

#OrchidsandOnions - Chicken Licken's clever, amusing SoulSister ads get the nod

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

11 Jun 2019

And I would rather have seen Shell, as a mark of respect to Nkosikho Mbele, giving its lowly-paid attendants a nice Christmas bonus.



Screen grab from the ad.

Over the past week or so, I have been watching, in some admiration, I must admit, all the free positive exposure Chicken Licken has been getting on Twitter from a band of die-hard fans down in Cape Town, one of whom is a former editor of the *Cape Times* and the *Cape Argus*.

The people singing the praises of Chicken Licken are an advertising dream group – not only fans, but prepared to spread the message. (I'd call them evangelists if some of them weren't Muslim...)

So, it does seem that the brand has a solid following.

It is also relaxed enough in its own skin to make ads which don't, strictly speaking, pitch products in a hard-sell way. So, the recent controversial "Big John" ad – which was pulled because of one complaint to the Advertising Regulatory Board that it was racist, because it somehow presented a distorted picture of colonialism – was more about entertainment and

humour, facilitated by the brand.



#OrchidsandOnions - Nando's, Chicken Licken have lots to crow about

Brendan Seery 4 Dec 2018



That's a cool trick for a confident brand – you know your product almost sells itself, but you want your customers (and potential customers) to associate you with fun.

The latest Chicken Licken ads – a whole series of them – are punting the Soul Sister chicken and chips combo package... but you only get to see the product at the very end.

What you get beforehand is a little bit of light humour, all revolving around how when a “sister” is in a jam, then that sister needs the SoulSister deal.

The little skits range from a credit card failure at a supermarket check-out (and doesn't the woman behind the till look like the worst of all those grumpy, bored employees who never smile and believe they are doing you the favour by taking your money?); to a guy (sister?) who is gay and trying to “come out” to his dad.



SoulSister brings some soul

Joe Public 27 May 2019



In all the mini comedies, the SoulSisters – a remake of the over-the-top Supremes all-girl group from the '60s – appear, and in pure Motown soul and R&B tell the world, and the problems, to go to hell.

The ads are worth watching more than once – and how often can you say that these days? – because they are entertaining.

Plus, you pick up things you might have missed the first time around.

As in the gay boy ad, when the third SoulSister appears late, because she's struggling to get out of the closet. “It's harder than it looks,” she says.

The closing shot is of the SoulSister deal... and it does look tempting. I wonder if the Cape Town fans have tried it yet?

Orchids to Chicken Licken and to its agency, Joe Public.

I must say, I have had mixed feelings about the heart-warming story of Shell petrol attendant Nkosikho Mbele, who gave Monet van Deventer R100 from his own pocket because he didn't want her to run out of fuel on the N2 highway on her way to Cape Town.

Mbele had already started putting in fuel when Van Deventer realised she had left her bank card behind and had no cash on her.

It's a great little story – and for the obvious reason that it is the less well-off giving to the better-off.

Mbele's story touched so many people that, within days, a crowd-funding exercise through BackaBuddy had raised more than R400,000 for him.

In addition, Shell said it would donate a further R500,000 to a charity of his choice and take him to a company conference abroad later this year.

“ Well done to [#NkosikhoMbele](#) . Your act of kindness has been noticed by South Africans and Shell

👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍. So proud of you. [@tumisole pic.twitter.com/CiZw4Ktt9a](#) — Ntobeko Mogadime (@ntobza2)
[June 3, 2019](#) ”

My problem is that Shell's action seems a tad cynical. I am not doubting that the company does good things with its corporate social investment (CSI) budgets, but that R500,000 probably got it back more than that in good publicity value. I learned something interesting from a friend and business colleague whose company does not believe in CSI.

“ The way you really give back to the community, is by making your products as affordable as possible, not ripping off your customers and not paying your top executives sky-high salaries. ”

I would rather have seen Shell, as a mark of respect to Mbele, giving its lowly-paid attendants a nice Christmas bonus.



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Brendan Seery 4 Jun 2019



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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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