

Greenpop's Got Wood

 By [Ruth Cooper](#)

20 Oct 2016

This past September you may have noticed your social media feeds filling up with images of strapping young naked men covered by strategically placed foliage, wheelbarrows or watering cans. If so, you were witness to the viral campaign from homegrown social enterprise [Greenpop](#) which aimed to raise awareness and funds for Arbor Month. We chatted to the good folk of Greenpop for #SustainabilityMonth to find out more about this "cheeky" campaign.

■ ***This campaign initially started out as a joke, how did making it into a reality come about?***

Arbor Month is our biggest fundraising period of the year, so we knew even when just brainstorming that we wanted our campaign to stand out. We initially thought of other iconic campaigns such as the 'Got Milk' advertisements, and our coworker Liam Brickhill jokingly came up with the phrase 'Got Wood'. While at first this was just an offhand comment that made everyone laugh, we soon realised that it could actually work. We knew we wanted a proactive campaign that people would remember, and with that catchphrase, we finally had a place to start. We immediately began drawing up a list of Greenpop's partners, companies we had worked with in the past, and friends that were part of local organisations, and before long we had 25 men that were willing to bare it all for the trees!



got wood?

I do, but many don't.

Did you know that in many African cultures trees are seen as sacred protectors and providers. With links to cultural heritage, ancestral pasts and the natural elements, many believe trees are a powerful symbol of life itself. Find your roots.

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LIAM BRICKHILL, THE BOOK CAFE

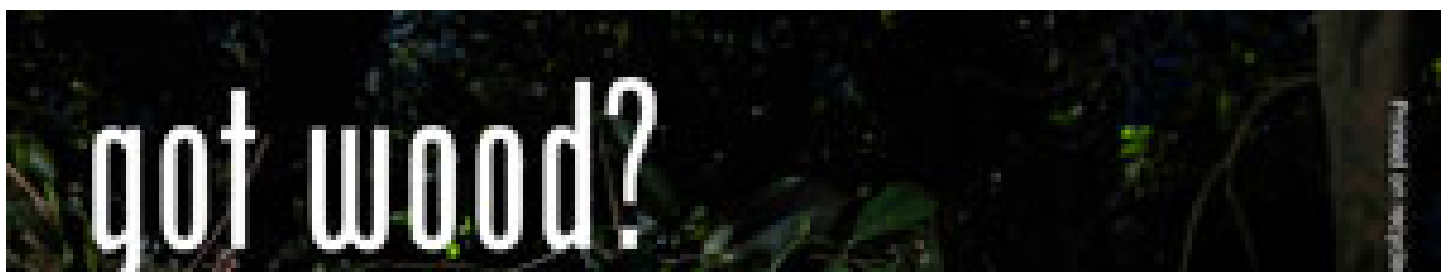
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■ **What has the response been like and how successful has the campaign been?**

The response we received has been absolutely amazing! Of course we wanted the campaign to be a success, but we never expected it to go viral or get as much publicity as it did. It has been posted by over [50 media sources in more than 13 countries](#), which is what has shocked us the most. The reactions we've received from both local and international viewers has been overall very positive, and individuals have shared and posted it to their personal pages over 1,500 times!



I do, but many don't.

Did you know that many everyday foods couldn't be produced if it wasn't for trees? Many staple ingredients including seeds, nuts and oils come directly from our leafy friends. Plant the seeds for a more sustainable future.

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UBATHI DYANTLE TYISA NABANYE

Image: Thanks go to Lesedi Orange Design for the House & Food tree & trees



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FOR THE FUTURE

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unenkuni?

ORIGINAL:

Mna ndinayo, kodwa
abaninzi abanazo.

(Got wood? I do, but many don't)

Did you know that around the world, trees are often indicators of socio-economic status? While wealthier communities tend to have an abundance of green space, poorer communities are frequently overlooked and under-greened. Bridge the gap.

SPONSOR A TREE!

CRAG MAKHOSI CHARNOCK,
UBUNTU BRIDGE



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Printed on recycled paper. 100% recycled ink. Photo by Lisa-Jane Dwyer. Photo by Lisa-Jane Dwyer. Photo by Lisa-Jane Dwyer. Photo by Lisa-Jane Dwyer.

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■ **Was the goal to raise R120,000 by 30 September realised?**

Our goal of fundraising R120,000, or 1,000 trees, in one month was an extremely ambitious target that we chose in order to pay homage to Greenpop's beginnings as an organisation. Before Greenpop was formed, our founders set off on a goal to plant 1,000 trees in a single month. Arbor Month marked the six year anniversary of this event, and although we were not able to reach our ambitious goal, we were able to fundraise over R80,000 which will allow us to plant more than 670 trees throughout Southern Africa!

