

Sixty60 Checkers all the boxes

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

19 Jul 2022

Celebrating Madiba: 67 deliveries to 67 charities and helping maintain the legend; Discovery Insure gets an Onion for arrogance, stretching the truth



Given the depression permeating everyday life in South Africa – we’re battered by the consequences of global events beyond our control ... and the consequences of rampant looting and incompetence – it is difficult not to be cynical.

My default mode is cynicism, especially when it comes to companies doing “corporate social investment” or burnishing their brands by riding on the backs of events like Nelson Mandela Day.

However, now that SA is increasingly drifting away from the ideals of Madiba and, indeed, the whole now hollow-seeming concept of us being the “Rainbow Nation”, I can’t help but fear that every year, the concept of Mandela Day is losing its power.



Paused during the pandemic, FoodForward SA's Mandela Day Food Drive is back

15 Jul 2022



The idea is that people donate their time, and resources – as little as 67 minutes (one for every year he spent fighting Apartheid) – to help others.

But, there is so much else to occupy people's minds (keeping heads above water, for one) that even the pull of the Madiba legacy will grow fainter and fainter.

However, as long as a company actually does make a difference, putting its money where its marketing mouth is, then I am happy to let them bask in whatever recognition they get.

So it is with Checkers Sixty60, the popular delivery service. To mark Mandela Day, the company ordered 67 "special deliveries" to 67 charities.

To illustrate this, the ad shows the distinctive blue motorbikes roaring all over the place to drop goodie bags to deserving charities. (One would hope the bags featured are merely symbolic and Checkers will be donating a little more than a brown paper bag of groceries...)

The final delivery is to Robben Island, the prison where Mandela spent most of his sentence.

It is a South African flag, which is run up the flagpole.

The kicker at the end reminds us of just exactly what he left us: "Celebrating the man who delivered what no one else could..."

The ad is a reminder that there is so much need out there and, even without a Mandela Day to galvanise us, we should all think about how we can help, in whatever small way. It also helps maintain the legend of Madiba, which is under assault from the revisionists of history.

But, also, it tells us that Checkers Sixty60 can bring us things which make our lives easier.

For all these reasons, it gets Checkers, ad agency 99c and production house Joe Films well-deserved Orchids.

The truth of insurance

South African marketers tend far too often to take their clients for granted or, worse, for fools. And they are surprised when

people talk about their bad experiences.

My brother-in-law has insured his vehicles with Discovery for some years now. In May, he received notice of his annual increase. But then, shortly after that, he got another notice for a “once-off” 6% hike.

What annoyed him particularly – as he lives in Joburg and drives very little since he was retrenched – is that Discovery had a laundry list of events to blame for the increase, from load shedding to Covid’s impact on supply chains, to “adverse weather events” (presumably all the payouts it had to make because of the KZN floods).

In total, his premiums shot up by 15%. When he queried the increase, he was told he was a “risk” because of his claims history.



New proposed bill could slash SA's petrol price by R9 per litre

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Last year, he was hit from behind by another car – not his fault. The insurance company told the repairer to fix the wrong end of the car, which increased costs and time when the correct side was repaired ... again no fault of my brother-in-law.

Despite him raising these points, Discovery was not only deaf to him but took ages to respond. So he went to Outsurance and got the same deal for less than half.

In these tight economic times, it is not a good look for an insurance brand to blame events not relevant to its customer as the reason for a premium hike.

Do not take people’s loyalty for granted, Discovery. Customers can, and do, shop around. Bad customer service undermines all your other marketing efforts.

So you get this week’s Onion for arrogance and stretching the truth – you are clearly trying to recoup your losses in places like KZN through “innocent clients”.

That Onion might look good in the lobby of your multibillion-rand building in Sandton.

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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