

Great ad, splendid timing

By  [Brendan Seery](#)

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SA Tourism: An antidote to all the bitterness, anger and defeatism; slack PR company sent a Happy New Year wish - on 31 January. Irritating.



Screengrabs from the ad.

I have to think it was no coincidence that the new SA Tourism TV ad started flying on Thursday night, just around the time Cyril Ramaphosa was delivering (sorry – trying to deliver) his State of the Nation address.

Ramaphosa, I was reminded this week on the 30th anniversary of the release of Madiba, has been hailed as the Great Negotiator, but I think that there are reasons to view him as the Great Marketer.



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Leigh Andrews 17 Feb 2020



He was one of the ANC's leading members at the Codesa talks in the early '90s, which led eventually to freedom on 27 April, 1994... and, no doubt, he would have sold FW de Klerk and the rest of the National Party the vision of a non-racial, majority-ruled SA as an alternative to a bloody civil war.

Never mind that De Klerk and his people will already have been willing consumers of this sales pitch, Ramaphosa was the one to push the benefits of the new product, because he has the gift of the gab and a true salesman's charm.

And even though we sit in the midst of a dire situation presently – both economically and socially – Ramaphosa's words in parliament felt, at times, like the soothing balm of promise... yet with more action than talk this time.



#Sona20: We're talking in the right direction, but actions speak louder than words

Carl Coetzee 14 Feb 2020



The vision he sold of South Africa – a multiracial, happy, rich paradise – slotted perfectly into the almost mythical scenes portrayed in the SA Tourism ad.

Perhaps I am saying mythical because I have become very cynical in my job as a journalist and forgotten that, outside the toxic swamp of social media and news, South Africans, as people, are quite likeable. And our home is truly magnificent.

Those traits come across clearly in the SA Tourism ad, which has a dual target audience: South African potential holidaymakers and foreign tourists. And it showcases, in lavish colour and clarity, the vibey, beautiful side of South Africa, which certainly pushes reality into the background for a while.

“ But it's not all dreams; this is a country which actually does exist outside the horror headlines. The sort of place you really need to get out and explore, as a South African. And the sort of place you need to visit as a foreigner to understand that South Africa is one of the most diverse destinations on the planet, both in terms of people and scenery. ”

When you look at the ad, even as many did in the midst of the EFF-initiated turmoil in the House of Assembly on Thursday night, you can't help but take a deep breath and remember your blessings. And you will also get itchy feet to see some of those splendid mountains, beaches and animals.

The ad, conceptualised in-house by SA Tourism and produced by Bomb Shelter, is magnificent in terms of production values. It also effectively serves three purposes: marketing to South Africans first – by saying first visit each and then welcome the world – and to foreigners at the same time... but also as an antidote to the bitterness, anger and defeatism, which is so common these days. Orchids all round.



SA Tourism launches new brand campaign

17 Feb 2020



Evolution, so they say, is a very slow process. That being the case, then Evolution PR agency seems to have the most apt name in the business.

On 31 January, 2020, at 2.41pm, an e-mail popped into my inbox from Evolution PR, wishing me a “Happy New Year”. On. The. Last. Day. Of. January. There is a “statute of limitations” on Christmas decorations, so I am told. This means that leaving them up beyond a certain time will bring you bad luck.

I am not sure what the protocol is for New Year’s greetings, but I am fairly certain that 31 days late is well past the “Best Before” date. Evolution PR – you shouldn’t have bothered sending that out. All it did was make me notice how slack and out of touch you are.

Irritating people and making yourself a laughing stock are not particularly appealing marketing traits so, Evolution PR, you get this week’s Onion. But before you have a go at me for waiting two weeks to do this, just know: I had more important offenders than you lined up...

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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