

An open letter to Facebook from a very frustrated marketer

 By [Sarah Britten](#)

6 Nov 2023

Dear Mark Zuckerberg, I am writing an open letter to you because I am South African, and we like writing open letters. It's just part of what we do, like winning Rugby World Cups.



Source: © 123rf [123rf](#) Sarah Britten's frustration has led to an open letter to Facebook

I would very much like to spend some of my marketing budget with you. But I won't, because Facebook aka Meta won't let me change the name of my client's page and won't tell me why either.

And I'm certainly not going to invest precious budget in promoting a brand that no longer exists.

My client is a community radio station. We are small, and we would like to grow.

"Computer says no"

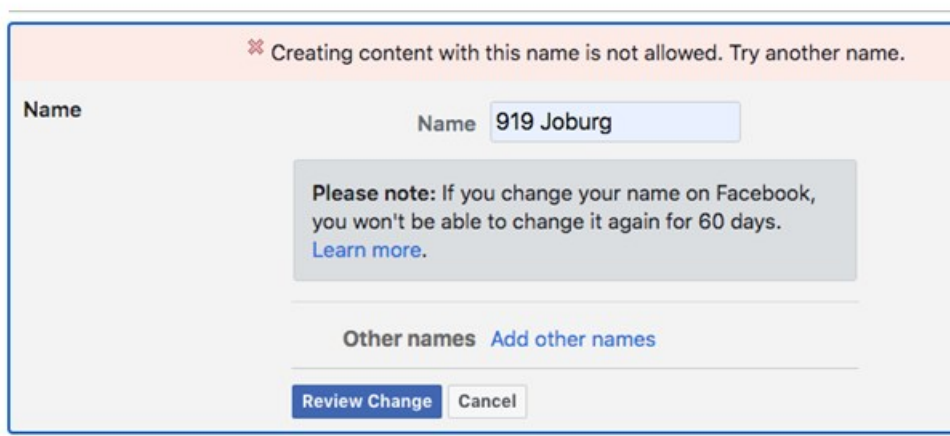
Advertising on Facebook would make a lot of sense for us, because we want to target people within our broadcast footprint, and Facebook is great for local and hyperlocal targeting.

In August this year, we changed the name of our brand from Star919FM to 919.

I managed to change our Facebook url, but not our page name.

No matter how many times I try, I get the same response, which looks like this:

General Page settings



✖ Creating content with this name is not allowed. Try another name.

Name

Please note: If you change your name on Facebook, you won't be able to change it again for 60 days. [Learn more.](#)

Other names [Add other names](#)

[Review Change](#) [Cancel](#)

Username <https://www.facebook.com/feel919>

“Computer says no,” to quote Carol from *Little Britain*.

It seems that we are Star FM on Facebook, and always and forever shall be.

”I want to cry and scream

There is no query button to click on. Nobody to ask for help.

When I did the obvious thing and sounded out the Facebook social media group I’ve been part of for donkey’s years, they told me that your Bryanston offices are a shell with a security guard and no one else.

“I want to cry and scream,” to quote someone who works in the same industry and has the same problem.

She mentioned chaining herself to a chair to try and get results, but she’s not hopeful, and neither am I.



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Reputational damage to client

This is causing reputational damage to my client, through no fault of our own.

When we try to explain, we sound like we're making excuses.

As we all know, Facebook is the biggest social media platform in South Africa, with the possible exception of WhatsApp.

You make a lot of money out of us. It makes no sense that you'd put in place some arbitrary rule to frustrate the very people you rely on for your millions.

For a platform that supposedly makes it easy to access anyone, anywhere, you certainly value opacity and intransigence when it comes to your own organisation.

Light at the end of the tunnel

It seems there might be a light at the end of this particular tunnel. It turns out that you have partner agencies who can help.

I've messaged one of them on LinkedIn, and another social media professional on Facebook has kindly tagged someone who might be able to help.

I'm choosing to feel positive, like the liners on my radio station client remind listeners who are battling potholes and loadshedding and drivers who don't know how to use traffic circles.

But it shouldn't get to this stage.

Screaming and tearing out our hair in sheer frustration shouldn't be part of it.



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Make using your platform better

In my industry, we spend so much time talking about customer experience and user journeys and how to make it better, and yet the 800-pound gorilla in our marketing landscape can do what it likes.

Spend money with us, you seem to be saying, but we won't lift a finger to help.

So, here's a solution: tell us who to ask for help and where to go. Make using your platform better. Make it easier for us to spend money with you to build our brands and our businesses.

Please.

ABOUT SARAH BRITTEN

Dr Sarah Britten has 21 years of experience across various clients and multiple strategic disciplines, including social media and shopper. Her client experience includes Nedbank, Investec, FNB, Bothongo Group, Sanofi, Colgate Palmolive, Aspen, Adcock Ingram, Kraft Heinz, Citroën and Land Rover.

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