmes, a key income stream for the Madaraka-based university.

Some of the programmes she has run include the leading woman just last week while there are several other upcoming ones such as balanced scorecard, operational excellence and the effective director.

Ms Murugami, who joined SBS two years ago, says she has increased the annual programme offering four-fold, from five to 20, in what she considers her biggest achievement in the current job.

Previously, she worked at listed cement maker Bamburi as a business controller, a position she joined after holding different roles in audit and consulting at consultancy firms Deloitte, KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). Ms Murugami, who holds an MBA in Strategic Management and Marketing from the University of Nairobi, believes her strength is in leadership, management, strategy, process improvement, marketing and business continuity. And she is not done yet.

**KENDI OGAMBA, 37**

Senior Operations Counsel, Coca-Cola East and Central Africa

When it comes to complexity, Mrs Ogamba's job is as complex as it gets. As Senior Operations Counsel at Coca-Cola East Africa, Mrs Ogamba is an assignment that straddles the worlds of strategy and operations management.

This means she has to support initiatives aimed at driving Coca-Cola's growth in a territory that covers 27 countries, while keeping an eye on the legal landmines that may be as diverse as the number of countries covered.

Executing this task means Mrs Ogamba has to offer legal solutions for the range of transactions that Coca-Cola makes across the expansive territory even as she scans the entire environment for emerging regulatory and legal risks.

When she is not performing these trouble-shooting roles, Mrs Ogamba gets down to promoting ethics and corporate governance in Coca-Cola's East and Central Africa Business Unit and its leadership team.

Having started her career with the Coca-Cola Company in 2003, Mrs Ogamba has risen through the ranks to become a member of the soft drink giant's leadership team with a vast advisory role.

Prior to joining Coca-Cola, Kendi worked at Hamilton Harrison Mathews as an associate lawyer. She holds a Bachelor's degree in International Commercial Law from the University of Nairobi and is a member of the Bar of the High Court of Kenya.

So highly placed on the corporate ladder at this fairly early stage, there can be no doubt that Mrs Ogamba is in the league of women to watch in corporate Kenya.

"The opportunity of a lifetime must be seized within the lifetime of the opportunity."

This maxim, by Leonard Ravenhill, is the response Kendi gives when asked what it takes for one to make a tangible, positive impact in the workplace.

CAROLINE ARMSTRONG, 35

Director of Shared Services, Housing Finance



From management trainee 15 years ago to the coveted C-suite at Housing Finance (HF), Caroline has had a good run in the highly competitive financial services industry.

Having begun at ABN Amro Bank, she quickly moved to Citibank to manage an SME lending portfolio, making her the youngest portfolio manager in the business. In 2003, she joined Barclays Bank to head the Corporate Cash Management portfolio with more than Sh150 million in annual revenue. For five years she beefed up her banking expertise, taking on Retail and Operations before moving to HF.

At HF, Caroline is in charge of three departments, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), Operations, Customer Services and Business Optimisation, which handles the firm's Business Processing Improvement (BPI) and Business Continuity Management (BCM).

She heads a team of 45 employees, comprising a fifth of the Housing Finance workforce.

Having joined HF two years ago, Caroline has been part of the turnaround that has propelled

HF to triple its profits.

And seeing the beaming faces of first time home owners, and witnessing the shovel hit the ground for ground-breaking is what convinces her she is in the right place.

"It's fulfilling to have been part of the drive to transform HF and I'm glad we have managed to avail innovative housing solutions to our customers; breaking a previously held notion that housing development and ownership was a reserve for the well to do. We are in a place where what we do helps build Kenya."

Away from professional banking work, Caroline is part of the all women team that competes in the annual high adrenaline off road motor sport cum environmental drive, the Rhino Charge. The event held annually raises funds used in environmental conservation especially around the Aberdares. The 'Pinks in Charge' lady team raised some Sh750,000 last year and hopes to surpass that this year.

