

No small change: 99c opens Zambian branch

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Ninety9cents (99c), one of South Africa's largest independently owned full-service advertising agencies, has opened a new office in Lusaka, Zambia, as of July 2016.

Andrew Brand, founder and Managing Director, explains that the move is part of the agency's broader vision to spread its roots across the continent, with further subsidiaries in Luanda and Lagos in the pipeline.

"Africa holds enormous potential for us as an agency; firstly, because our values-driven model is very much aligned to Africa's need for delivery and real business impact at affordable rates, and secondly because our experience and expertise in the retail and FMCG space will translate well in other markets."

Known for its high-volume and results-driven work on big retail brands, Brand believes that the agency's understanding of action-oriented advertising and promotion across all touch points, quick turnaround, as well as expertise across multiple disciplines is what will set it apart in a competitive market.

The move follows on the back of retail giant - and 99c client - Shoprite's increased focus on its African business, as well as Ackermans' growing presence in the country, with a number of recent store openings. "It made sense from a client-proximity point of view, and the openness to trade that Zambia offers is very advantageous to us as an agency."

However, the agency's existing clients will remain its immediate priority. "Only once we feel confident that we can offer the same level of service that our clients have come to expect from the Cape Town team, will we look at taking on additional business."

Brand will be there frequently in the early stages, adding to his Zambian staff complement as needed. The agency has also partnered with Simply Black, a pan African specialist media agency, whose services will dovetail with the 99c creative focus.

In order to communicate genuinely and effectively in a specific market, Brand believes this on-the-ground presence is critical. "Every market is different, he explains, "and to create work that connects with customers, people with very specific needs one has to take a holistic view of the challenges and opportunities unique to that region. This is only possible if you are physically there."

"This brings deeper insight which leads to richer ideas that better resonate with the consumer – and that's when you start seeing real business impact."



Andrew Brand

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Ninety9cents



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