

# DStv acknowledges promo similarities with iconic Apple ad

"Here's to the crazy ones... who had the balls to copy one of the greatest commercials ever made." The Bizcommunity.com peanut gallery was un-amused when Ornico recently picked a DStv promo, titled ['The Dreamers'](#), as an 'Ad of the Week' in its [ad showcase on Biz](#). The promo in question reminds one strongly of a rather iconic ad made by Apple for its successful 'Think Different' campaign in the late 1990s.

 By [Herman Manson](#) 8 Mar 2010

The [original ad](#) featured historically significant characters with a voiceover narrated by Richard Dreyfuss. The [DStv promo](#) uses a similar concept. Both ads feature, among others, Albert Einstein, Martin Luther King Jr, Richard Branson, John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Mahatma Gandhi, Amelia Earhart and Pablo Picasso. The sound track on both ads appear similar (though it's not an exact copy) and the voiceover follows a similar rhythm.

The copy from the Apple ad reads: "Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do."

The copy for the DStv promo reads: "Here's to the dreamers. The artists. The music makers. The thinkers. And the visionaries whose only limits are their imagination. To the ones who think differently. Who make a difference. The ones who have a dream. And those who live it. The ones who speak out. Who stand out. To the odd ones out. The ones in a million. You turn our world upside down. And leave it a better place. DStv - so much more inspiration."

## Similarities acknowledged

Graham Pfuhl, director: marketing and sales at Multichoice, acknowledges the similarities in the ads. According to Pfuhl, Andy Rice, chairman of Yellowwood and well-known advertising commentator, originally pointed to the similarity to the Apple ad and that subsequently Multichoice withdrew it immediately.

Even so, the ad ran until quite recently and against Pfuhl's instruction.

"We have just pulled logs and discovered that this promo did indeed go out recently — even though there were strict instructions to take it off our system last year," says Pfuhl. "It was pulled immediately we realised this, and for all the reasons discussed before, will not be played again."

Colleen Goodman, marketing manager for DStv, says the commercial in question is one of a series of more than eight that have been created for DStv by its production house Studio Zoo. (The production house later emailed Bizcommunity two of the ads in the series that are substantially different from the Apple ad).

"The similarities are unfortunate and occurred both because of the limited footage available of the icons promoted, as well as the line 'Here's to...' Strangely, this particular promo was the third one produced and no deliberate copy cat tactics were used," says Goodman.

"We thrive on creative originality but I guess it comes back to the age-old question on whether any idea/concept is truly original. This ad has been pulled and we are no longer airing it." Goodman confirmed that her ad agency Ogilvy played no part in this particular campaign.

## Apologies

In a statement released by the production house in question, Studio Zoo, it apologises to DStv "for the negative press the promo has received and for disappointing viewers."

Spokesperson Adi Leach acknowledges the similarities between the two spots. "Everyone working in the creative industry knows the term, 'It's been done,'" says Leach. "Ideas overlap all the time; that is the nature of the beast. We now understand that the Apple ad is iconic and well-known in the advertising industry and, had we been aware of the ad at the time, we certainly would not have gone ahead with the promo in its current incarnation - no-one deliberately shoots themselves in the foot."

Leach provided transcripts of the original presentation document. It reads in part: "This idea [for the campaign] draws from the 16th Century Italian school of improvisational theatre, *Commedia dell'arte*, which roughly translates as, 'play of professional artists.' According to this style of theatre's structure and philosophy, there are certain archetypal characters that, when put together, create the perfect cast."

"What this campaign says to our viewers is that DStv has 'all of them. Each promo features characters from across the various DStv genres. Some promos are fun and quirky while others are more emotive, depending on the characters featured within each promo. Music and voice will echo and build these sentiments."

## Quite dissimilar

Leach also provided the very first draft of the script for 'The Dreamers' and it's quite dissimilar to what finally emerged from the editing suite. The first draft of the voiceover read (as provided by Leach): "Here's to the Dreamers, the ones who find their way best by moonlight and see the dawn before anyone else. To the artists, the music-makers, the poets, and the thinkers, [w]hose only limits are their imagination... and who constantly capture ours. To the ones who have a dream. And those who live it... The ones who question, who challenge, who stand up... And break down what divides us. To the one-in-a-million the ones who think differently. And change how we think... Here's to you all... you turn our world upside down/around, and leave it a far better place.."

## Internal failings

The similarities in the sound-track and rhythm in the voiceover will mean not everybody is convinced. Internal failings are to blame for the ad being flighted again, allowing Ornico to pick it up and pick it as its 'Ad of the Week', and allow an online community to react.

That said, Multichoice deserves some credit for acting responsibly by pulling the ad when it became aware of the issue. It should consider flighting promos created internally or by a production house past its agency for final thumbs up.

### For more:

- YouTube: [Original Apple ad](#)
- Wikipedia: [Think Different - Parodies](#)
- Bizcommunity: [Ornico Ad of the Week](#)

## ABOUT HERMAN MANSON

The inaugural Vodacom Social Media Journalist of the Year in 2011, Herman Manson (@marklives) is a business journalist and media commentator who edits industry news site [www.marklives.com](http://www.marklives.com). His writing has appeared in newspapers and magazines locally and abroad, including Bizcommunity.com. He also co-founded *Brand* magazine. View my profile and articles...