

Teacher turned events extraordinaire, Amanda Rabinowitz

 By [Lauren Hartzenberg](#)

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Durban-born Amanda Rabinowitz started her career as a school teacher, but the "entrepreneurial bug" soon bit and she's now the proud owner of a growing experiential events business.



Amanda Rabinowitz

Her company, Jellybean Concept Events, is a Cape Town-based agency that focuses on conceptualised events within the shopping mall, private and corporate events spaces.

In the spirit of [#EntrepreneurMonth](#), Rabinowitz shares the highs, lows and learnings on her startup journey.

■ ***Tell us a bit about your career before Jellybean Concept Events, and what led you to start your own business.***

I qualified as a foundation phase teacher in Durban in 2007. Whilst studying I started up a kids party company with a friend. Penguin Parties was a combination of passion for dance and theatre, love for kids, and a need for extra income being a student. Needless to say, it became a success for a couple of years until we both qualified and moved into full-time careers.

I moved to Cape Town in 2010 as a teacher for a well-known Jewish private school. After a year and a bit, the entrepreneurial bug started biting. Something sparked the need to recreate and launch a new kids party company in Cape Town, which I started to do on weekends.

I came across an Ort Jet startup business plan competition and worked on an insane pitch and proposal to a panel of judges in Joburg. After placing second in this competition I decided that this was the confidence boost I needed to jump ship and do what I love - entrepreneurship.

▣ ***What does Jellybean Concept Events specialise in?***

We specialise in experiential out-the-box activations and events for shopping malls, corporates and private clients.



The Rugby World Cup 'Tackle Toss Triumph' experiential event at Liberty Promenade Mall, conceptualised and executed by Jellybean Concept Events.

▣ ***As an entrepreneur, describe your average work day, if such a thing exists.***

I think what makes entrepreneurship so exciting is how each day is so different. I try to get some exercise done in the morning to clear my head for the day. This allows me to work later into the evening. There are many weekends and after-hours taken up with events and work. I don't have my own family yet, so my business is my baby and I devote all hours to it.

▣ ***What has been your favourite project you have worked on thus far?***

I absolutely love working on our experiential events at shopping malls. My favourite one to date must have been our Ribbon Printing factory event at Sandton City. I am also super passionate about sports cars, and being involved in several Ferrari launches must be at the top of my list.

▣ ***With shopping mall activations forming part of your service, why do believe them to still be valuable in an increasingly digital world?***

We are constantly working with marketing managers and landlords at the shopping centres to create out-of-the-box concepts that will pull feet and increase dwell time of their shoppers. This could be from kids' activations to family or even

adult activations. Anything that is engaging and memorable and gives shoppers a reason to come to a mall is a winning recipe of success.



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■ ***You recently returned from a trip to Israel where you were exposed to the country's entrepreneurial culture. What are your key takeaways from your trip?***

To resist the temptation to think small. Always thinking bigger and how you can service not just South Africa but the world on a larger scale. Also about being resilient, and how failure is good. You need to see it as a 'lesson learned' and 'experienced gained'.

■ ***Some of the biggest struggles and major highlights on your startup journey so far?***

Major highlights have been year on year business growth, in both income generation and client base. My biggest struggle is the internal struggles of having a small team and hiring incorrectly.

■ ***How do you plan to grow your business, and what is your ultimate vision for Jellybean Concept Events?***

We have big plans. It's been super rewarding seeing how far the business has developed from a kiddies party company into an experiential events agency.

Just having a clear vision of where you want to be, and how you are different from the rest of the event space is my personal recipe for success. However slow and steady has always been the best method for us. We are growing our internal team at the moment, as well as spreading our footprint around southern Africa.



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■ ***If you could travel back in time to the start of your career and give yourself one piece of business advice, what would it be?***

I would have a clearer vision from the start. When I first started Jellybean I was very confused about which direction I wanted to take the business. Two years ago I started actually knowing where I wanted to be and this made me accelerate the growth and start to see massive growth.

Business advice to myself: Set up clearer internal systems initially. Backing myself in my decisions would have helped me in the early days.

For more information visit [Jellybean Concept Events](#) online and connect with the brand on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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