

IAB SA and Kantar's #InsightsinAction: Guidelines to amplify your brand purpose

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"You can't just wake up one day and decide to be purposeful, it has to be built into your brand's DNA." Kantar and SA Breweries share the importance of looking beyond consumer insights to also tap into cultural aspects when amplifying brand purpose from within, during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond.



As lockdown restrictions continue, being purposeful as a brand matters more than ever before. Some brands are still figuring it out, but it's been proven time and again that brands with true purpose are growing, with Kantar Futures, Global Monitor and Kantar Purpose 2020 studies revealing that 80% of overperforming companies link everything they do to a clear brand purpose.

The essence of brand purpose is about defining your brand's role in society to make better decisions, communicate more clearly and get behind what matters. Kantar's global BrandZ tracking data shows that brands with a recognised commitment to purpose have grown twice as much over the past decade as those without it.



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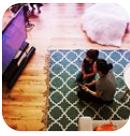
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The current Covid-19 pandemic has further amplified the need for brand purpose. Without it, you're flying blind as life as we know it has fundamentally changed.

Where a crisis usually affects just one sphere of life, the impact of the coronavirus has put our physical, emotional, social and financial wellbeing under threat, with the latest Kantar Covid-19 Barometer results for South Africa showing that we're disproportionately concerned about the financial aspect. As such, consumers are now reflecting on what matters and reprioritising budget over blind consumption and impulse buys.

With 67% of consumers choosing tried and tested brands and 81% of consumers expecting a reassuring tone, it's time for brands to act as a North Star in offering a measure of consistency in these turbulent times.



The double-digit surge in TV and social media use under isolation shows that consumers are more receptive to brand messages now but be clear on your brand purpose as 91% of consumers say brands should talk about how they could be helpful in the new, everyday life.

Brand purpose is what will help us get through the current crisis and prepare for the world beyond.

Four guidelines to being purposeful in the pandemic

1. Be clear: Define your brand's role in society and be flexible to evolve to meet the new cultural context. Brands that are clear and authentic about their purpose are usually the first to engage with consumers in times of crisis, using this as an opportunity to build emotional connections. To get this right, brands need to identify the societal tensions and problems in a culture that the world is grappling with, then step up to define their brand's unique role in solving the issue. In a time of crisis, those societal tensions are magnified and show up in new ways, making it the perfect time to communicate your brand values.

For example, to the societal tension of society setting unrealistic beauty standards with Photoshop, Dove responds as the champion of real beauty by boldly saying that courage is beautiful, garnering brand love for sticking true to its purpose:

2. Be authentic: Brand purpose must be anchored to the brand or category's functional and emotional benefits, congruent with what consumers have always known about how our brand shows up in the world. This creates a golden thread connecting everything the brand is about to an authentic purpose. So, stick to what your brand stands for, as being inauthentic looks opportunistic in times of crisis. Without authenticity, brand purpose falls flat. Don't be tempted to greenwash or exploit the crisis to your brand's benefit as consumers are increasingly vigilant of opportunistic tactics.

Watch this TedTalk with Lifebuoy's Dr Myriam Sidibe to understand how they're excelling at promoting their reason for being – protecting society's most vulnerable, while showing up with care and confidence as they stand for functional germ protection and emotional peace of mind:

Be active: At best, brand purpose creates movement in a tangible way by showing up when it matters most. At least 88% of consumers say they want brands to inform them about their efforts to face the situation, so now is not the time for brand

purpose to live on a page or in silos in your organisation. Brand purpose is activated through communication touchpoints, brand activations and platforms as the Kantar Purpose 2020 study shows that 67% of over-performing companies deliver consistency across touchpoints. In times of crisis, activating your purpose means showing up when it matters most.

