

Crunch forces change in marketing

By [Monica Laganparsad](#)

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As the credit crunch creeps into the lives of consumers, advertising agencies have taken on the challenge of marketing products in the global recession.

American fast food chain MacDonald's has taken this challenge head on, boasting the "cheapest Big Mac" in the world, right here in South Africa.

Glen Lomas, of DDB ad agency, agreed that the pressures of the economic climate have brought about change.

He said in any recession the obvious reaction from consumers was to simply stop paying for products and services.

Lomas said food was high on the list of products people needed and that when marketing a recognised brand, which offered value for money, the product sold itself.

"We know that people look for value in tough times, and where better than from a reliable brand, where you know you are getting substantial quality food for what you're paying?" he said.

He pointed out that people would always need food and always looked for quality and value.

Gisele Wertheim Aymes, head of media at First National Bank, said the bank had spent great effort ensuring its advertising was relevant to its clients' financial needs.

"As business conditions deteriorate, customers are looking even more closely at our advertising to find relevant and useful messages," she said.

Yvonne Johnson of Marketer at Large said ad agencies generally always led the way or were right in the middle of a trend.

"People always look for products that they feel reflect themselves ... and the good ads answer their question: 'What's in it for me?'," Johnson said.

She said while consumers might feel the pinch, branding was geared towards offering the consumer a lot more.

Source: The Times

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