

Literally standing the test of time

By  Danette Breitenbach

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"You can't be a real country unless you have a beer and an airline. It helps to have some kind of football team, or some nuclear weapons, but at least you need a beer."

These famous words by Frank Zappa were fittingly quoted by Nic Scheijde, South African Breweries' (SAB) General Manager for Castle Lager. The occasion? An event at SAB's Brewhouse in Sandton celebrating its flagship brand, Castle Lager.

In the presence of over 100 guests and media, this iconic South African brand celebrated 120 years of heritage. This is a remarkable achievement, especially in a world where we have seen so many well-established brands, some hundreds of years old, close down and disappear.

To further mark the occasion, a commemoration song was performed by Prime Circle and PRO at the event. The song, which was composed by the band and PRO, is available for download on iTunes. Lead singer of Prime Circle, Ross Learmonth, says working on the song was inspirational. "Not only was it a very cool thing to do, given that Castle Lager is such a strong South African brand, but Castle Lager advertisements are synonymous with iconic music, so it was an honour to compose a song for the brand."



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Devlin Lakay, Brand Campaign Manager: Castle Lager adds to this, saying that this was the first time the brand had ever undertaken something like this. "The brand is strongly associated with music, but this is the first time we have our own song. The song is not only a narrative on the brand but a method to demonstrate what the brand is about, which is friendship and togetherness."

In his presentation to the guests, Scheijde touched on what has made Castle Lager a South African brand that has literally stood the test of time. "The first element is taste, with all the ingredients 100% home grown." The taste of Castle Lager - somewhat bitter, never sweet - has remained the same since Charles Glass sold the recipe for his "Castle Beer" in 1895.

The second element is the soul of the brand. "Castle Lager represents what South African guys love: getting together, having a cold lager and watching their national team."

The third is the brand's heritage, which Scheijde says is Castle Lager's ability to bring people together. "The brand has always tapped into the psyche of the nation. For example, its 1992 television commercial (TVC) Maradona's Boots and the 2010 Homecoming TVC."

He ended off saying that the collaboration between PRO and Prime Circle on the Castle Lager commemoration song stood for all the things Castle Lager stands for.

Castle Lager will launch its big theme TVC, which speaks to Castle Lager's brand proposition around bringing friends together for the last 120 years, at the end of this month.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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