SUSAN NJOROGUE-NDEGWA, 37

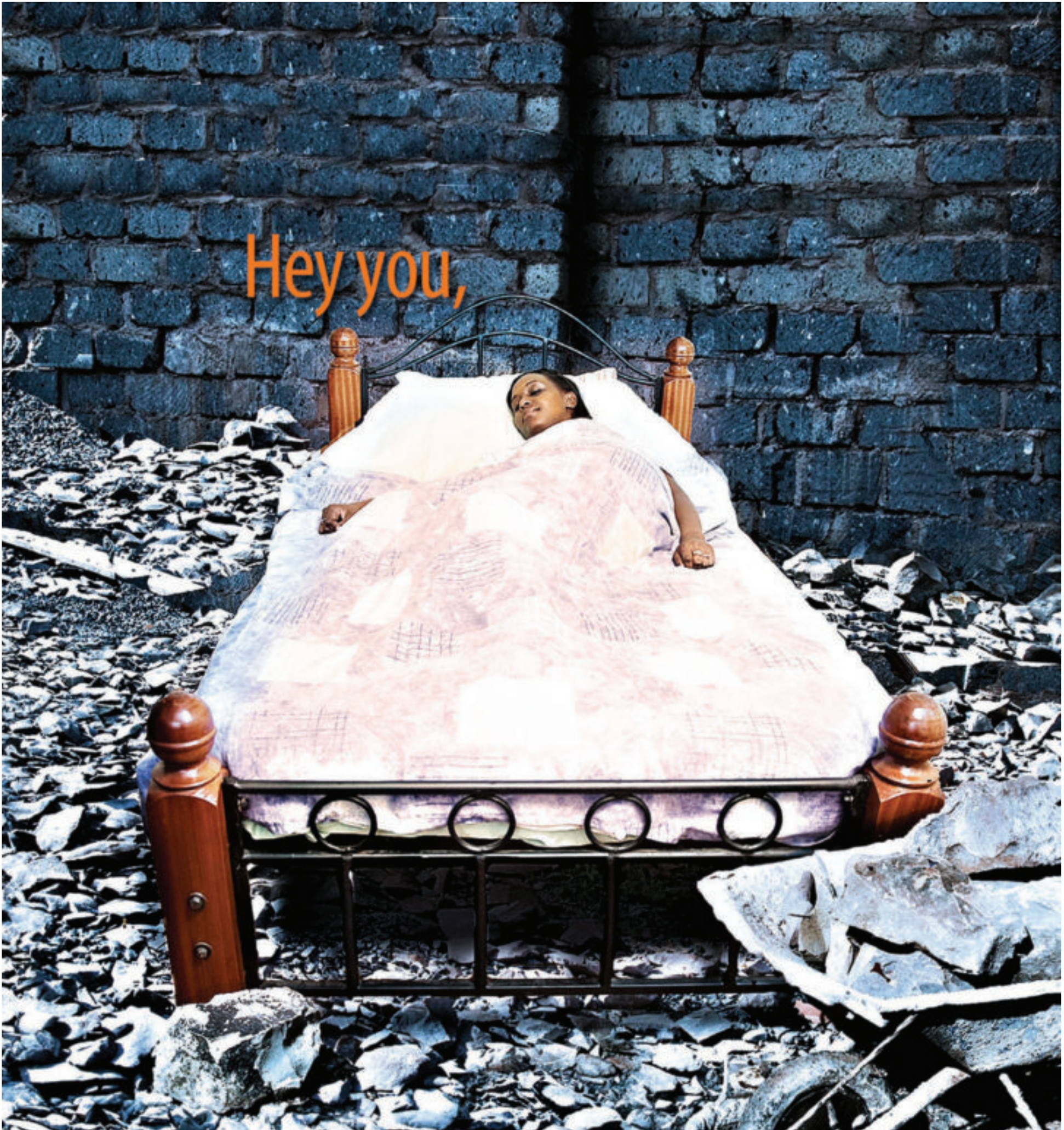
Scientist and Head of Research and Development, Syngenta East Africa

Back in the day when Susan Njoroge was in campus, she would often take up odd jobs during her vacations to supplement her pocket money and avoid idleness. "At one time, I got a job with one restaurant in town and this entailed scrubbing floors and cleaning windows. Some of the patrons were my friends and classmates," says Susan.

Now that's a distant past. At 37, she oversees the technical development department at Syngenta East Africa. The multi-national agro-business company has over 25,000 staff, working in 90 countries. Susan, who holds an MBA in International Business and a Bsc. in Agriculture, is the only certified trainer in Kenya of the globally acclaimed GLOBALGAP - a good agricultural practice certification. "I am also the only lady in Syngenta global having gone through a vigorous training and exam in 2008," adds Susan. This has made her one of the most sought after resource people in the agri-business sector, especially by export farmers who seek the best practice certification.

Susan joined Syngenta as an assistant in the research and development department and through "honesty, self-discipline, positive attitude and focus" has risen to head the department, a position she has held for the last six years. Her passion is to empower the small-scale farmer. "A lot has been said, conferences and workshop held and many deliberations, but all these do not seem to make the life of small-scale farmers any better." The answer, Susan believes, lies in exposing farmers to new and advanced technologies.





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Top 40 women under 40

VICTORIA OTIENO, 38

Regional Head of Government & International Relationships, CFC Stanbic Bank



From working as a graduate trainee in 1994 to supervising a team that straddles international borders, Victoria Otieno has come a long way.

Her philosophy of life is simple and precise; “With God all things are possible.”

Victoria has had a string of victories in both her private and public life she believes have given her the opportunity to give back to the community.

