

# Appealing campaign that gets my vote

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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The greatest reality show in the country continued running last week, in Parliament, as the debate around the State of the Nation address became heated.

So it was perfect timing for the electoral commission to launch its campaign to urge South Africans to register to vote in the local government elections – and to maintain that civic duty.

I think the campaign hits the nail on the head about political participation in any democracy: don't whinge and complain about your government if you didn't bother to register and vote.

The electoral commission tells voters that the future of their community, their ward and their municipality is "in their hands".

The TV and print executions – along with some "out of home" posters in public places, such as toilets on university campuses – all carry that simple and telling message. There is also an interactive digital game, IXSA, in which people register and vote. Developed for the 2014 national elections and enhanced and updated for the 2016 municipal elections, it is available for download free from the Apple and Android app stores.

The commission's statistics show that 9.1 million people who are eligible to vote have not registered.

Even more worrying is that 80 percent of those unregistered voters are under the age of 35. So the campaign is targeting these people, who are the future of this country.

A simple, good idea and good execution mean the campaign gets an Orchid from me. And, unusually for me – because I am agnostic whether any ad campaign works in selling widgets – I hope this one does achieve its marketing goals.

If we continue to stay silent at the ballot box, someone is going to take our voice away.



Screenshot of the ad.

Perhaps it was because I was peckish and my stomach was making complaining noises that I noticed the simple KFC ad in *The Star*. I normally go through the day's papers at my desk as I wolf down my sandwiches (my wife makes my lunch every day and if you'd like to call me sexist, don't bother – I have heard it before), so I know all about silencing a growling stomach.

The KFC ad made a simple, double-punch appeal to the senses: "Get rid of the Growl" and "Only R50", accompanied by a photo of someone about to demolish a KFC "Fill up" – chicken pieces, small loaf, potato and a drink.

I guarantee that office workers going through their day's paper would be tempted – not only by the food, but by the price. And they would make hasty plans to duck to the nearest KFC outlet.

Good advertising is that which appeals to the senses – and to common sense. This ad screams "Eat me!", yet in these tough financial times it also lets a person know it's good value.

So, an Orchid to KFC and to Ogilvy Joburg.

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## 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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