

It starts with...

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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Woolworths recently launched a digitally-led and multi-channel marketing campaign called the 'Starts With' challenge - a seven-week balanced living challenge facilitated through a [Facebook event](#) inviting participants to take part.

Four women representing South African bodies and lifestyles were chosen to motivate people to take up the challenge: body positivity activist Thick Leeyonce; 'momtrepreneur' Elana Afrika-Bredenkamp; fitness fan and lawyer Tracey-Lee Lusty; and chef and blogger Luyanda Mafanya.

"We chose a high energy and inspiring cast to show how easy it is to incorporate healthy, easy and delicious food into your lifestyle," says Cathy Lund, Woolworths' marketing head of copy.

Content has been strategically crafted to feature on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, as well as various media channels, radio and TV.

The underlying message is that good health is about people, communities, animals and the planet, and it's really a call to action to live a better, healthier life.

Here, Lund provides some insight into the campaign.

■ **How did you come up with the idea?**

This challenge forms part of a greater campaign that includes a manifesto we have created, in support of government initiatives, to address issues of obesity in South Africa.



The idea for the #startswith challenge was sparked by three driving insights:

1. Wellness is not a trend. It's part of our customers' lives and here to stay.
2. Living well starts with eating well.
3. Everyone has his or her own definition of what constitutes better living.

As people are at different stages of their journey to live well, we needed to ensure our campaign felt inclusive and supported the multitude of wellness approaches our customers have. We bucked the basic marketing principle that 'you can't be all things to all people' by creating a seven-week balanced living challenge where everyone is welcome.

The campaign's intent is for our customers to challenge themselves to be mindful of their lifestyles, with a focus on body positivity. We reinforced this inclusiveness by casting four influencers with differing lifestyles and body types to motivate entrants.

What started as a campaign has resulted in the creation of a robust, highly engaged community of 'Woolies' customers who have not only pledged to live well, but are supporting each other along the journey. Under the Woolies #startswith banner, they are creating their own content, bringing real-time and intrinsically authentic communication to life.

■ **How does it work?**

Follow the [link](#), 'join' and become part of the community. Be inspired by our four motivators, enter weekly competitions, post about your progress, exchange tips with community members and read informative articles, including advice from the Woolies dietitian.

■ **The internal agency and brand team designed the campaign. Comment on the process.**

This campaign is a true collaboration between the in-house agency and brand marketing team. From the initial brainstorm and strategy meetings, all the way through production to the monitoring and engagement with our customers on social media, we have worked side by side. This closeness has generated great trust, which, in turn, has led to great work and great results.

■ **What's the objective?**

The #startswith element of the overall campaign has already exceeded initial expectations, so we are raising the bar every week. We had aimed to have a 10k-strong community at the end of the seven-week challenge. After three weeks, we already have 8,300 participants and the content created in support of the challenge has been viewed almost 3 million times on social media.

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