

What What a successful Kasi campaign

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An old granny who I respectfully refer to as gogo has no teeth; when she talks her bottom lip folds inward over her gums, and because of this she lisps and spits a little. When she is excited, like now, her lisps sound like a snake hissing under her words.

"At kisimusi, Christmas, it is so wonderful," she lisps. "We all gather at the community hall, the stokvel group and our families, a huge truck like that one" - she points to a Coke truck unloading at a spaza - "loads our groceries and we split them between us. There are 25 of us, you know." She holds up two fingers on one hand and five on the other to emphasise this. "We save seventy-five touzand over the year."

Stokvels' power and allure to their members is the social connectedness it gives each member. The protection of group assistance, the social fun of the stokvel meeting where members gossip and feast and laugh together. They fulfil a social benefit first, and a financial one second. Any offering to this sector needs to consider this and find ways of satisfying both elements.

"How do you communicate with each other?" I ask my old lady with no teeth.

"Iwhatwhat," she replies.

"What what?"

I am confused so she fishes her cheap Android smartphone out from between her sagging breasts. Holding it away from her face so she can see the screen with her failing eyesight she fiddles with it and then pushes it towards me.

It's WhatsApp, the messaging service, the WhatsApp group at the top of the phone screen called 'stokfela'. I am astounded. If her grandchild was using it that would make sense but not an illiterate seventy-year-old granny.

"It's wonderful, you should try it," she suggests to me. "I have the whole stokvel on there and we just send one message and it goes to the whole stokvel."

Refiloe Rantekoa grew up in White City, one of the toughest and poorest suburbs of Soweto, epitomised by concrete-roofed homes that look like air raid bunkers. In 2016, Refiloe started baking loaves of bread from his tiny backroom in White City. At first, business was slow, so Refiloe set up a Facebook Lite page for the bakery and invited customers to WhatsApp their "ipini" and their orders from the Facebook page WhatsApp link. Using WhatsApp, Refiloe started getting more and more orders, six loaves here, two there, and more and more streets started buying his bread. Then the kota outlets started ordering on WhatsApp. Within 18 months Borotho Bakery was baking and selling hundreds of loaves a day. When lockdown happened all his business moved onto his Facebook Lite & WhatsApp platforms. "We now have orders as far as Rockville, even Dube, so the guys walk about 10, even 15 kilometres, a day." Orders still flood in via WhatsApp and the trolleys rattle up and down the tiny kasi streets selling or delivering.

GG Alcock founder of Kasinomics noted that "we have noticed the astonishing growth of Facebook lite as a landing page for township businesses. Nowadays almost every kasi hair salon, tavern, kasi kos fast food outlet, bakery even the odd spaza shop has a Facebook page and a link to WhatsApp orders or enquiries. Ipini or pin locations are sent, and local deliveries are done by runner, cyclist or battered motorbike. Kasi e-commerce business Yebo Fresh which supplies bulk stock items to spaza shops has even moved their e-commerce site to WhatsApp, based on our insights and has gained massive traction as a result."

Kasinomics believes that the WhatsApp platform is the future of e-commerce and group communication and has partnered very successfully with technology enabler, Mobitainment, a specialist in mobile and particularly WhatsApp marketing. The Kasinomics and Mobitainment collaboration has resulted in two highly successful kasi marketing campaigns.

The loyalty-focused Supreme Business Bakers campaign targets kasi bakeries and vetkoek sellers, where thousands of kasi bakeries have been signed up on a WhatsApp enabled database. Today bakeries share pics of their till slips of Supreme flour purchases which the WhatsApp platform interprets and awards loyalty points to the outlets. In addition, baking tips and tricks, bakers' business tips and much more are shared with kasi Supreme Business Bakers.

The other campaign is the multi-award winning Amstel The Entrepreneur, "I AMSTEL Building Ik'sasa Lami" (my future) campaign. The Amstel The Entrepreneur created a unique value proposition focused on township and community-based entrepreneurs, overlooked by most. This initiative funds and invests in kasipreneurs' marketing and business skills, which are critical, yet not often supported. This campaign initially focused on Gauteng only, and aimed at the youth in townships with a kasipreneur competition aimed at the upliftment of Kasi entrepreneurs.

