

When brands get social media engagement right

By  Sheila Afari

26 Apr 2019

Social media has become an increasingly valuable component for consideration with a lot of PR strategies over the years. It's exciting to see how various brands are using social media to convey their brand personality, humanise their brand and grow their brand loyalty which has a positive effect on their overall PR.

I really enjoy seeing posts online from brands that show they are current, on trend, and in tune with what's going on around them.

Recently the #WooliesWaterChallenge was trending for days. What impressed me about this thread was a) how quickly Woolworths reacted to the trend b) the foresight the brand had to quickly engage the gentlemen behind the trend.



Nando's is known for their tongue-in-cheek personality and wit and is consistent with keeping on top of trends. The below posts show a more "human" side to the brand and not just a company with smart marketers coming up with witty campaigns.

Their responses below were on target with their brand communication but also came across as how other people were responding when congratulating the recent achievements of DJ Arch Jnr and AKA. Nandos referring to AKA as "Di Moli Tsalented Number One Superstar from South Africa" is a prime example of a brand being in tune with popular culture.



Being a relatable brand

Gone are the days where a brand's online communication needs to be about “selling”. Brands need to show that they are relatable which in turn conveys the message that maybe they do indeed know what their customers want.



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Brand relatability can easily be achieved by engaging in current and/or trending topics, replying to messages, and getting into conversations that sometimes have nothing to do with you directly, but by humanising the brand you can always find a way to fit into the conversation.

Audi got the “fit into the conversation” component right when they recently commented on a post about the worse pronunciation of your name. The post had nothing to do with Audi or cars, but their comment made them come across as relatable and cool. They owned a good part of that thread because a lot of people admitted that they didn’t know how to pronounce Audi and went on to ask Audi other questions related directly to their brand which they, in turn, responded to.

“ Odi. <https://t.co/V2TcFcJQHg>— Audi South Africa (@audisouthafrica) [March 25, 2019](#) ”

YFM recently made a post asking, “Which bank do you think is the coolest?” FNB jumped in and made it known that they’ve been holding that title for 7 years. The post was related to them, even though they weren’t looking for a comment from any of the banks. It was well played by FNB to get involved in the conversation and their tone was on the mark for the audience that would be following YFM on social media.

“ We’ve beeeeen at it for 7 years in a row. [#FNBae](#) loading...[#DropsMic pic.twitter.com/Xa6FMXankW](#)— FNB South Africa (@FNB SA) [March 29, 2019](#) ”

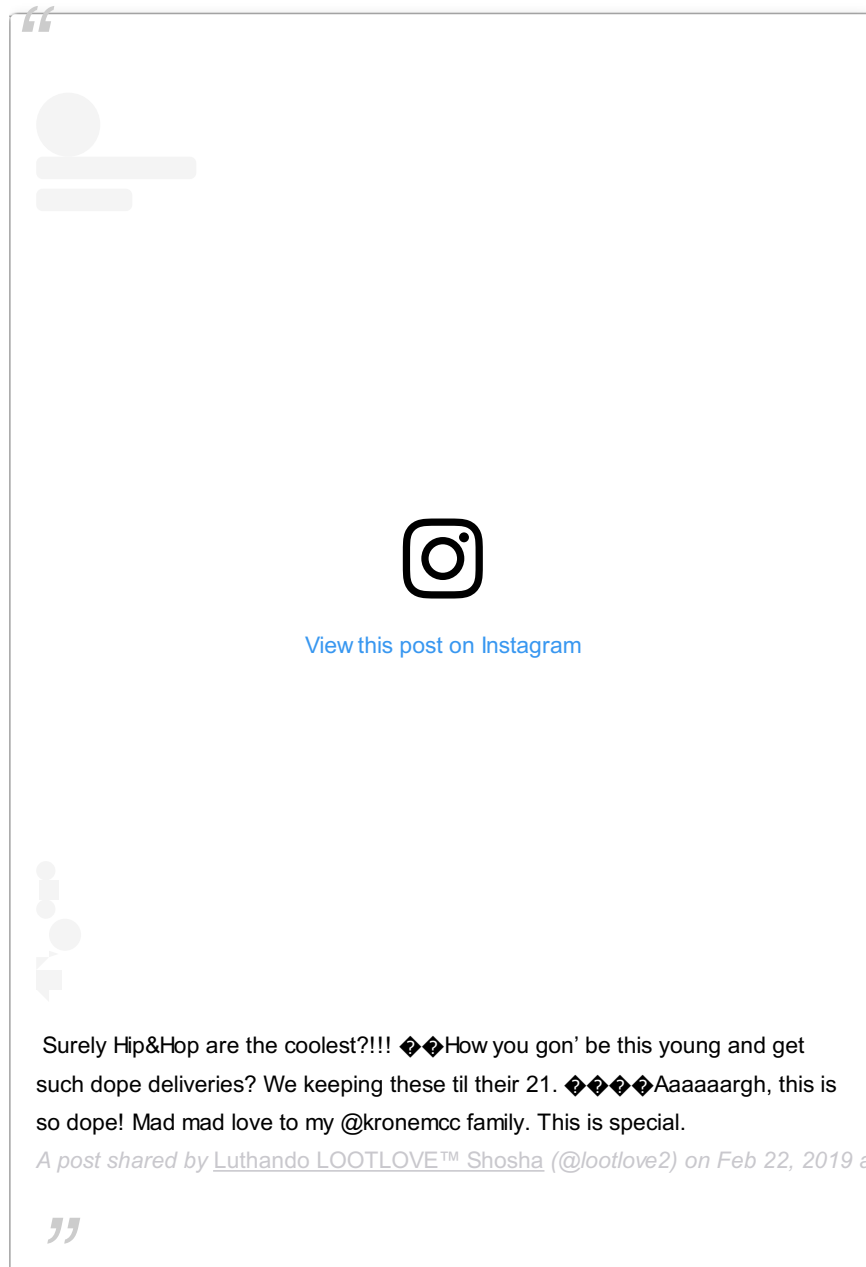
On the same YFM thread, a user highlighted Standard Bank as the coolest bank and Standard Bank responded that they are cool because of customers like him. Now isn’t that a wonderful way of growing brand loyalty!

“ 🎉🎉 Thank you for the Love, we the coolest bank because we got the coolest customers like yourself. 🎉🎉🎉🎉—

Standard Bank SA (@StandardBankZA) [March 29, 2019](#) ”

My favourite recent example of brands getting it right has to be that of Krone MCC. I'm a strong believer that your brand needs to be better offline than it is online.

Krone MCC gifted media personality Luthando "Loot Love" Sosha two personalised bottles "Hip" and "Hop". Their engagement with her was in the "real world" in the form of something tangible. The personalisation showed that the brand is in tune with pop culture and the gift was meaningful enough for Loot Love to post on her social media.



Loot Love referred to them as "family" which insinuates that there's already an established relationship, which is why I give additional kudos to Krone MCC for going the extra mile with an existing relationship to harness brand loyalty.

ABOUT SHEILA AFARI

Sheila Afari, managing director at Sheila Afari Public Relations, is a multi-award-winning entrepreneur and has serviced clients in territories such as the UK, New York, Los Angeles, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Botswana, Mozambique, Cameroon, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

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