In 2001, at the age of 30, she established the Westlands Branch of CFC Stanbic, a division that went on to be voted best branch in the network with her as branch manager. She was then promoted to senior relationship manager, in charge of governments and international organisations.

Never one to shy away from firsts, Victoria helped to pave the way for the successful trial of banking and financial institutions in South Sudan. She helped introduce banking services in what was virtually an ‘unbanked environment’, from which the South Sudan Business was voted the top business within the global Standard Bank International Development Group for two years running in 2008, and 2009.

The Kwezi Khulu “shining star” award bestowed on Victoria in 2005 for her high performance record was a fitting validation for her cumulative wins.

“Set goals and set them high, believe in what you do” she advises anybody interested in making a mark in the world of finance.

PRITAL PATEL, 37

Managing Director, Creative Edge

When Ms Prital Patel took over Creative Edge 13 years ago, she had not envisioned the company growing into the entity it is today; a competitive force in the market.

Starting off as a below-the-line graphic design house — with only one designer — it has since gone into web design, internet marketing and recently corporate publishing, evolving into a multi-million shilling business with clients that have included Aquafresh, Lucozade, Ribena, Cadbury, Officepoint, Serena and Total.

Prital, now 37, quit her job at her family business to start her own business. Her father — also her mentor — played a key role in encouraging her to invest in the small outfit in 1997, two years after its start. A former pupil of Loreto Convent Mson-gari, Ms Patel says her initial plan was to go back to London for further studies after working in Kenya for two years. She studied Business Management at Kings College, University of London.

But her planned return to London never materialised as she became ever more immersed in



Prital Patel

her own venture.

“The first two years were very difficult. I did not know much about design and therefore I had to embark on intensive research and wide reading. I learnt mostly through trial and error,” recalls Prital.

Nowadays, her challenges are more strategic. “We have now reached a crossroad; we are on the borderline of a design house and a branding agency. We are hoping to offer our clients related services to be a fully integrated communications agency and would like to venture out of Kenya as well,” says Prital, who also now plans to pursue postgraduate studies.

Making it to the Top 100 Medium-Sized Companies last year was the highlight of her career, which she says has been a big boost to the company. And as for her own business success: “it takes a lot of perseverance. You have to prioritise. If success is your aim, you have to hang in there despite the challenges,” she says.

CAROLINE SIMBA, 34

Legal & Corporate Affairs Manager, Jamii Telcom

The Legal and Regulatory Affairs manager for Jamii Telecommunications Kenya, Caroline Simba is at 34 taking a lead role after investing years in her own education.

Having gone through the 8-4-4 system, Caroline needed to convert to the British System before she could study law in England. She enrolled at the Kenya School of Professional Studies for a Certificate in Legal Studies, she graduated in 1995 with a distinction and the “Best Student of the Year” award.

She then pursued three consecutive degrees in the UK, graduating with honours in law from the University of Wolverhampton in 1999, then with a postgraduate diploma in law from the University of Sheffield, and finally joining Brunel University



Caroline Simba

in 2001 to read for a Masters Degree in Human Resource Management.

Caroline went on to join Callen & Howman Solicitors, Slough, UK as a Legal Secretary, before returning to Kenya in 2003 and in 2004 joining Kaplan & Stratton Advocates as a pupil, before proceeding to Kenya School of Law.

“After completing the KSL programme I was retained as an associate in the Commercial Department at Kaplan & Stratton Advocates, where I worked until March 2009.”

At Jamii Telecom, Caroline plays a key role providing legal advice on joint ventures, strategic alliances, share purchase agreements, leases/licences, incorporations, purchase agreements, charges and debentures, and has provided legal advice to JTL on its investment in the TEAMS undersea cable that links Mombasa to Fujairah.

NELLY WAINAINA, 36

Category Marketing Manager, Home Care, Reckitt Benckiser

Every day, Nelly Wainaina reckons her job is to find ways of perfecting Reckitt Benckiser’s product offers so they never drive people mad. She is also responsible for identifying new products to satisfy household health and personal care issues.

From her office in Abuja, Nigeria, she oversees the company’s Central Africa region, which includes West and East Africa and stretches from Kenya, across parts of Central Africa to Nigeria.

Reckitt Benckiser has a modest mission; “We look at the little things that drive people mad in their everyday life,” said the company, “then we deliver brilliant, fast-acting solutions that help make life better and easier.”

“Working in a new region offers one the opportunity to work with more diverse cultures and work environment. I have been able to learn how to manage brands in a more complex business structure where various functions within the business have to be deployed to meet the marketing goals of the business.”

Nelly was appointed to this position four months ago, in January 2010. Her previous post was as Brand Manager (East Africa) and Marketing Manager (East Africa).

