

Vannie Kaap comes a funny ad... and a slice of customer service madness

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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Many South African English speakers definitely lose out by not communicating, or even taking in, other languages. The rest of the people in this country often speak three or more languages, whereas we English-speakers expect everyone to speak to us in our language... and then to do so properly.

In the case of Afrikaans, English-speakers miss out on a lot of very interesting content in newspapers, on TV and on radio. And, I admit, I am lazy that way: I have to remind myself every so often to go on to SABC2 or KykNet and take in an Afrikaans programme or two.

Afrikaans advertising has, for the same reason, often been ignored by the greater marketing industry, which is largely dominated by white, English speakers.

Quite a few years ago now, the Pendorring Awards were created to recognise Afrikaans-language advertising, which was not being reflected in the Loeries ad awards at the time. Pendorings have become sought-after awards and, over the years, have highlighted some really great advertising – not just great Afrikaans advertising, but great advertising full stop.



ALL THE #PENDORING2017 WINNERS!

27 Oct 2017



The awards themselves have produced their own memorable ads, including one about 10 years or so ago, when black ink poured out of a mouth...a snort of film noir-type point about creativity's different outlets.

Being different – and taking a bit of a chance when it comes to using sensitive material – is what won Y&R Cape Town and 7Films a special Pendorring last week for their TV ad for the Western Cape government's road safety campaign.



#Pendorring2017: Lucky number two!

Danette Breitenbach 30 Oct 2017



There have been a number of different spots for the campaign and they have used a range of methods – from shock to humour – to get across various points about safe driving.

The Pendoring-winning ad, titled “‘Everybody knows’, takes place in what is clearly the gang-riddled Cape Flats. A group of gangsters is sitting around, gambling and drinking heavily, their guns readily available. Someone rushes in with what is clearly bad news and the gangsters all grab their guns and rush to go and exact revenge.

They all pile into the car and realise no one is in the driver’s seat. The conversation bounces around the car in the best township Afrikaans as they all realise they’re drunk and that the cope are all over the place breathalysing people..

The gang leader decides it: “Gentelmen! Let’s take a taxi!”

The punchline is that 'everybody knows' it is illegal to drive when you're drunk... and that you'll get caught.





It's funny and the humour helps elevate the apparently grim content and make a great public service point.

I know it's not quite Pendorring Award, but Y&R and 7 Films, you get an Orchid from me.

The interesting thing is that, after the Pendorings had been handed out, police minister Fikile Mbalula went on a rave, threatening the makers of fake videos of gangland violence. The one 'Mbaks' had a go at was so obviously faked that no serious cop would take it seriously... yet the minister did, claiming those guilty of producing the videos would be "brought to book" for "defeating the ends of justice".

No, you cannot make up this stuff. I suppose it's fortunate Mbaks never saw the Pendorring winner, because he could well have swooped on Y&R and 7 Films...

And now, even more from the You can't make this up marketing department. Colleague Linden Birns popped into his local Roman's pizza outlet in Cape Town recently, looking to get himself a medium pizza for lunch.

You can't have one, he was told. The special is for two. He asked a few times, emphasising he only wanted one. No can do, was the response...so Linden walked into the Woolies next door and bought himself a sandwich.

Of course, the world being what it is, Linden's experience, when posted on Facebook, generated many comments, most of them disparaging, about customer service at Roman's Pizza. The common theme was that this cavalier approach to customer service – and marketing inflexibility – is commonplace in modern-day South Africa where our national marketing motto seems to be: The answer's No! Now, what's the question?

The Facebook had a sequel a few days later, when Linden was contacted by someone from the social media team handling Roman's activities online. Then he was contacted by some from the customer service department, or some such, of Roman's Pizza.

After a bit, she asked him what size pizza he had ordered, and Linden replied that it was the medium one.

"Oh well, then, that explains it," she said (or words to that effect).

"You can't order only one of those..."

True story.

Linden's comment was that he could see why Roman's was so empty.

Today's Onion special means Roman's gets two: one for alienating a customer and the second for making it worse with their inflexibility.

And sorry, you can't have just one...

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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