

# Global taste, local flair

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Adapting international brands to a local market can be a complex process that involves careful consideration of cultural nuances, consumer preferences, and regulatory requirements. While global brands may have a strong reputation and recognition in their home country, they may need to make adjustments to their products, marketing strategies, and messaging to successfully appeal to consumers in a new market.

Working with international brands for the majority of my career, I can vouch that media and creative agencies are almost always constrained by a clear set of global standards and have little room for innovation. However, as we approach the era of relevance, it is still the agency's and the local brand team's responsibility to collaborate, push the envelope, and make sure that the brand and placements remain pertinent to the target audience and that South African nuances are taken into account.

Reach and cost-effective buying are two crucial media principles that international brands are hell-bent on applying, and in the majority of cases where impact is produced, cost-effectiveness occasionally goes out the window.

Clients are reluctant to spend money where they may not be able to track the returns, which makes it harder for local teams to justify using unconventional placements, with the "central" teams with little local expertise and understanding. To guarantee that all nations are adhering to the same rules and making progress on all set KPIs, global companies end up checking the boxes and filling out tracking reports, instead of coming up with innovative ways to make an impact, which is usually worth the splash and necessitates bravery on the part of the brand and media teams.

To stand out from the "usual" and attract customers' attention, the Netflix team at Wavemaker decided to localise the debut of the latest season of *Stranger Things* by appearing in "unusual spaces" and in "unusual ways".

The team collaborated with the well-known Afrikaans publication, *Die Son*, and wrapped the issue in artwork that was intended to resemble a normal newspaper but had the wrap placed upside down, in keeping with the well-known *Stranger Things* concept. The landscapes in the advertisement were chosen to symbolise Johannesburg and Cape Town so that they would speak to the local market. The success of this ad raised public awareness of the launch of the new season.

A big shout out to Netflix for entrusting the local media team with their brand and local insights to help the new season of *Stranger Things* debut successfully.



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Nadine Lerm is client lead at Wavemaker South Africa

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