

Brands, it's International Women's Day, why can't we do things differently?

 By [Khangalani Dziba](#)

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It is a gloomy Thursday morning and work beckons whilst the body probably wants to reboot until a warmer and better day approaches. Story of every summer baby I tell you!



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It is not lost upon me, however, that today is not just any gloomy day. But one that is meant to celebrate and acknowledge women from across the world in all shapes and sizes. Women who brave each day at the hopes of making it a better day for us all.

Yes, that's right. It's International Women's Day.

This day has not only got me honouring the women in my life who I interact with on a daily basis and the role they play in bettering my world. But, has also got me interrogating the different set of binaries that exist for women and men. Some acceptable and some not so much.

Women drinking beer

I have particularly started interrogating this in the brand space with the different types of ads that are put out there and portray both men and women in a different light. In other words, men are often associated with more macho brands whilst women are associated with softer ones and an approach that is much more differentiated.

But there are spaces where this can be interrogated and as brand practitioners, we can totally do a better job at looking at how we communicate certain messages that continue maintaining gender norms.

Let me be more specific.

I was scrolling through the net this morning and a very interesting engagement was taking place after a tweet that was put out by radio and TV personality, Dineo Ranaka, enjoying a Castle Lite beer. The backlash received and the conversations that were being had on women drinking beer were quite revealing of the somewhat negative perceptions and judgements made on this matter.

I followed the conversation which even went live on the host's radio show (*The Front Row* – Metro FM) where dissenting views were being shared on this matter to a point where I started asking myself, what can brands in this category particularly do to change this kind binary sets where it is seemingly acceptable for men to enjoy a beer, whilst for women it is a different set of circumstance.

Women not only accessories

Whilst it may seem that they are a small segment in comparison to their male counterpart, they are still an integral consumer that ensures sales and they need to be included as main characters in ad material like TVCs and ATL material that is used to advertise the product.

Post the heated conversations, Castle Lite has since released a statement that recognises women as not only accessories to men but a big consumer base coming in at 1 million that enjoy the famous beer.

Now tell me, why can't we influence other brands to see women holding beer as normal without changing how we view their womanhood?

ABOUT KHANGELANI DZIBA

Khangelani Dziba is the divisional head of PR & influencer partnerships at Rapt Creative. They are a Master in Brand Leadership graduate from Vega School and are passionate about gender, diversity, and inclusion in brand advertising.

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