

New agency educating the youth while creating brand loyalty

By  Juanita Pienaar

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This #YouthMonth, Brad Stern from Superiate, a new boutique marketing agency, talks to us about the unique approach the agency takes when it comes to marketing to the youth, the state of the industry and what the future of youth marketing looks like.



Brad Stern, founder of boutique agency, Superiate.

■ Tell us more about your business and what it is you do.

Superiate specialises in youth marketing. Simple. Take a brand, showcase it to the youth and build brand loyalty (and drive to stores/ecom, coupon and reward redemption). Our offering is extremely targeted and creates brand loyalty and education amongst South Africa's schoolgoing youth.

We have been operating for 18 months and brands like Microsoft, Telkom Mobile, DSTV, Jet clothing stores, Mweb, Total Services Stations, to name some of the bigger ones have trusted us to activate their brands. Most of them are repeat customers!

We want to work with brands that uplift. We work on brand-building campaigns outside of the school environment. Yet part of our core offering is within the school space and we have great relationships with almost 1,000 public schools. But our reach is to virtually every one of the public schools throughout South Africa.

People always ask which brands focus on the youth and I say, walk through a Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Dis-Chem and what brands on the shelves don't have the objective of gaining youth loyalty and brand preference. We stay away from the obvious 'no go' brands in alcohol, cigarettes, gambling and the like. We aim to bring smiles to the lives of South Africa's youth and do this on behalf of brands with youth marketing ambitions and big hearts.

▣ **How did you come up with the name?**

It is somewhat a personal motto and became something I desired to build as my own brand. I've been in marketing throughout my professional career. I've worked on brands like Woolworths, Kauai, MTV, Nickelodeon, Tarocash, and for the last 10 years at Adidas.



148: A new chapter at Adidas, with Sport 15 'Create Your Own Game'

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I left an amazing corporate role as brand director at Adidas to pursue this dream to drive my passion for marketing, but marketing with purpose. So, Superiate, if you google it, means (in Italian) to uplift, exceed, surpass and surmount. So, it was a personal journey to challenge myself and do it alone, and while we are marketing for brands, we are making sure we uplift and give learners a chance to exceed, surpass and surmount!



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Machine_ 14 Oct 2013



▣ **What approach does Superiate take to youth marketing?**

The youth of South Africa is the future and it is certainly the future of brands. The youth influence. Every brand I've worked on, the ambition was to target the youth. Get them loyal to your product/brand/service and they influence others around them in their social circles. But also the older generation actually looks to the youth for inspiration. So, we work with brands that truly believe that their current and future is reliant on the youth.

I'm a sort of anti-agency marketer. I believe in the simplicity of taking a brand and placing it in front of the youth at a fraction of the cost of traditional marketing campaigns and brand-building campaigns. The little hair I have left is grey because activating is hard. Activating to the youth in schools is even more complicated and intricate, but our aim is to take this off the hands of brands and clients and make it a simple and smooth process. We are always responsible. It's our top priority. But delivering a solid return on investment for clients is also a top priority.

▣ **Comment on the current state of youth marketing in SA.**

I do believe (and I was as guilty of a spray and pray approach to marketing to the youth) most brand managers/directors spend a lot of money on various channels like digital, out of home, radio, TV and print. Don't get me wrong, these all have their place, but there is so much wastage.

We work on a cost per acquisition/conversion rate with our clients. How much would it cost you to take that 16-year-old male or female and introduce them or convert them to your brand? R200, R100, R50? We aim to halve that for any brand and believe we have a cost-effective way of doing this.

