

Orchids for Wimpy cuteness - but Onions for PR sloppiness...

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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There's cute and there's cute and knowing how not to overdo it or get too twee and clever - that's what makes the difference between ordinary and great advertising.



Screengrab from the ad.

I recently panned Sanlam for using a precocious, overly cute girl in one of its ads... but now along comes Wimpy and gets it just right.



#OrchidsandOnions: When cute becomes cloying and how to win (and lose) at the car insurance business

Brendan Seery 27 Mar 2018



Ad agency FCB Joburg have a knack of getting the tone and South African-ness of their ads just right and the Wimpy series of recent years has been entertaining and funny.

The one ad, which got everybody going “aww” was the one about “Mr Cuddles”, the giant furry teddy bear who, apparently, plays a major role in the family.

The first time we saw Mr Cuddles, he was being blamed by the greedy Dad, who could not stop himself from nicking some of Mum's cheese griller sausages when she went to the loo.

"Mr Cuddles took them, I swear," was Dad's transparent little lie. That, in turn, got his cute daughter to raise her eyebrows in that look that every idiot father knows so well...

"This guy," she sighed.



[Orchids & Onions] Heartening reminders that life can be sweet

Brendan Seery 2 Feb 2016



In the latest episode, the family are again in a Wimpy and the daughter asks Dad if he can remember the time he blamed Mr Cuddles for stealing the cheese grillers. "Yes..." he responds, a little hesitantly.

"Well," she says with that Madam-type attitude that we Dads know well, "Now it's payback time".

She reaches over to take away Dad's delicious-looking milkshake. He pulls it back: "Don't you think you're a little too big for Mr Cuddles now?"

Her response, as she takes his milkshake away again, is: "Don't you think you're a little too big for this milkshake now?"

Good point. He could use with losing a bit of weight. He turns to his wife, who giggles, not terribly supportive at all.



Mr Cuddles back in new Wimpy TVC

Nahana Communications Group 4 Apr 2018



It's simple. It's funny. It continues a long-running gag. And, in all that, it also showcases Wimpy's tempting food... and the fact that it's a great place for a family meal.

And so, another Orchid for Wimpy and one for FCB Joburg, as well as for Egg Films. You're not too big for one of those...

Let's call this next section: "Why you should read your press releases before sending them out to the cynical media..."

A couple of weeks ago, I got a release from MasterDrive South Africa, which talked about the troubles at the Road Accident Fund.

Firstly, it referred to the things being done at the fund to "stabalise the liabilities" of the fund. The word is, actually, 'stabilise', people.

Worse was to come, though, as someone described as "Herbert" began making comments about the situation. There was no clue as to whether his first name or surname was Herbert and who he was within the MasterDrive organisation. Maybe he was Mr Cuddles's brother, who knows? The release didn't give any clues.

Sloppy press-release writing and even sloppier checking, so PR Onion Number 1 to MasterDrive. I hope your vehicular coaching is better than your communication skills.

PR Onion Number 2 goes to one Londeka Ngubane, of Training24 at an organisation called asmcomm.co.za.

The email with the release was titled "Creative Writting for Business & Media". In details of the R8 grand per delegate writing (one 't') course asmcomm was offering, there was a section on "proof reading".

Presumably you will be on that course, Londeka...

But this sort of thing should not be left to one person. If you are serious about accuracy – which is, after all, what you claim to be able to teach people – make sure you are accurate.

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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