Reckitt Benckiser operates in 60 countries and its brands are sold across 180 countries by a workforce of 23,000 people. Last year, the company realized net revenue of Sh883.8 billion, an increase of 18 per cent from the previous year.

ORY OKOLLOH, 33

Technology entrepreneur, founder of online social network site, Ushahidi

Ms Okolloh first entered Kenya’s social conscience as a blogger and open-government activist five years ago through her website Mzalendo, famous for its bold decision to publish status reports on parliamentarians. However, it was during the aftermath of the 2007 elections that Ms Okolloh’s work was recognised on the world stage.

As a co-founder and executive director of Ushahidi, or “testimony” in Kiswahili, a website that attempted to map violence in Kenya after the post-election fallout in 2008 using reports submitted online and by mobile phone, Ms Okolloh was part of a team that created a new emergency response system.

Ushahidi has since grown into a free, open-source software project, used most recently to track the relief efforts in Haiti following the devastating earthquake.

Described – fittingly – as a wearer of many

Top 40 women under 40



Ory Okolloh

professional hats, Ms Okolloh, now 33, has a background in law, political science and development work that has seen her work in some of the biggest firms around the world.

Currently based in South Africa, she graduated with a BA degree in Political Science from the University of Pittsburgh, and a JD from Harvard Law School.

The Moi Girls High School graduate went on to work at the World Bank – looking at how bank disbursements could be subject to corruption, and whether confidentiality agreements signed as part of these loans were subject to disclosure requirements.

As a social activist, Ms Okolloh continues to run the Mzalendo website tracking the performance of Kenya's Parliament and its parliamentarians. With a vote tracker, articles and opinion pieces, the site connects Kenyans to their leaders, lifting the lid on this powerful and once-secretive body. Ms Okolloh's own blog is called Kenyan Pundit, and tracks her work with Mzalendo and her other efforts as part of the rebuilding of Kenya, following the post-election violence in late 2007.

ANNE MURAYA, 38

Audit Partner, Deloitte Consulting

Anne Muraya is a partner in the audit department of Deloitte Consulting, with over 14 years experience in auditing, and a trainer in the implementation of International Standards on Auditing and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

The international standards are allowed or even required in over 100 countries, making it possible for businesses to present internationally comparable financial statements in a single accounting language company-wide.

Anne, 38, trains within leading companies and through seminars organised by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK),



Anne Muraya

where she is a member. She has also been a panelist on the Financial Reporting (FiRe) awards held annually to recognise excellence in financial reporting. Anne holds a Bachelor of Education (Science) degree from Kenyatta University, and joined Deloitte in 1994, where as senior manager and partner she has been involved in the audit of over nine companies in the mining, financial, and tea sectors.

DR CATHERINE MUNANE MUTISYA, 35

Psychiatrist and Deputy Superintendent, Mathari Mental Hospital

After graduating from medical school in 2000,



Catherine Munane

Catherine Mutisya worked as a general practitioner until 2003, when her lifelong passion for mental health saw her switch to psychiatry for her masters, and rise rapidly to a leading role in the field. Her position is the fulfilment of a lifelong ambition, she says, which grew out of watching her own uncle struggle with schizophrenia in the hardship area of Mutomo District.

"I felt the need to help such people" she says. Dealing with mental patients is no easy task, but her love of the profession means she seldom feels worn out by the demands.

She joined Mathari Mental Hospital as Consultant Psychiatrist in 2006, where she co-ordinates the operations of nurses and doctors in the two wards that handle the most sensitive mental illness cases, such as mentally sick offenders. This sometimes requires her to assess a mental offender and present a court report. She also represents the hospital on the National Medical Board. Her other duties include conducting outreach programmes to educate Kenyans on handling the mentally ill without stigma.

She has also worked with Transgender Advocacy group in Kenya on handling such disorders. At 35 years, one of her defining moments was being involved in revising the current mental policy and presenting it to Parliament. The other was establishing Millennium Health Solutions, which also handles mental health. She is the director there.

"We realised people with mental illnesses feel traumatised going to Mathari and opt to suffer in silence," she said. Her career mantra is there is no health without mental health.

AGNES W. GATHAIYA, 37

Director, Public Sector Group, Deloitte Consulting

As director of the public sector group at Deloitte, 37-year-old Agnes Gathaiya's brief includes managing the firm's external relationships and delivering consultancy services to governments in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, as well as donor and non-governmental organisations.



Agnes Gathaiya

As governments have worked to improve public services, Ms Gathaiya has had to juggle between delivering business processes, system programming and capacity building.

Her area of specialisation is the management of large, complex public sector projects, but she also designs public sector solutions that have helped transform how governments work in the region.

She was instrumental in Deloitte's rise as a leader in managing securities and in fiduciary assurance, involving holding assets for another party, often with legal authority and duty to make decisions on financial matters on their behalf.

