

Standard Bank delivers with adorable ad

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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As it is with insurance, being a bank account holder is a grudge purchase for many...and it is surprising the disdain with which many banks treat their customers (their revenue source).



If you doubt that, carry out this little experiment the next time you are chatting around a dinner table or braai fire and people are moaning about politics and crime. Ask this simple question: Everyone happy with their bank? Guaranteed at least someone, and probably more than one person, will offer up a horror story of dreadful customer service.

Easier lives

So, it would be pretty pointless producing marketing which seeks to tug at the heart strings of account holders to convince them that their bank is their forever, faithful, lover.

What you can do, though, is tell your customers, and your potential clients, about products you offer which could make their lives easier.

This is what Standard bank has done to promote its forward payments product. This, working via the app, will work out for you how much (if anything) you will have left over to spend (or fun stuff?) after the bills have been paid...and presumably until next pay day.

That is quite useful and, if nothing else, might be a reminder about how close you are to crashing and burning financially.

What Standard Bank decided to do was showcase the life-saving benefits of the product by using humour.

We see a worried mum, about to head out and leave her two hyper-active kids with her Dad,

What are you going to do all day, she asks him anxiously considering the rain pouring down outside, while a voice in her head tells her that the two terrors are going to be stuck inside all day.

While granddad swears they will “just chill”, mum has visions of her kids smearing him with make-up and doing his hair while he naps, unaware. She also has the horrifying vision of arriving home to a devastated bathroom where the young ones have wreaked havoc.



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But what can she do, because “we have no money”, as she realises, for getting out and entertaining them.

Up pops the forward payments app, pointing out that she has enough financial headroom to send all three out of the house. And that’s where we seen them at the end of the spot, chilling with grandpa at the movie...while he sleeps.

It’s simple, it’s sweet and it comes with a little glow of humour, but manages to sell the product, too. Well done, Standard Bank, an Orchid for you.

Better never than late

Many ad agencies and PR companies – and often big company in-house marketing people – have no idea that for them to piggyback their marketing messages on news events requires actually getting the “news” out quickly. Leave it too long and your news becomes history.

Competition was fierce this week for most slovenly marketing pitch – with Liqui-Fruit (and its agency, DNA Brand

Architects) sending out an unbelievably breathless press release on Tuesday, 3 October, about an event which happened on 27 September...five days earlier.

One could almost hear the influencers swooning in the background as DNA ladled on all the marketing event clichés – “highly anticipated”, “prestigious”, “star-studded guest list”, “graced the sensational affair”, “true spectacle”, “vibrant atmosphere”, “captivating presentation”, “most exquisite fashion” I could go on but, seriously, this is all real and is not from a Monty Python skit on the vacuousness of PR people.



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Sadly, though, the event was about Liqui-Fruit's *Nothing quite like it* campaign and none of what it was really about was conveyed in the PR release. So, anyone who wasn't lucky enough to be on the favoured guest list – like the journalists you scatter-gunned the release to – would have been none the wiser.

For a total waste of marketing time, never mind the OTT language, DNA Brand Architects and Liqui-Fruit get an Onion each, because someone should have stopped this nonsense.

Similarly, the marketing folks at Isuzu – which is a brand I really respect for its long heritage of toughness and reliability – though it clever to send out their release, also on October 3, about the company honouring heritage on Heritage Day...a mere week earlier.

And the, surprise, surprise, we had the clichéd pics of staffers in their “traditional” clothes, grinning for the camera.

A week too late, it was even more clichéd...but the real lost opportunity was for Isuzu to talk about the brand heritage and tell the stories of the legendary bakkies which just keep going and going.

Lost opportunity will always get you an Onion, Isuzu...

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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