

Kantar announces South Africa's Top 20 Best Liked Ads for 2020

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Kantar's Best Liked Ads celebrates South Africa's favourite TV commercials. These are the ads that have been rated as the best liked by the South African audience, whom we believe to be the most important critic - the person who, ultimately, chooses to buy your brand or not.



With some going so far as calling it 'the year that wasn't', 2020 was certainly one for the books. Our rosy tinted 20/20 optimism for this year of golden promise soon took a reality check, as we were fast-forwarded into the global framework of keeping our sanitised distance and doing it all from home under lockdown.

We also yearned for simpler times and made our circles smaller, changing the way we lived to feel a little safer, both by shopping local and taking in the bulk of our entertainment on various screens at home, between dashing from Zoom calls to Teams meetings. In true Mzansi style, we soon adjusted to business as unusual and life interrupted as the status quo. The on-screen

creative of the time echoed this, with all the emotion reflected in a wave of '[sadvertising](#)', but later in the year the slice-of-life human stories reappeared, laced with humour, inspirational true tales and Lol-worthy vignettes.

Standing for the serious, celebrating and supporting South Africa's uniqueness

It's little wonder then that some of the best-liked creative of the year tapped into just this, showing our sense of community, collaboration and Ubuntu, celebrating the colourful threads that tie the nation together. That's the essence of the Tastic X Laduma Heritage ad, which stitched its way beyond top spot of Q3 2020 to reign supreme as South Africa's Best Liked Ad of 2020.



Kantar announces South Africa's top 10 Best Liked Ads for Q3 and Q4 2020

Kantar 6 May 2021



It's a tale of resilience, weaving together the feel-good true story of how Makhosa Africa knitwear brand founder Laduma Ngxokolo got his start in fashion based on the generosity of others, going on to reflect this in his Tastic pack design, which encouraged little acts of kindness throughout Heritage Month. His closing call of "*Ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*", rang true as it took pandemic-induced isolation to show South Africa the true meaning of "*I am, because we are.*" Inclusive of our local culture and heritage, the ad brought the essence of South Africa on screen, highlighting how brands can use inclusion to contribute to long-term equity by positioning themselves as emotionally different.

On bringing the fan-Tastic essence of South African Ubuntu to life, Sylvester Chauke, founder and chief architect at DNA Brand Architects, said the PR-led work stands out on its great timing, authenticity and empathy, and that's what South Africa connected with. "Thank you, South Africa, for seeing the magic that we did. We know that great insights always lead to great work, so we built on that to come across as authentic while amping up what our audience was feeling at the time, ensuring we showed empathy and understanding of the times that we're in."

Thembisile Sehloho, marketing director at Tiger Brands, added: “For Tastic, it’s really humbling to do work from the heart, without expecting anything from it. We just wanted to evoke that true spirit of generosity and Ubuntu in our audience and our consumers. We’re excited about the heritage journey we’re walking as a brand, celebrating our South African heroes and icons while they’re still here, in a time when people really needed to hear it and be reminded of what’s good and true about being South African.”

1st For Women’s “My body (stand up)” also took the stance of standing up for causes that matter to people by putting women first through purpose. We took note of the song and the need to take a stand together as the ad amplified our voices in lyrically calling for an end to GBV beyond the 16 Days of Activism. Serious stuff that really hit home.

(Virtual) reality check: Looking back on how we looked forward to 2020

Marketers know that emotional response plays an important role in consumer decision-making, but many still push explicit messages in ads at the expense of emotional relevance and creative engagement. This doesn’t mean we should just make ads that entertain, but we do need to be smarter about how we convey functional benefits and evoke an emotional response. So, when there’s a need to reinforce functional benefits, deliver the message in a creative way – ‘show’, don’t ‘tell’, as people tend to not remember the explicit message but instead the creative demonstration.

We saw the pandemic giving functional ads more airtime with ads like Lifebuoy’s public service announcement, where local celeb DJ Zinhle was called upon to promote the World Health Organisation’s recommendation of washing hands with soap or alcohol-based hand sanitiser to fight the spread of the coronavirus together.

