

Nissan Micra gets Active in the market - but enough of politicians' mugshots, already

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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Perhaps it's a bit early, but some experts have seen the first green shoots of a recovery in our struggling economy. Car sales - always one of the most sensitive indicators of hard times - appear to be picking up a little.

And there clearly is a large, mainly untapped market to be exploited by manufacturers: the clichéd “millennials”, who now have jobs (sometimes their first) and are energetically exploring the world.



Screengrabs from the ad.

Getting around for many in this group requires something that is affordable, yet still has an air of funkiness about it.

That's exactly the vibe Nissan and TBWA\Hunt Lascaris have tapped into with a TV advertisement to launch the Japanese maker's new, affordable Micra Active.

Let me say right up front that I do have soft spot for the Micra, having had one as a long-term test car some years ago. A more easy-to-drive and economical car you'd struggle to find.

But at the same time, it is quirky enough to be just slightly different from the other econo-boxes at the entry-level end of the

market. TBWA\Hunt Lascaris's ad speaks right to the always-on-a screen generation: fast, furious and rapidly changing.

The millennials in the ad are teleported into a Micra Active and then have their friends teleported into it along with them (nice way to show the car can accommodate four adults) and then they have their own slightly way out experiences... and a whole lot of fun.

The ad positions the car first and foremost as a fun choice and works well as an awareness booster, so that other parts of the campaign, which focus on its reasonable price and best-in-class service plan, can get the feet through the doors of Nissan dealerships.

If I were a youngster in the market for a car, the ad would make me sit up and pay attention. So it does a good job for Nissan. And that means Orchids for Nissan and TBWA\Hunt Lascaris...and it's been a while since either of those brands graced these pages. Well done!

One of the reasons, I believe, for the lack of service delivery in this country is that our ministers are so busy having their egos stroked (with taxpayer) money that they don't pay enough attention to the job at hand. This is obvious in the public service advertising put out by most government departments.

Whether it is about Aids prevention, business assistance or traffic safety, the Golden Rule for this type of marketing is: Use the picture of the minister! Did you ever see Steve Jobs in ads for Apple? Bill Gates for Microsoft?

Ministers, your visage has absolutely nothing to do with the jobs we are paying you to do.

You are seldom experts on the details of your portfolio, so this is just a waste of space, which could be used to properly market – using the techniques of professional ad agencies and marketers – and get your message across clearly.

The latest egomaniac is Lebogang Maile, MEC for Economic Development, Environment, Agriculture and Rural Development in Gauteng, who has his face tacked on to announcement ads for the launch of new automated SMME business systems in the province.

MEC, just because you have the longest official title in the country does not entitle you to bore us with your picture. You get an Onion... and so do other government departments that do the same thing.

ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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