

Lucy Lightfoot from RMB

 By [Nicci Botha](#)

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For any organisation, whatever the industry, the concept of a brand is not just important but a business imperative when it comes to establishing a foothold in the market. The brand represents everything about an organisation - its purpose, values, point of distinction and ultimately the value to the market and the broader society, says Lucy Lightfoot, head of brand and integrated marketing at RMB.



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■ *Why is the whole concept of a brand so important, particularly in the financial services industry?*

Whether its retail or B2B, within financial services the brand plays a critical role in enabling commercial value and driving both the business vision and strategy. In a competitive industry where there can be a lot of parity across the market when it comes to products and platforms, the brand enables a point of distinction. When it comes to financial services you're dealing with clients, their financial needs and wellbeing. Building a brand and then actually delivering on that every day is critical to the client experience and whether they remain with you for the future. Ultimately it has the ability to drive the commercial value to ensure future success.

“ The brand defines how an organisation shows up in the market through all of its touch points to influence preference. ”

■ *The advent of social media can be a help or hindrance to brands? Can you give us your three golden rules of social media engagement?*

1. While social media can be a more cost-effective channel than traditional mediums - never diminish the significance of social media, its reach and influence to positively and negatively impact brand. Get out of the thinking that “its just a social media post”. Pay as much attention to social media creative, push copy as you would a traditional newspaper ad or a billboard.
2. Avoid technical industry language and jargon. Speak to your audience in plain English.
3. Use the tools and tech to monitor and measure sentiment. Have a clear plan for monitoring, reporting and responding in order to keep a steady hold on brand perception.

■ The pandemic obviously affected the financial sector. What were the lessons learned in communicating with your clients during this time?

As a relationship-driven business the pandemic brought about a situation where we needed to rethink and find new ways to connect with clients. We were able to move many of our events and sponsorships online, transforming physical events into exciting content that people can consume and engage with in their own time. Some of the lessons we learnt:

- It takes just as much effort and planning to move something online as it does to host a physical event.
- It can become an entirely new way of doing something so never assume what has worked before will work in a different format.
- If you don't try and test, you'll never progress in a changing environment.

■ What are some of the brand's most successful campaigns?

RMB has developed some iconic and memorable work over many years from the early days of TV ads like “sevens” and “tyre”. From the Solutionist Thinking Podcast Series in 2018 which delivered fantastic results to the award-winning documentary *A Story of Courage* produced in 2020, it's not always the big campaigns that we consider successful.

Sometimes, it's also the small meaningful moments that surprise and delight clients that we consider a success like getting a very thoughtful, locally produced item in their RMB Starlight Classics picnic hamper, that only RMB would think of. RMB Starlight Classics is not a campaign but one of our most successful brand builders. It has been supporting the creative economy for 22 years, celebrating and showcasing incredible talent and inspiring our audience with the magic of music.

▣ **What would you say is your brand's value add that gives you the competitive edge in your sector?**

At RMB we have a very enabling and collaborative culture that frees people up to perform. It's the collective know-how that means our people can solve complex challenges for our clients. It's the quality of thinking that's always grounded in a good values that have stood the test of time. It really is Traditional values. Innovative ideas.

▣ **What do you enjoy most about working in this space?**

The diverse skills that come together to really make something impactful from strategy, creativity, planning, media, ops, logistics, analytics – it takes a range of skills in a constantly evolving environment. This diversity is energising.

“ Marketing, advertising, branding is often seen as fluffy from the outside but when you work with professional, dedicated teams who are passionate about what they do and take what they do seriously it really can move the needle. There is always something to learn and improve. That's what I enjoy. ”

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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