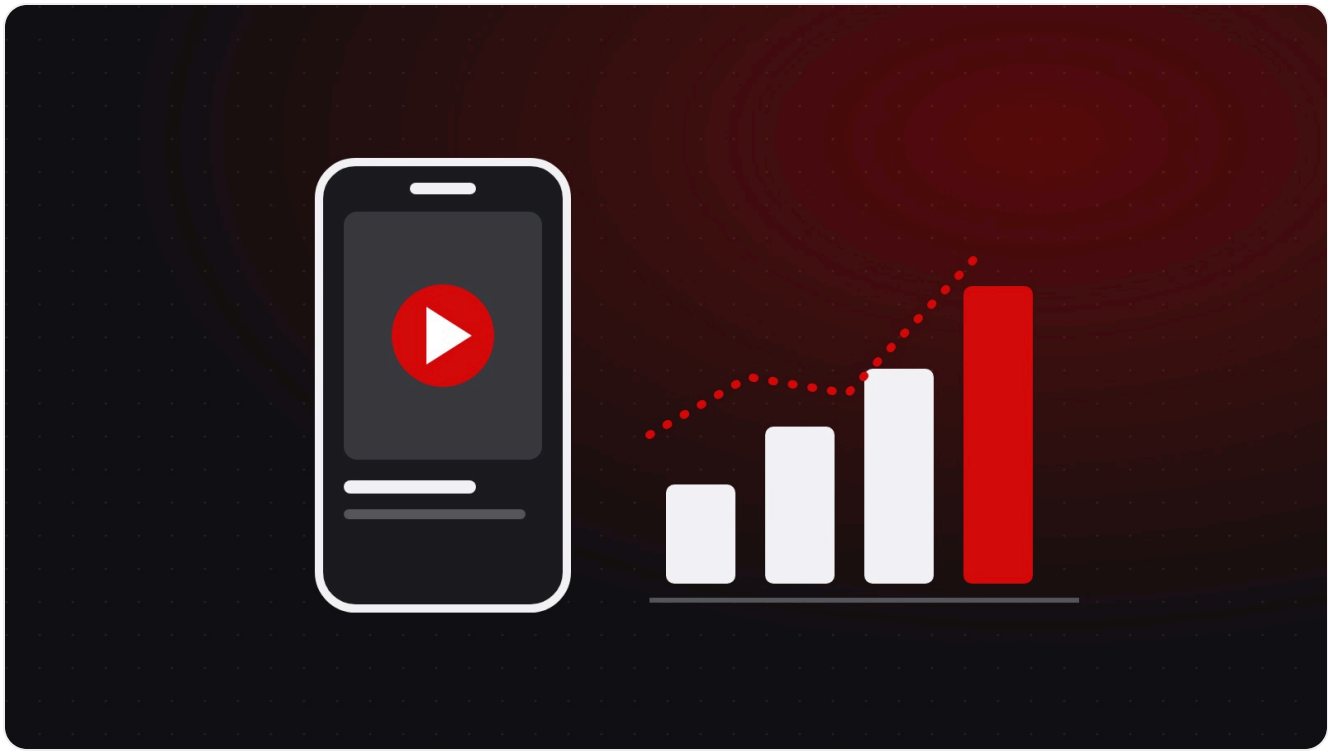
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# South Africa: Revenue Generation and Digital Ventures.



