

Flag bearer ads have a happy taste, for real

By [Brendan Seery](#)

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Politicians need to learn that they are not the story. So, City of Joburg, you get this week's Onion for unnecessary ego-stroking.



Screen grabs from the ad.

The reason why Spur restaurants have become such a firm South African family favourite has a lot to do with the affordable prices, but also, the food is consistent.

You know what you're going to get in Colesberg is the same as what you'll be served in Cresta.

But, over the years, the company has put a lot of effort into advertising that has showcased the family nature of the places (we've been there quite often), and the sizzling appeal of the food.

So, I find the latest ad for Spur – which is more of a corporate social investment statement than anything else, (with not a piece of food in sight) – quite a change... and a brave (ha ha) one at that.

The ad focuses on Spur's Flag Bearer programme, which is a partnership between the company, and the Springbok Supporters Club.

Each year, 20 kids between the ages of eight and 12 are chosen to become on-field flag bearers at Springbok Tests. The ad focuses on the story of one of those actual flag bearers, Inam Lamani, who comes from Queenstown in the Eastern Cape.

We follow him as he heads for Cape Town – where he will be reunited with his dad and brother Kwezi, before heading for Newlands. At the legendary stadium, he and the other flag bearers file out to stand in front of tens of thousands of fans, simultaneously proud and scared.

“ It's a great story of a child given an experience he'll remember for the rest of his life, and it taps into Spur's well-known ad tag line, by noting that these flag bearers are being “a taste of” what it's like to stand in front of a massive crowd and represent your country. ”

What I really like about the ad is the positivity, which flows right throughout it – made all the more appealing because these are real people and this is a real experience.

The emotions are not faked. It's a reminder that, even when times are bleak, there are still things to celebrate, and to make us happy, in this country.

Well done to Spur, to its ad agency Ninety9Cents, production company 7Films, and director Siphwe Myeza-Mhlambi.



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People often don't believe us in newspapers when we tell them that only right at the end of the production cycle do we get to see the ads placed on the pages.

This week, in *The Citizen*, we had two interesting juxtapositions of ads on our pages.

Our story on Tshwane's mayor, Solly Msimanga, surviving the no-confidence vote in him, carried the headline “Solly's victory smile”.

The front page ad was for CTM, talking about making people smile.

Earlier in the week, we ran a story about the transformer fire at Rand Water, which led to large parts of Johannesburg being without water. Unknown to us, at the time we assigned stories to the page, the ad was on behalf of the City of Joburg, appealing for submissions on the draft water services by-laws.

But it was not the unplanned ad and news placing that irritated me. It was the fact that, yet again, an irrelevant government official had to have her picture on a public-service announcement.



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Brendan Seery 3 Oct 2017



National government does it all the time. Provincial government also does it. But I am disappointed that Joburg mayor Herman Mashaba allows it on his watch. I have no objection to his pic on statements relating to the city – he is the mayor, after all. But he doesn't often succumb to the temptation of putting his own mugshot in municipal communication.

So, why on earth was there a picture of one Margaret Sheron Arnolds, who is said to be chairperson: Section 7 Environment and Infrastructure Services Committee, on your ad for public inputs?

I don't care. Nor do any of the ratepayers of the city care. Politicians need to learn that they are not the story. And they need to be reminded they are working for us.

So, City of Joburg, you get this week's Onion for unnecessary ego-stroking.

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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