

With Loerie Grand Prix winners Carl Willoughby and Sanele Ngubane

Watch and listen as 2021 Loerie Grand Prix winners Carl Willoughby, executive creative director at TBWA Hunt Lascaris and Sanele Ngubane, creative director at Toasted Samish discuss the story behind Shwii, their recent campaign which navigated the Google directions app into Zulu and a coveted award for client Nissan.



Hosted by Rutendo Nyamuda, the discussions mine topics such as the fact that only 8.4% of South Africans speak English at home as a first language; the richness of having 11 official languages and cultures; and the importance of diverse voices to be heard within the industry - as the starting points for our 6-part series around the value of greater diversity, inclusion and cultural relevance in the SA advertising sector - made possible by the ACA.

This interview is also available on [YouTube](#), and at [BizTakeouts](#), via downloadable [App](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#) and [IONO.FM](#).

“ If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart - Nelson Mandela ”

According to Carl Willoughby, ECD at TBWA Hunt Lascaris, this quote from the late Nelson Mandela is a key inspiration for this award-winning campaign. For Willoughby, the power of emotion in advertising is far stronger than anything else.

“When you can affect your audience emotionally, then that's pretty powerful,” says Willoughby.

Sanele Ngubane, creative director at Toasted Samish on how Toasted Samish works, "Our system is very simple and that we are home language writers, so what we mean by that is that traditionally, like advertising agencies will brief out translations which then compromises sometimes the creative work, like the creative quality and so what we basically do is we start from the beginning, we work in the languages we're conceptualizing, we'll stay for all 11 of your radio recordings like all the 11 languages because it's important to make sure that the quality of those languages improves".

“What I think I'd like to see is that people come in and use their language and their cultural insights, I believe South Africa is very rich, a country with 11 official languages, so many different cultures, but we have to use creativity to show that in the best way possible, so we can have more role models, we can have better examples...” says Willoughby.

“We've already got English slang, also Xhosa, Pedi and Tswana, but what's important to say, it's not a translation. Zulu is about warning words because it fits a Zulu narrative, Xhosa is a different narrative, each to highlight the best things and the coolest things in that language, that's what we are doing,” comments Sanele Ngubane, creative director at Toasted Samish.



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14 Sep 2021



Willoughby continues, “If you're not invested in the conceptual nature of the work you might as well take stuff and put it into Google translate...there's a broken telephone thing when you take it to be translated, you need to conceptualise things in the language...Sanele was part of the team that conceptually and culturally translated into Zulu and I think that was great”.

“As a home language speaker, I have to set it to a certain level because I know what home language context I'm competing

in out there...” says Ngubane.

“I think the complexity suits us, you’ve got 11 official languages, how do you commemorate that in a way that everyone understands?... Nissan is a tech brand and using tech is something we all can connect with, when tech excludes the language of the people that’s a problem because tech should enable, AI is neglecting people, the use of AI tends to be in English only, Siri, Alexa only now have a handful of languages that they use...” says Willoughby.

“ From a SA marketing point of view we should be tapping into different people’s languages, otherwise, we are alienating people, alienating audiences. ”

“You can’t just say I’m going to tap into my home language, you have to make it inspirational, add a layer of creativity that makes people go wow that really spoke to me,” adds Willoughby.

CARL WILLOUGHBY

Executive Creative Director player/coffee addict with a career spanning over 20 years at agencies throughout South Africa. and brands including VW, Nissan, BMW, Liberty, Standard Bank, Jameson, Castle Lager, DSTV and more; I even launched a telecommunications company during a brief stay in the middle-east. I still believe in the transformative power of the idea, no matter the medium and that advertising can play a more pivotal role in society than just ticking boxes or satisfying focus groups. I’ve collected a number of local and international awards and am still hungry for more. I now celebrate 3 Loerie Grand Prix’s for locally relevant work including Nissan Shwii, City Lodge’s Real Cost/Mahala campaign, and Channel O’s Young, Gifted and Black. I’m proud to be a Pirate at TBWA Hunt Laszaris South Africa. [@Thewilloughby](#) [@TBWAHunts](#)

SANELE NGUBANE

Sanele, has turned down ECD roles at big agencies to build Samish. The home language engine. Samish is not your typical translations’ company. Language is more than just the words we speak. it gives brands, big or small, a credible local voice. We have made it our mission to use this voice to raise the level and quality of content in our mother languages. Only 8.4% South Africans speak English at home as a first language. Yet, advertising agencies are still outsourcing the bulk of their language requirements for campaigns. Which leads to the big idea getting lost in translation. Because translators do not have the ability to tell the full brand story. That’s why we created; Broken English storytelling™ At Samish, we flip the advertising model on its head by putting local voices and insight first. [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#)

In conversation with Rutendo Nyamuda. Founder Tinzwe Media. [@roo10dough](#) | [www.tinzwemedia.com](#)

This industry-wide series of discussions on the topic of diversity and inclusivity in the SA advertising industry, is made possible by the Association for Communication and Advertising. The ACA is committed to the transformation of the industry and to upholding the principles of the ACA Transformation Charter.

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