

How to do real sincerity



10 Nov 2020

Challenge: lessons for SA Brands from overseas work; Advertisers in this country must 'push reset button' and come up with new material...

One of the most overworked clichés of 2020 – apart from "in the time of coronavirus/ Covid-19" – must be "we're all in this together".

It's well past its sell-by date, as the realisation sinks in that humanity really didn't "push the reset button" (oops, another one) because of the global pandemic.

We're still as selfish, angry and narrow-minded as we've always been ... it's just that when we all thought we faced a common enemy, we were better at hiding it.

When it comes to business, capitalism still seeks to squeeze as much blood out of the profit stone as it can – and competition is still cut-throat.

The lockdowns and loss of turnover saw many in the hospitality business go to the wall and in SA there was a praiseworthy effort to get restaurants to work together (an initiative of the dynamic and innovative Ocean Basket chief executive Grace Harding), to lobby government to ease lockdown and, in the longer term, increase their effectiveness as bulk buyers.

I was struck by a similar sort of sentiment this week from Burger King UK, which got people talking on social media with its ad headed: "Order from McDonald's".

"Restaurants employing thousands of staff really need your support at the moment."

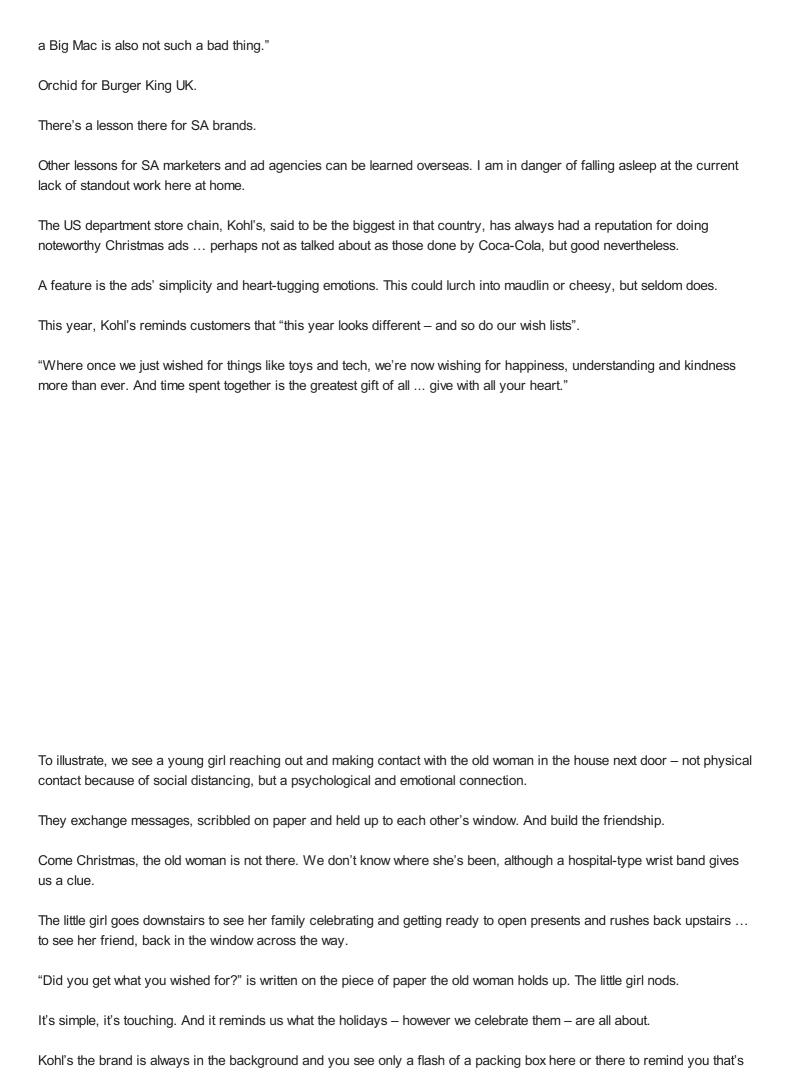
We know, we never thought we'd be saying this either. <u>pic.twitter.com/cVRMSLSDq6</u>— Burger King (@BurgerKingUK)

<u>November 2, 2020</u>

It's a show of solidarity as Britain – or large parts of it anyway – is in lockdown again.

It's a magnanimous gesture from one of the big players in the fast-food business, but shows a brand comfortable enough to give its biggest rival a plug.

Of course, it is not completely altruistic, as the last line reminds customers: "Getting a Whopper is always best, but ordering



where you get the presents.

The ad, in making us feel good about ourselves and giving us hope in an often hopeless world, makes us feel good about the people who brought us this.

So, an Orchid to Kohl's for classic Christmas advertising. Let's see what we come up with locally.

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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