The competition was open to all adults to nominate and then vote via WhatsApp for businesses they know of in their hood. WhatsApp was instrumental in maximising the reach within the youth target audience, with its low use of data and its reach that promoted inclusivity to bridge the digital divide and so created an online community of aspiring youth.

Mobitainment CEO Candice Goodman explained why WhatsApp: "It was critical to connect traditional media like local radio and print with a simple mobile call to action, like an easy-to-communicate vanity "click me" to WhatsApp. WhatsApp created a frictionless path for their target audience from digital media like social media and web articles, to the nominations mechanic to collect the amount of data needed to enforce the eligibility of the businesses according to the Terms and conditions of the campaign."

Technology, specifically, the humble mobile phone was the connector of these two parties, the brand to the kasi community. A minimum of an entry-level smartphone with WhatsApp was needed and was instrumental to maximising the reach and engagement with the youth target audience, with its low use of data and its reach that promoted inclusivity to bridge the digital divide.

The conversational nature of the business-branded WhatsApp chatbot streamlined the collection of loads of data needed from the nominations so that the judges could easily evaluate, identify and contact the top 40 businesses to visit them in-person to then shortlist the top 20.

The Top 20 kasipreneurs then had an opportunity to do a pitch for their business on community radio in order to gain votes with the top 12 voted kasipreneurs going into the finals. The Voting chatbot on WhatsApp outlined the Top 20 businesses with a rich-media interface showcasing their logo (image), business profile (text) and radio interview (audio), allowing the voters to make a very educated decision that was enabled with one tap on their phones.

Results were available in real-time to create buzz and hype on radio for the business at the top of the leaderboard of each radio station. Conversational marketing on WhatsApp enabled voting for The Amstel Entrepreneur, by the people, for the people!



The Amstel The Entrepreneur campaign, was very successful generating an increase in Amstel's Brand Power Score and contributing to increased sales volume growth over the campaign period.

The Amstel The Entrepreneur campaign run by [Kasinomics](#) and [Mobitainment](#) has received multiple awards:

- At the inaugural [Bar & Beverage Awards](#) the award for the Best CSI Campaign
- At the [New Generation Awards](#) 2 Bronze Awards (Best Online Competition & Mobile Marketing Excellence) and a Gold (Best Community Engagement Award)
- A Gold Award from the prestigious [Assegai Awards](#) for the Food & Beverage Category, as well as a Leader award for Shared Value. The Assegai Awards Acknowledge and Award those whose Integrated Marketing campaigns deliver exceptional, quantifiable results, and a focus on return on investment.

What What does this all mean?

In the Amstel The Entrepreneur Top 4 winning entrepreneurs' own words:

- [iTaxi Ubuntu App](#) "Our business has gone from few daily trips to over 400+ active daily users"
- [Mr Bartender](#) "The association with the Amstel brand has made my business more reputable and credible in conjunction with our now consistent marketing and advertising efforts... it has had a huge contribution to our revenue growth".
- [LebzCafe'](#) "With our voice reaching over 1.5 million people through social media campaign, we are now recognised and distinguished by our new tag line "Life is bitter, your coffee shouldn't be"
- [Excellence Mobile Bar](#) "When we started, we viewed this as more of a side-hustle and now together with our mentor Shugasmakx, we have the blueprints of a business."

What What made the difference and enabled **Kasinomics & Mobitainment** to build interactive, innovative and award-winning mobile campaigns on WhatsApp reaching and connecting with kasi audiences and gaining brand traction and connectedness. What What a successful Kasi Campaign, Halala!

Watch Amstel The Entrepreneur Case Video:

About the Author: GG Alcock

GG Alcock is the author of among other books Kasinomic Revolution, and a thought leader and commentator on the trends and dynamics of the informal economies & societies which make up the majority of South Africa. GG's business Kasinomics an advisory service providing insights, strategies, route to market and consumer marketing to the informal and kasi consumer and business sectors.

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