

Gerry Thomas, the man behind Krispy Kreme SA



By Evan-Lee Courie

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With over five years in the business, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts remains a popular brand for many South Africans. Having played directly in the 'sweet treat' category and having a clear conceptual difference, competitors are seen as few and far between. Strategic site selection has led to the establishment of 23 stores in prime locations. Krispy Kreme South Africa are keeping pace with their legislated development milestones and have since established production facilities and stores in all three metropolitan areas. Since inception, Krispy Kreme South Africa has created over 600 jobs for the community with five production facilities in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban.



Gerry Thomas, director of Krispy Kreme South Africa.

What does it take for a brand to be successful?

A brand needs to live by its values. These values need to be relevant to the brand's most important associations; namely its team members, its customers, the community and its shareholders.

For Krispy Kreme, what is that special ingredient that makes it a success?

What differentiates the brand is strict adherence to the Krispy Kreme way. These conceptual differences include the use of specialized ingredients and production methodology, the fact that doughnuts are made fresh daily and delivered to stores throughout the day.

“ The brand is about more than just doughnuts - it's about premium coffee, innovative frozen beverages and most importantly it's about an experience that touches and enhances lives, through the joy of Krispy Kreme. ”

The franchisor's dynamic approach to a global brand being able to encompass local nuances means that the South African business has flexibility within a framework to localise innovation and implement conceptual points of difference that enhance

the local operation.

The end game is to ensure that nothing less than the best is Krispy Kreme quality. Ultimately, the local operation is proudly South African, and its most asset are its 600 employees. People development is what is going to sustain the long-term success of the business. The South African business leverages Krispy Kreme global best practice and resources into training and skill development.

■ **Many businesses suffered thorough the Covid-19 storm. How and what did Krispy Kreme do?**

We moved quickly and transformed the business to align with the 'new normal'. Firstly, Krispy Kreme prioritised the safety of its team and guests. Secondly, we undertook to act with compassion and ensure as minimal as possible impact on everyone associated with the company. From here on the foundation was set to act on what we have always believed in, providing the most awesome doughnut experience imaginable. Fortunately, our omnichannel business allowed for enhanced revenue from our off-premises sales via Pick n Pay and Engen when restrictions compromised our retail store income.

■ **Could you perhaps share some insight into the marketing strategy?**

Krispy Kreme South Africa uses a bare-bones marketing strategy that relies on word-of-mouth marketing by its satisfied customers, in addition to cause marketing.

“ The customer experience is prioritised via our absolute dedication to hospitality and mission to ensure that ‘everybody deserves a happy place’ ”

. This strategy sets up our priority 'by word of mouth' marketing. Digital marketing is also a vital marketing strategy with our Krispy Kreme loyalty app and the social media community leading the digital initiative.

“ Wondering how our NEW doughnuts are decorated? Well, they are glazed choc rings, filled with a scrumptious filling, carefully hand-dipped in a milk choc dip, dusted with shimmer and gold ball sprinkles, finished off with one of the Nestlé Quality Street chocolates! [#KrispyKreme pic.twitter.com/mSiUiYFOD3](https://twitter.com/mSiUiYFOD3)— Krispy Kreme ZA (@KrispyKreme_ZA) [April 12, 2021](#) ”

Krispy Kreme's 5C's spearhead #KKCARES

1. Care

We are dedicated to bringing joy and magic moments to all South Africans, ensuring their care and safety comes first. Guests and staff truly are what matters to the brand. By being a part of the Reach for a Dream foundation, which is non-profit organisation committed to making dreams come true for children with life-threatening illnesses, really ignites our brand love! Together we have made over 60 dreams come true and look forward to many more!

2. Community

We keep community engaged, entertained, and connected with each other by encouraging sharing and tagging in their comments sections. We have increased the number of giveaways and competitions which is used to reward our fans and followers. This “amped” up the joy factor as well as giving consumers something to look forward to.

3. Confidence

Even pre-lockdown, we have always given guests the reassurance that the brand complied with the strictest hygiene standards. Understanding of preventative measures and continuous training underpinned the absolute duty of the brand to do their part in containing the effects of Covid-19. An official brand statement was released across all platforms. Together with the use of influencers, the brand created a wider reach to audiences to assure guests that strict precautions are in place.