Agnes holds a BSc in Economics and Math-

ematics from Bryn Mawr College in the US and is pursuing an Executive MBA at the USIU Kenya.

WATURI MATU, 39

Managing Director, Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA)

Perched at the top of an organisation in a turbulent services sector, the mother of two knows too well the dangers of laxity, and is always prepared to fight to see through her ambitions. "I love my job, it's a very dynamic industry and you must live with constant change," she says.

This takes a real ability to understand opportunities and achieve the best outcomes, which has been Ms Matu's trademark.

She remembers one of her greatest career moments as "being part of the team that won a Sh50 million research contract on the economic development of the Limpopo Provincial Government in South Africa".

This came as she worked with Turnaround Partners, a Johannesburg consultancy that majors in enterprise development, business linkages, development finance, governance and public sector management. She has a BA from the University of Nairobi and an MBA from the United States International University (USIU).

ROSEMARY MOMANYI, 35

Head of Innovation, EABL

As head of innovation at East African Breweries, Rosemary Momanyi is paid to have great ideas, the foremost of which has been the company's

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Top 40 women under 40

launch into Kenya of the company's first non-alcoholic beverage, Alvaro.

The 2008 launch was both challenging and rewarding for Rosemary as she led out a team that worked days on end to put out the drink, but it established her department as a trend-setter.

"I'm happy that we are trend setters in the new category called the adult premium non alcoholic drinks because the competition immediately followed us. We have solidified our leadership in the non-alcoholic drinks category because Alvaro flavours are unique and sophisticated and offer adults choice," says Rosemary.

But Alvaro was only a beginning. Rosemary, 35, is charged with ensuring new product innovation contributes 30 per cent Year-on-Year growth to the company's bottom line, which includes leading in development and execution.

She joined East African Breweries, to spearhead the company's onslaught into new and existing markets in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia and DRC. The innovation team comprises six Innovation Project Managers across East Africa, based in both Kenya and Uganda. Each of them has a specialised background in either Marketing, Sales or Supply.

Rosemary, is a graduate of Science from the University of Maryland College Park in the US. She also holds an MBA in International Business and Management of Global IT from the American University.

ANGELA AMBITHO, 38

Founder and CEO, Infotrak (a research firm)

As far business environment can change within the shortest time one could ever imagine, Angela has seen it all in the consumer market research segment of the Kenyan economy.

When she founded Infotrak in 2004, there were only about six well established players in the market. That number has more than doubled in the past five years eroding the possible gains that players should have made in the expanded research market estimated to be worth Sh2 billion.

Under Angela, Infotrak has managed to hold its forte and its share of the pie. Perhaps the biggest measure of Infotrak's success can only be told by the number of suitors who have been knocking at Angela's door to buy the firm.

Ms Ambitho threw Infotrak into the deep end of the pool when she teamed up with American pollster Harris to enter the volatile waters of opinion polling.

"This threw us into the ring with the big



Angela Ambitho

Rosemary Momanyi



boys, but that is where must play to succeed in this market," she says.

That Infotrak has waded through the tough economic times in the last two years under Angela means women entrepreneurs have the mettle to manage in a crisis. It remains to be seen how far she will ride the recovery wave to realise her objectives.

SENAL SHAH, 29

Head of Research, Kestrel Capital East Africa

Foreign based investors have been in control of trading volumes at the Nairobi Stock Exchange changing the fortunes of those who deal with them as they cherry pick shares they perceive to be going for the cheap.

One firm that has identified a niche in the business of helping investors get market insight and benefited immensely from it is Kestrel Capital East Africa.

That business of gathering market intelligence is what 29-year-old Senal Shah steers making her a pivotal player in the company's rising fortunes.

Kestrel grew the volume of business it handled last year by 60 per cent to 37.5 billion with the bulk of the trading coming from foreign trade and local high net worth investors.

Kenya's position as eastern Africa's financial hub has caught the eye of international investors, keen to cash in on the promise of higher returns than they can hope for in the mature US, Europe and Asia markets.

A significant portion of this business has been tapped by Kestrel on the promise of delivering value to the investors—through and detailed research work.

Ms Shah joined Kestrel in August 2008 from African Alliance where she was a research analyst. She holds masters in financial mathematics from City University, London, and degree in business mathematics and Statistics from the



Senal Shah

London School of Economics.

PRISCILLA NYOKABI KANYUA, 32

Director, Kituo Cha Sheria

Priscilla's passion to see human dignity upheld and human rights and justice dispensed fairly across the marginalised in Kenya saw her appointed Executive Director of Kituo cha Sheria (KTS) last August by KTS board of directors.

At 32 years, she is also the deputy presiding officer of the African Union's civil society assembly for the East African Union in East Africa, and cites one of her career defining moments as being elected to African Union Civil Society in a ceremony Tanzanian president Kikwete presided.

