

## Machine\_ appointed lead digital creative agency for PepsiCo SSA snack portfolio

Machine\_ has been appointed as the local digital creative agency for PepsiCo's snack portfolio including Nik Naks, Simba, Doritos and Lays.

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Brandon Mncube, head of Digital Marketing & Media for the snacks division at PepsiCo Sub Saharan Africa says that through the pitch process they were looking for an agency that showcased a deep strategic understanding of South Africa's youth market, and how to meaningfully connect with them by telling an engaging story online.

According to Mncube, they found what they were looking for at Machine\_, after the agency delivered a pitch specific to the Nik Naks brand. "Through the pitch Machine\_ really demonstrated their strategic capability with an insightful understanding of our nuanced audience, while proving their ability to both creatively and effectively use digital and social media platforms to connect and engage with our consumers. Their unique approach to the process also grabbed our attention within the first five minutes of the pitch, so we knew right away that the chemistry and culture fit was there."

Jacques Shalom, ECD of Machine\_ in Johannesburg, believes that brands need to fight so much harder to be relevant and are not necessarily adapting their communication approach to the nuances of social media

*“ Always-on calendars serve their purpose – but they are becoming the ‘stocking fillers’ of social media. The real magic to creating engaging social media content is to be right there in the moment with your audience, speaking about the same things that they are, and subtly sliding your brand into the conversation. It’s not about beating them on the head with your strategy document to get their attention while they’re trolling a celebrity. As a brand, if you’re not relevant to the conversation you’re not really welcome. ”*

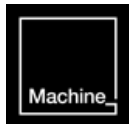
Machine\_ has shown consistent growth over the past 12 months starting 2020 with a strong through-the-line appointment on Heineken SA. Most recently the agency added the Absolut Vodka (digital creative agency), their existing portfolio of Pernod Ricard SA brands in Johannesburg.

“Machine\_ is known for being a solution orientated partner in what can sometimes be a jaded industry.

Fostering these type of partnerships requires a strong agency culture and an ability to build agile teams that function as an extension of our client's brand. And we approached this pitch in true Machine\_ fashion, with strong work-that-works and our heart on our sleeve," commented Lindsey Rayner, managing partner of Machine\_ Johannesburg.

The IAS facilitated the process from RFI through to the creative pitch, and contract negotiations. Johanna McDowell, chief executive of the IAS says: "We ensure client/agency connection from the onset by setting up partnerships with strong foundations both from the creative delivery view point through to the contract negotiations and onboarding."

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