

Bravo to uniquely South African ads

By [Brendan Seery](#)

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Perhaps it is the fresh optimism of the spring air, but I get a positive vibe seeing so many uniquely South African ads around these days. In the days of Covid-19, advertising - specially of the video type - seem to plunge off a cliff and what there was, was often mediocre imported material.



Ads that are uniquely South African are ones which utilise local icons to make an instant impact with a viewer and build a rapport based on the feeling that you know who they are.

Two ads fighting now do exactly that.

Orchid for Toyota's talking dog

The first is the return of Toyota's boxer dog, Buddy, to tell customers, and the country "We're back!" after the half-year production hiatus caused by the destruction wreaked by the floods in Durban and which closed Toyota's factory at Prospecton.

We see Buddy strolling into a Toyota dealership, eyeing up the gleaming new vehicles and then taking a ride, in a Fortuner, along a country road, passing a car carrier truck packed with units from Prospecton.

The animation is still good and you can almost believe there is such a thing as a talking dog.

The message is: Your old friend, your reliable old friend, is back. And clearly, none the worse for wear. It's the message the market wants to hear and, no doubt, it will boost Toyota back into the top position on the sales charts (and I see that is already happening...)

So Orchids for Toyota and FCB Joburg, its long-standing agency.

Orchid for HTH and Bryan Habana

Another SA icon is rugby legend Bryan Habana, who has just been roped in to promote HTH pool chemicals and its spring campaign. Perhaps it's because the ad resonates with me – after all, it is the man's job to look after the pool and I am the HTH “gooier” in our house, not to mention I'm about to try out their solution for black algae – that I liked it so much. Perhaps, though, it's because Bryan comes across so well, not at all skaam in his SA flag Speedo (a la Faf De Klerk) and with his straight-talking manner.

Ladies, he says, look at your pool. If it's a mess, it's because your man is not doing his job. Get him to pay attention and get out the HTH. Also, maybe enter him in a competition where the winners get to go to “pool school” and learn from the

professionals about how to keep a pool clean and sparkling.

Habana clearly speaks to the target market, which I am told, amounts to 800, 000 private and 2, 000 public swimming pools – supposedly the sixth biggest pool market in the world. The reality is also that HTH has become almost the generic for pool cleaning chemicals and is the default in many homes, ours included. And trust me, there is nothing better than goo-ing a couple of cups of HTH into the pool, running the filter overnight (Ok, well for as long as Eskom will allow you) and then coming out to a clean, glittering pool in the morning. It is so satisfying, like have your car washed well.



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Izak van der Walt 9 Sep 2022



Sorry, man stuff...

The ad gets the message across with a touch of light humour and puts the brand front and centre, which is the essence of good advertising. So Orchids to HTH and agency Retroviral.

Onions to sneaky estate agents

Why is it that so many people – and not just our looting government – believe they are above the law? The ad industry, and in particular the out-of-home sector, is one of the worst in this regard.

While Cape Town has got its act together as far as enforcement of municipal bylaws is concerned, here in Joburg, it's like the Wild West, as posters, billboards and street signs – the vast majority of which are illegal – proliferate at an alarming rate.

Why should you people pollute my suburb with your illegal rubbish?

Estate agents are some of the prime offenders, sneakily pushing the boundaries, knowing the chances of them being prosecuted are vanishingly small.

A new trick is to place “Sold” and “For Sale” boards a long way from the particular property being advertised, with a direction pointer. This is illegal. The bylaws state that “Sold” and “For Sale” signs may only be erected at the property being advertised. Estate agents are allowed to put up direction signboards to “show houses” over the weekends when these are on show.

But these must say “On Show” and must be removed by midday on the Monday following the show day, which is usually a Sunday.

Needless to say, the three signs I saw in our area – two for Jawitz Properties (directing people to a house for sale, a long distance from that house) and one for Rawsons (directing to a “Sold” property) – were illegal.



Now, there are only two explanations for this, neither of which reflects well on the brand or the agent. The first is that the person putting up the signs does not know the law. If that is the case, I would wonder what other laws, in relation to property, that they are ignorant of. And I would wonder whether that ignorance was a good trait in someone I wanted to buy a house from (or sell through).

The second reason would be that they are well aware of the law, but choose to break it anyway. Would I want someone knowingly guilty of criminal behaviour handling my property transaction? I don't think so.

One day, you estate agents and other advertising criminals, ordinary people are going to start pushing back against law-breaking and intrusions into their peace and privacy. And your brands will be damaged in the process.

For now, though, both Jawitz and Rawsons get Onions from me. Why can you not just do the right thing?

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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