

Meet Tamsin Darroch of Kellogg's South Africa



By [Lauren Hartzenberg](#)

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Few food brands have the historical connection with consumers around the world as Kellogg's does, having held meaning at the breakfast table for over a century.



Tamsin Darroch, marketing lead at Kellogg's South Africa

From creating one of the first breakfast cereals and being known as the Corn Flake Company, Kellogg's has stood the test of time and helped shape the FMCG sector.

Its product repertoire has expanded beyond the beloved Corn Flakes to include a broad range of breakfast and snack foods.

Helping to keep the brand relevant and engaged with local consumers is Tamsin Darroch, marketing manager at Kellogg's South Africa.

With more than a decade of FMCG experience under her belt, Darroch is skilled in marketing strategy, integrated marketing and digital expertise.

Beyond managing a professional team and working in cross-functional teams at Kellogg's, Darroch is a mother to a set of 7-year-old twins and she reads, hikes and travels (pre-Covid) in her downtime.

Here, Darroch tells us more about her role as a proud brand custodian for Kellogg's.

■ ***Tamsin, can you tell us a bit about yourself and your career journey prior to your current role at Kellogg's?***

I have spent most of my career in marketing working for multinationals in the FMCG sector – from GSK, to Kimberly Clarke to Mondelez. Most of my career has been spent on Cadbury/Kraft/Mondelez where I had the privilege of working with some amazing marketers on some amazing brands and campaigns.

I also had a stint doing consulting work when my twins were small. It was very interesting as it took me totally out of my comfort zone – I worked on a regional brand in the maize meal and flour categories, then did some strategic work for Walmart as well as working in the financial sector, specifically in the technological space, even receiving Agile certification.

Eventually the pull towards corporate and working on much-loved brands was too much, I was very excited to join Kellogg at the end of 2019.

■ ***What do you love most about working for Kellogg's and in the FMCG space in particular?***

I am very proud to be part of the Kellogg marketing team – we are a small team versus the big brands that we manage, but the team manages to accomplish so much. We utilise regional expertise to see how we deliver on efficiencies and growth, which is always great as you get fresh and diverse thinking.

I also love the fact that Kellogg's has such a clear purpose (creating better days and a place at the table for everyone through our trusted food brands) and translates this purpose into its CSI programmes. With all the turbulence we are facing, there is a greater need for organisations to be deeply attuned to why they exist and who they are serving. The reality is that many South Africans do not have access to any food and childhood hunger is a pandemic in itself.

I am so proud to work for a company that creates better days by providing meals to 47,000 school children in 69 schools across four provinces every day. The company's objective is to serve 7 million meals in 2021 and have partnered with the Kolisi Foundation and Shoprite's Act for Change to drive this.



Source: Supplied

■ ***Are there any unique challenges that come with marketing such a well-established, household brand like Kellogg's?***

Our challenges are not very different from what other marketing teams in the FMCG space are facing and the pandemic has changed consumer and shopper behaviour in a fundamental way.

There are broader challenges (declines in the economy, employment rates, consumer confidence and spending power), business challenges (the need for shorter planning timings, profitable growth) and marketing challenges (reduced marketing budgets, fewer internal resources, the rapid change in digital).

With these challenges comes huge opportunities and at Kellogg's we are striving to understand consumer and shopper insights and how we can action these insights and drive competitive advantage to reach, engage with and delight our current and future consumers.



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■ ***Can you share some of your favourite Kellogg's campaigns and brand activities that you've worked on?***

I have loved working on the Granola relaunch with my brand manager, Erin Abrahams. We utilised consumer insights and trends to develop a full 360-degree campaign (including innovation). The Muesli/Granola category is overtraded, so we really needed to shoot the lights out to gain market share.

We worked with our agency partners (Leo Burnett, Tilt, Foodies) to drive indulgent and glamorous content through our owned digital assets, lifestyle and foodie influencers as well as tapping into the versatility of our food through recipes. This was a key trend that started due to lockdown that we really capitalised on.

We also worked with our internal digital team to ensure we drove the right level of reach with our target audience, whilst still

ensuring we drove engagement with the right content. The results are amazing, and we have managed to double our market share within the segment over the last year.



Source: Supplied

I have also loved working with our innovations manager Yandisa Hene and my brand manager Khuliso Mapila on driving growth of our Kids' cereal offerings. We have done exciting initiatives such as partnering with X-box and Crayola with on-pack activations, launched Froot Loops Unicorn and Baby Shark, but recently launched Coco Pops Fills.

The campaign brought together key insights around the challenges we faced with the brands, the insights around the target audience (teens) as well as the unique benefits of the innovation to create a magical communications platform. The innovation has seen great success in the segment – Kellogg's has achieved double-digit growth in the segment and Coco has gained its highest market share within the Kids segment.



Source: Supplied

■ In your opinion, what skills and qualities are key to being a successful brand custodian?

Marketing is both an art form and a science. It is an art in understanding and targeting human emotions and delivering exceptional, relevant content. It is a science in having clear objectives, focusing on facts, tracking metrics and analysing results. To be a successful brand custodian, you must have a balance of both (and having a great team that supports you with their areas of strength).

Being a successful brand manager is often like being a great journalist – it is about being continuously curious and asking the right questions; being observant and possessing strong skills to assess a situation; it's about great storytelling - the difference between an ordinary story versus a great one is often not just the facts that you include, but the way in which

you tell and inspire with those facts.

And lastly, being a brand custodian in the FMCG sector does mean taking ownership of the brand in all aspects (including financial rigour).

Marketing is so central to many organisations and forms a key role in mobilising and bringing different functions together, bridging their differences and initiating and directing processes to get things done.



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■ If you were mentoring a future you, what career advice would you give to an aspiring young marketing professional?

I would give aspiring marketers three points of advice to consider:

1. Sometimes marketers underestimate the power of the brief: It is extremely important to be crystal clear on what your challenges and opportunities are as well as the objectives of what you want to achieve. A good brief has all the necessary information, but a great brief is often constructed through a great client/agency partnership.

It also plays such a key role in critiquing the creative work. I learnt early on in my career that if you do not do this you end up giving meaningless feedback based on personal preference or a gut reactions.

2. Do not let perfection get in the way of progress: Marketeers are A-type personalities and seek excellence and having all the answers, but perfectionism often means that you miss out on opportunities because something isn't good enough or you aren't sure. It often stems from a fear of failure.

Rather focus on progress towards a goal – it is all about making small everyday progressions, constantly experimenting and iterating, but also having crystal clear on what you want to achieve, making sure you celebrate the small wins along the way.

3. Be an eternal student! Expert marketers spend a significant amount of hours and resources researching, reading, networking and advancing skills. Side hustles and projects can be a great way to learn new skills and embrace areas you are passionate about. Marketing is such an exciting space with so many changes – there is always someone out there who knows more and there's always room for improvement.

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