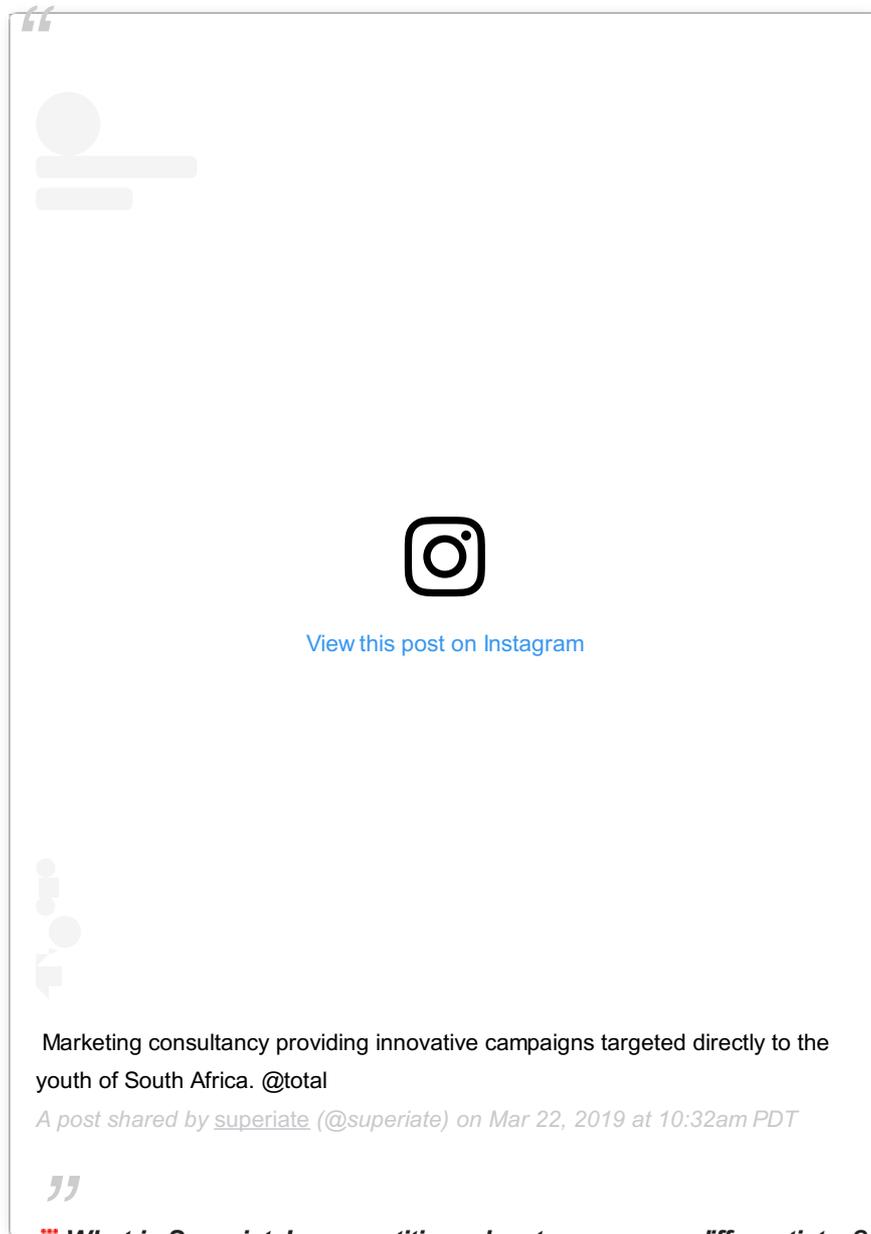
Also, the youth is looking for something more than being told. Our approach is to bring them something different. We do an educational talk at every activation. Be it on school bullying, dangers of the internet, nutrition and exercise, showcasing ways to improve job hunting after school. Learners walk away with a smile and learn something new.

If you understand the youth, you can understand how to influence them. One example: a client was hell-bent on collecting

email addresses. The youth of today are social media animals and most don't have email. It struck me when a learner told me that he sees email like us oldies see fax machines.

■ **What does the future of youth marketing look like to you?**

The landscape isn't changing, it has already changed. As marketing budgets get tighter, brands need to ensure bang for their buck. Every brand has different short-term objectives and strategies. However, all have that one thing in common. Their long-term brand success and survival is dependent on how they influence the youth of today.



■ **What is Superiate's competitive advantage or core differentiator?**

We have the experience and understanding to enable us to activate in this space. I have been working on youth marketing locally and internationally for 20 years and the Superiate team is made up of two others that have been doing this sort of youth marketing for almost a combined 20 years.

We utilise the best trained on the ground teams to execute. We have completed 'outside of schools' campaigns for Hi-Tec, Red Bull and various others. 'In schools' we have visited (and activated at) over 700 schools in the past 18 months. We aren't reinventing the wheel, we just aim to do this better and more cost-effectively than anyone else in the space.

■ **What obstacles did you have to overcome to launch the venture?**

Starting your own company is as simple as a basic website and an email address, and boom you're sitting in a coffee shop and attending meetings and you're a company. Obviously registering a company, applying for VAT registration, invoicing and the like and doing it all alone without the help of a corporate structure has its challenges. That's why we

keep it simple.

We sit with clients to understand their objectives. We tailor a programme based on age, gender profile, income profile, geographical location to store/shopping centre etc. It is purely brand building, whether we are introducing a new product or trying to convert with samples, trial, etc. Each brand has a different objective, so each campaign is slightly different. Then we go out and execute. We then showcase the results and celebrate the success with the client. Pretty simple.

🔴 **What is next on the agenda?**

We have put together a top secret programme, launching in August. This will enable our brand partners to join the Superiate programme we are introducing. I wish I could say more, but we have some top brands on board from various industries like telecom, ecom, software, stationery and various others and anyone who wants the top secret inside scoop is welcome to [contact me](#) directly.

For more, visit [Superiate](#) and follow them on [Instagram](#).

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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