

Nando's not chicken in deflating egos

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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A huge fail for your billboard outside the Wanderers featuring the name 'Rabada', Web Africa. Speed over to collect your Onion.



Screen grab from the ad.

There are times, to be honest, when Nando's ads have irritated me because they have set out to be deliberately controversial.

And that – more than its blend of traditional herbs and spices – has been Nando's recipe for marketing success: spend X amount of rand making a commercial; a tiny bit more flighting it in a few places, a lot of effort in PR and, finally, get the “free” media coverage as journos latch on to the cheeky or more offensive bits.



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Nando's has turned “make adbucks stretch way further than they should” into an art.

Sometimes, in the past, that recipe has been too obvious. On other occasions, because the brand dealt with topical issues like racism or the Guptas, the news hook was tolerated. Nando's also instinctively knows what people are talking about.

They are ad people after my own heart because they have a go at some of the pretentious ads, which seem to be cluttering up our TV spaces.



Screen grab from the ad.

One I particularly like is the parody of Absa's "Africa-nacity", which calls a red product, with a logo suspiciously like the bank's, "Africa Nasti".



Absa embraces Africa with new brand

11 Jul 2018



There are various other digs at over-the-top local ads, which, according to Nando's, portray a same-old, same-old image of Africa as outrageous. Bombi Mavundza of *Business Insider SA* identified a number of them, including one for Absolut Vodka, which featured rapper, Kuli Chana.

He also appeared in the Nando's ad, pulling the mickey out of his previous ad work...

Doug Place, Nando's chief marketing officer, told *Business Insider*: "There's so much more to being South African than one narrow vignette and we thought it would be fun to point out some of the absurdities of it all."

What I loved about the interaction between Nando's and the *Business Insider* journo was the fast-food brand's trademark tongue-in-cheek humour.

Asked by *Business Insider* which brands were referenced in the ad, Nando's responded: "We've just used generic references. Anyone could have designed the logo on the bottle, but come to think of it we have seen something similar, but not for a bank."

That was another dig at Absa, which took flak for its logo which, critics said, resembled that of Telkom subsidiary Open Serve.

Once again, Nando's, you get an Orchid from me... this time for deflating the egos of the ad industry clevers.



The billboard.

Our sporting superstars are more than great players – they are brands in and of themselves and they can be a powerful addition to a product's marketing campaign.

However, you have to go about it the right way.

A Web Africa billboard outside the Wanderers featured the words "Rabada Fast" to emphasise the speed of its services.

I can see the argument that the name Rabada is "common property," but it was very poor form for Web Africa to purloin the name Rabada without his knowledge and without paying him.

So huge fail for your billboard, Web Africa. Speed over to collect your Onion.

ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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