

Huggies new market leader as South Africans embrace growing nappy brand

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In a rare achievement for a brand in the firmly established South African nappy market, challenger brand Huggies® has been able to unseat the long-time market leader to become the leading nappy brand in South Africa.*

This milestone is the culmination of a seven-year process by Huggies® with its agency, Ogilvy Johannesburg.

Morné van Emmenes, Marketing Manager in the Kimberly-Clark Baby Care Category, said the growth in market share was due to understanding customer needs, putting them first and delivering effectively.

“Unseating a market leader is an incredible achievement, and something that doesn’t often happen in South Africa, with our concentrated consumer markets,” said Van Emmenes. “We’ve achieved this by taking a consistent, long-term approach to the nappy category and basing our decisions on the needs of South African moms and babies.”

“Despite South Africa’s diversity, every parent wants the best for their baby,” he said. “We do our best to deliver that, by making sure there is a high-quality Huggies® nappy to suit the needs of every baby in South Africa. Once that’s in place, we make sure communications and brand story is clear and that our products are available where moms expect to find them.”

Van Emmenes also credited the brand’s long, open partnership with Ogilvy for achieving this great milestone with Huggies® in South Africa. He cited the relationship as a clear understanding of client needs, met with award-winning creative generating clear, measurable results.

“We take great care to ensure our messaging resonates with South African moms, and testament to this are the awards we’ve won on several of our campaigns,” said Van Emmenes. “While those were well deserved, our campaigns deliver against business objectives, one in particular generating sales improvement of up to 27% at a time, which all helped getting us closer to that number-one position.”

One such campaign was the highly successful Huggies Baby Marathon campaign, which saw four cute babies fitted with distance-tracking devices and completing 21km over seven days, testament to the strength and quality of their Huggies nappies. It won numerous awards, including a Grand Prix at the Loeries for creativity and a Grand Prix for effectiveness at the Apex Awards.

Eloise Kelly, MD of Ogilvy Joburg, said trust between client and agency was the secret to a successful partnership.

“When an agency truly understands client objectives, and client is comfortable that you get it, the client will take your advice, and let you run with your ideas,” said Kelly. “This is when you get the most creative, most effective work, and we see brands gaining market share, as Huggies have done. We are proud of what they’ve achieved, and we thank them for letting us work on their brand for the past 15-plus years.”



The Kimberly-Clark team that took the Huggies brand to the top of the pile in the nappy category was led by Marketing Director John Clark, Marketing Manager Morné van Emmenes, and team of Senior Brand Managers Caitlin Meredith, Simamkele Madikane and Kgothatso Radebe.

The Ogilvy team was led by Catherine Wanliss (CD) and Tanya Taylor (GAD).

“There is certainly a high level of trust at the core of our relationship with the Ogilvy team,” said Van Emmenes. “Their commitment, advice and decision-making goes beyond the usual agency partnership. They are fellow custodians of the Huggies® brand.”

**Data Source: Nielsen Market Data, March 2020*

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