

How Jameson mixed up their marketing efforts during Covid-19

By [Beatrice Marfleet](#)

31 Mar 2021

Brands in all sectors of the economy have come through Covid-19 with varying degrees of success. The liquor industry was of course hard hit, but through it we (as a brand) have learned a lot about consumer behaviour. In fact, the purchase-behaviour spinoffs we've seen as a direct result of Covid-19 restrictions have been very interesting. These are things that perhaps might not have come to the fore in any other way.



Source: www.jamesonwhiskey.com

Here are a few insights into how we changed our marketing efforts:

Accountability

Consumers are demanding of brands to be a lot more authentic in their communications and deliverables. For example, it's not enough to state that you are a truly South African brand, you have to show it to your consumers.

With nearly 25 years in the local market, Jameson has a very strong South African legacy and we've found that of late our loyal consumers are really buying into that, particularly in terms of the brand's values. We've worked innovatively to align Jameson's values with that of the consumers and current status quo.

As a result we've made a statement by putting a face mask on three of Jameson's billboards in Johannesburg – at Braamfontein (60 Juta), Melrose Arch and on the corner of Witkoppen & Main in Fourways. The idea is to continue to encourage consumers and the public in general to not get complacent and to keep wearing their masks.

Value does not relate directly to price point

Now, more than ever, consumers are looking for value and quality in their purchases. They are looking to buy into the value of the lifestyle that a product promotes as much as they are looking for real value from the product itself. We have found that this does not relate directly to price point. By that, I mean that consumers are not shopping on price point but rather to

get the 'real' value out of their purchase.

As a super whiskey, consumers have indicated that they don't mind paying a little bit extra because of the quality and the unmatched taste it offers in the market.



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27 Mar 2021



Experimentation has become linear

The days of product experimenting for experimentation's sake are long gone. We have found that throughout this time consumers are staying true to the brands and tastes they know and trust. However, experimenting within the realm of silo has seen big growth.

Jameson Original, the flagship brand, has been in the South African market for nearly a quarter of a century. Thanks to that brand loyalty though, we are seeing more and more endemic consumers trading up into the Caskmates range, because they know that they are experimenting within the family and therefore highly unlikely to be disappointed.

Responsible messaging remains engaging

This very much relates to my first point on accountability. As a brand, we at Jameson (and Pernod Ricard SA as a whole) have always promoted responsible enjoyment of our products. The environment of this messaging has changed over the past twelve months, but the actual product messaging hasn't.

So, 'responsibly' used to be getting a taxi after a night out; now it's 'wear your mask' and practice social distancing when out. The reality is that at the end of the day, when this is all over, we want to be able to go back to 100% capacity at events and be able to bring those authentic experiences and tangible consumer activations back.

But, unless we take a stand together and galvanise our consumers through the connotations of our messaging, it is going to be much harder for the government to do so. This is why we have put face masks on the three billboards, and also why we are running the 'Mix, don't Mingle' campaign, which promotes ordering up an exciting mix or cocktails, reiterating not to mingle in big groups.

Of course, we are well aware that there may well be a few more speed bumps ahead, but we will continue to walk this road in an innovative and authentic manner and stay true to our consumers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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