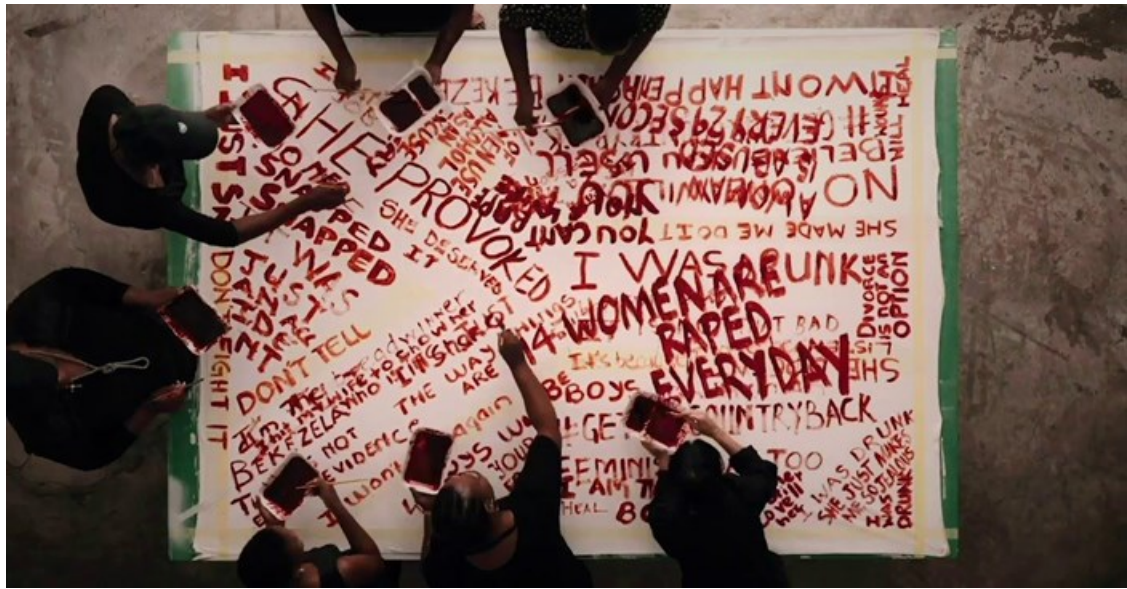


Campaign that hits the spot

By [Brendan Seery](#)

3 Dec 2019

Good advertising is something which works for the client - isn't that how it's supposed to go? Excellent advertising not only pushes a message and a brand, but it pushes people to action... not so?



Screengrab from [Youtube video](#).

Sadly, one of the best campaigns I've seen this year is only going to have a limited impact.

Ad agency Black River FC put together a series of different executions for People Opposing Woman Abuse (Powa), to tie in with 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. The idea was to move the focus on to the non-government organisations (like Powa) who are trying to do so much with so little in the fight to curb this scourge of our society.



Meet BRFC's new ECD, the woman challenging creativity in SA
Black River Football Club 29 Aug 2019



We've seen plenty of ads done to highlight the abuse of women and many of them have been gut-punch sickening. But shock and horror were not what Black River FC were going for. Theirs was a more subtle message about the broader effects of this ongoing violence - on our nation as a whole.

And their core idea is: we should be ashamed of this.

To make that point hit home, they constructed the "Republic of Sexual Abuse (RSA)". This is the place which shares our common provincial and national borders, but where the main characteristic of the society is violence against the vulnerable.



#FairnessFirst: Taking action beyond #16DaysOfActivism

Leigh Andrews 2 Dec 2019



The agency put together a number of art pieces - including a map of "RSA" with suitably altered province names highlighting our everyday abuse. They also rewrote the words of the national anthem - in all the languages used in the official one - to say that our real national anthem is abusing, assaulting and killing women and children.

A national flag was also filled in with the various comments the abusers use.

There might be some who would get angry, or at least uncomfortable, with the apparent abuse of national symbols like the flag and the anthem. Yet, that is exactly what should be happening when it comes to abuse - the things which are defacing the nation as a whole.

Black River FC, in conjunction with Avatar PR handling the media communication side of the campaign, also did some clever activations and produced some haunting images of people effectively questioning their loyalty to a country which can allow this sort of abuse to continue.

Orchids to Black River FC and Avatar for an unusual and thought-provoking idea and campaign.

“ [#RSA](#): Republic of South Africa or Republic of Sexual Abuse?

Go and check the shock value exhibition in Rosebank Mall. [@POWA_ZA pic.twitter.com/3UY9NJKwov](#)— Noé Hochet-Bodin (@noehochet) [November 28, 2019](#) ”

But, as I said earlier on, it probably will not amount to much. That's sad and that's not the fault of the agencies involved. It's just that South African men, the abusers who are the central actors in this campaign - whether they realise it or not -

are not likely to change any time soon.

However, the Republic of Sexual Abuse should give pause to the "good men" out there... it should make them think about how much they - through their tolerance of sexist behaviour - are accomplices to the creation of the climate of fear and terror of women.

And, even if one of them realise that and takes action, however small, then this campaign will have moved things slightly.

The example of the Black River FC campaign also reminds me that good ideas need good communication... and that public relations done properly can be highly effective. The best PR people are storytellers (and the best storytellers are often, but not always former journos) and Avatar's Keri-Ann Stanton is one of them.



[Trends 2015] Back to basics communications engagement

Keri-Ann Stanton 27 Jan 2015



Another company which is achieving good exposure in a cost-effective way, thanks to excellent PR communication, is the Mozambik restaurant group.

Behind the communication is a PR and marketing industry veteran (sorry, but you are), Hein Kaiser. As someone who cut his teeth on a newspaper, Kaiser knows how to tell stories... and how to package them into entertainment.



#AfricaMonth: Hein Kaiser in the media and marketing mix

Leigh Andrews 30 May 2017



A really good example is the print and electronic in-house magazine, *Mozambik* magazine. The content is good and the layout and design is excellent. It's a great bonding mechanism (printed mags are going to be available for restaurant patrons to browse through while they wait tables) for brand and client - and it recognises within every brand and business, there are stories to tell, stories which can entertain and educate others, while subtly pushing your brand. A pity more brands don't see that...

But it's not just me saying this about *Mozambik*. Our lifestyle editor, Thami Kwazi, recently attended the launch of its branch in Fourways. After scores of launches over the years, Thami has become a bit jaded, so for something to stand out, it has to be really good. That launch was simply the best she's been to. No waiting around, plenty of wonderful food, drink and good entertainment.



Mozambik Restaurant to open in Cape Town

26 Jul 2019



Her's the interesting bit, though: she's going back there using her own money, taking her family because it's a great family choice, she reckons.

It doesn't get better than that when it comes to marketing, does it, so Orchids to *Mozambik* and to Kaiser.

ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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