

Albany Bread Girl joy sours to disappointment for content creator and brands

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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Photographer Lungisani Mjaji, who captured a beautiful picture of his niece, smiling and holding a loaf of Albany bread that went viral last year has hit out at the brand on social media, despite acknowledging that he had no agreement with Albany in a subsequent article in [Sunday World](#).



Source: © Lungisa Mjaji [TheGoodThingsGuy](#) Photographer Lungisani Mjaji, who captured this beautiful picture of his niece Lethukukhanya Mjaji, smiling and holding a loaf of Albany bread that went viral last year has hit out at the brand on social media

In the article, he also admits that he granted Albany a right to repost on their social media platforms "as he hoped it would open the door for them to work with him".

"I couldn't say no, because I was in the process of negotiating for a compensation package for the child."

Commenting on the post, Tiger Brands says while it reshared the beautiful image of a young girl taken by her uncle, talented and aspiring photographer Lungisani Mjaji, "It is important to note that this project was not a Tiger Brands initiated or commissioned project or campaign. Furthermore, neither Tiger Brands nor Albany made use of the photograph for advertising purposes."

In the *Sunday World* article, Mjaji states, "I do not want to say the Albany people used my niece or my work for their gain. But they reposted the pictures on their social media platforms. Yes, they do not owe us anything because we had no agreement. But a token of appreciation, especially for the child, would have greatly helped."

Miss Albany or the Albany Bread Girl

Last year [Bizcommunity](#), and many other media, reported on Mjaji's photographs of Lethukukhanya Mjaji holding a loaf of Albany bread on TikTok which were viewed over a million times online.

The public loved the photograph so much, they called Lethukukhanya, Miss Albany or the Albany Bread Girl. Albany also picked up on her popularity and shared Mjaji's TikTok video of the shoot with his niece on its Love Albany Bread page on Facebook.

The [South African](#) reported that Bokomo offered a year's supply of cornflakes to Lethukukhanya Mjaji aka Miss Albany's family.



Miss Albany, the image of joy, shows the power of social media

Danette Breitenbach 17 Jul 2023



That Albany brand

Now the joy has been taken out of the story for Mjaji who tweeted that neither he nor his niece received any compensation from “that Albany thing”.

“ We received no compensation from that Albany thing. Let's dispel the notion that we gained anything from it. We've moved on, we're creating, and I trust that God will guide our path. I'll personally support the child with what little I have.

"Ubuntu abusekho"— Lungisani Mjaji (@MjajiLungisani) [April 2, 2024](#) ”

Mjaji says that because Albany employees came to their home, it was assumed that the brand would provide financial compensation. But, he says, “ Those are employees who, out of the goodness of their hearts gave us five loaves of bread, blankets and a gas stove.”

Tiger Brands explains that "Albany branch managers then visited the family and brought a gas stove for Mjaji's grandmother, blankets, lunch boxes and hampers for his niece and other children in the area who often help him with his photography".

Responsible Marketing Policy

In a subsequent meeting with the brand, he says they told him his photographs do not align with the brand.

“The pictures did not display signs of health, according to them. I understood that as them associating rural areas with poverty. And I assumed that their target market was someone from Sandton,” he says in *Sunday World*. He adds that they also discussed the portrayal of children in the media.

Tiger Brands confirmed that members of the Albany and Tiger Brands marketing leadership team met with Mjaji where they

also explained the Responsible Marketing Policy as it relates to the portrayal of children.

"As the producer of the Albany brand, Tiger Brands is a member of the Advertising Regulatory Body (ARB) of South Africa which calls for responsible marketing practices and covers aspects of marketing to children as well as the portrayal of children in advertising. Tiger Brands' commitment to fair and ethical marketing practices is also underlined in its Responsible Marketing Policy, which includes guidelines for portraying children in advertising to safeguard their rights."

Dual responses

Response to Mjaji's tweet has been met with criticism of the brand.

“ Shameful [@LoveAlbanyBread](#) Extremely disappointed in you guys! A little love and compensation and inclusion in your internal and external campaigns is the actual impact you seek to achieve! This wasn't even going to hurt your budget! Do the right thing— Unathi Masonwabe Nolufefe Twala (@NdinguUnathi) [April 2, 2024](#) ”

But some say the brand owes Mjaji nothing.

“ Kodwa Lungi Albany doesn't owe you. This wasn't a paid campaign. I believe they were just cornered by social media— kenna Precious (@JustPrecious_dj) [April 2, 2024](#) ”

No year supply of Bokomo cornflakes

In the *Sunday World* article Mjaji also took on Bokomo and their promise of a year's supply of cornflakes did not materialise.

"I'm just over brands and their empty promises. After that, Clover gave us milk to use with the Bokomo cereal. But to this day, we never received anything from Bokomo, and I've stopped enquiring," says Mjaji.

However, in response, in the same *Sunday World* article, Bokomo confirms that they had promised Mjaji a year's supply of cornflakes. However, things changed when he requested financial support.

"We reached out to the photographer solely to show appreciation for his artistic skill. And voluntarily, we offered the family a year's supply of cornflakes. The photographer requested financial support relevant to the child's education. Something which we were not able to consider."

Whichever side you take, this case demonstrates what happens when a brand and content creator's expectations do not match up or are not met. It shows why brands and content creators need to ensure that both parties fully understand what they are giving and what they are receiving in turn.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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