

When less is more...

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

9 Mar 2021

Mazda: Orchid for simple, to-the-point, 'real' ad for new CX-30 SUV; Link to Emperors Palace special - valid until 31 December, 2021 - tells a visitor offer has expired...

A fundamental principle of advertising, which brands and agencies sometimes get wrong, is to ensure that the tone and style of your ads fit with the brand and the product you're trying to flog.

So, if you're trying to let people know that the essence of your product is "less is more" – but that the less really does mean more in terms of what it offers – then you don't do marching bands and exploding fireworks.

That's the approach Mazda and its agency, Grey, took when doing the launch ad for the new CX-30 SUV. The car is sleek and svelte – but in reality is not much more than a butched-up, jacked-up CX3 (which is no bad thing, though, because it is an excellent SUV).

Mazda's brand essence – in my mind, anyway – has always been less is more; a sort of eastern mystical zen-type philosophy which leads you to contemplate what's under the skin. As a brand, it is quietly confident in its design, its engineering and in its quality.

It's a measure of that confidence that, in the ad for the CX-30, Mazda has allowed the agency to produce a minimalist, zen-like ad. It features a number of ordinary people – Grey swears they were not actors – being asked to sit and talk about themselves and then to “try on” the CX-30.

They're all very different and individualistic people, yet each smiles with pleasure and almost a “coming home” recognition that the car suits them.

And then comes the punchline: You'd swear it was made just for you.

It's refined, it's meditative and contemplative, which suits the brand and the car perfectly. So, Orchids to Mazda, to Grey and to Chloe Coetsee of Darling Films.



The Mazda CX-30 is launching and you're invited. And you, and you, and you

Grey Africa 3 Mar 2021



Our government IT systems have been in a mess for ages – from booking a driver's licence test to getting your child into school, it's all much more of a mission than it should be.

But, let the private sector not laugh, because bad implementation by the techies is letting many brands down in the online or social media space.

Trying to get online to get detail about an upgrade I am being offered by MTN was a nightmare.

Eventually I gave up after waiting longer than the allotted five minutes for an OTP to arrive...

However, this week's lesson is simply: don't put anything online unless you have double-checked it. I learned that the hard way when doing some freelance work for an overseas company 10 years ago.

I had to check every single hyperlink in every single document. Nothing worse for a company's image than someone clicking through on a broken link.

A classic example this week was ads for Emperors Palace which popped on to my Twitter timeline. It was catchy – asking if you got caught “holding down the fort” and needed a break.

There was a 35% off special and a link in the ad.

Sadly, when you followed the link, you got the message “This event/package has expired”.

Initially, I thought some IT clever or “programmatic” ad buying had posted an out-of-date ad. But when I checked, there it was:

Valid until 31 December, 2021.

Nobody bothered checking this.

Emperors Palace is made to look silly because of this inattention to detail ... or worse.

So, Emperors Palace, you get an Onion. Sadly, the offer may well have been enticing had it not “expired”.

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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