

Francois de Villiers joins Haas Collective as agency takes Spur account



By Herman Manson: [@marklives](#)

31 Jan 2012

A small Cape Town agency has just taken the Spur account and brought on board the former executive creative director of Drafftcb - [Francois de Villiers](#). Haas Collective is a creative collective run by Mike Orrey, one of the founders of Orrey, Rightford & Drysdale Advertising (ORD Advertising) and [Glynn Venter](#), a former ECD of the Drafftcb through-the-line studio.



Francois de Villiers, Glynn Venter and Mike Orrey

Launched in March 2011

Haas Collective launched in March 2011 and consists of a concept store, a design gallery and a high-end coffee house and roastery, as well as the agency, all tucked into two buildings across from one another in Rose Street in the Bo-Kaap.

It quite literally is a collective of small creative spaces and businesses that collaborate when need be. *Wallpaper* magazine recently voted the space one of the [top 20](#) reasons to be in South Africa.

Different people are involved in different aspects of the collective. For example the gallery is managed by Francois Irvine and Vanessa Berlein, while the agency consists of Venter and Orrey and now De Villiers.

Venter helped start the various businesses as the right partners came along and didn't initially plan for them to feed off one another to the extent that they do - but, today, the concept store readily ties in with the gallery which ties in again with the agency - all in all, the design collective represents 50-60 up-and-coming designers and illustrators which any of the businesses can call on as required.

Built up its business

While the other parts of the business have attracted considerable media attention, Venter says the agency has kept a low profile while it built up its business. Its clients include the Whisky Live Festival, Aegis Media (which includes trigger/isobar, Full Circle Media, Vizeum, Carat and Clickthinking), Fancourt, Katjes, the Compass Bakery and Act II Popcorn.

Haas Collective also collaborates with Drafftcb on Johannesburg on parts of the Old Mutual account. It won the Spur account in mid-January 2012 and will take up the account 1 March.

According to De Villiers, he decided to leave Drafftcb late last year; he had been with the company for 17 years. At that stage, Drafftcb had already lost the Spur account. Spur founder and executive chairman Allen Ambor and he had such a good relationship, says De Villiers, that he decided he would want to continue their working relationship, if possible.

To this end he was accommodated by Drafftcb, and after a pitch for the Spur business with his new partners at Haas, they duly won the account. De Villiers joins Haas on the same day the Spur account becomes active - 1 March.*

Collaborative model

The account win has lead Haas to appoint an (as yet unnamed) heavy-weight account director**, who will eventually be mentored into an MD role; a new account executive; and a copywriter. For the rest, the agency works on a collaborative model, bringing in a wide range of experts, as and when required.

De Villiers says the collaborative model allows Haas to step around the numerous middlemen big-agency operations layer between the creative decision-makers and the client decision-makers. The specialists the agency use, be they photographers, CRM specialists, or directors and producers, include the best in their areas.

Those collaborators have their own trusted suppliers, and so the model ripples out to the advantage of the agency and its client, with best-of-breed relationships in place all along the production chain.

Venter says the other businesses in the collective keep the agency close to consumers. For Orrey, the advantage of shared space is keeping a lid on costs in a tough economy - something that ultimately benefits clients as well.

Other benefits

And the roastery holds other benefits, too - the agency has picked up work just from Venter getting to chatting with customers downstairs. Which lets the customers upgrade from the coffee shop to the plush lounge style room upstairs from where the Haas agency operates - of course, with some great coffee to go.

*[Mike Barnwell](#), who left South Africa in 2010 to work at Publicis Mojo Auckland, will be replacing De Villiers as Drafftcb Cape Town ECD on 1 March.

**Nick Barr, ex-group account director at The Jupiter Drawing Room, joins 1 March.

Updated at 4.54pm on 31 January 2012.

ABOUT HERMAN MANSON: @MARKLIVES

The inaugural Vodacom Social Media Journalist of the Year in 2011, Herman Manson (@marklives) is a business journalist and media commentator who edits industry news site www.marklives.com. His writing has appeared in newspapers and magazines locally and abroad, including Bizcommunity.com. He also co-founded *Brand* magazine.

- AwardsCandy - SA app start-up signing global award shows - 11 May 2012
- Ninety9cents lands Capitec, sees 43% growth y/y - 9 May 2012
- Press freedom, the commission and you - 26 Apr 2012
- Cell C drops King James, FoxP2 - retains Ogilvy - 25 Apr 2012
- Zando rockets into SA ecommerce space - 24 Apr 2012

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>