

Woolies Father's Day campaign shines amidst Pride backlash

By  [Brendan Seery](#)

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Woolworths has been taking a lot of stick for its Pride Month campaign - at least on social media, because I don't really see too many of the chain's shops being empty, despite the angry Twitter warriors and their threat of a boycott.



Interesting, too, that, in most Woolies stores, the "Pride" displays are not exactly in your face and, if you weren't looking for them, would probably go unnoticed.

Protest movement

What has been more noticeable, for me at least, is the effort the group has been throwing into its Father's Day promotions. This has been going on for some weeks ago, across all media platforms and the repetition will have rammed home the message that you can get your Dad something special this Father's Day, 18 June.

“   Important Father's Day announcement from [@DonovanGoliath](#)

[#WooliesFathersDay](#)

Spoil Dad this Father's Day: <https://t.co/UI8x0va3Cy> pic.twitter.com/9YGZyahdBq— Woolworths SA (@WOOLWORTHS_SA) [June 6, 2023](#) ”

The ads have also covered the gamut of creative ways of getting people to part with their money, from humour to call-to-action bargain type ads which push the idea of value.

I quite liked a few done by local comedian Donovan Goliath and, in particular, the one where he launches his protest movement, FAS (Fathers Against Socks). Now, which father hasn't had socks on Father's Day, birthday, or Christmas? While Woolies still sells socks, Goliath's tongue-in-cheek cameo raises the question: Why does it have to be like this?

Celebrating dad

This is followed by various suggestions for alternative gifts, so Dad doesn't have to curse the "S-Word" on Sunday.

Another, more serious, part of the campaign is personalities talking about their fathers. And, in one case, you can feel the man's pain as he wishes his late father a happy Father's Day.



#OrchidsandOnions: Siya and Rachel Kolisi make a dynamic duo in FNB ad

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Woolies then also makes Father's Day more about the simple money-grubbing buying of gifts. It makes it a celebration of Dads.

Connecting with your audience emotionally will always help burnish your brand (despite what your haters say, Woolies).

So, an Orchid to Woolworths.

Vision to fruition

In every copywriter, they say, there lurks a poet. We journalists have no such pretensions... at least those of us with our feet on the solid ground of realising we just churn out words.

Pretentiousness, though, reached a new level for me in a TV ad for law firm Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr (CDH).

As a beautiful leopard prowls across the screen, the earnest and moody voice proclaims:

“Visions are desires that flicker between a wish and intent. They are carvings waiting for the artisan’s hand. One who is consumed by purpose one who can bring vision to fruition.”

Seriously? Between a wish and intent has what, exactly, to do with a law firm? I would want my legal advisers to be down to earth and not be concerned with bringing vision to fruition. What does that mean anyway?

I can see the line being relevant to an architect, or possibly a builder, or maybe even the company putting in your wife’s new kitchen (I know that sounds a bit sexist, but that is the reality in House Seery) ...

And what is the leopard going to do? Pounce on your opponent? It is a predator, after all. Pretty blood-thirsty image, CDH.

This smacks of an ego-striking exercise for the firm and its bosses: Look at what we do; it’s not grubby, it has a high purpose, we are sleek beautiful animals...

Having said that, though, the leopard is gorgeous.

Not gorgeous enough, though, to prevent Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr from bringing the vision of an Onion to fruition.

ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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