

Yoco's *Back the Underdog* celebrates SMEs

Yoco celebrates SMEs with its *Back the Underdog* campaign.



Image supplied. Yoco's champions of the underdog campaign features real SME owners and their businesses.

The African payments platform asks with South Africa's SMEs providing 66% of all jobs in the country, isn't it time we started celebrating them? Answering yes, the company created a campaign to do just this.

The campaign was created by Yoco's in-house creative team, with the concept being led by Drew Soglo, senior copywriter, and Simphiwe Khumalo, senior art director.

"Our goal was to highlight the importance of small business, that small businesses add to our lives in many ways, by contributing to job creation and GDP as well as by enriching culture and communities," explains Yoco brand marketing manager, Robyn Viljoen.

This created the incentive for people to support them by asking people to imagine a world without the small businesses that help to add colour to their lives while making their days so much easier.

360-degree campaign

Viljoen adds that the chief element of the 360-degree campaign was a TVC that aired on TV and digital platforms.

The TVC featured real customers to highlight all that would be lost if the small businesses we support were to die out.

“Each of our campaigns features real small business owners, rather than actors, as does all our creative work. It is important for the authenticity of the story, but more than this, it allows small businesses to be seen and tell their own stories in their own words,” adds Viljoen.

Image generator

Another core element of the campaign came in the form of an image generator. South Africans were invited to engage with the campaign by creating custom artwork, posing the question: “What would the world look like without your favourite small business?”

The image generator allowed customers to fill in the blanks, helping to raise awareness of these businesses and the space that would be left without them.

Significantly, over 4,800 people created a custom image on Yoco’s image generator – proof that the campaign got people to interact with small businesses, as intended.

“This was very important for us because one of the key measurements of the campaign’s success is earned media; essentially, how many people were vocally showing their support for small businesses,” Viljoen says.

Organic social media and other content

The campaign further included organic social media content, giving an explainer about just how small businesses impact our country as well as generic and live reads on 11 radio stations, billboards and performance marketing.

Finally, Yoco collaborated with underdogs to create T-shirts and a coffee blend; again helping to raise awareness of the contribution and creativity of small businesses.



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21 Feb 2023



A single-minded, consistent message

“The end result was a fully integrated campaign: each aspect, from theme to messaging and design, was integrated across multiple channels, from the brand touchpoints to the performance funnel.

“This created a single-minded, consistent message, which allowed the story to be told in great detail,” Viljoen says.

One of the greatest benefits to emerge from this is that Yoco’s stance as an active and vocal supporter and advocate of small businesses has been reiterated and entrenched.

One of the outcomes of which Yoco is most proud is that this attitude spread amongst all who encountered the campaign.

Reaching 40.6 million people online

“People were visibly moved by the invitation to ‘Imagine the world without...’” Viljoen says.

This was evidenced by the responses, comments, and posts elicited by the campaign as a whole as 29.9k people joined the conversation to speak about backing the underdog and what we would lose if small businesses disappeared. In total, the campaign reached 40.6 million people online.

Viljoen says that the campaign ultimately is an ode to these small businesses and the challenges they encounter and overcome daily.

“We understand that this is no small feat, and we wanted to celebrate it. More than this, we wanted South Africans to celebrate it, too – and to do this by supporting the spaza shop owners, food stores, hairdressers, and all the other small businesses who are such an integral part of our economy.”

The campaign follows Yoco’s *We the Underdog* campaign.