

# IN THE NICK

Through the marriage of design and technology, founder and CEO of BNC Technology Nick Caripis creates the future of home entertainment

# OF TIME

## THRIVE PERSONALITY

**F**inding a way to combine his love for sport with a viable profession was something that was always at the back of Nick Caripis's mind. Pursuing a career in medicine seemed like a good answer to his dilemma, but after spending one day with a general practitioner, his perspective was completely altered.

'I didn't think too much about my career when I was young,' Caripis recalls. 'I didn't really have any direction, so I focussed on something that was a passion of mine – sports – hoping to get some direction. I still didn't have a clue, so I started studying a bachelor of commerce degree, but eventually dropped out. I then moved on to a one-year diploma in IT.'

Caripis travelled to London with his girlfriend Bianca – now his wife of just over a decade – and worked in bars and restaurants for close to two years. Upon



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their return to South Africa, Nick started studying a correspondence degree through Unisa, but having entrepreneurial blood, he preferred working at night and learning more about the IT field.

'I was offered multiple opportunities over the years as I think others recognised the passion and attention to detail I always had for my job,' Caripis says. 'I considered dabbling in an imported shoe brand and also speculated getting involved in the property market. But, I soon learned that to put all my passion in one venture was the correct thing to do, and this would be a turning point for me when it came to starting my own business.'

#### **AESTHETIC TECH**

Caripis started BNC Technology – a home-integrated technology company – in 2005 from a simple desk, which he still has today, underneath the floating staircase in his apartment in Fourways, Johannesburg. He was always intrigued by technology and he recalls tinkering with an electronic circuit-board game his parents bought him when he was younger, the main attraction for him was always the design aspect.

'I guess the Italian side of me was always attracted to well-designed vehicles, furniture, clothing, and so on,' Caripis says. 'I have always appreciated good product design. This is exactly what BNC believes it's good at and what makes us stand out in the industry. This holds true whether it be design in electronic systems, cinema interiors, or from a practical perspective.'

Naturally, not all of BNC Technology competitors feel the same way. But, even with aggressive industry players resorting to shortcuts and price wars, Caripis refuses to compromise on quality or functionality, as doing so would be too damaging to the reputation he has worked so hard to build. 'I knew the path I needed to take and that it was going to be tough,' he says. 'I hate

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losing and love proving people wrong. So, I had to be patient. Through constant work and always maintaining consistency in our service and the quality of our workmanship, we kept re-investing in our company's brand and focusing on getting better and better.'

#### **DIARY OF A CEO**

Besides taking care of long-term vision and strategy, Caripis handles all sales functions and project management work. He's also involved in day-to-day activities and looks over the finances too.

'I'm hands-on and know all the details of each client and job,' he says. 'I love the smile on the client's face when they press the button for the first time or experience their favourite song or film in their cinema. That's what gives us our kick.'

With so many responsibilities, one of Caripis's major challenges is managing his time. A typical workday involves taking his eight-year-old son Alessandro to school,

getting to the office, processing emails, and overlooking the schedule and teams with help from his technical director. Then it's a case of client meetings during the day, CrossFit at 4:30 pm, dinner with his family, and back to work two to three times a week from 8 pm. 'It's tougher than you think,' he says. 'It's not all glamorous. We may make it look effortless, but it takes plenty of attention to detail, passion for design, ability to care for clients and a lot of drive.'

#### **INVESTING IN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

One of Caripis's core characteristics is how driven he is. It's not only his passion for CrossFit and trail running that fuel his fire, but the face that he continues to invest in what matters, such as spending quality time with his family on weekends and working on his personal development. 'I never enjoyed learning about things that I know I will never use,' he says. 'That's why the bachelor of commerce was tough; I just couldn't relate. Now, I just focus on doing courses that are relevant to my position, interest and industry.'

Caripis studied to become a certified designer through the international industry body CEDIA (Custom Electronic Design & Installation Association). 'The practical business lessons, best practices, and insight into the industry were the biggest gains from the CEDIA courses and mentoring,' he says. 'I realised that what I dreamed about for my business was possible; it just wasn't done in South Africa yet and the rest of the world only had a handful.'

According to Caripis, this investment is really paying off. Staying true to his values has solidified his belief in himself as well as the success of BNC Technology. 'I really love winning and I have a long-term vision for our company and brand,' Caripis says. 'We produce a truly world-class product. Often, industry heads congratulate us on our level of work, which is humbling.' **Man**

#### **HOME SMART HOME**

**BNC Technology focuses on four main innovative areas to make your home that much smarter:**

**Home automation:** Wind things down with dim lighting, a cognac and a classical soundtrack, or rev things up with a cocktail from your floating bar. And if it's late-night safety checks and lock-ups you're looking for, it's all possible too.

**Home cinema:** Just about everything including technical design, luxury interiors, the calibration of audio-visual equipment with distinguishing precision and 3D-design renderings.

**Audio visual:** Producing sound so distinct, you'll feel Mariah's vibrato from your toes to your crown, Barry's base resound in your chest, and Freddie's vocals may just knock your socks off.

**Integrated security:** They offer full control over surveillance and alarm systems, from any location in the world.