

# Kiss of death ad may be wake-up call drivers need

 By [Brendan Seery](#) 12 Apr 2016

There has already been a lot of debate in the Twitterverse and elsewhere in cyberspace about this ad, with some saying it is stunningly effective while critics accuse it of being too shocking.

Flighted around the time of the Easter weekend, when South Africans follow their usual holiday habit of slaughtering each other on the roads, it focused on conveying the message that the wearing of seat belts is critical – for everyone in a vehicle.

The ad opens at a party with the focus on two young people who meet – not quite so much across the crowded room but next to each other on a sofa – and, clearly, fall instantly in love. As they gravitate toward one another, it is clear that the first kiss is about to happen. Each time they close in, though, someone interrupts them and they never quite get to kiss. Then they jump into a car to go home. There are four people in the vehicle and three out of the four (except the love-struck young man in the back) buckle up. Suddenly the scene of laughing happy youngsters is shattered with a bang of shredding metal and exploding glass.

All of this is conveyed in detailed slow motion. We see blood and fragments of car all over the place as well as flying bodies. The young man who was not strapped in is flung ferociously into the front of the car and cannons back into the back seat. There we see him finally meeting the lips of his beloved as he smashes into her. And kills her. As a cop at the accident scene says on his radio: The person not strapped in has killed everyone else in the impact. The punchline is “an unbuckled passenger can kill” and “No seat belt, no excuse”.

It definitely is shocking. But after the shock comes the clear message. I reckon that most thinking people who see this ad will not drive off in a car until everyone is buckled up. I have been doing that for more than 25 years – since before the wearing of rear seat belts became mandatory – and my kids grew up with seat belt-wearing as second nature. Scores of kids never got to their ages because they weren't buckled up.

The question remains: Is the ad too shocking? I don't think so. South Africans are still shockingly cavalier when it comes to their own safety and that of others when they get into vehicles. Will it make a difference? I think it probably already has... and if this ad saves at least one life, then it is worth an Orchid.

Orchids all round: to the Western Cape government, for having the guts to go with the concept; to Y&R Cape Town who put together the Safely Home campaign and to Egg Films' Jason Fialkov for a finely crafted, disturbing and gut-punching piece of cinema.



Screengrab from the ad

Cell C has been running a radio ad to show its data services are much better than those of other mobile networks. As proof, the ad offers a “test” of data speeds which show Cell C’s upload and download speeds are quicker than its rivals.

What’s the problem with that? Well, according to the ad, the test was carried out in peak-hour traffic on the M1 highway. While this may prove that Cell C’s data is good in a mobile application, it carries the danger, I believe, of accepting that downloading and driving are acceptable behaviour.

If this is only intended for passengers, then the ad should say so. But given that most of the cars on that highway are single-occupant vehicles, this is clearly aimed at tempting drivers who want to use the internet while driving. Using cell phones or texting while driving are almost as dangerous as driving under the influence of booze or drugs. That’s reckless, Cell C. So you get a fast-download Onion.

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PS: Last week’s [Orchid for FNB](#) didn’t mention the agency – FoxP2.

## 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. [View my profile and articles...](#)

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