

TBWA Hunt Lascaris's Peter Khoury on why 'The Real Cost' is truly iconic

By [Maroefah Smith](#)

4 Sep 2019

TBWA Hunt Lascaris recently won the Internet & Mobile Audio Commercials Grand Prix at the Loeries. The Grand Prix was in recognition of the agency's City Lodge Hotel Groups' 'The Real Cost' campaign.



TBWA Hunt Lascaris's Peter Khoury at the 2019 Loeries Awards. Image credit: Julian Carelsen/2019 Loerie Awards.

The radio campaign, which was also awarded at this year's Cannes Lions, embraces the theatre of the mind and half of the campaign was written in South Africa's widely-spoken language, Zulu.

TBWA Hunt Lascaris's COO, Peter Khoury, lets us on why he thinks the campaign deserved to win, the idea behind the campaign and his experience at this year's Loeries Creative Week.



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Congratulations on your Grand Prix win! What does this win mean to you/for the agency?

We at TBWA Hunt Lascaris aim to create iconic work for our clients that is culturally relevant to their consumers. This is an acknowledgement to us having achieved this. This was a really special win for us as it was first for South Africa in that a non-English script won a Grand Prix, making it truly iconic.

We couldn't be prouder, as we have committed ourselves to locating and involving brands into modern culture and these ads did just that. We are thrilled that they received the recognition that they deserve, so a big thanks to the judges and the Loeries for awarding it the highest prize.

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■ ***Why do you think this campaign was deserving of such a win?***

These spots have great, contemporary insights that cross cultures. They embrace the human truth about going home for the holidays. They are beautifully written, in both English and Zulu, and have exceptional production values.

They feel fresh in their execution-style and are a guiding light to the young writers out there who want to push their cultural insights into their work to make it distinctive.

■ ***Tell us more about the thinking behind the idea for the campaign.***

This radio campaign has six spots and focuses on deep, cultural nuances in both the English and Zulu versions. When it comes to holidays and occasional travel, the City Lodge Group not only compete with other hotel chains and Airbnb, they compete with the homes of friends and family.

The truth is, in tight-fisted economic times, many of us end up choosing the ‘free’ option.

But how free is it really? Finances aside, there are some undeniable emotional and, sometimes, physical costs to staying with the people you love: looking after your ageing, haggard childhood pets and the constant, unrequited company – not to mention too much information about your parents’ sexual renaissance. When you weigh up the real cost of staying with family, staying at a City Lodge hotel is better than free, actually.

We flighted these on traditional radio stations, specifically 94.7, but The City Lodge ‘The Real Cost of being Zulu’ radio ad

breaks the mould in all aspects of radio advertising and how we traditionally advertise to black people. The driving insight for the campaign is to speak to Zulu people who grew up in rural or peri-urban South African areas, but due to work, or other reasons, go off to the CBDs of Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban.

When these South Africans are back home, they might hear a predominantly Zulu radio station, such as Ukhozi FM, for instance. However, we recognised that when they are in the cities, they mostly engage with online and urban radio stations. With a limited budget, this is where we decided to launch our campaign for maximum effect, with an online radio burst just before the major holidays.

Cliff Central is the biggest online radio station in South Africa, with a variety of popular hosts who appeal to young trend makers. We were able to disrupt the way marketers advertise to black people by not looking at them as isolated LSMs or monolingual beings. We also released our audio stories with subtitled videos as visual support, so that even those who don't speak the language could still be entertained. We opted for a non-traditional radio medium to do this.

The success of the campaign means that our client now has more of a budget to book media on big radio stations. The next burst of the campaign is around the December break and will feature traditional, but regional, radio stations as well.



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■ What was your main takeout from Loeries 2019?

There is work here at Loeries that, regardless of how good it is, in many cases won't win in other award shows because the work is so nuanced; plus, without the background or cultural understanding, it won't have the same resonance.

This is not a bad thing. It just means that we are finally understanding who we are as a people and embracing it, which makes me proud to see.

“ A [@loeries](#) GRAND PRIX for [@TBWAHunts](#) and [@citylodggroup](#) !! 🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉 [#tbwaloeries2019](#)
[#loeries2019 pic.twitter.com/nw4VawORoS](#)— TBWA Africa (@TBWAfrica) [August 24, 2019](#) ”

■ Comment on the current creative landscape in South Africa and how this compares globally?

On the positive side, we are embracing who we are as a country, and are really producing work that reflects our stories, aesthetics, cultures and society. This is distinctive and really fresh to the rest of the world, and hugely inspiring to our local consumers. We need more of this kind of work – great, local insights and stories but executed in an exceptional

way.

■ ■ ■ **What's next?**

We have a great momentum at the moment in terms of being experimental, producing great work for big brands at scale, and evolving our company each and every day to stay ahead of the curve. For us, it is just about staying open-minded, to challenge and change and to use them to propel us to bigger opportunities that reinvent who we are and what we do.

Stay tuned for more of TBWA Hunt Lascaris's iconic work on its [press office](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

ABOUT MAROEFAH SMITH

Enthusiastic UCT graduate with a passion for fashion, film and words.

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