

# Doing one's bit – through design

Design: not your traditional contribution to a non-profit organisation, yet one that can make all the difference in the world, according to Joanne McLaren, marketing and communications manager, Starfish Greathearts Foundation. The Foundation's pro-bono design partner? The Switch Group.

“At Starfish, we're passionate about our projects and the communities we serve. What we realised early on, though, was that for our organisation to not only stand out among the multitude of non-profit organisations in the market, but also gain credibility among our patrons, we needed to own and build an inspiring and exceptional brand. Switch has single-handedly done this for us.”

The Starfish story itself is a particularly inspiring one. Formed by a group of young South Africans in London in May 2001 in response to the unfolding tragedy of children orphaned or left vulnerable by the HIV/Aids pandemic in South Africa, the foundation is committed to making a difference: giving these children the opportunity to grow up, achieve their dreams and become contributing members of society. It does this by providing and channelling funding to various non-governmental and community-based organisations. These organisations care for and support over 23 000 children around the country.

## Based on a parable

The vision of the Starfish Greathearts Foundation is based on a parable – that of being able to make a difference as an individual despite enormous odds being pitted against you. Gaby de Abreu, creative director: The Switch Group, explains that this parable proved just as inspiring to the design team at Switch:

“When we looked at the incredible vision of this organisation and the story behind their work, it was impossible for us not to become involved. We also knew immediately that we could make more of a difference – both personally and professionally – and, in turn help the foundation to make more of a difference, by getting out our drawing boards as opposed to our wallets.”

The team at Switch went on to assist the Starfish Greathearts Foundation with its visual design style – encompassing everything from stationery to website, brochures to invitations, premium items to posters and advertising.

## Sustained

Switch's contribution to Starfish has also been sustained: guiding the brand as the organisation has grown. “I honestly don't think Switch realises the impact it has had on our brand and what value it has added to our organisation,” says McLaren. “What they see as an almost negligible contribution assists us in doing the work we do on a daily basis.”

McLaren says the “magic” of Switch's Starfish visual design lies in how it engages with people around the world, “Switch has created something that sets us apart – it doesn't depict the challenges we face as hopeless or overwhelming, but rather captures the essence and promise of our vision. As a result, our brand has become something compelling. People want to be a part of what we do – they want to make a difference too.”

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>