

# Chris Luyt, Bestmed

 By [Nicci Botha](#)

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Chris Luyt, executive of marketing and sales of Bestmed chats about his brand, why TV advertising is losing its appeal and what inspires him.



■ ***Tell us a little about your brand?***

**Luyt:** Bestmed represents a unique value proposition in that its administration is owned by its members. It doesn't make administration profit, rather, what it does make goes back to all the members. In addition, it's the largest self-administrating scheme and Bestmed's significant market share makes it the fourth largest open scheme in the country.

■ ***Medical aid is quite a hard-sell, what is your strategy to soften it up a bit?***

**Luyt:** I don't agree it's a hard sell, but do agree it's a grudge purchase. Medical aid is bought, it's not sold. In essence it's a need every one of us has. If you think about it, the concept of ensuring your health makes so much sense.

Our health is the one thing we have besides our skills and our attitude which helps us make a living. So it is a very important aspect and, accordingly, people need it and buy it from brands that they trust. To soften it up a bit, Bestmed emphasises that we are a trusted brand and open to every one of our members.

■ ***How are the current disruptions (Competition Commission inquiry/changes to PMB legislation/NHI) in the private healthcare sphere affecting how you are going about your business?***

**Luyt:** I think it is important that we acknowledge that there will always be disruptions, whether it comes from the legislative side, whether it comes from the competitive side or market conditions.

We are standing at the forefront of the fourth industrial revolution, where robotics, nanotechnology and the internet of things are probably going to be a far greater disruption on the way we do business than any of the above aspects.

What Bestmed has always done very well is adapt. Disruption is that sand that irritates the shell to form the pearl over time. Bestmed always aims to add constructive arguments. In short, we tend to look at disruption more of an opportunity than threat.

■ ***What's on your wish list for brand objectives for 2016?***

**Luyt:** Bestmed has embarked on a very specific brand navigation methodology. Our brand objectives for this year are obviously closely aligned to growth in market share and sustainability.

One personal wish, as the marketing exec, is that Bestmed can really shine through in terms of its brand essence... By the members for the members. We want to be known as one of the stalwarts, one of the rocks that can really weather the storm. Not that I think 2016 will be a particularly be a stormy year, I think there are a lot of opportunities, but we do have trying economic conditions.

■ ***What do you see currently as the main challenges and or opportunities for your brand sector?***

**Luyt:** A major challenge is that many of the historical brands have been diluted through diversification. For us it's an opportunity as it is a very specific need that members have.

Another challenge/opportunity is member communication. Bestmed's ability to constantly live closer to its members is going to be important with the technology to back it up. Take something like Facebook, I would never have thought three or four years ago that individuals would invite corporates to become friends with them on Facebook and today we are seeing that as a growing trend.

■ ***Does your brand still see the value of TV, print and other mainstream media? Explain.***

**Luyt:** There still is a lot of value, but in my personal view it is waning a bit. The days of talking to a customer who can't move is deteriorating fast. Unfortunately people tend to pick up their phones or tablets whenever an advertisement comes onto television and go into other media. Consumers, when they relax, use multiple platforms of communication.

Even if you take a medium such as YouTube, how valuable is the five second ad? I think we are in a very exciting period when it comes to experiential marketing. The trend we are picking up is that the consumer is far more comfortable engaging with a brand that they experience. In other words event marketing is becoming more important.

A consumer's attention span is hard to capture in first five seconds. Even though the millennials may discount advertising if you do catch their attention they tend to be very loyal. The art is probably choosing the right channels for your target market.

■ ***What are the biggest obstacles to take up and planning of "new media" campaigns?***

**Luyt:** Insuring that your planning and campaign ties up with your consumer need. Often we get absorbed by a wonderful creative idea, but maybe the market research was lacking and we totally missed the market.

The second common mistake that marketers make is not having the campaign at the point of sale. It's important that your campaign, your distribution channel and your media is all aligned.

### ■ ***What do you love most about your brand?***

**Luyt:** I fell in love with Bestmed, probably 30 years ago as a dependent on my father's medical aid. That was probably the first time I realised the funding mechanism of medicine. I was ill that day. We went to the pharmacy and my mother produced the card. The lady at the pharmacy took the card and said: "Bestmed oh it's a very good medical aid." And that was my very first interaction with Bestmed. I didn't think that 30 years' later I would be the marketing exec.

Bestmed has the unique ability to be both robust and flexible, and utterly focused around its members.

### ■ ***What inspires you, personally?***

**Luyt:** Umm... Coffee?

It inspires me when people are passionate about something, people who enjoy what they do. I love craftsmanship and how people take hours and hours to do something perfectly. It inspires me how people can see opportunities and how people can challenge their limits.

## ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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