

# Draftfcb has handled Toyota account for 50 years

By [Chris Moerdyk](#): @chrismoerdyk

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It was sometime in 1961 that a fellow called Albert Wessels started importing bakkies from Japan. One of the first things he did was get in touch with an ad agency called Lindsay Smithers to help him advertise them. Now, 50 years later, Draftfcb still handles the account after the original Lindsay Smithers begat Lindsay Smithers FCB which begat FCB SA which eventually begat Draftfcb.

**DRAFTFCB**  
SOUTH AFRICA



**TOYOTA**

The Toyota brand was an almost instant hit and really hasn't looked back in half a century.

I remember way back in the mid-1960s, asking the then Lindsay Smithers MD and eventual Toyota SA CEO, Colin Adcock, just what it was that made Toyota such a popular brand in South Africa.

**Nothing going for it**

He told me that it certainly wasn't the design or visual appeal of the car because it really didn't have much going for it. And, equally, it wasn't faster than its competitors or more fuel-efficient. Nor was the Toyota any more comfortable. And it certainly didn't perform as well. So really, he said, all it had going for it was "obsessive" customer service.

Which meant that in the absence of being able to claim anything that was actually better than its competitors, Toyota came up with a slogan that really just mirrored the brand: "Everything keeps going right."

## Iconic slogan

It was a slogan that backed the Toyota brand for decades and upon which build-and service-quality were founded. It was a slogan that was the envy of every other car manufacturer and importer in the country. It was iconic.

And then, for some completely insane reason, Toyota decided about 10 years ago to change its slogan to "Lead the way." A classic example of trying to fix something that ain't broke.

That aside, Toyota advertising has always been workmanlike and efficient. Its ad agency has never really taken anything for granted and has worked hard.

And proven time and time again the [value of sticking to your agency](#) and not chopping and changing.

## ABOUT CHRIS MOERDYK: @CHRISMOERDYK

Apart from being a corporate marketing analyst, advisor and media commentator, Chris Moerdyk is a former chairman of Bizcommunity. He was head of strategic planning and public affairs for BMW South Africa and spent 16 years in the creative and client service departments of ad agencies, ending up as resident director of Lindsay Smithers-FCB in KwaZulu-Natal. Email Chris on [moerdykc@gmail.com](mailto:moerdykc@gmail.com) and follow him on Twitter at [@chrismoerdyk](#).

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