For example, Vodacom's brand purpose is about connecting people today for a better tomorrow, and as such has collaborated with Discovery on virtual medical consultations during the crisis, offering the full school curriculum online and provided medical workers with much-needed technologies to track Covid-19 cases. It's tangible action in line with their brand purpose:



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Ogilvy South Africa 21 Apr 2020



4. Be an inspiration: To effectively engage with consumers, you need to infuse your brand purpose throughout the organisation. The call centre needs to be as passionate about the brand purpose as the CEO. Leadership needs to be brave and inspire hope in our darkest hours. This comes from the type of leader that MIT calls a 'transcender', who goes after institutional success while or by seeking benefits that are best for society and the world at large. Kantar Purpose 2020 shows that 85% of overperforming brands have a purpose supported by C-Suite leadership, so ensure your purpose is clear throughout the company.

The world is now at a watershed moment, where we can follow the old, broken model of chasing money and self-interest, of profit as the sole end, at the expense of people and the planet. Or we can bravely create a new world, where purpose fuels profit and profit fuels even greater impact. Imagine a world where brands and businesses solved society's biggest issues and, in return, consumers chose those companies more often – creating a virtuous circle and ecosystem, where all players have a positive role, all roles are valued and society thrives.

Laurence D Fink, chairperson and CEO of BlackRock Asset Management, says it best: "To prosper over time, every company must not only deliver financial performance, but also show how it makes a positive contribution to society."

SA Breweries' perspective on brand purpose

While severe lockdown restrictions caught many in the marketing world like a deer in the headlights, Covid-19 has presented an interesting opportunity for SA Breweries to fulfil its brand purpose, despite being unable to sell beer for over 60 days now.

Week one: Castle Lager has long sponsored South Africa's national sporting teams, so it's fitting that on the day lockdown was announced, they aired a commercial to support the 'new national team' – the attackers, defenders, keepers and captains on the frontline.

Week two: They benefit of their global footprint is the ability to share ideas quickly and scale them, such as the production of hand sanitiser and shields – taken as best practice from Brazil, thousands of bottles of sanitiser were produced in South Africa, which were distributed in partnership with government.

“ We're proud to be part of an incredible country! Together with our partners, we've produced sanitisers that are ready to be distributed to pre-selected hospitals around the country. [#FightCOVID19](#) [#FlattenTheCurve](#) pic.twitter.com/bS6xAILVUb— SABreweries (@SABreweries) [March 26, 2020](#) ”

Week three: With restaurants and bars affected by lockdown restrictions, it was Stella Artois's opportunity to set up a platform for consumers to pledge support in the form of post-lockdown redemption vouchers. The brand added 50% to the

bill and has received over R1m in donations so far.

Week four: With Easter approaching, there was a strong need for a sense of belonging in a time where many usually go home to visit loved ones. Castle Milk Stout exists to celebrate heritage, so took the opportunity to urge elders to stay home with the message [#HlalaEkhaya](#).

Week five: Now the attention was firmly on SAB's tavern partners, suddenly unable to provide for their families. SA Breweries stepped up by partnering with Shoprite Checkers to distribute food vouchers, with 14,000 of the vouchers redeemed in just a few days.

Week six: With the surge in gender-based violence under lockdown, it was fitting to set up a WhatsApp helpline with Lifeline for those who couldn't talk as their abuser may be in the next room. This initiative ties in with Carling Black Label's call to recognise the champion within all men.



ESG & SUSTAINABILITY

New WhatsApp line launched to help address spike in gender-based violence

5 May 2020



Most recently, Castle Lager celebrated its 125th birthday while under lockdown in 2020 and in solidarity with all those who had to put their own birthday celebrations on hold, pledged a voucher for 12 Castle Lagers.

Set to be redeemed when we can all get together again, there have been 40,000 [registrations to date](#).

Now, finally in a position to resume trading again as we welcome Level 3 lockdown restrictions next week, SAB's biggest concern is the need to minimise infection, with each brand devising powerful messaging on the importance of hygiene and drinking responsibly, linked to brand values.

This marketing run wasn't about telling a story or making a statement, but an effort to reduce suffering and assist the frontline – all causes that touched the business and the families that form part of their value chain in wanting to make a real difference. It's an incredible example of transcending to your true brand purpose quickly under pressure.

Now more than ever, it's on all of us to be brands that consumers can rely on, as there is no one-size-fits-all silver bullet for winning in these times.



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