

Ogilvy and Carling Black Label win the Partnership Award at the 2023 AdFocus Awards

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Every year the AdFocus Awards celebrate a strong and enduring partnership between a brand and agency. This year the accolade went to Ogilvy's long term partnership with Carling Black Label.

Arné Rust, brand director for Carling Black Label commented, "As marketers, we often discuss the bravery required to create exceptional work, and that is absolutely true. What is less frequently mentioned is the trust essential for being brave. True courage emerges when you have unwavering trust in yourself and your team, empowering you to push the limits. Carling Black Label and Ogilvy share a level of trust that I have not encountered in any other brand or company, and I take great pride in the legacy we have built together."



In 2008, the brand and agency launched the positioning of 'Champion Men Deserve Champion Beer', which has been shaped and evolved ever since. This resulted in a long lasting strategic platform that has successfully kept relevant, with their changing consumer and society, while also helping Carling become the largest selling beer in South Africa.

One highlight of this evolving platform was the introduction of the #NoExcuse platform, alongside a shift in society towards toxic masculinity. The platform aimed to directly shine a light on intimate partner violence in South Africa, where one in three women face abuse each year. In its first year, the brand reached 38 million people with its message, recorded an increase in women willing to report intimate partner violence, as well as an increase in men committing to stand against intimate partner violence. In parallel, the campaign also resulted in a significant increase in brand equity, achieving the highest recorded brand equity score in the brand's history. This accelerated Carling Black Label to the number one spot for brand power in the entire beer category.

"Alongside the powerful work we've produced together, we've also experienced impressive levels of sales growth. Our brand affinity and brand power scores are also at their highest ever, putting us in the top spot in brand power," Arné adds.

South African Breweries and Ogilvy have shared a rich and enduring partnership, which has not only shaped the brand's trajectory, but has also made a positive impact on cultural issues resonating with our country.

"The power of partnership is brewed from a blend of respect, trust, and a relentless focus on the brand. Our partnership with Carling Black Label is rooted in creating meaningful and impactful work," says Vicki Buys, managing director for Ogilvy in Cape Town. "It's more than just business; it's the art of crafting memorable narratives, ensuring the next chapter is poised for success, and amplifying the harmony of our shared story."

Over many years, Ogilvy and Carling Black Label's collaborative efforts have not only yielded market-leading results for the brand in challenging conditions but also garnered widespread acclaim for their work. At Cannes, the largest creative awards in the world, this includes a Grand Prix and 2 Golds, alongside multiple recognition at the Loeries, Effies, Bookmarks, Assegais, Clios, New Generation, One Show, and Creative Circle awards shows.

"I am incredibly proud that our collaboration with Carling Black Label has been recognised by the AdFocus Awards and our industry peers. It's wonderful to work with a client who recognises the power of creativity to create not just business impact, but also to make a positive impact on the society that their consumers live in. We are very fortunate to have that relationship with Carling Black Label. What makes this an extra special journey is that we've managed to continue this close bond despite many changes over the years of the client leadership." Concludes Pete Case, CEO and Creative Chairman of Ogilvy South Africa. "The true impact of our partnership is seen in our work, with Carling winning the Grand Effie this year, for the Most Effective marketing campaign in South Africa."

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