

# Cirrus Team

**Bio Sheet**

 CIRRUS 



## Gregg Barrett

CEO

Gregg Barrett co-founded an organisation that became the market leader in contract management systems in Africa and was selected to provide the E-commerce platform for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) common market. He headed the International Association for Contract and Commercial Management (IACCM) in Southern Africa to develop and advance contract and commercial management in the region. Over the last decade Gregg has been engaged in data science and machine learning. This includes the establishment and management of data science operations, working across people, process and technology, integrating structured and unstructured data to derive insights for business strategy. Currently, his focus is the establishment and management of machine learning operations and foundries.



He holds an undergraduate degree from Oxford Brookes University in Marketing and Business Management, a Masters in Data Science from Northwestern University, and has completed the Professional Risk Manager (PRM) and Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) programs. Gregg serves as the Alumni Admission Council Director and the Global Ambassador for Northwestern University in Sub-Saharan Africa.



## Louis Nel

General Counsel

Advocate Louis Nel studied at the universities of Stellenbosch, UCT, Wits, Tulane (New Orleans, USA) and London. He holds the degrees B Com, LL B and LL M, completed the Wits Executive Development Programme and Executive Negotiator Courses, holds diplomas in Marketing and Industrial Relations, and is an admitted attorney and advocate.



After 15 years with Rennies as Group Legal Advisor he set up his own consultancy in 1997 focusing on travel and tourism, logistics as well as the Small, Micro & Medium Enterprise (SMME) markets. Advocate Louis Nel is a regular contributor to various media outlets on matters pertaining to the Consumer Protection Act and the Protection of Private Information Act and regularly talks at various forums and provides in-house personalised training.

## Johan Brink

Corporate

Johan is an expert in mergers and acquisitions, banking and finance and general corporate and commercial law. He was a founding and naming partner of Brink Cohen Le Roux, a leading South African boutique law firm for many years and until 2019, a partner at Webber Wentzel, Johannesburg.

He holds a B Com (Pret) LL B (South Africa) LL M (LSE, London) and H Dip Tax Law (Wits). His expertise has been recognised as a legal expert by various international research organisations such as Chambers Global, Legal 500, IFLR 1000, and Best Lawyers for many years.

Johan was an extraordinary professor of mercantile law at the University of South Africa for many years, a guest lecturer at the MBA Programme of GIBS Business School and a company law expert member of the Financial Reporting Standards Council, appointed by the Minister of Trade and Industries pursuant to the Companies Act 2008. He was an original co-author of the title “Companies” in Butterworths: The Law of South Africa.



## Eric Thalmann

Procurement, Supply Chain and Operations

Eric Thalmann obtained a B Sc in Electrical Engineering from Wits University, completed the Advanced Management Programme at the University of Navarra, the Programme for Management Excellence at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, and has 18 years of varied technical and commercial experience ranging from Software Engineering, Management Consulting, Global Procurement Transformation and Category Management. He co-led the commercialisation of Anglo American Technical Solutions in 2014. Eric is currently the founder of 212Degrees, a consultancy focusing on Strategic Sourcing and Business Transformation.

Eric's value proposition is the combination of global experience, proven record of leading multicultural and cross functional teams to success, ability to distil the essential from complexity, and his core belief is that if you leverage people's strengths and creative energy, combined with an ambitious picture of the future, you can achieve great things.



## Andre van der Merwe

Intellectual Property

Andre van der Merwe obtained a B Sc in Chemistry and Mathematics from the University of Pretoria (adding chemical engineering subjects thereafter). After 8 years of experience in industry, he joined the patent profession and obtained the degrees B Proc and LL B from the University of South Africa. He was admitted as an attorney of the High Court of South Africa in 1975 and was registered as a patent agent in 1977.



His areas of expertise have included patents, trademarks and copyright law. He has dealt with both filing and prosecution matters, and also litigation in these fields before the Registrar's Office and before the High Court of South Africa, including before the Supreme Court of Appeal.

Andre is a past-President of the South African Institute of Intellectual Property Law (SAIIPL), and has served on certain of its committees for many years. Until recently he was a long-standing board member of the South African Chapter (LSSA) of The Licensing Executives Society International (LESI), and is also a past-President of LSSA.

He has published and presented papers on various Intellectual Property matters locally and abroad, and over the years he has been active in making submissions on emerging IP legislation in South Africa, including in respect of Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions.

## Jacques Ludik

Cirrus FOUNDRY Cape

Machine Intelligence Institute of Africa

Dr Jacques Ludik is a smart technology entrepreneur, AI expert, investor, ecosystem builder, and award-winning AI Leader, and currently Founder & Group CEO of Cortex Group, MD of Cortex Logic and Founder & President of Machine Intelligence Institute of Africa (MIIA), and has also founded CSense Systems (sold to General Electric in 2011), SynerG, Mosaic, and Bennit AI.



Jacques was also Senior Lecturer and Researcher at Stellenbosch University, where dozens of his papers on AI were published in Journals and International Conferences as well as a book published by Cambridge University Press (UK). He also has a patent filed for Knowledge Fusion. Jacques holds a B Sc (Cum Laude), B Sc Hons (Cum Laude), M Sc (Cum Laude), and Ph D degrees from Stellenbosch University, and has 25+ years' experience in AI, Data Science and its applications.





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