CHRISTOPHER VAN BLERK

Client Growth, Partner Success & Customer Value

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Cape Town based · Available for in office and hybrid work

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

I grow the value of existing customers and partner networks. At Food Sock I lead growth across sales, marketing, CRM and data for a network of more than 300 independent resellers and three consumer brands. The business only grows when partners stay active, sell more and feel supported, so I traced why partners were leaving, found the moments that decide whether they stay, and rebuilt onboarding, engagement, campaigns and reporting around them. I also led the marketing rebrand, rebuilt the brand websites and report weekly to the CEO and COO on growth, pipeline and network health. Before that I spent nine years building the systems behind The Lewis Group's sales call centre, collections floors and head office departments, where every change had to show up in the daily numbers reviewed by the executive team. I combine customer insight and a background in applied psychology with hands on data, automation and AI skills.

SELECTED RESULTS

- Diagnosed a year long decline in a 300 account partner network as an onboarding and engagement problem rather than a pricing one: two thirds of churn happened inside 30 days, day 60 decided whether a partner stayed, and pack size made no difference. Redesigned the partner journey around those findings and reset the growth plan.
- Found that reporting overstated active partners by about a third and month to date revenue nearly fourfold. Rebuilt the metric definitions and dashboards so leadership tracks retention, activity and revenue per partner from one trusted source.
- Audited the paid social account and restructured it: consolidated campaigns that were bidding against each other, fixed conversion tracking across the website and built the monthly paid media plan approved by the CEO and COO.
- Rebuilt two brand websites and built a third from scratch, and fixed the technical SEO foundations across them: sitemaps, duplicate pages, permanent redirects, page titles, descriptions and share images.
- At The Lewis Group, delivered systems for a 100 seat sales call centre, two collections floors, HR and Procurement on one platform, and caught a R1.4 million order error caused by a vendor deployment before any stock left the warehouse.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Partner & account growth, upsell & cross sell
- Customer insight, research & journey mapping
- Paid social, content & campaign planning
- CRM, automation & AI workflows
- Team leadership, coaching & facilitation
- Retention, onboarding & lifecycle design
- Dashboards, KPIs & executive reporting
- Websites, technical SEO & analytics
- Agency & stakeholder management
- Business cases, budgets & growth planning

WORK EXPERIENCE

Growth Manager | Food Sock Meals, Strand — Jun 2026 to present

Joined as Reseller Manager. Scope grew to Head of Sales within three months and to full growth ownership (sales, marketing, CRM, data and channel strategy) in October 2026. Report to the COO and lead a team of three. Food Sock is a South African FMCG business selling affordable meals through 300+ independent resellers, e-commerce, retail and NGO channels.

Partner growth & retention

- Ran the cohort retention, segmentation and revenue concentration analysis (roughly half of partners produce 80% of revenue) that identified when and why partners churn.
- Designed the First 90 Days programme with touchpoints timed to peak churn risk, the 15 chapter Reseller Playbook, a weekly live community session I founded and host, a monthly newsletter and a three tier offboarding framework.
- Lead the sales team with daily stand ups, individual KPIs and a lead outreach playbook. Negotiate distributor, federation, retail and export partnerships.

Marketing & brand

- Led the marketing rebrand and wrote the creative framework that governs all brand content, from claims and asset rules to video series, QA and approval.
- Built the content calendar and a three posts a week system tied to four paid campaigns (partner acquisition, website traffic, audience building and remarketing). Manage the external paid media agency, including scope, budget and fees.

Websites, data & systems

- Rebuilt two brand websites and built a new brand site from scratch (Next.js, Payload CMS, PostgreSQL) with self service content management, analytics and POPIA compliance. Rebuilt the partner ordering portal with a phone first design, one tap reorder and a marketing asset hub.
- Built the company's Insights Dashboard (Node/TypeScript, PostgreSQL) and write a weekly growth report for the CEO and COO covering marketing, sales pipeline, network health and decisions needed.
- Migrated the CRM to a new platform, linking about 3,000 contacts and 350 partner accounts. Run n8n automations and set up WhatsApp Business messaging with consent compliance.

Founder & Technical Consultant (part time) | Rolodex, Cape Town — Jan 2026 to present

- AI and automation solutions for small business clients using n8n and the Anthropic and OpenAI APIs. Operations and procurement support for a manufacturing start up in Hamburg.

Platform Specialist & Front End Developer | Genius Platforms, California (remote) — Apr 2024 to Dec 2025

- Platform delivery for US clients in an Agile scrum team: requirements, implementation, QA, release and the client training that drove adoption.

Co-founder & Director | Bluelight Software, Cape Town — Feb 2022 to Mar 2024

- Co-founded and directed a software company, responsible for strategy, budget, client relationships and technical direction. Met almost daily with the executive team of our principal client, The Lewis Group, and produced the CEO's daily operations report.

Developer & Client Solutions Lead | Brainwave Projects, Cape Town — Jan 2015 to Jan 2022

- Seven years embedded with The Lewis Group, a JSE listed credit retailer, as solutions lead for its call centres and head office departments. Worked daily with the Sales Call Centre Manager to map how agents worked, define the metrics that mattered and redesign the flow, supported by dialler integration, SQL Server reporting and live wallboards.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

- Diploma in Counselling and Communication Skills (NQF 6), major in Business Communication, South African College of Applied Psychology (SACAP), 2015
- Private Pilot Licence, Morningstar Flight Academy, 2021

TOOLS & TECHNOLOGY

CRM & automation: Zoho Bigin, GoHighLevel, n8n, WhatsApp Business API, Anthropic and OpenAI APIs. Marketing & web: Meta Ads Manager, Google Search Console, GA4, WordPress, WooCommerce, Shopify, Next.js, Payload CMS. Data & reporting: SQL, PostgreSQL, SQL Server, Looker Studio, Metorik, Google Sheets modelling, custom dashboards. Engineering: TypeScript, React, Node.js, .NET, Python. Delivery: Agile/Scrum, Jira, Notion.