

Why Covid-19 is driving creativity

 By [Monare Matema](#)

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Covid-19, popularly known as the coronavirus has upended life as we know it. Millions around the country and the world have been sent into self-isolation as we grapple with the wide-reaching social and economic impact of the pandemic and the government regulation that has been imposed to contain it.



Image source: [Pexels](#).

As of this writing, 402 cases have been reported in South Africa. While this pales in comparison to the cases reported in the hardest-hit countries, it's evident that we are only at the beginning stages of this pandemic and things are likely to get worse before they get better.

Out of an abundance of caution I have been working from home for the past week and this has not been its challenges. As a brand communicator, I am used to having people around me as we build ideas through collaboration with a collective, not through isolation. Not being able to engage with my teams and clients face to face on a daily has been a rather painful experience for me. This coupled with a slew of campaign postponements and cancellations that have left the future looking rather uncertain.

While we navigate this new normal, I have realised that this crisis has forced us to be a lot more creative. From how we choose to connect with colleagues on a day to day whether it's through Zoom, BlueJeans, and Whatsapp groups. Or how we reshape campaigns for clients through the innovative use of platforms that don't require us to be together.

As the old showbiz saying goes, "the show must go on" and for certain artists, brands, awards, and organisations, it certainly has. Here are some insanely creative highlights that are inspiring me to keep the show going:

#OnlineQuarantineParty

If you weren't living under a rock this past weekend you probably heard about the #OnlineQuarantineParty. Artists have been amongst the hardest hit during the Covid-19 crisis, with many seeing their bookings dry up as major events are cancelled.

This hasn't dampened their spirits though and the #OnlineQuarantineParty hosted by DJ Shimza is an exciting initiative that promises to keep Mzansi entertained! The party was streamed on live on Facebook from Shimza's home studio and

featured a lineup of some of South Africa's biggest artists including Scorpion Kings DJ Maphorisa and Kabza De Small, Black Motion, DJ Zihle and Shimza. Major brands like MTV Base also jumped onto the party streamed it to their audience of 6 million on Facebook.

“ [#QuarantineOnlineParty https://t.co/beNmWJNoVE](https://t.co/beNmWJNoVE)— SHIMZA (@Shimza01) [March 21, 2020](#) ”

Bookmark Awards go digital

One of the most prestigious awards for digital marketers in South Africa digitised their Annual Bookmark Awards ceremony. The Bookmarks are usually a glamorous affair celebrating the country's most digitally savvy marketers however this year IAB SA, the award's organisers, were forced to cancel to minimise the health risk to attendees. True to their digital nature, they decided to celebrate their winners across IAB SA social platforms with winners enthusiastically engaging with their pages as awards were announced.



#Bookmarks2020: Shining, shimmering and splendid

Jessica Tennant 20 Mar 2020



#MTVUnpluggedAtHome

MTV is a household name here at home and around the world and often partners with brands and artists helping their music and message reach millions across the continent. In the wake of the coronavirus the network's mother brand, ViacomCBS Networks Africa, has introduced the #AloneTogether campaign to promote safety and unity in the coronavirus era.

As part of the campaign, they have introduced #MTVUnpluggedAtHome which aims to bring the biggest artists from across the globe to entertain the millions of people in quarantine and self-isolation at home. This was kicked off by mega artist Wyclef Jean who serenaded the masses on MTV Africa's Twitter page.

“ We're bringing you the biggest stars from around the Globe! Welcome to [#MTVUnpluggedAtHome](#). Listen to the legendary [@wyclef](#) perform the ORIGINAL "Hips Don't Lie" for [#MTVUnpluggedAtHome](#) [#AloneTogether](#) pic.twitter.com/hMIPpfVs9w— MTVAfrica (@MTVAfrica) [March 23, 2020](#) ”

Loeries wants to Wake the Nation

In a bold move, the Loeries wants to wake the nation. The highest honour for creatives in Africa and the Middle East is calling on creative minds to create lasting change. In what it is calling a defining "thuma mina" moment the Loeries is calling on creatives everywhere to put their problem-solving skills to use by helping those hardest hits by the Covid-19 crisis.

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On the specially created [website](#), creatives can download briefs from how to help the elderly to how to make public transport safer. They are calling on anyone and everyone to get involved from scholars to workers and brands. Through Wake the Nation, it is evident that creativity could be the very thing that gets us out of this crisis once and for all.

ABOUT MONARE MATEMA

Monare Matema is an Associate Architect at Marketing and brand consultancy DNA Brand Architects. He describes himself as the voice of the millennial in the boardroom and has a passion for ideas that have the power to change the world. His work has won him notable accolades including Best Up and coming PR professional at the 2018 PRISM Awards, an IABC Gold Quill in communication management in 2018 he currently serves as a Young Judge for the PRISM Awards 2019.

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