

# Lessons in courage and innovation in a pandemic

The sheer enormity of the sudden-onset Covid crises took the wind out of sails across all industries, globally. However, writes CEO of the IAS and Scopen partner Johanna McDowell, there are gems shining brightly across the marketing landscape everywhere...



[shopriteholdings.co.za](http://shopriteholdings.co.za)

Scopen's 2020 tribute to the agencies and advertisers that looked past contracted economic activity, budget reductions, lockdowns, social distancing requirements and quickly-implemented remote working is testament to courageous innovation of marketers and agencies that rose above the mire, against the odds.

Cesar Vacchiano, president and CEO of Scopen International, says: "With The Show Must Go On: Success Stories During a Pandemic, Scopen wanted to pay tribute to the agencies and advertisers who came together and creatively tackled the immense difficulties brought on by entirely unique circumstances.

"We want 2021 to further strengthen this collaboration and creativity, and asked our international network to share cases strategies quickly and effectively adapted to the circumstances and local campaigns that demonstrate the considered agility of our industry to meet challenging, unfamiliar circumstances and soar."

The Show Must Go On is a lesson in absolute delight for those of us in this industry. From the Brazilian team that partnered with fast food company to gamify the lockdown and awarded prizes for staying home during lockdown to the beer brand that changed its name to show appreciation for doctors, while removing the alcohol from their beverage and donating it to a sanitiser manufacturer, the gems in this White Paper are exceptional.

## The star of South Africa

The South African initiative that stood out is the Shoprite Group and 99c collaboration that leveraged the launch of the Checkers 2019 customer loyalty programme Xtra Savings to launch Shoprite Xtra Savings, as well as the pilot online home delivery service, Sixty:60 – shop in 60 seconds with delivery guaranteed in 60 minutes.

Both marketer and agency found innovative ways to work together, from home, with tight deadlines. The results show what a streamlined, world-class partnership can do: Despite the poor economy and impact of Covid-19 on market share, new Checkers Xtra Savings customers benefitting by savings of over R972m collectively in only nine months (at end-June 2021) with sales growing by 6.4% year-on-year.

In studying The Show Must Go On, we see how advertising needs to adapt with agility to its environment and return on investment is greatest if it is relevant to and empathises with the consumer.

Importantly, the very best advertising is a result of a close marketer-agency collaboration and a willingness to turn the bow of boat and set sail for maximum success.

The IAS Masterclass with Cesar Vacchiano is set to take place on 21 April at 2pm. RSVP to [radams@scopen.co.za](mailto:radams@scopen.co.za).