Another pinnacle was in 2007 when parliament tabled the freedom of information bill. She co-ordinated the discussions and writing of the bill and pushed for its tabling in Parliament by Medical Services minister Prof Anyang Nyong'o.

By choice she has invested most of her career to human rights law and drafting laws that factor the rights of minorities in society. Her daily tasks at KTS involve coordinating the legal activities of



Priscilla Nyokabi Kanyua

the firm's 40 staff.

She also tracks progress of KTS community justice centres spread in places like Nyando, Majengo, and Shimo la Tewa. The centres take up law related complaints from residents of these poor communities.

Prior to becoming executive director at KTS, she was from 2005 the Programmes Officer at the International Commission for Jurists Kenyan chapter, an organisation also committed to human rights protection.

She was admitted to the Bar and became a High Court advocate in July 2004.

Currently she is pushing for the judiciary to allow prisoners to vote in the upcoming constitutional referendum.

KAJUJU LAIBONI, 28

Pilot, Founder and President, Women Aviators in Africa (WAFRIC)

There can be no doubt that piloting is a male dominated profession, but that has not prevented Kajulu from charting her own course and breaking new grounds.

Having began flying at the tender age of 17 as a Form Four student at Makini High School, Kajulu says her mission is to inspire a new generation of women aviators who will transform the aviation industry in Africa and make it a flying continent.

WAFRIC's goal is to foster a commitment to young people interested in the aviation through promotion of social networks that build strong interpersonal skills and reassert a sense of hope in the future. How far she will go only time will tell.



Kajulu Laiboni

Top 40 women under 40



Tara Gitau

TARA GITAU, 24

CEO, Winnie's Pure Health

Tara Gitau is the executive director behind the success of Winnie's Pure Health, the local natural foods company founded by her mother in 2003, and driven forward by Tara's strength of personality and positive attitude.

From a small kitchen set up with fewer than five employees, the company has emerged as one of the leading healthy foods companies in the country, employing over 100 workers and producing more than 40 products in six different product lines.

Winnie's Pure Health now supplies East Africa and markets as far as Zimbabwe and Canada. "We have managed to record a 25 per cent growth in our unit output over the last one year and now we are working towards being the leading healthy foods provider in the region," says Tara.

With a BA in business administration from Baylor University in the US, her previous management experience has been critical to the business, which, she says, has faced challenges that sometimes threatened to cripple its operations, including fake producers of natural food.

The company's key to survival has been ethical business practices and consumer protection.

ANGELA WAKI, 30

Corporate Lawyer & Partner, Coulson Harney

Anyone who's had a peep into the backroom world of deal-making and corporate investigations can easily tell that Angela Waki is a woman to watch.

A partner at law firm Coulson Harney, Angela has played a pivotal role in some of Kenya's biggest mergers and acquisition deals in the past four years. She was part of the advisory team that oversaw the Government of Kenya's sale of 50 per cent of shares in Kenya Petroleum Refineries Limited to Essar Energy Limited of India – paving the way for the re-development of East Africa's only oil refinery at Mombasa.

This year, Angela was among the advisors in the PricewaterhouseCoopers consortium for the privatisation of Kenya Pipeline Company. Angela is also advising companies that include NSE-listed Centum Investment Company on a wide range of corporate issues.

She was admitted as an Advocate of the High Court in 2005, trained and worked in the litigation department at Kaplan & Stratton before joining Coulson Harney two years ago.

Since then, Angela's assignments have been some of the largest merger and acquisition deals

in the country, placing her among the avant garde of young lawyers within Kenya's law fraternity.

DOROTHY SAGWE-ONYONI, 37

Finance and operations manager, Hewlett Packard East Africa

Dorothy is no media star, but at 37 she has for five years held down a demanding position as the finance and operations manager for Hewlett Packard East Africa, recently extended to cover West African countries among them Mali, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso.

Having graduated from USIU-Nairobi with a bachelor's degree in International Business Administration in 1998, her passion was to become a leading entrepreneur. Little did she know that a 60-day internship at Proctor and Gamble would be the beginning of a completely different career.

She is married and is the mother of a four-year-old son.

CHRISTINE SABWA, 35

Finance Director, CFC Stanbic Bank

Christine Sabwa is one of the few managers who have broken into the executive suite of a multi-



Dorothy Sagwe-Onyoni

national company without having a degree from a top US or European university.

The 37-year-old University of Nairobi commerce graduate was tapped in December 2009 by Standard Bank executives from their headquarters in South Africa to help run its finance department following the merger of its local shop with CFC Group.

