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## Need to Meet: Sasha Jensen, Founder and CEO, Context Jensen Partners

By Eamon Murphy

**S**asha Jensen began her professional life as a journalist, working as head of investigations for the *Sunday Independent* in Johannesburg before a stint on Fleet Street.

In London, she recalled, she happened to be introduced to the CEO of a finance search firm who “suggested that the commodity we have as journalists, which is the ability to work with people, would be very complementary to a career in recruitment.”

Fittingly enough, “I was headhunted,” she said.

Thirteen years later, Jensen runs her own recruitment firm, **Context Jensen Partners**, which “solely focuses on placing asset raisers in teams across the entirety of alternatives,” she explained. Previously just Jensen Partners, the firm added “Context” after an investment by **Context Capital Partners** in December 2015.

Jensen saw a gap in the market for a “strategic, data-analytical methodology,” an approach that would offer clients quantitative as well as qualitative insights. Her idea was to start “at the sourcing point,” going to investors to seek information on marketers.

The first step was to create an investor database, including more than 4,000 worldwide, across all strategies. Jensen and her team then built a CRM network of top marketers, “the first in the investors’ minds. Simultaneously, we ran a big-data model of recruitment alongside this, which effectively gathers investor intelligence,” mapping the distribution platform across hundreds of firms.

The result is a search product Jensen calls 360° Investor Referencing Methodology, intended “to ensure that we could analyze and understand the veracity of each candidate’s asset-raising claims effectively. It’s very important to understand whether they raised money directly or as part of a big team.”

Countries in which a candidate has raised assets, types of deals they’ve done, and what their Rolodex looks like are all included, as well as “personality and peer analysis.”

Jensen attributes this emphasis on data to her reportorial background. “When you’re an investigative journalist, it’s a skill set you have to know. It just makes sense to be exact with the numbers and try to substantiate claims.” She said CJP is spending \$150,000 a year on research alone, which would have been impossible without Context’s capital injection.



In addition to handling around 12 private-market mandates at a time, Jensen offers advisory services, “talking to different firms about how they should shape their distribution teams in terms of where they need to get their AUM to.”

In terms of hiring trends, Jensen sees “an institutionalizing of distribution and investor relations divisions. ... IR is not just a nice-to-have, it’s a must-have.”

And the makings of a good IR professional have changed: “There’s a requirement for a very technical marketer, whereas before you could maybe be less intimate with the investments themselves. And now there’s a sense of LPs really needing to be sure of where their investments are going and why. ... To put a headline on that, I would say really high-level EIQ [emotional intelligence quotient].” ❖

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