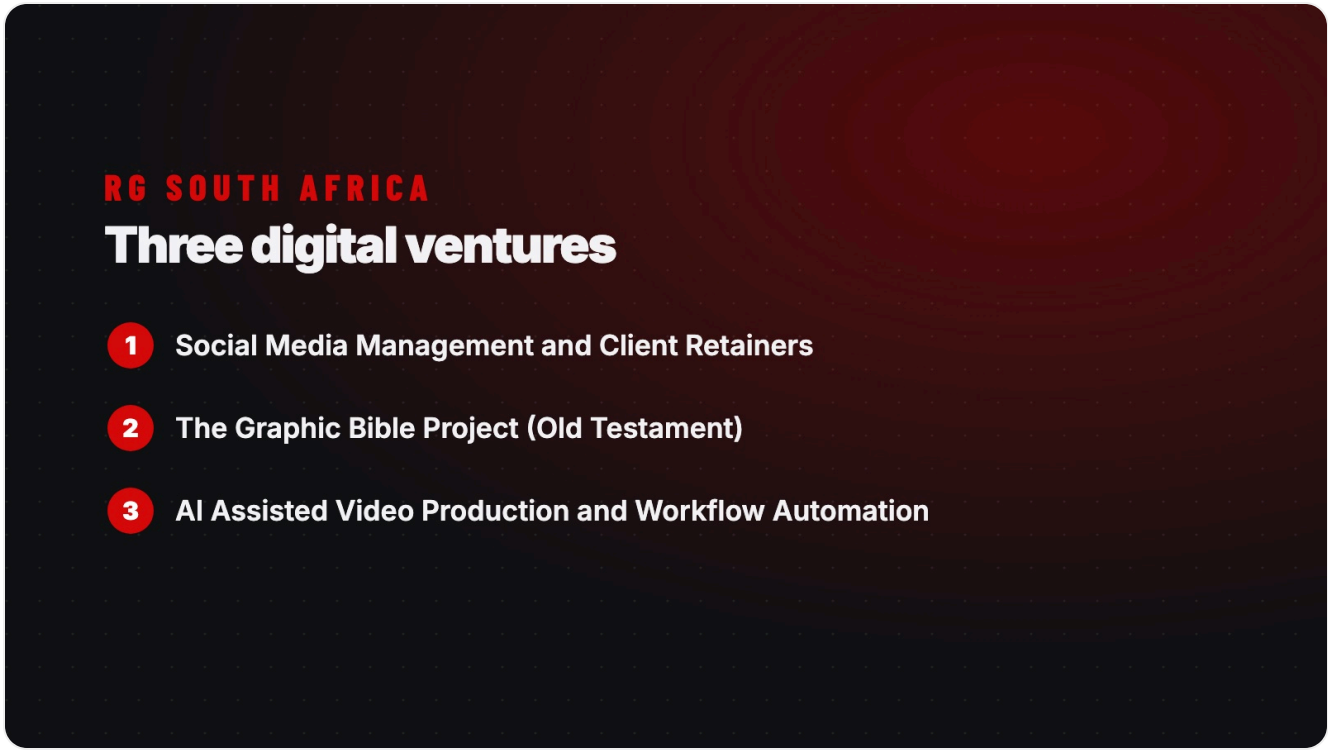
By Tommy Lee



A year ago I was wrapping up my time in Johannesburg after our Faith and Work Conference for Resource Global South Africa. Over lunch I was talking to some of our cohort members who were telling me about the huge percentage of unemployment in Johannesburg, as well as the low minimum wage. There were many, as they told me, who were trying to make side income by creating social media videos that would go viral. That got me thinking. Creating videos that become viral is hard. But how could I build on this idea and create jobs through the skills they brought, along with revenue to create sustainability for the work of Resource Global in South Africa?

Over the past six months, what began as an early conversation at Northpoint Church in Johannesburg has grown into a working, revenue generating digital venture, known first as Social Media One (operating locally through our LLC that I launched in the US, Create Possible, and transitioning now into Gospel Ventures Studio). The goal is to create steady income for local talent and help fund ministry by serving international clients. The project is overseen by Loren Joseph (serving as Team Lead and client liaison from Kolkata, India) and led on the ground in South Africa by Aria Chinaboo, alongside core team members Linda Mdlalose, Gift Soko, and Musa Buthelezi in Johannesburg.

Key operational pillars and milestones over the last six months include:




## Social Media Management and Client Retainers

The team provides digital marketing and social media account management for both US based ministry initiatives and commercial clients, using the lower operating costs in South Africa to offer high quality services. Aria has been managing social strategy and campaigns for Beth Galik at Legendary Communities and the Rich in Faith storytelling initiative, including plans for an interactive storytelling competition designed to draw wide viewer engagement. Linda leads social media content and brand strategy for executive leadership accounts as well as pastoral and

ministry partners, while Musa has expanded client work to commercial accounts, including digital marketing and practice workflow automation for dental practices and eventually doctors' offices in the US.

## The Graphic Bible Project (Old Testament)

Led by Aria with visual design, scripting, and layout execution supported by Linda, Gift, and Musa, this project is producing illustrated Scripture lessons made for Gen Z and Gen Alpha audiences. The team is currently building out 40 core Old Testament stories (starting with foundational ones such as Cain and Abel and Abraham's Covenant). The team uses ChatGPT Plus custom GPTs to keep the story and the visual prompts consistent, along with standard Canva Pro templates and a unified color palette, to produce comic and storyboard formats that are engaging and not too text heavy. After they are done, they will work on the New Testament. After that, they will work on a hymns project.

## AI Assisted Video Production and Workflow Automation

Instead of relying on traditional graphic tools alone, the team is building real AI skills to offer more services. Gift is focused on researching, training on, and producing professional AI generated video, following quality guidelines that keep the visuals authentic for digital campaigns, podcasts, and client media. Musa is the team's technical specialist, working on automated AI pipelines that can be packaged as repeatable, scalable software and services for small businesses and partners. He is also helping me experiment with voice cloning, podcasting, and script writing using AI. His newest project is a 52 episode series on the US Presidents to generate monthly passive income.

These individuals will now apply for the Resource Global South Africa cohort, where I will be their mentor. So aside from our team meetings, I will meet with them to talk about the hows and whys of their work, but also the biblical grid in which we see our work. We will work on exercises in stewardship and giving, along with budgeting, as well as leadership, character development, mission, vision, and a deeper understanding of faith and work.

One of the things I have emphasized to them is the importance of excellence in their work. This includes having a hard work ethic (something you cannot train), communication, meeting deliverables and timelines, and being disciplined in the small things. I do remind them also that this is a job. If they do it well, we will increase their income. But if they don't do it well, I will be forced to let them go. When we first started, we had six people who were part of the team. I had to let two of them go because they could not perform up to par with the projects.

In partnership with the church, we also bought them two book scanners that will scan books I have purchased to build the knowledge base of our AI Bible Research Assistant. This is to support the work that our AI volunteer in the US is working on, led by my friend Melissa Wong.

The profit made from these ventures will then be used to donate to Resource Global South and thus slowly develop sustainability alongside donations made by fundraising. We are developing another revenue bucket and are not solely dependent on donations.

*Tommy*

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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