

MetropolitanRepublic are the creatives behind #ILoveEatingRussians

In August 2021 a story broke that seemed to suggest that South Africans eat Russians. No, not the sausage kind but actual Russian people. Of course, this was not true and it was later revealed that Eskort, in collaboration with their agency partners MetropolitanRepublic and 8909 had successfully pranked the entire country with their elaborate #ILoveEatingRussians integrated campaign.



Source: www.youtube.com

It all began with a brief from Eskort tasking MetropolitanRepublic with the ideation of their flagship campaign to promote their range of delicious Russians. The brief was cracked when the creatives landed on the insight that South Africans are the only people who refer to those tasty sausages as Russians. A small detail that someone from Russia or anywhere else in the rest of the world could easily misconstrue but South Africans would easily understand.

This formed the basis of a campaign that would take the form of an elaborate ruse, coming to life through a series of viral, unbranded spoof videos that seeded and then fuelled this would-be 'misunderstanding'.

After launching on August 4th, the campaign immediately trended on Twitter for over 48hrs and organically made its way onto TikTok, major media platforms like eNews, Cape Talk and 702. The campaign has even found itself in the infamous and iconic South African comic - Madam and Eve.



#ILoveEatingRussians: Eskort campaign gets South Africa chuckling

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“There are very few brands one could ever do this kind of campaign with and even with the right brand, it takes a truly brave brand team to buy into this kind of campaign and run with it. At Metro we consider ourselves lucky to have the kind of clients we do in Eskort. It is only because of their bravery that we were able to deliver a successful campaign that undoubtedly entertained many South Africans and most importantly achieved great brand awareness for our client” said executive creative director at Metro, Kamogelo Sasing.

This of course isn't Metro's first rodeo when it comes to creating outstanding work for a heritage brand. The agency has been long known for positioning and creating some of South Africa's most loved campaigns for heritage brands including MTN, Wimpy, Nando's and FNB.

By combining the big conceptual thinking of MetropolitanRepublic with a savvy digital and social media strategy from 8909, it is clear that a comprehensive integrated approach was undoubtedly the key to the client's ability to achieve a successful & cohesive cross-channel campaign. The success of this campaign also included the partnership working very closely with NoMenu Media Specialists, FleishmanHillard SA (PR), Made Films and Admit1 Production.

The Russian conversation series is the latest in a long line of entertaining South African content from Eskort. From their cheeky adverts to their widely successful online content series, Who Got Chowd on Twitter, featuring the ever-popular Coconut Kelz.

“To say the least, we were ecstatic when the Eskort brief landed on our desk, but Paul Warner wasn't looking for another campaign; he wanted something that had social ripples. After a few sleepless nights, we remembered a proactive idea we had come up with months earlier but never presented. It was just a funny radio ad about Russians finding out that South Africans eat Russians and do so proudly. We knew right away that this was the one. It matched the persona and the Eskort brand energy. The entire Metro team rallied around the concept, working nonstop to turn a simple idea into a full-fledged creative campaign. There were times when we doubted that this concept would ever see the light of day, but at Metro, we specialise in bringing complex concepts to life. Only this agency could pull off such a stunt.” says Lee Ndinisa, senior art director and Gift Afrika, senior copywriter at MetropolitanRepublic.

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