

Vodafone announces global brand relaunch

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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Today, 6 October, Vodafone made a global announcement across all of its markets that it is relaunching its brand positioning, which marks the biggest relaunch it's had in its 33-year history. What's changed is the strategy positioning of the brand, its strapline and pay-off line, and its visual identity.



Nyimpini Mabunda

“It’s a momentous occasion for Vodafone, which is our parent company,” says Nyimpini Mabunda, chief officer of the Consumer Business Unit at Vodacom Group Limited. “It’s quite a significant change. We have had ‘power to you’ since 2009, and in South Africa this will be the third time that we’re changing.”

With that comes one of the biggest campaigns they’ve done, which launched globally today, with local executions in the various markets. South Africa was one of the top five (out of 14) markets within the Vodafone network chosen to develop the new positioning and tasked with localising the campaign to ensure that it resonates with as many markets as possible. The brand positioning strategy was developed after a period of extensive research and concept testing, including quantitative and qualitative inputs from more than 17,000 people in 10 countries. Additionally, advertising concepts were tested with more than 10,000 people in 17 countries.

As a result, the new positioning simply reads:



“The pay-off line is actually ‘ready’ with a question mark, and the pretext to it, which is the context for readiness, is ‘the future is exciting’,” explained Mabunda, who went on to explain the thinking around this:

“What we’re saying is that there’s reason to be optimistic. In the short term there’s anxiety around the world, particularly with the youth, with what’s happening with the economy, politics, and so on. Technological advancement and digital breakthrough is creating a level of optimism that we haven’t seen in a long time, and people are expecting technology to contribute quite positively to their lives and to add value to the quality of life in general.”

I interviewed Mabunda to find out more...

■ ***Talk us through the evolution of Vodafone’s brand positioning.***

The brand reposition is part of aligning with our business strategy and vision 2020, which CEO Shameel Joosub outlined during the last financial results. Vodacom’s strategy adapts as consumer needs change and our brand identity is part of this evolution.

Our new brand positioning reflects our commitment to support customers and their communities adapt and prosper as exciting technology trends emerge. At the same time, we’ve updated our visual identity to reflect the increasing importance of digital marketing channels.

■ **What are some of the things the new brand position speaks to?**

This is a long-term repositioning of our brand. At a time of widespread public anxiety about the future, we think it's important to emphasise that many of the technological innovations anticipated over the next 20 years will have a profoundly positive impact for everyone.

- One of the innovations we are experimenting with is a voice authentication system. This means shorter call times and potentially a reduction in identity fraud.
- In Europe, there are already a lot of interesting concepts being explored such as the Vodafone Smart Bikini which will tell you when it is time to get out of the sun. This could be relevant for the South African market and something we can look into with enough consumer demand.
- We have also recently launched the Connected Farmer. Vodacom's Connected Farmer aims to assist in providing farmers with the services they need through the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, enhanced productivity and, most importantly, risk reduction.
- Sourcing from smallholder farmers as a result becomes more realistic and executable for food manufacturers and retail businesses, increasing the number of smallholders and subsistence farmers in commercial agricultural value chains. This has been proven in the deployment of the Connected Farmer platform in East Africa.

■ **What's the objective?**

The objective is to support and help our customers embrace new technologies and the possibilities of the future. There's so much to look forward to! For example, according to Futerra (the research commissioned by Vodafone), with breakthroughs in artificial intelligence (AI), machines will increasingly support human intelligence. AI will become the ultimate personal assistant, anticipating our needs to help us spend less time doing menial tasks. Our personal digital assistants will manage more complicated tasks too, such as anticipating our needs, protecting our time, monitoring our health, even helping us avoid problems, and stay safe. In the medium- to long-term, we can also anticipate major innovation around healthcare and education, as they become more immersive, using technologies like virtual, augmented and mixed reality.

■ **What's next?**

We believe there are very good reasons to be optimistic about the future as emerging innovations in science and technology begin to have a profoundly positive impact on society. Vodacom has a long and proud history of bringing new technologies to hundreds of millions of people, enhancing quality of life and transforming the workplace. Our brand positioning is intended to embody that mission and purpose to help our customers adapt and prosper as these remarkable trends reshape the world.

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