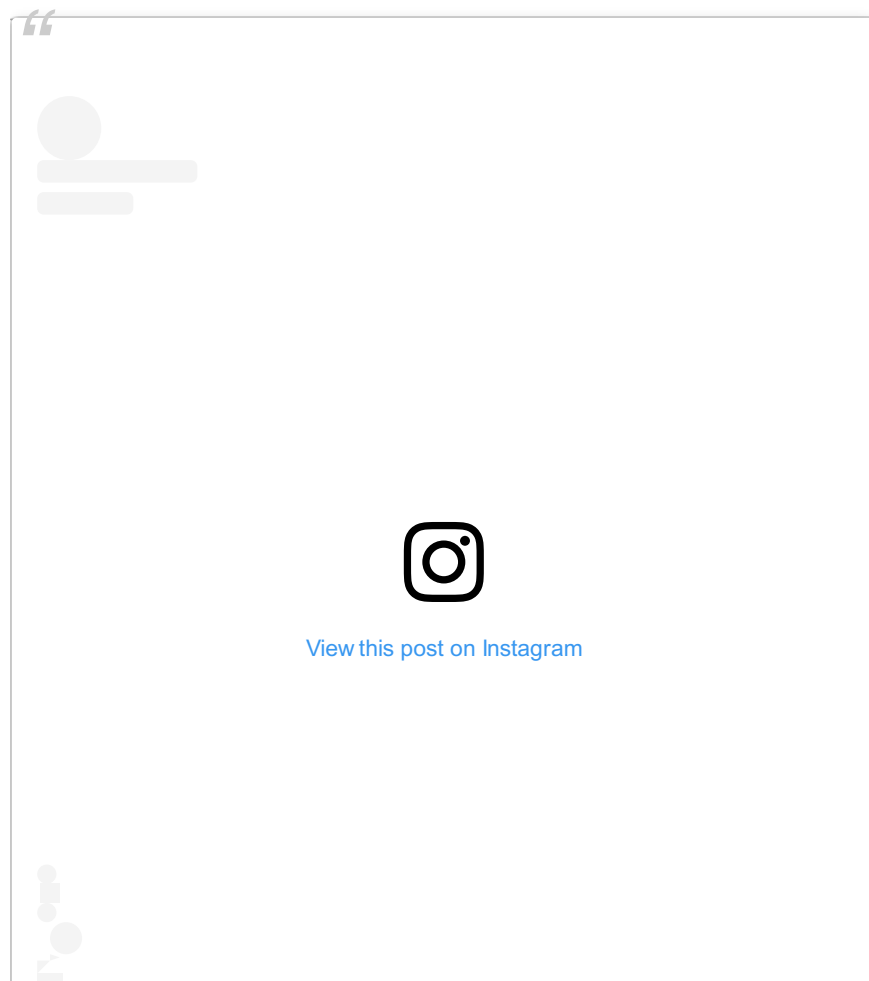
4. Convenience

With guests social distancing, self-isolating and in quarantine, we provided the convenience of purchasing doughnuts through mini locations, UberEATS and Mr D Food. We have also incorporated a contactless payment solution through our app, where guests can load their card details and simply scan their phone and pay in-store via the app

5. Consistency

As lockdown has disrupted the income of many consumers and heightened their need for real value, ‘trust and respect’ have become non-negotiable qualities in brands that consumers choose to support. Throughout the disruptions of lockdown, we assured guests that they can expect the same level of joy, magic, and quality that the brand has been renowned for, whether it be through their product or social media community engagement.

Our goal is to use our unlimited passion and knowledge to create a fun filled magical experience, by serving craveable doughnuts, premium coffee at value for money and accessible to all.



A post shared by Krispy Kreme South Africa (@krispykreme_za)

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🇿🇦 **What does the future of the Krispy Kreme look like?**

Within the next five years, we plan to establish doughnut production facilities and stores in the metropolitan areas where there is currently no brand representation. We will continue on the trajectory of growing an omni channel business adhering to our value of always considering others and generating 'sweet returns'.

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

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