

Warning: 50 shades of pirate parts

By  [Brendan Seery](#)

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Toyota has a rock-solid reputation for reliability and quality and, because of this and because the brand's marketing in this country has a unique, local flavour, it is successful in the sales charts...

But, like any carmaker looking to maximise returns across its whole business, it also devotes a significant portion of its budget to pushing servicing and parts. Keeping owners in the Toyota fold once the warranties and service plans have expired means not only more profits, but also a greater likelihood that they will return to the brand.



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An area that does concern most major carmakers is that of pirate parts, which are often considerably cheaper. One of the biggest worries about non-original replacement equipment is reliability and safety, so these factors feature in Toyota's ads.

Its campaign to promote genuine parts has been extended to include factory-approved body shops for repairing accident damage.

The message is clear: non-approved shops won't do as professional a job as the people we have vetted. To get that across, there is a TV ad which is simple, cute and clever.

It features a sweet little girl, in the car along with mum. She answers questions - "What is that? What colour is that?" - with an innocent and infectious enthusiasm. Then a two-tone Toyota Yaris pulls up next to them. "What colour is that?" asks mum.

"Burple" is the reply... and she's right: the Yaris's front door has been repaired and resprayed and it's clearly a different hue from the rest of the car, somewhere between blue and purple.

The shame-faced Yaris driver quickly winds up his window. That'll teach you to cut corners. The ad showcases the concept of genuine Toyota in an easy-to-grasp and humorous way. Nice one, Toyota and your agency, FCB Joburg. You get an Orchid.

When it comes to media placement, advertisers don't often have much say in deciding where their ad will run. That is particularly true of newspapers, where - believe it or not - there is quite a separation between the "church" and "state" of editorial and advertising.

When we put our newspapers together, we seldom pay attention to the ads on the page because, quite correctly, what is being sold on the page should, barring coincidence, not have anything to do with the story on the page.

If it does, it is advertorial (or perhaps the less obvious cousin, "native advertising"). But perhaps one of the funniest - and

yet saddest - editorial and ad juxtapositions occurred this week in *The Times* newspaper.

On page 5, the lead story was about how King Goodwill Zwelithini wanted another R2 million because the R50-odd million that taxpayers had forked out was not enough.

The story was full of details of the Marie Antoinette-esque lifestyle of the royal household, including that millions had been spent on military-style uniforms and fashion outfits for Zwelithini's wives for the opening of the KwaZulu-Natal legislature.

As if that was not bad enough, the subeditors chose a photograph guaranteed to make the blood of tax-paying readers boil: the king's brand-new Rolls-Royce limo (not much change from R4m at the dealers) at an undoubtedly expensive wedding.

Right below the story was an ad for the SA Revenue Service (Sars), urging taxpayers to settle their outstanding accounts by the end of this month.

Pay back the money - to the government, which would simply transfer it to the "Let Them Eat Cake Fund".

No Orchid (unless the clever subs at *The Times* did this deliberately by placing the story where they did), but also no Onion. It is not the fault of Sars that the ad ended up where it did. Nor is it the fault of Sars that an unusually high proportion of the blood squeezed out of the taxpayer stone seems to end up in the far reaches of northern KwaZulu-Natal.



It's still called Ceylon tea, but the region's now called Sri Lanka... © Illia Uriadnikov – 123RF.com

Finally, the "times have changed, people" Onion this week goes to Five Roses Tea, which has a TV ad that refers to the "finest tea from Ceylon".

The place might have been called Ceylon back when my father was based at Trincomalee with a Royal Air Force flying boat squadron in World War II, but the country has been known as Sri Lanka since 1972, although it gained independence back in 1948.

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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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