

TBWA/Hunt Lascaris' Carl Willoughby on his new role as CCO

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

5 Jun 2023

Recently appointed chief creative officer (CCO) at TBWA/Hunt Lascaris, Carl Willoughby's career spans over 20 years at various agencies throughout South Africa, for multiple brands across different categories.



Recently appointed CCO for Hunt Lascaris, Carl Willoughby admits he spends too much time on advertising, but also on his phone

His work has been acknowledged at all major local and international awards shows and in 2021 he was ranked #1 ECD in South Africa by The Loeries Awards.

At one point in his career he also launched a telecommunications company during a brief stint in the Middle-East

■ **What does your role as the recently appointed CCO for Hunt Lascaris entail?**

Firstly, there's way more stress and responsibility. I always considered myself the Scottie Pippen to my predecessor, Pete Khoury but now I've got to fulfill his role. It's quite a huge responsibility actually.

Hunt Lascaris has a strong history of being a creatively pedigreed agency. To continue that reputation is daunting but it's something amazing to help build on actually and it's incredibly energising.

Previously as ECD I managed to find my rhythm. Now there are many new challenges. We're trying to build an agency where I'd like to think people want to work and feel that they can contribute their ideas.

So building a strong culture especially post-Covid is important to me and Karabo Denalane, the CEO.

I'm busier, slowly building more relationships with more of our client base while ensuring we keep building our shopfront window work. There are some extremely exciting projects on the horizon which makes it all worth it.



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■ **What do you want to achieve in this role?**

I want to help further transform the agency digitally. I'm actively driving transformation by playing a key role in the hiring of talent. We've still got some way to go but we're making good progress.

I want to push the creative profile of the agency by developing work that takes us beyond the traditional world. I'm extremely excited about work that's in the pipeline that already works towards that goal.

■ **You have worked on many brands across different categories from VW, Nissan, BMW, to Liberty, Standard Bank, KFC, Windhoek, DSTV. So what does creativity mean to you in the world today and why is it important for business but also for society as a whole?**

Creativity is incredibly important.

I believe it is a way for businesses to find alternative disruptive ways to achieve better business results. It can add value, economically and culturally; it helps us overcome so many conventional ways of thinking and being.

It can change a point of view because for me creativity is the ability to step out of a comfort zone and have a better experience.

Creativity feeds innovation, not just in communication but in many other aspects of society. The thing is that creativity is not just the responsibility of the creative industry, it's a necessary quality in many other spaces.

You have creative accounting, you have creative lawyers, engineers. Teachers can be creative.

▣ ***What should be important to brands today? What should they focus on?***

Brands have to make money, they have to be profitable, that's just business. But brands can do so much more.

In South Africa they can play a more fundamental role in driving progress within our country. Not to be political but I really feel that brands can help us move to a more first-world way of being.

From technological innovation to helping build infrastructure, to helping address cultural issues. We see how brands are adopting a more inclusive approach to marketing, showcasing the right people, and talking with the right voice.

It's great, but it can't just end there. Brands can say a lot but they can do a lot more too.

Brand actions for me are where brands can fundamentally make a difference in society and South Africa as a whole. Influencing culture is an amazing place for a brand to be. It doesn't have to just be a commercial transaction with the consumer, it can be cultural.



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▣ ***Why is transformation in the industry so important?***

It's critical. Yes we right the wrongs in many ways. That's our collective duty in the industry.

But transformation means a more diverse inclusive industry. And the more diverse the more diverse our thinking and ultimately our work. It's not complicated logic getting that right.

For me it's exciting to see work reflective of the true cultures we talk to.

▣ ***In terms of the above, why is it so important that the industry brings in young talent and how do we give them an opportunity to shine?***

Young talent brings new thinking. I'm not criticising older talent. Older talent has just found their groove. Young talent hasn't quite.

Yes, there might be more insecurity but that insecurity fuels more creative thinking. I really believe that.

The problem is often the young talent lacks the confidence to be 'heard' and us older people need to be open and ready to listen.

The youth make up 35% of our population. To be honest, to talk and appeal to them we need to understand them. A more youthful industry drives more relevant insights and creates work that connects on a deeper level.

▣ ***Apart from your work, what are you passionate about doing or spending time on and why?***

I spend too much time on advertising to be honest, I know that. My side hustle was photography, did weddings, shoots,

packshots, anything.

These days I really don't get enough time to pursue that. Other than that I also spend way too much time on my phone.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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