

OFyt emerges as a collection of communication experts

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Over the last 18 months, Old Friends Young Talent (OFyt), one of the longest-standing independent agencies in the country, has experienced rapid growth. A new structure, alongside newly-arrived management sees an agency distinctly-adapted to an industry that is changing in real time. The team, including some stellar and recognisable industry faces, is well-positioned to win even more new business, and attract the best talent.



OFyt has added in-house capability to offer clients a smoother, quicker and more consistent brand service. Creative strategy and executive creative leadership are now available in both Johannesburg and Cape Town. A PR and Influence offering has also been included, powered by a nimble, concept-driven in-house content production studio.

Strongly and proudly independent, OFyt has retained long-standing clients and added new ones, with its staff contingent steadily increase to over 45 people across its Cape Town and Johannesburg offices. Standing true to its name, the agency has a renewed focus on its unique internship programme. The OFyt intern programme has seen over 100 graduates enter the industry since inception. In a competitive industry, the agency has also successfully acquired cross-ability talent to meet and exceed the ever-changing needs of its current and future clients.

[Carol Gallarelli](#), group MD says, “Agencies have had to evolve and change their ways of working. We wanted to be as far ahead as we could, as quickly as we could. We took away the silos and traditional departments. The skills are still there, but they integrate very freely. We are now a kind of ‘collective brain space’ of communication experts, who work across clients. Each of us, bringing our unique, respected and specialised skill sets to the fore.”

This change in trajectory has meant a 50% growth in personnel.

More recent business wins have been secured, based purely on chemistry and credentials. That’s perhaps the surest sign that the DNA is very strong in this agile and experienced full-service agency.

New business wins include Tracker SA TTL, Woolworths PR, Sterns BTL, Birkenstock (via the Bash Group) and Allport Cargo Services. There have also been exciting projects for Decorex Africa and BetLion. A small, agile full-service business, OFyt is not slowed down by size and complexity, relying instead on a quick, intelligent network of capabilities and expert knowledge.

Amongst the agency’s most exciting recent appointments is [Melusi Tshabalala](#) as partner and ECD of the Johannesburg

operation. His insights and leadership have resulted in a fresh approach for the agency's largest client, Kia South Africa and for new clients like Birkenstock – helping these two global brands develop their local expressions.

Based in Johannesburg, uMshengu is a published author of four books.

"Relevance is defined as the quality or state of being closely connected or appropriate. This is a quality any brand that seeks to connect with its target needs to have. The people have got to 'feel' you. Global brands are waking up to this reality, and our agency is single-minded in working with the ones in our client roster to attain this relevance" says uMshengu.

OFyt continues to make moves with a renewed air of optimism and is certainly an agency to watch in 2023.

"OFyt is poised for growth and back in the pitch ring," says Gallarelli. "Thanks to the changes we've implemented, we're confident that this is just the start of an exciting time for the agency and its clients – be they old or new."

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