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EXCLUSIVE

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POSTER

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Bryan Habana**

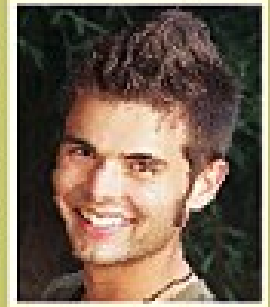
HOW SA'S TOP BLOGGER RAKES IN THE CASH

Paid to live the high life!

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My new life of aliens and adulation

WE TALK TO SURVIVOR CHINA WINNER TODD
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EMMYS
Rubbing shoulders with TV's top stars



CLEAR OUT THE CLUTTER: TIPS THAT REALLY WORK
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Nice work – SA blogger Seth Rotherham's amazing world of fun and money

By Pieter van Zyl
Pictures: Martin de Kock

My life's a HOLIDAY!

DO YOU love living and writing about the good life, making it sound so enticing people can't wait for your next offering? Then your blog could be your ticket to Hollywood.

That's exactly what has happened to Seth Rotherham (32) from Camps Bay, Cape Town. Until a few years ago he was just a regular guy with a regular life. Then he started writing 2oceansvibe.com.

He now lives at the exclusive Cape Royale Hotel in Green Point and drives around in luxury cars – today an Audi R8, tomorrow perhaps a red Ferrari with a CA 3 numberplate.

"I live the dream life and write about it," he says.

"People lend me smart cars to drive and give me clothes with designer labels to wear because I let people who read my blog plug into my life. I invite them to live my philosophy and the blog's slogan: work is a sideline, live the holiday."

The view from his private suite at the Cape Royale is breathtaking. He has a bird's-eye view of the new Green Point stadium, and the sparkling blue sea and green sports-

fields at Mouille Point provide the perfect inspiration to write the next entry for his blog.

"Take a look, Macky D's 24-hour drive-through take-aways stayed put while all the development took place around it, very clever," he remarks.

That kind of thing catches his eye and he punts it because it's one of the secrets of his success: to drop (brand) names on his web and get paid up to R150 000 a year for each brand.

Seth has a slight stutter but when he records video clips for his blog it disappears like mist in the Atlantic Seaboard morning sun.

He's shorter than his larger-than-life avatar on his blog but from his red-framed Ray-Bans, which he rarely removes, to his peppermint-green Puma tankies he's a walking advertising billboard.

"I'll never punt brands on my blog if I don't believe in them – even if they paid me," he insists.

About four years ago a company approached him – he can't remember its name – to mention its product on his blog for payment.

"They liked my sense of humour and blogging style.



They offered me R1 000. Thinking back now it's a joke. That was money for jam."

Seth's 2oceansvibe.com blog was the winner in six categories in this year's SA Blog Awards, including best blog, best humour and best blog entry.

The winning video clip in which Seth practises for an imaginary fight with Idols judge Randall Abrahams to the theme music of the movie Rocky had

more than 100 000 hits.

After Seth slated Randall for his lack of intelligence the Idols judge challenged him on radio station 5FM and by e-mail "to meet me face to face to test my intelligence and patience".

Randall was apparently gagged by his bosses so Seth emerged the winner in the verbal slanging match.

This small victory is only the tip of the iceberg.

'I live the dream life and write about it'

IN THE mock documentary *Adopted American*, stand-up comic Pauly Shore comes to South Africa to fetch an orphan. If Madonna and Angelina Jolie can do it why not him?

5FM got into the spirit of things and launched a fun competition, which was won by Zinzi Mangweni who flew to Hollywood to find out what it would be like to be the comedian's adopted child for a week.

The producers of the mock doccie invited Seth to cover the trip with images and blog entries. The six-episode commentary is hilarious.

Offerings like this have made 2oceansvibe.com so popular it has up to 200 000 hits a month.

"I chat about anything that interests me," Seth says.

He comments on sports stars, reveals where the coolest beautiful people hang out, discusses which new clothing items and accessories are a must and raves about women in bikinis.

One of the most popular offerings on his blog is the *Weather Girls Show* which sends viewership skyrocketing.

South African models including Tracy McGregor and Genevieve Morton chat about their careers and, sporting bikinis, indicate on a map where they'll be over the next few days.

Seth even managed to per-

suade Titanic actor Billy Zane to appear on the blog when he was in South Africa for a Harley-Davidson launch.

After nearly a decade of blogging he knows what his readers want.

He started posting pictures and entries on his website seven years ago when the word "blog" hadn't even been coined.

Seth was more or less born with a computer on his lap. He was six when he first programmed a computer, took it apart and put it back together.

"I was an only child so had lots of time to play on the computer on my own," he says.

He went to Bishops where he was smart enough to befriend boys who would later become

MAIN PICTURE: Seth Rotherham in his Cape Royale suite in Cape Town where he enjoys writing his blog on the bed. **LEFT:** Blogging at the breakfast table in the morning, often long before his first cup of coffee.



sport stars, such as Robbie Fleck, Herschelle Gibbs and Bob Skinstad ("from Hilton College, shame").

"That's why I can send them up and use them occasionally for my blog," Seth says. "People like it when you take the mickey out of celebs – and get away with it."

After school he studied marketing at Cape Technikon (now Cape Town University of Technology) then left for the UK "to find myself".

He designed websites for among others the BBC and made a financial killing during the internet boom.

When he came back to SA in 2001 he started an internet business renting out luxury holiday villas in the Cape Peninsula.

His blog was initially only a hobby but two years ago it was doing so well financially it became his full-time job.

Now he's South Africa's blogging and mom Lovonne and dad Simon, both successful businesspeople who live in the south of France, are bursting with pride.

"They're very excited I was able to make something out of nothing, that I turned a passion into a career."

That's the universal recipe for success: live the holiday. □

SETH'S BLOGGING TIPS

- Stop talking; sit down and write. Go to www.blogspot.com for step-by-step instructions on how to start your own online journal.
- Download Blog Desk free at www.blogdesk.org. It makes it easy to upload each day's entries directly. If you're flying off somewhere and won't be at your computer for a while you can write ahead and program on which day and at what time each entry must be uploaded onto your blog.
- Get a striking logo readers will instantly associate with your blog.
- It must be fun. Your readers mustn't feel you're struggling to churn out each day's entry.
- Be original. Offer something that's not available on the internet.
- Choose a topic and stick to it. If your passion is wine, write a wine blog. "My blog is about holidays and luxuries," Seth says.
- Look for a bigger blog with lots of traffic, e-mail the owner, tell him you like his blog and want to create a link from your blog to his provided he does the same for you.

Seth with his latest flashy wheels – an Audi R8.

