

Welcome to executive interviews, where we pose questions to executives on their role and the highlights of their career

Jessan Doton – Radisson Blu Fiji New
Director Sales and Marketing

'The hotel industry has always fascinated me and the opportunity came up to join a global brand that I couldn't turn down.'

Compiled by



Charles Chambers

Jessan Doton is one determined young woman and has taken on a huge challenge as the Director of Sales and Marketing for Radisson Blu Resort Fiji.

A wealth of experience from a journalist to working for our national carrier Fiji Airways, Ms Doton has never shied away from any responsibility given to her.

Ms Doton is no stranger to the tourism industry. Already she has knuckled to one of the most difficult job at any resort or hotel, and that is making sure the rooms at the resort are filled with visitors.

This is no easy feat but she has taken the fight head on. **Below are excerpts of her story:**

Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

I was born in Manila, Philippines to a very medical family – my mother is a dentist, my dad's a doctor, my maternal grandfather was also a dentist and my maternal grandmother a pharmacist.

My grandparents on my dad's side went against the mould and were educators and academics.

After my parents finished their postings in public health living in Lakeba, Nadi, and finally Ba.

They decided to put down roots in Ba and started their private practice.

Education Background

That's where I attended Primary and High School at Saint Theresa's and Xavier College respectively.

I was fortunate to attend foundation studies at Otago University. Luckily this was before the cold chased me up north to Auckland where I studied Film, Television & Media Studies (Major) and English (Minor) at Auckland University.

Tell us a bit about your career till today?

I started my career in journalism, volunteering for The Jet (community newspaper) before joining the Fiji Sun as a reporter then progressing to manage both news and advertising sales in the West Bureau.

After three and a half years there I joined the national airline at the cusp of their rebranding, an exciting and interesting time.

I was at Fiji Airways for seven years, most of which was in the Public Relations Department as Manager PR.

Then most recently overseeing the project to bring the inflight magazine (FijiTime) in-house.

After the successful implementation and handover of the magazine to the talented in-house team.

It's been an exciting and interesting experience so far and I look forward to contributing my knowledge and experience to this wonderful property!

What is your best memory so far that stands out in your working career?

There are many, but one that always strikes a chord was being on the delivery flight on Fiji Airways' first A330 from Hong Kong to Nadi.

The flight did a low fly over most of the Fiji group and many places we flew over, there were people on rooftops with 'Bula, Welcome home' signs, children forming shapes on their school grounds, people in car parks waving up.

It was an experience money can't buy.

Did your parents or any family members have any influence in your career path?

My parents always hoped one of their children would eventually take up their practice, but we all swayed away from it.

However, that being said, I always loved to read and write and my parents always encouraged it. I was a science student until Foundation Studies and my dad was my science tutor in high school.

Inspiration

So both he and mom fuelled my affinity for science, but in uni, the thought of another chemistry paper had me looking for alternative.

That's where I went back to my love of writing and took up media studies, which eventually took me on a journalism and PR path.



SUN INTERVIEW

“

I made a switch in careers from the airline to the hotel industry, joining the Radisson Blu Resort Fiji Denarau Island as Director Sales and Marketing just 3 weeks ago.

Jessan Doton

*Director Sales and Marketing,
Radisson Blu Resort*

My parents love to travel so that in a way influenced a travel and tourism career path.

What is your specialised field or are you an all-rounder?

I specialise in Public Relations, a lot of which during my career had branches in marketing and creative campaigns, which plays a big part in my current career at the Radisson Blu.

I see a lot of areas where my experience can be used as well as a lot of opportunities for me to further develop.

In what capacity are you in with Radisson Blu?

I joined the Radisson Blu three weeks ago as Director Sales and Marketing.

What does your new job entail?

I am responsible for planning and implementing sales, marketing and product development strategies that align with the short and long term goals of the organisation.

The Sales and Marketing team looks after wholesale, MICE and direct sales activities.

This is targeted towards existing and new markets.

The team also looks after brand.

Fun facts:

What is your favourite past time?

Catching up with friends- good company is underrated.

What are your hobbies?

Travelling, writing, watching documentaries, exploring new dining experiences.

What is your favorite dish?

Oh man, this is such a hard question but a good crab dish is difficult to beat.

Do you cook at home and what do you like best to cook?

I like to cook for others, but if it's just me I tend to buy food

What is your favourite dish that either your mum or dad cooks or the best dishes from both?

My mom's pancit (Filipino vermicelli noodles cooked in prawn stock with chicken and vegetables)

What are your dislikes?

Long queues, bad service, the fact that some still think climate change isn't real

When eating out what do want to see in restaurants?

Good service, clean surroundings, delicious food, good value for money