■ **How did you choose the 25 men featured? Was it easy enough to convince them to get their kit off?**

We are extremely fortunate to surround ourselves here at Greenpop with organisations and individuals that are such motivated and accomplished changemakers, and the men that participated in this campaign are no exception. We expected to get a bit of resistance, or at the very least hesitation, from the people we pitched this idea to, but the men who starred in our campaign all thought the idea was a hilarious way to make an impact and were keen to participate.

got wood?

We do, but not enough.

Did you know that in the 1950s rainforests covered more than 15% of the Earth's surface? Now, they cover less than 6%. That sounds dangerous, even to us.

SPONSOR A TREE!

NO DANGER DIARIES

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■ ***You plan to turn these images into a calendar right? When and how will this be available?***

Our plan is to give this campaign new life by turning it into a calendar. We plan to release this calendar around Christmas time, and are currently in the middle of creating surveys, so our followers can let us know exactly what they hope to see in this calendar!

■ ***Can we expect this campaign to turn into an annual event?***

We have thrown around the idea of recreating this campaign again, but as of right now we are not planning on turning the Got Wood campaign into an annual event. The success of this campaign has been incredible, and we attribute much of that success to how shocking it felt to our audience during its release. Our intent for next year's Arbor Month is to release a new, fresh campaign that will once again inform, entertain, and entice our followers!





[click to enlarge](#)

A photograph of a man lying on his back on the forest floor, surrounded by lush green foliage. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The text "got wood?" is written in large, white, lowercase letters in the upper right. Below it, the text "I do, but many don't." is written in a smaller, white, lowercase font. Further down, a paragraph of text explains the benefits of fruit trees. At the bottom right, the text "SPONSOR A TREE!" is written in bold, white, uppercase letters. Below that, the text "MPUMALANGA 'MANGOS' SEFALANE, DINE WITH KHAYELITSHA" is written in a smaller, white, uppercase font. On the left side, there is a vertical line of small text: "Printed on recycled paper. Thank you to L&L Design (Pty) Ltd. for the design & production & Greenpop for the photos."

got wood?

I do, but many don't.

Everyone knows that fruit trees are an abundant source of nutritious and delicious natural foods. But did you know that just one apple tree can produce more than 7,500 apples in its lifetime? Snack on that!

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MPUMALANGA "MANGOS" SEFALANE, DINE WITH KHAYELITSHA

Printed on recycled paper. Thank you to L&L Design (Pty) Ltd. for the design & production & Greenpop for the photos.



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■ ***How important is it to make being eco-conscious fun and sexy?***

One of our main goals as an organisation is to make being eco-conscious sexy and fun, so this campaign fell perfectly into our niche. Our name itself is an indication of this goal: green, meaning sustainable and eco-friendly, and pop, meaning popular and mainstream.

■ ***Can you tell us a bit about your involvement with the recent Rocking the Daisies.***

We have just finished another successful weekend of running the Green Village at Superbalist is Rocking the Daisies. The Green Village is an eco-friendly and sustainable space within the festival with a full stage, many activations such as acro yoga and hoola hooping, delicious vegan food, and much, much more. This space is entirely run by Greenpop with help from our partners at Hemporium, Fry's Family Foods, TEDxCapeTown, Sunshine Cinema, and many others. For a glimpse into our experience, check out this recap video made by Sunshine Cinema.

■ ***If your personality could be represented by a tree, what would it be and why?***

We love all trees, so it's difficult to pick just one that represents us as an organisation. If we had to pick one tree though, we would choose the Wild Olive Tree. This is a tree that is indigenous to South Africa that we often plant as a part of our Urban Greening Programme. The Wild Olive Tree has strong roots and is able to not only survive, but thrive in a multitude of environments and conditions.

got wood?

I do, but not enough.

Did you know that if the current rate of deforestation continues, it will take less than 100 years to destroy all of the forests on Earth? That's a fact I certainly don't dig. Join the Treevolution.

SPONSOR A TREE!

MISHA TEASDALE, GREENPOP

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■ ***Are there any other out there initiatives that Greenpop is working on?***

Our focus now is on our Zambia Festival of Action and Platbos Reforest Festival, which we are about to launch! You can find information on both of these events [here](#). Our audience can also look forward to another exciting campaign for the holiday season!

■ ***What would you say is the most important thing that we can do as individuals to live more greenly?***

We here at Greenpop think that the most important thing people can do to live an eco-friendly and sustainable lifestyle is to make conscious decisions. When you start to actually think about how your actions are affecting the planet, you'll find that it's much easier to become a green superhero!

greenpop.org

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

Ruth is the production manager at Bizcommunity. ruth@bizcommunity.com

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