

Challenger Type - The Irreverent Maverick

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When true irreverence makes for unshakable relevance

Witty brand communication that consistently attacks the comfort of the same-old-same-old, is a hallmark of an Irreverent Maverick.

Think of a brand that's been making South Africans laugh for over two decades. Chances are, many will answer 'Nandos'. Yes, this is a great example of an Irreverent Maverick, but there's another exemplar worth highlighting.



Savanna Premium Cider has been keeping us engaged and entertained for twenty years with provocations that challenge the traditional category cues.

The nationwide response to the Covid-19 pandemic that includes a ban on all sales of non-essential goods, including alcohol, is having a major impact on the liquor industry. What do brands, in an industry that's heavily reliant on social gatherings; on and off trade sales; and physical activations do in the midst of lockdown restrictions? What Savanna did is to go back to its core brand and from there, continue to do what it's always done: put the fun back into a category that appears to be at a "stand still" - and doing it in a way that is authentic to its Challenger strategy and mindset.

In April 2020, Savanna launched the #SavannaVirtualComedyBar to keep consumers entertained while supporting the nation's call to #StayHome. The live virtual comedy bar is hosted on various social platforms with weekly bar nights and bi-weekly specials which include a longer line-up.



Photo: Savanna website

In addition to staying connected with customers, the initiative is how Savanna helps keep comics and entertainers, another hard-hit industry, active and engaged. This is central to the brand's long-time mission to support and nurture comedic talent. The result is not only exposure for entertainment heavyweights, but for up-and-coming comics too – a key objective of Savanna's upliftment goals.



Photo: Savanna Twitter Timeline

Savanna has challenged the established beer and cider market. It was the first alcohol brand in South Africa to launch a black bottled variant in the form of Savanna Dark. More recently, in another South African first, it confronted the seemingly over-complicated and exclusive world of the “craft movement” by launching a Juniper-flavoured cider.

To ensure that #SavannaVirtualComedyBar is as accessible as possible, a promotional competition was launched in tandem to give entrants a chance to win up to 3GB of data. That's a lot of laughs!

Traditionally, competitions like this in the alcohol industry are centred around a purchase-to-redeem prize mechanic. However, true to its Challenger form, with the restriction on alcohol sales in place, Savanna flipped this on its head: consumers only needed to engage across the different social media platforms to stand a chance of winning.

Since its entry into the market in 1996,



Photo: Savanna YouTube Channel

Irreverent Mavericks find success by making headlines and having the ability to respond to what is going on while not being afraid to take risks. They simply do not shy away from topical commentary or participation. Take the launch of the Savanna non-alcoholic lemon variant that taps into the growing sub-category of mindful consumption. The variant's entry into market focused on breaking the rules of an “alcohol brand” – defying where one is allowed to drink it; who can drink it and on which day of the week - and in turn, the brand gave consumers permission to go out and break the rules themselves.

In the foreseen future, regulations will be subject to additional compliance limitations and restrictions, but the Irreverent Maverick always finds a way to flip things on their head and maintain the counter industry exuberance that continues to endear Savanna to the public. The Savanna initiatives have been consistent in approach, from the days of Barry Hilton right through to the introduction of the “new school” Lazola Gola and now, coming up on the Savanna YouTube channel, another installment of the #SavannaVirtualComedyBar series. It's a most irreverant laugh, relevant for these times.

<https://savannacider.com>



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We act as catalysts rather than consultants and, through our collaborative approach, we provide inspiration and frameworks which enable 'would be' challengers to deliver breakthrough solutions for their teams and brand.



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