

Tractor Outdoor's #20in21 SME initiative: Meet the SME heroes

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*Outdoor media owner Tractor Outdoor's **#20in21 SME initiative** was born out of a desire to support South Africa's small and medium businesses (SMEs) that were dealt a blow by the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, Tractor Outdoor celebrates its 20th birthday and, thus, aims to give 20 qualifying SMEs a marketing boost via its nationwide outdoor media network, with a total media value of R8m, helping these businesses increase top of mind awareness.*

This is the story of Busanitextiles, one of the beneficiaries of Tractor's #20in21 SME initiative.

Founded by CEO Nkululeko Lehapa in 2020, Busanitextiles, a specialised textiles manufacturing business that produces high-quantity hospital linen and school uniforms, was born out of both desire and necessity.

The manufacturing business – which falls under the Busani Clothing Enterprises umbrella, owned by Lehapa – is the sister company to Busanimen, a retail business that provides tailor-made day-to-day corporate wear and clothing for special occasions.

Lehapa explains that Busanitextiles was established in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which dealt a severe blow to his core retail business. “As a custom clothing retailer, Busanimen is inherently reliant on events such as weddings and graduations and with lockdown, entailing the cancellation of all events, we saw an instant and drastic downturn in our income.

“We lost a great deal of business for a period of approximately six months. As a result, we had to retrench a number of employees, and make financial arrangements with several of our creditors.”

However, rather than watch his business fail, the young entrepreneur decided to act by establishing a B2B textiles manufacturing company that would run in parallel to that of his retail business. “Our country suffers from a lack of resources in the medical sector. As we had the capabilities and resources already in place, we wanted to assist in contributing to the fight of this deadly virus, while ensuring our long-term viability as a business.”

The textiles business also services the education sector. “Our country has 25,000 schools with more than 12 million learners,” says Lehapa, “and the majority of these schools are based in townships or areas with minimal resources. Therefore, our mission is to become a trusted manufacturer of affordable, quality uniforms, catering for learners in disadvantaged areas.”

While entirely new markets, both hold enormous potential for the manufacturing business. “We are currently working on securing contracts with corporate partners so that we can create a consistent and stable stream of income that will allow us to expand, and service new markets.”

Busanitextiles is one of 20 companies that will each receive a package which includes outdoor advertising across Tractor’s out of home media network, as well as social media exposure. In addition, Busanitextiles will also receive PR, digital assets and online promotion.

Lehapa says that his biggest priority at present is marketing Busanitextiles in order to assist in securing new business, and he believes that this media package will play a significant role in helping him achieve this.

“I believe that this marketing boost will assist us in creating awareness around our brand and offering, which will generate more leads for us.”

Says Remi du Preez, commercial director at Tractor Outdoor: “Last year was a difficult time, but the silver lining was that it gave us a moment to pause, and reflect on our purpose. We realised that we couldn’t think only of ourselves – we needed to help those around us, if we were going to get through this as a country.



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“And so, we established an advertising initiative, with the intention of supporting local SMEs – the very backbone of the economy. The initiative proved to be enormously successful, and helped the beneficiary businesses entrench their brands in the hearts and minds of South African consumers.

“The success of last year’s campaign became a pivotal moment for us, and this year we are building on what we achieved in 2020, by giving another twenty businesses access to our extensive media footprint and marketing manpower. We hope that in this way we can assist them on their journey well into the future,” concludes Du Preez.

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