At the time the local shop of the South

Africa firm was through a complex reorganization that created a business spanning from selling shares, motor and life insurance and managing pensioners investments. That sent the merger unit looking for someone with experience in investment and commercial banking, understood Standard Bank's corporate culture with a regional experience.

Sabwa's job is to enhance and improve financial discipline of the merged outfit besides offering advice to the board on ways to give the company an edge in the increasingly competitive banking market.

She began her career in the corporate world as an auditor at KPMG in 1999.

ACHIENG AJULU-BUSHELL, 16

World record holder and swimming personality

Achieng Ajulu-Bushell rose to the top rank in the entire world for the age 14-and-under 50m breast stroke category just as her career in sports began to flourish. She is also the African record holder in the 50m breaststroke long and short course, having broken the 10-year-old record set by Penny Haynes of South Africa.

Her first experience with competitive swimming was in Nairobi as a six-year-old at a swimming gala at St. Austin's Academy, where she won her first two gold medals. When she got home, she drew a picture of a swimmer with a red ribbon around her neck.

The picture was a self-portrait depicting her first Olympic win. Achieng continued to compete for Kenya, eventually becoming the national age group champion, before she moved to South Africa when she was 10.

Her first international competition as a Kenyan swimmer was in Senegal in September 2006 at the 8th African Swimming Championships. She was the youngest swimmer at the competition, and describes the experience as "amazing."

In 2009, Achieng won one gold and a silver at the SA Senior Nationals for Kenya. The 2008 Africa Senior Swimming Championships in South Africa saw her win two golds, one silver and two bronze medals.

She registered the world's fastest time for a 14-year-old at the World Youth Championships in Mexico in 2008, and won seven gold medals, two silvers and a bronze in the 2007 SA National age group championships.



Angela Waki



Achieng Ajulu-Bushell

Women entrepreneurs say flexibility key to

Female innovators use experience from the design world to show how the ability to compromise is key to long-term, positive growth

While posing for photographs before her high school prom, Becca Brown's high heels sank into the grass. She found herself stumbling around at a time when she most wanted to appear mature and sophisticated. The experience inspired SoleMates, the business Brown launched on the Internet in 2008 with former Goldman Sachs colleague Monica Murphy. The pair designed a plastic cap with a wide bottom that can attach to high heels to provide a more stable base while walking on uncertain terrain, such as grass or cobblestone streets.

Although getting stuck was the problem that led to the founding of SoleMates, Brown hasn't allowed inflexibility toward change to trap her business in a web of inertia. As part of a panel discussion at the recent Wharton Women

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Business Conference, she and three other female entrepreneurs showed how the ability to compromise is key to long-

term, positive growth.

In addition to Brown, the other speakers at the panel, titled "Women Pursuing Innovative Ideas: Ventures that Create Buzz," included Stacey Bendet, founder and CEO of New York clothing company *alice + olivia*; Jennifer Hyman, co-founder of dress rental company *Rent the Runway*, and Susan Smith Ellis, CEO of (RED), which raises money for Aids research and treatment.

Brown and Murphy originally envisioned selling SoleMates in stores that ran the gamut from Walmart to specialty boutiques. After reaching out to mass merchandisers and department stores, however, the pair decided that starting small offered more advantages. "We realized the better way to build the brand was to grow more organically, to go into boutiques or to wedding planners where there would be a more memorable experience than going to Target or Walmart, where we would be in a sea of products," Brown noted.

She believes that concentrating marketing and sales on boutiques and wedding planners will build a following for Connecticut-based SoleMates and convince customers to pay more for the original if and when lower price knock-offs begin to appear. Brown and her partner are currently the company's only employees.

"Has it been difficult to launch a consumer product in this economy? Yes," stated Brown, who quit her job to launch the company in 2008, just as the global economy began to crumble. But she and Murphy are pitching SoleMates as a necessity. "It's an insurance product against losing a heel and preserving the assets we already have by extending the life of our shoes," she said.

If It's Broke, Fix It

Initially, the signature look of *alice + olivia* was fanciful pants that Bendet made out of rich, but stiff and unforgiving, fabrics. Her company designs and manufactures clothes that are sold in more than 800 outlets and five-company owned shops in high-end areas.

Bendet's business model changed once she took on a new partner, long-time garment industry executive Andrew Rosen. He pointed out that the pants sold well in sizes 0 and 2, but the company was lacking in sales volume across all sizes.

"Andrew said: 'Your pants need stretch. Change the fabrics,'" Bendet noted. She went along with the idea, and pants of all sizes began to move rapidly out of the stores. "Even if you don't want to change, you've got to try it,"



Climbing the growth ladder: Women entrepreneurs say the better way to build a brand is to grow organically.

Bendet suggested. "You can change again if it doesn't work."

