

Big, brave and true storytelling



By Leigh Andrews

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#MandelaMonth is all about work that uplifts and business that's aimed at more than just plumping up the business bottom line. House of Brave's latest purpose-driven brand campaign for client Tracker shows how 'lighthouse brands' do just that.



A TV ad has to really resonate to garner an online orchid from Independent Media's media and marketing editor, Brendan Seery. That's what happened with the latest Tracker ad a few weeks ago. In what Seery calls a '[big story that packs a ray of inspiration](#)', House of Brave used beautifully crafted storytelling to begin repositioning Tracker from its former pure stolen vehicle recovery space to something more altruistic.

It does this by shifting focus of what the brand actually cares for, from the obvious metal vehicle to the consumer the vehicle belongs to and whose life is tied to that vehicle, which is today's emotional advertising high ground. It's an ad that's "striking the right chords in keeping it true", writes Seery.

Telling true stories for true advertising resonance

Titled 'Wiley Pitman and five notes that changed a life', the ad focuses on the true story of a young, blind boy living a difficult early life in post-depression America. His only joy is listening to a local shopkeeper play piano, and when the shopkeeper takes the boy under his wing and teaches him how to play, it changes his life for good.

Howard Audio, commissioned to oversee the musical direction of the commercial, [reveals](#) that Wiley Pitman was the real-life shopkeeper in the story, who cared enough to nurture and protect the talent and love for music in the young, blind boy who went on to become musical legend, Ray Charles:

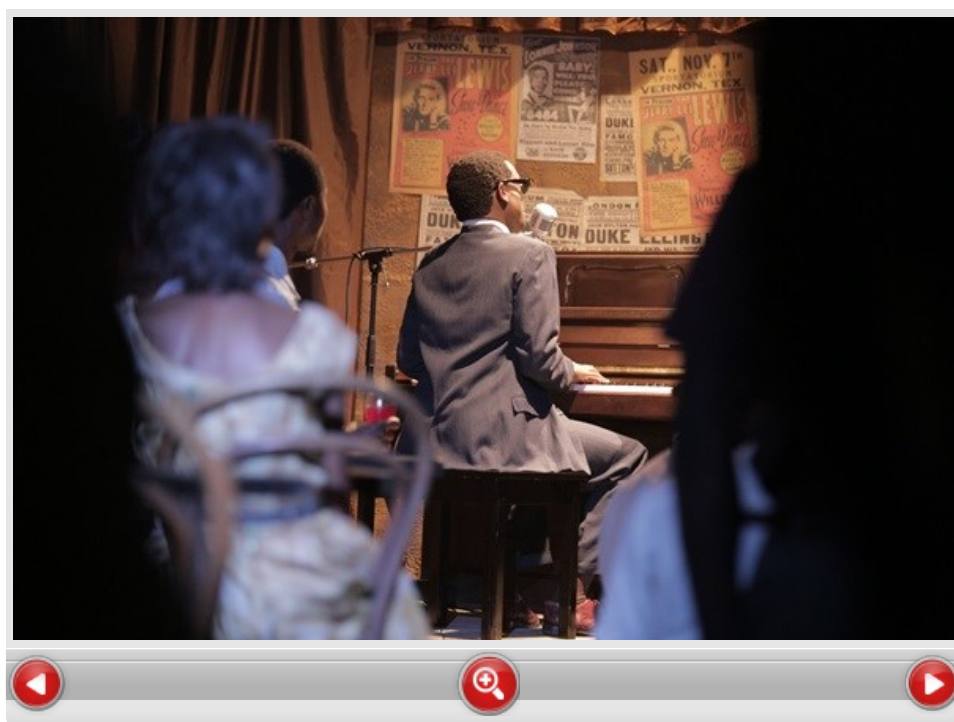
House of Brave's executive creative director, Vanessa Pearson says the ad needed to shift the focus from Tracker's reputation as South Africa's leading stolen vehicle recovery brand to actual people and their inherent value, because: "People know what the brand does, now they need to know what the brand stands for and believes in."

So it's a logical progression. Charlotte Roetz, head of marketing for Tracker, adds: "With a growing customer base and our technology, we are able to derive insights into consumer behaviour and their use of cars, which allow us to offer a far more diverse range of services that will continue to grow into the future."

Lighthouse brands, lighting up lives

Pearson adds that Tracker is a 'lighthouse brand' - generally high quality brands with emotional resonance. "They are brands that are purpose driven in everything they do. They are brands that can be trusted to do right by their customers, and to do that often and consistently. Their behaviour, their products and services all align in terms of offering and follow through. They embody individuality, confidence and integrity. What they say and do and believe in is consistent with their messaging. They know who they serve and why they do it."

Lighthouse brands also understand the emotional and rational attributes relevant to their customers and appeal to their hearts and minds consistently by tapping into those two aspects in an engaging, tangible and believable way. Customers then support lighthouse brands, because they demonstrate leadership and actually make a meaningful difference. Pearson says the campaign idea is therefore based on "the unknown people who made a huge difference in the young lives of future world legends, without knowing at the time the full impact of their intervention or their moment of care or protection – the names and people behind the scenes who just cared enough at a particular moment in time."



That means the association in this specific ad is actually more with Wiley Pitman than with Ray Charles himself.

"Wiley Pitman gave a damn. He took the time to care and engage with a poor, young, hopeless boy who didn't have much to look forward to. Wiley was not in it for the fame or the 'pay back'. He had no idea that this young, blind boy would become the world-famous, legendary musician that Ray became. Wiley just gave Ray his time, care and protection, because he was that kind of guy."

It's exactly this quality of standing for something "beyond the 'pay back'" that resonates, especially in #MandelaMonth.

[Click here](#) for a reminder of House of Brave's innovative work. For more on the agency, visit [their website](#) or follow their [Twitter stream](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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