Offering a (virtual) reality check, “Hold My Hunters” was third-best liked for the year overall. It flipped the script on how we’ve come to expect VR to overlay real life. In a realistic “Hold my Hunter’s” video call with friends, we see just how tech-enhanced our lives have become. And, of course, the cute dog did not go unnoticed! On refreshing the times with a blend of VR and imagination, Meenal Abdulla, Hunter’s marketing cluster lead at Distell, called it an especially high honour in year that featured multiple alcohol bans. ““Hold my Hunter’s’ is about seizing the moment, changing the status quo and solving a problem. The team needed to launch and land this idea in a way that left the audience feeling uplifted while reflecting the new norms of social distancing and responsible alcohol consumption yet remaining true to the brand’s lighthearted and fun nature. Hunter’s refreshed the situation, as it does every time.”

Thando Mafongosi, strategy director at Grey Group Advertising on WPP’s Team Liquid, adds: “With all the uncertainty and devastation of 2020, people were feeling quite disempowered by everything that was happening to them. In an incredibly entertaining way, the ad reminded us of South African ingenuity and the spirit to overcome whatever is put in our way. In a time where we had to be quite conscious of observing Covid-19 protocols, both in how we recorded and told the story, we acknowledged the times we were in, without creating a ‘Covid ad’. That’s why people liked it – it’s a story that’s still entertaining to watch today, without feeling that you’re stuck in 2020.”

Standard Bank’s “The Call” demonstrated the power of pressing pause on the action, while Trustees School Shoes’ “Back 2 school” played on the nostalgia of classic first-day-of-school scenes and Adidas’s “Faster than” resonated by playing on how we had to evolve and adapt when the world said ‘no’. Jacobs’s “Coffee mastery” also saluted the dreamers and believers who get things done – even if it takes a little caffeine power to get them there.

The sunny side of life: From small acts of kindness to relishing the simple joys

As we slipped out of the gloom of the year and the sunny days of summer beckoned, the advertising story also brightened.

Savanna’s “Birds” made us laugh at the absurd and instead appreciate crisp simplicity, while McDonald’s “What’s your coffee – McCafe” spoke the truth of the fact that getting your hands on a cuppa quality coffee can be an inconvenient and time-consuming exercise, anything but simple. “McDonald’s favourite” spun a similar sentiment about hitting the pause button on the harsh moments, taking the time to treat yourself and enjoy what makes you happy, while Coca-Cola’s “Taste the simple joys” bubbled over from top spot of Q4 2020 to second place overall for the year by reminding us all to take a step back, count our blessings and savour the small things that matter most.

Dalene Van Niekerk, consumer and shopper connections senior manager Africa, nutrition at The Coca-Cola Company, comments: “Everyone knows there’s nothing quite as delicious as a meal with an ice-cold Coke. Coca-Cola has always been a catalyst for connecting people and bringing families together. There hasn’t been a better time in our recent history for us all to feel connected than in 2020.”

Jonathan Wolberg, creative director at FCB Joburg, adds: “The story and the tone resonated with our consumers because it spoke to the simple human truth of family, togetherness and the nostalgia that goes with meals and the making of them. ‘Taste the simple joys’ shifted the focus away from being locked down to being more celebratory, in terms of being at home with your family and being able to share those delicious Coke-and-meal moments together.”

SA is the can-do nation: Ready to fast-forward ahead of the pandemic

While the ads largely differed in storyboard and scripting, they’re all distinctive, and it’s distinctive advertising that helps drive sales in the short-term while creating meaningful impressions to building brands in the long term. It’s in these slices of life that we realise just how similar we all are. After all, [Kantar’s global Creative Effectiveness Awards 2020](#) found that audiences are definitely suffering from pandemic fatigue and want ads to distract and entertain them. They’re not as sensitive as they were at the start of 2020, so there’s no need to cut back on the funnier side of life, provided you don’t make light of the serious situation and compared globally, SA audiences enjoy humorous ads the most.

The creative, as always, was one step ahead, swiftly switching focus from the functional to an air of comic relief as we approached the festive season. The Toyota Hilux meerkat got in on the Dakar Rally action, as Nando’s “The half-full news” and Wimpy’s “That’s classic” both made us laugh at everyday hassles and headlines. Steers’s “Cheeseboy sharing meal” also showed how we roll with the punches and adapt our dreams to live our best lives, while Calpol’s “A mom’s headache” and Gaviscon’s “Triggers” showed the need for speed in solving our everyday problems.

