

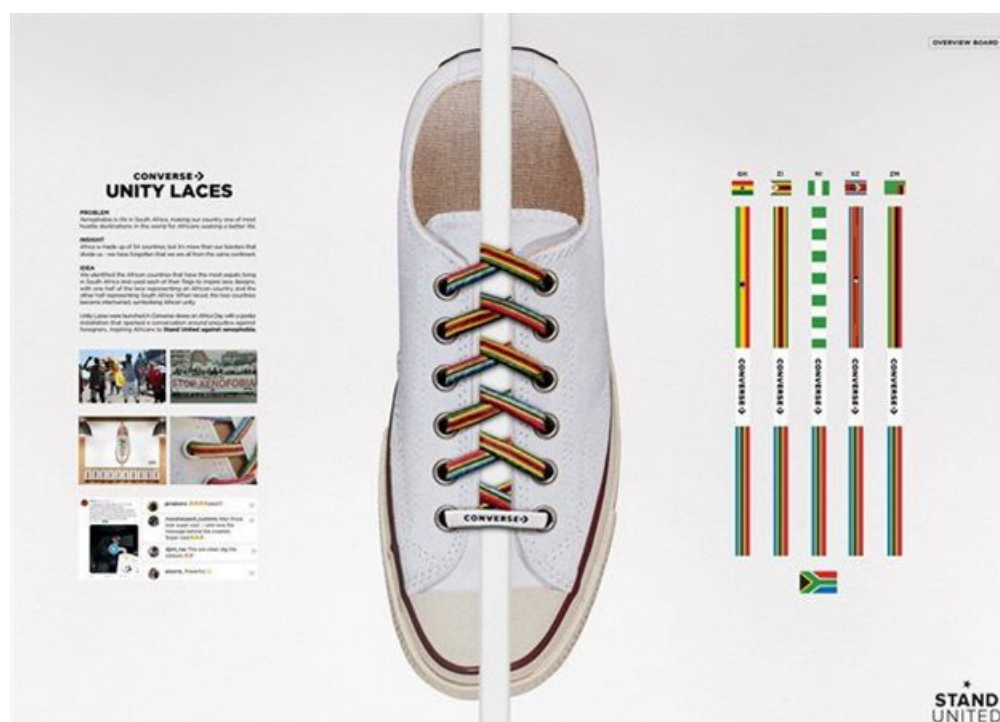
Grand Prix winner Joe Public United's 'Unity Laces' for Converse



By Jessica Tennant

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As part of our Loeries post-event coverage, we interviewed some of this year's Grand Prix winners. Next up, our interview with Joe Public United on their 'Unity Laces' campaign for Converse.



Integrated creative director Assaf Levy talks us through the campaign, how they went about creating awareness around xenophobia and unity amongst Africans living in South Africa, and what he believes made it an outstanding piece of work...

🏆 Congrats on your grand prix win! What does this mean to you/the team involved?

Winning a Loerie Grand Prix is an honour. To the Joe Public team it means that our peers, as well as consumers, recognised the intention behind the idea, which was for Converse SA to create awareness around xenophobia and help create unity amongst all Africans living in South Africa.

🏆 What do you attribute the win to?

I think this win comes down to simplicity and craft. The idea and symbolism is clear at first sight, and visually appealing.

🏆 How did you go about this campaign?

We identified the African countries that have the most expats living in South Africa, namely: Nigeria Ghana; Zimbabwe; Swaziland and Zambia, and used each of their flags to inspire lace designs, with one half of the lace representing an African country and the other half representing South Africa. When laced, the two countries become intertwined, symbolising African unity.

🏆 What advertising medium was used, i.e. OOH? Why did this make the most sense?

We launched Unity Laces in Converse stores on Africa Day. To bring the idea to life, we designed separate posters, each with larger-than-life eyelets on a Converse shoe.

The posters were laced together by specially designed Unity Laces, showcasing various African countries uniting with South Africa.

■ ***Comment on the impact of the campaign / the results.***

Customers received a free pair of limited-edition Unity Laces with every purchase of Converse. Sales of Converse increased by 80% during this time. But most importantly the campaign sparked a conversation around prejudice against foreigners and inspired Africans to celebrate their differences, embrace African unity and stand united against xenophobia.

■ ***Why are/were you proud to be part of this campaign / project?***

The Joe team is proud to be able to help clients like Converse address social issues in a unique way but that stays true to the brand and is 100% authentic.

■ ***Are there going to be any follow up versions of the campaign / any next steps? Any exciting plans in the pipeline?***

Xenophobia isn't just an issue in South Africa, so together with Converse we'd really like to take Unity Laces to the rest of Africa and thereafter the world.

■ ***What do you think will make winning work stand out in 2022?***

I think the work that will stand out in 2022 will be simple, purposeful ideas that push the boundaries of innovation within the chosen medium.

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