

Brief Curriculum Vitae

Theo Pistorius Consultant



Born in Phalaborwa where both his father and grandfather worked for (and helped set up) Foskor, Theo Pistorius was always drawn to engineering and data. While reading industrial engineering in 2005 at the University of Pretoria he started and eventually sold his first enterprise, which later went on to become South Africa's largest e-Commerce company. Returning to the books in his mid-twenties, Theo studied Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing, specifically focusing on rapid remote sensing techniques for accurate, verifiable data.

His research into the use of crowdsourcing multispectral data analysis led to him being awarded first prize at the UNISA and GISSA research competitions, and allowed him to present at the International Geographic and Remote Sensing Symposium in Quebec, Canada, in 2014, where he was also requested to act as a session chair.

While lecturing under the guidance of his mentor, Dr Nitesh Poona (now Scientist: Digital Agriculture at the SA Sugarcane Institute), Theo started a platform- and technology-agnostic multi- and hyperspectral remote sensing business to help his students get accurate research data, while providing assistance to farmers. Integrisense, through its DroneClouds product, won the 2016 Airbus Space and Remote Sensing Competition in Toulouse, France, while servicing clients including Bayer, Monsanto and various South African farmers.

After exiting DroneClouds in 2017, Theo established Observa in 2018, adding in-situ, satellite and under-net crop-monitoring to its stable, while focusing again on helping people answer their crop questions using the correct, verifiable data tools rather than selling drone flights and imagery as a product. There he has consulted to organisations including Aerobotics, Stellenbosch University, the Exponential Africa Institute, Airbus, Bayer, Harmony, BerryWorld and a host of local and international farmers to select relevant technologies.

Theo lives in Durbanville, South Africa, with his wife Lisa, where he helps impact- and values-driven startups to start and grow, and lectures students on humour and leadership, because they say they know enough about remote sensing.