Rosen also helped *alice + olivia* develop new manufacturing networks in Asia that allowed the company to offer better designs at more affordable and competitive prices. The company will continue to evolve: Plans are in the works to launch more retail stores and to rely less on the wholesale model in order to grow "without being a prisoner to department stores and others," Bendet said.

Former Omnicom Group marketing executive Susan Smith Ellis was challenged by U2 frontman Bono to turn (RED) into an ongoing, sustainable private-sector approach to supporting the fight against the AIDS pandemic in Africa. The idea was inspired by the successful fundraising efforts of one-time emergency appeals, such as the Live Aid concerts. "It was a daunting task, although it is less daunting now," Ellis stated.

She started out with a model that included partnering with corporations such as Starbucks, Nike and Gap. Each time consumers bought specially designated (RED) products, the companies donated a percentage of the sale to help eliminate AIDS in Africa.

The partnerships also created visibility that drew consumer interest and helped Ellis recruit additional partners. "I knew from my years in marketing and branding that consumers want companies to do more than just make a profit," Ellis said. "Companies are not there to give money away; it has to be good for them, too."

Eventually, however, (RED) had to diversify. The New York-based company, which has 30 em-

ployees and also maintains a small office in London, has branched into other initiatives including (RED) Wire, a digital music service. Ellis also helped to produce a 2008 Valentine's Day art auction that raised \$42 million for The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. In July 2009, the group said it had raised \$130 million for AIDS patients in Africa. "(RED) is the catalyst. It is the organizing principle," Ellis noted. "You learn as you go and you have to adapt. We stayed true to the original idea, but expanded the model."

Jennifer Hyman's idea to create New York-based *Rent the Runway*, a service that allows women to rent designer dresses at a fraction of the cost, was inspired by her sister's efforts to satisfy caviar taste in fashion on a tuna fish budget.

But her business plan came to fruition, in part, thanks to harsh criticism she received while gathering input from leading designers and retailers. Hyman approached designer Diane von Furstenberg and Bergdorf Goodman CEO James Gold up front to curb potential industry opposition or efforts to kill her company. *Rent the Runway* delivers dresses by courier to subscribers who order them over the Internet, much like a Netflix movie.

Gold and von Furstenberg each told Hyman that "there is an idea here, but here are the problems I have with it," she said. "Then I came up with a model to address the problems and create something that might be beneficial to the community."

Hyman, who used to work in the hotel business, believes that renting designer dresses alleviates the cost burden on women trying to develop their own sense of style. It also would encourage customers to experiment and take fashion risks, because they

Success



wouldn't have to sweat a hefty price tag.

She convinced von Furstenberg that Rent the Runway could lead to an overall increase in sales for the designer's line because dress rentals would tap into an audience beyond those willing to buy the garments at full price.

Indeed, letting women experiment with high-end brands via rentals would turn them into full-price customers of the designers with styles that worked best for them.

To address Gold's objections, Hyman decided that Rent the Runway would not make dresses available until the items had been in retail stores for at least eight weeks.

The delay allows stores to sell the clothes at full price to willing consumers before facing competition from Rent the Runway. The company, which launched in November 2009, would not have developed as well if von Furstenberg and Gold had immediately embraced her idea, Hyman said. Her advice to budding entrepreneurs is simple: "Think about who hates the idea most and actually listen to what they have to say."

In addition to learning from industry insiders, Hyman and partner Jennifer Fleiss are also listening to their customers. They initially expected that Rent the Runway's target audience would be women aged 18 to 30 living in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

But early customer data revealed a much broader subscription base of women between the ages of 16 and 50 living all over the country.

Customers like the chance to sample designer duds, but they also embraced the convenience of not having to trek to the mall to buy a dress, Hyman noted. "We're finding that when we ask middle-aged baby boomers why they are renting they say, 'I've never worn any of these brands before and I work eight to nine hours a day.'" Said Hyman: "We're using that information to grow."

» Travel tips for smart women

1. Sleep smart

Dark circles under your eyes aren't good for business. Many road warriors know that you can only use a certain amount of concealer to cover bags under your eyes to mask jetlag or poor sleep nights in strange hotel rooms. So carry eye masks and earplugs. Invest in a blow-up pillow to sleep soundly on planes. They also prevent your hair from being flattened as you sleep.

2. Carry rations

If your flight is delayed or has mechanical problems, you may spend hours on the runway or circling in the air while your stomach is screaming. Airlines offer little more than the tiny, salty rations of peanuts or pretzels for short flights. Carry a nutritious and filling power bar and an apple in your bag.

3. Pack lightly

If you need to be dressed in business attire for a meeting the same day you travel, wear it on the plane. Always assume your luggage may be lost and be prepared. Pack the least amount of clothes and shoes you think you can survive on. You can wear the same mix-and-match outfits day after day. Leave room in your bag for the shopping treasures you can't resist along the way.



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