

Tickling the funny bone

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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Boerboel Wear: Clever, eye-catching campaign on social media; Net#work BBDO comes up with a unique way to celebrate staffers



There are still a few brands – Nando’s, Chicken Licken, King Price insurance spring immediately to mind – which remind us that humour is still alive and well in some parts of the South African ad industry.

Otherwise, the things which make you chuckle in a uniquely local way are still few and far between.

That is why it was great to make acquaintance with a South African brand, Boerboel Wear, which makes the sort of tough outdoors clothing you’ll see out on the farm. It has been building up quite a following, fuelled by the fact that, according to cofounder Stephan Hugo, they have done their own thing when it comes to marketing.

Part of that is via some slickly produced music videos of “their” band, *Jan Jan Jan* which has gained a wide following, mainly in the Afrikaans community.

The brand (the other founder is Sarichia Coetzer) has also been producing and flinging funny videos on social media channels, most of which have gone viral because, frankly, they are very funny.

The main storyline of the latest revolves around two tannies – Martie and Kotie – who have an eye for what would be called ‘beefcake’; hunky men all, naturally, showing off their muscular assets to best effect in Boerboel’s rugged shirts, shorts and trousers.

When the ladies go looking for their “prey”, they use a variety of means – from tranquillising darts to face masks impregnated with knock out fluid – to subdue them.

It’s a light-hearted bit of fun and works really well because the women (Martie van Graan and Naomi Dippenaar) are natural comics, able to deliver a straight line with aplomb. Most of what they say is unscripted, which is even more remarkable.

Mostly, the women are in their way striking a ringing blow for feminism (although they would probably both say siestog! to that notion) by turning the hunter vs hunted element in romance on its head.

However, what really works well is that, throughout the skits, the clothing makes a solid appearance, although it is not overwhelming. You won’t miss the fact that Boerboel Wear makes mansvleis look quite attractive.

What makes this marketing effort all the more noteworthy is that it has been achieved without the help of the “professional” big buck agencies, although both Stephan and Sarichia are marketers.

Boerboel Wear gets an Orchid from me. Thanks for the laugh.

A creative ‘thank you’ from Net#work BBDO

When a company makes an extra effort to publicly thank those employees responsible for its success as Bidvest did recently in full-page newspaper ads – it sends a double message to both clients and workers that it is a company that values people.

The ad business can be a heartless beast, frequently spitting out burned-out husks of creatives and strat people, who move on and leave their glory behind them in the agency’s trophy cabinet.

When Net#work BBDO moved into their new offices and started unpacking the 27 years of awards haul for the shelves, the leadership team had what it describes as a meltdown.

And the idea was not only a worthy way of thanking all those who have been part of its success, but it showed some imaginative thinking.

Why, they thought, keep all these trophies and medals? What if we melted them and repurposed them as individual decorations for those 670 employees who fought with us over the years?

The melted-down awards have been used to craft the 670 hashtag logo pendants, each with its own hand-carved employee number.

“We’re igniting a new era of Net#work BBDO by looking back and showing our gratitude to every employee who has been part of our 27-year story,” says Net#work BBDO’s MD, Leo Manne.

Orchids to those who came up with the idea and to all those involved in one of our country’s most successful agencies.

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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