

Vernacular agency opens within Bester Burke

Department of Native Audiences (DONA) is a new agency with the [Bester Burke Slingers](#) group, focusing on communicating with South Africa's mass market in its own language. It offers comprehensive vernacular-based communication and creative solutions in all nine vernacular languages plus the ever evolving vernacular-English, commonly known as township slang or Tsotsi taal.



L to R: Mpumelelo Zondi and Karabelo Mokoena

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Headed up by founding partners Mpumelelo Zondi, MD and Karabelo Mokoena, CD, it aims to position itself as 'The Brand Praise Singer', fashioning itself after Imbongi, 'a South African traditional poet'.

Zondi states, "Almost 80% of our population is black South Africans whose mother tongue is one or more of the nine vernacular languages. However the South African marketing and advertising industry is still predominantly rooted in English-based communication. We believe that we can challenge this status quo and truly 'speak' to our target audiences, in turn forming more relevant, long-lasting attachments to brands'.

Its driving policy is 'Originate don't translate', which extends beyond language, by shaping the agency's entire creative process from strategy development and campaign conceptualisation onwards to ensure that its work always maintains cultural relevance.

"Our ability to understand and incorporate key customs, traditions and values into what we do will ensure that our work is never lost in translation," adds Mokoena.