But it’s Nissan X-Trail’s “Get inside. Go out there” that really put on screen our desire to break free of the mundane routines we’ve already settled into. H&M summed up the sentiment perfectly in “Let’s change. For tomorrow”, which also reflects our natural diversity to a ‘T’ – if 2020 has taught us anything, it’s that what we do today will define our tomorrow. We’re ready for whatever comes next, and we’ll face it all with the sense of humour and national pride that makes us South African.

Congratulations to the following brands and agencies:

#1 ad for 2020

Tastic Rice – Tastic X Laduma Heritage
DNA Brand Architects

#2 ad for 2020

Coca-Cola – Taste the simple joys
FCB Joburg

#3 ad for 2020

Hunter's Cider – Hold my Hunter's
Grey Africa/WPP Liquid

best liked
ads The Top 20 Best Liked Ads of 2020

Rank	Ad	Creative Agency
1	Tastic Rice – “Tastic x Laduma Heritage”	DNA Brand Architects

2	Coca-Cola – “Taste the simple joys”	FCB Joburg
3	Hunter's Cider – “Hold my Hunter’s”	Grey Africa/WPP Liquid
4	McDonald’s – “McDonald's favourite”	Pacinamix
5	Calpol – “A mom's headache”	Grey Africa
6	Steers – “Cheeseboy sharing meal #CheeseBoyLife”	McCann1886
7	Lifebuoy – “Lifebuoy public service announcement”	Lowe Lintas
8	H&M – “Let's change. For tomorrow”	Samuel Åkesson & Max Vitali
9	Savanna – “Birds”	Grey Africa/WPP Liquid
10	Wimpy – “Now that’s classic”	FoxP2
11	Standard Bank – “The call”	M&C Saatchi Abel
12	Trustees School Shoes – “Back 2 school”	Wisdom & Youth
13	1st For Women – “My body. stand up”	Retroviral
14	McDonald’s – “What's your coffee – McCafe”	Pacinamix
15	Nissan X-Trail – “Nissan X-Trail. Get inside. Go out there.”	TBWA Hunt Lascaris
16	Gaviscon – “Triggers”	Havas

17	Nando's – “The half-full news”	M&C Saatchi Abel
18	Jacobs Coffee – “Coffee mastery”	Saatchi & Saatchi Geneva
19	Toyota Hilux – “Toyota TGR Dakar meerkats”	FCB Joburg
20	Adidas – “Faster than”	AndPeople

The winners were announced at Kantar’s “Creativity in Advertising” digital session on 8 July, where the team also discussed the art and science of creating great ads against a backdrop of inclusion and diversity imperatives in advertising, in the quest to better understand consumers. Click [here](#) to watch on demand, and [download](#) our global playbook – *The power of inclusive portrayal in advertising: How to get it right*.

Click [here](#) to view a PDF of all the ads.

Kantar’s Best Liked Ads list is based on our Adtrack newcomer measure, which is the first in-market measure approximately two weeks post-launch for all new brand commercials flighted.

About Adtrack™

[Adtrack™](#) is Kantar's proprietary advertising testing system, evaluating the impact, and liking of all brand advertising in South Africa for over 35 years. The resultant database stands at over 100,000 TV adverts tested, and more than 1,1 million interviews conducted, making this database one of the largest of its kind in the world. Find out how your creative and media benchmarks against the competition! Adtrack is the most comprehensive and sophisticated post launch evaluation and planning efficiency tool available. A commissioned Adtrack study offers deeper insight and understanding on the performance and effectiveness of your ads. Through the use of Kantar’s Media Optimiser tool, we are able to recommend the optimal future flighting of ads, to maximise your return on investments. Adtrack studies are available across all media channels.

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[Kantar](#) is the world's leading evidence-based insights and consulting company. We have a complete, unique and rounded understanding of how people think, feel and act; globally and locally in over 90 markets. By combining the deep expertise of our people, our data resources and benchmarks, our innovative analytics and technology we help our clients **understand people** and **inspire growth**.

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