

A walk on the wild side with Gabriel



As far as the printed media goes, this ad is brilliantly experiential and taps into the archetypal parts of the human mind. The ad begins with an evocative series of sentences designed and phrased to generate an emotive response. It follows with a narrative on Gabriel Kubu shock absorbers and a picture of the actual product.

By [Dr Kay Brügge](#) 2 Sep 2004



The "Supper in Etosha" line facilitates good eye movement to the front of the ad with the nearly palpable *sizzle* of steak, lures the reader into a false sense of safe and serenity. Having effectively facilitated a situation where one's guard can be dropped, potential danger approaches from 'behind' and in the form of the **snap** c a twig. The terms 'behind' and 'snap' are operative: the former is outside the visual field and the latter is fully emotive (the term 'a twig breaks' would, for example, have not been effective).

Against the background of subliminal embellishments such as the head of a Kudu(?), 'flames' of the grill (which, subconsciously can be interpreted as the mane of a lion), as well as the backdrop of utter isolation and remoteness (the map is obstructed/blurred, creating isolation/disorientation), this tranquillity is rudely interrupted.

Rare for a print ad, this ad is fully experiential and creates a real visceral sense of fear, putting all senses on alert. This virtual inducement of 'fight-or-flight' reactions is the result of the most primal and evolutionary ancient part of our brains called the limbic system being triggered. This pathway facilitates survival (through an extremely swift, instinctual reaction) under conditions of real or perceived threat.

Having effectively created a sense of unease and vigilance, enter the 'KUBU' shock to save the day. The narrative clarifies that it 'reacts faster' (possibly even faster than our own survival mechanisms; and of course the competition), 'absorbs shocks better' and 'will survive wherever'. All of these terms feed into the basic survival theme, pulling us back from the brink of panic induced by the ad. Finally, some control is also put back into our own (as opposed to "Kubu's") hands with the qualification, "how you fare is up to you".

Ten-out-of-ten to the Jupiter Drawing Room (SA): this ad is virtually real (an armchair ride into the wilderness), original, emphatic and powerfully appealing, going to the heart of a key imperative: survival. After all, it's a jungle out there!

ABOUT DR KAY BRÜGGE

Dr Kay Brügge is a life-design practitioner with post-graduate qualifications in psychology and neuro-psychology, specialising in qualitative research and project management, driving market and social research projects, including methodology development and focus group facilitation. With a PhD in neuro-psychology and special interest in Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), he is interested in the analysis of subliminal messages in advertising and the subconscious influences of the retail environment on the consumer. He can be reached on email: lifecoach@polka.co.za.
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