

A loud, and crunchy Orchid to KFC

By  [Brendan Seery](#)

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How many of you reading this have not had to bite your tongues as you were rudely, or inefficiently, dealt with by a government employee?



Screen grab from the ad.

One of the most ironic terms in current-day South Africa is “civil servant”: many of those employed by government are neither civil nor are they true servants of the people they work for, the taxpayers.

How many of you have had to spend hours in queues, or on rock-hard benches while those “behind the counter” put up signs “back in 15 minutes” or ducked off on their lunch breaks? How many have been told to come back because “the system is offline”?

Yes – I thought so...

“ Yet, we wouldn’t be South Africans if we couldn’t laugh at ourselves. That’s been the Nando’s recipe for years and now Kentucky Fried Chicken (that avowed supposed favourite of civil servants – at least, given how much their political bosses spend on it for functions) has got in on the act. ”

Their latest TV ad is for their “Crunchmaster” product – a supersized portion of their famous fried chicken, which promises to be not only “double the chicken” but also “double the crunch”.

They go so far as to say it is #Fingerlickinloud.

To illustrate the point, they take us into a government customer centre – you know the place: it could be home affairs, a driving licence renewal centre, or an SA Revenue Service branch (where the IT system is more than likely giving problems).



Sars' Nugent inquiry interview goes viral

18 Oct 2018



Behind the shuttered counter windows – adorned with the “Back in 15 minutes” sign, we find two “civil servants” getting stuck into their Crunchmasters. The consumption thereof is making so much noise, they have to shout to make themselves heard.

And what they are saying carries clearly to those waiting outside: First “Let’s tell them the power’s off!” Followed by shrieks of laughter. Then: “Let’s tell them to come back tomorrow!” Followed by: “But tomorrow’s a public holiday,” and “I know!”... Accompanied by gales of mirth. A third employee chimes in: “Let’s tell them the system’s offline!”

They almost fall off their chairs in amusement. Finally, one opens the counter up and snaps at the waiting line: “Next!”

It’s painful to watch, because it’s so true to life. And it’s amusing at the same time. Also, it gets across the point that the Crunchmaster is an awesome meal. Nice one, KFC.

A loud, and crunchy, Orchid for you.

First Onion this week goes to... me. I got the credits wrong in last week’s Orchid for Absa’s Corporate and Investment Banking division. The ad agency responsible was Mortimer Harvey and the productions companies involved were Casta Diva Pictures and Chill Pill Films. Apologies all round.

#OrchidsandOnions: Absa ad is on the money





Brendan Seery 16 Oct 2018



There is something about digital platforms that makes many people – and marketers are not immune to this – lose their heads.

So I was surprised to see Doves Insurance – part of the funeral home group – asking the question in a tweet: “Summer is upon us and the weather is perfect for a swim. What’s your most fun summer memory that you remember? #Isikhumbuzo”.

It wasn’t long before the comments started coming in.

“ Summer is upon us and the weather is perfect for a swim. What’s your most fun summer memory that you remember? #Isikhumbuzo [pic.twitter.com/dabZCs5QJ0](https://twitter.com/dabZCs5QJ0)— Doves Insurance (@Doves_Insurance) [October 17, 2018](#) ”

“A funeral home celebrating the arrival of summer. Are you guys quietly anticipating to profit from drownings this summer?” was one.

Another ran: “Not sure if this is social media marketing fail or some fifth level irony at play.”

To both, the Doves’ sweet little social media team responded:

“ It’s important to us to celebrate life’s wonderful moments and memories with those near and dear. We focus our efforts on encouraging our community to live their best lives and know that we’re here every step of the way. #Isikhumbuzo ”

This is yet another example of: just because you can put it on social media, doesn’t mean you should.

What does summer swimming have to do with a funeral parlour – unless it is the obvious, as noted by the first comment? It may also be part of the silliness that afflicts marketers worldwide today: that consumers must “like” or even “love” their brand.



Using neuroscience in marketing to understand grudge purchases

25 Jul 2016



Bollocks. There can be few products more of a grudge purchase than a funeral provider. Nobody loves that. Nobody likes that.

An Onion for you, Doves. Please don’t bury it.

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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