

ANC comrades bring sexy back

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

5 Feb 2019

MSC Cruises' Orchid-worthy print ad spells romance, beauty and freedom - but trashy McDonald's gets a super-sized Onion.



A screen grab from the ANC ad.

There was quite a bit of controversy about the ANC's social media video (an ad, I suppose), which was aimed at urging young people to register to vote, but was also a view of the party through the eyes of a young person.

What got a lot of people hot under the collar was the accusation that the video was exploiting women and sexuality. Some even said it looked more like a commercial for Lux beauty soap than a plug for a political party.

There's no denying (colour me sexist) that the person in the ad – Rethabile Lethoko, a model and entrepreneur – is stunning. But, I do agree that her sultry poses were certainly more on the side of soft porn than hard politics.

The ANC reacted to a lot of the fuss by releasing a longer (just over 90 seconds) version, in which Rethabile speaks articulately about what the ANC has done for the country, but also about the challenges facing our young people (ironically, some of them caused by the ruling party itself, but that is a debate for another day ...)

“ [#ANCVideo](#) The Governing party's Head of Elections [@MbalulaFikile](#) just sent me this full video of the shortened one that they has received a lot of backlash here on Twitter. She speaks about the triple challenges ravaging the Country here and in particular the youth. pic.twitter.com/Af0jS528OY— Samkele Maseko (@samkelemaseko) [January 29, 2019](#) ”

The shorter version doesn't have that much nuance and does ooze sexuality a bit more.

Having said all that, though, I must look at it from a marketing point of view. The ANC's aim was to show a young, vibrant and sexy image.

Something that its old frumpy leadership (male and female) are unable to do.

“ The video is also unashamedly projecting an image of success and wealth. Logic might dictate that is not such a great strategy to use with your potential voters, many of whom are poor or struggling financially. ”

But the reality of life in South Africa is that voters seem to like their leaders flouting their wealth – perhaps that's why supercars, Range Rovers and Harley Davidsons are becoming the must-have political accessories for the party gatherings.



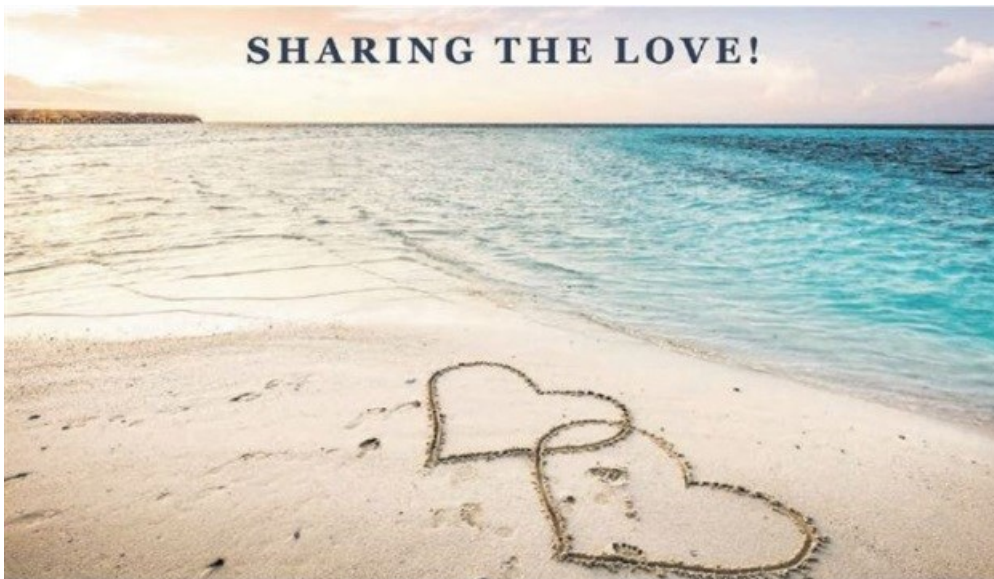
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All advertising, to an extent, offers a vision of perfection or, if not that, then something better. That's why you take out your money. This ANC image is saying to voters: you, too, can be like this: sexy and successful. All you have to do is put your cross next to ANC on the ballot paper.

So, the ad achieves its purpose. And marketing communication that achieves its purpose gets an Orchid, so step up and collect yours, comrades from Luthuli House.



The image from MSC Cruises' island getaway offer.

I had a reminder this week that a still image – even in our video-overloaded world – has the power to make you stop and stare.

That's what I did at a simple photograph in a print ad. It was Valentine's-themed, with a heart scribed on the sand of a deserted beach. It says so many things without words. It says romance, it says freedom, it says beauty.



MSC Cruises' 3rd Meraviglia generation ship to set sail in November 2019

15 Jan 2019



And it tops a special Valentine's offer, running in February, for MSC Cruises' island getaway cruises. If I were looking to impress someone with my romantic side, this would get me going.

And that's what the best ads do: they hook you (via the great imagery) and then reel you in (with the good offers).

I know I'm biased, but it's good to see print advertising is far from dead. Lively enough to get an Orchid from me, in fact.

And no, I haven't been captured. I wouldn't be driving a 2006 Ford Fiesta if I got any of those Bosasa brown envelopes...



Bosasa did not donate to SABC 8

23 Jan 2019



One of my regular readers, travel expert Jo Meintjes, is fuming about McDonald's, which held a huge public promotion in Delta Park in Joburg and then left the rubbish lying around until the next day, before shoving it into dustbins and leaving it to the municipal authorities to clean up.

Jo points out that if they were going to hold such an event in a public park, McDonald's should have taken all the rubbish away afterwards.

Not a good thing for your brand image, McDonald's, and there are certainly many people in that area – particularly the dog walkers, runners and cyclists who are out and about early in the morning – who would have been irked by your couldn't-care-less attitude.

Arrogant behaviour just confirms to people that big corporates don't care about ordinary people – even though you proclaim in your ads that you do.

So, a super-sized Onion for you, McDonald's...

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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