

Currey on female-led FMCG retail advertising

 By Leigh Andrews

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Think of your favourite local fresh food advertising, like that of Food Lover's Market and FreshStop, and chances are the brand work was created by the fittingly named Lisa Currey, managing director of Hamiltons Advertising. Here's a taste of her business success.

It takes a canny mix of risk-taking, luck and an innate sense of what's bang on trend to grow a business in the rapidly evolving world of FMCG retail and advertising.



That's just what Lisa Currey has done with Hamiltons Advertising, which has been in the advertising industry for over 20 years. Currey's initial background was in graphic design, but fast realising her love of working on the client service side, she studied marketing and soon moved through the agency ranks from designer to account director. As she thrives on marketing a product, seeing the end results of a campaign and nurturing client relationships by understanding their needs, she soon found herself constantly striving to deliver beyond expectation. Upon realising she could only get all of this done if she did it herself, she took the bold leap of resigning, then gathered great people around her, many of whom are still with her today, and with huge amounts of passion and determination and very little money, opened Hamiltons Advertising.

Currey has since built the business from a fledgling agency specialising in retail fashion, to one of the foremost FMCG retail agencies in South Africa, affectionately known as the 'Hamfam' – see those food references keep coming! Now, with the current economic climate tough on business owners and *women*trepreneurs hesitant about grabbing the opportunities and starting their own businesses, who better to share tips on making a success of your own passion project?

Fresh produce deserves fresh advertising

While she wouldn't single out a specific moment as an overall career highlight, Currey says there've been many amazing successes over the years and that she's exceptionally proud of the fact that Hamiltons has been able to retain South Africa's leading fresh produce retail brand, the Food Lover's Market Group, as a client since almost inception, and it excites her to see how the brand has evolved and where it's going.

For example, Hamiltons helps Food Lover's Market to stage their spectacular in-house conference each year, where everyone involved in the company has the chance to network, listen to inspiring speakers and discuss the way forward for

the brand. As 2016 is an Olympic year, Hamiltons created team-centric banners to drive home the theme for this year's conference and created a number of inspiring short films that showcased in Food Lover's Market's latest innovations, all a resounding success.

Another example of Hamiltons' love of doing things in new and innovative ways that motivates the Hamfam to get up each morning and hit the ground running is the worldclass interior and exterior signage they created for the beautiful new Food Lover's Eatery concept store that opened in the landmark Towers building in Cape Town's CBD towards the end of 2015.

View the showreel embedded below for a stronger feel for Hamiltons' work – warning, it'll leave you hungry and inspired:

It's clean, simple and lets the produce speak for itself. Currey predicts local or homegrown will continue to be a major trend for retail of 2016 and beyond. There will also be a more urgent move towards emotive, storytelling-type campaigns as consumers educate themselves and become more interested about the origins of the products they purchase. "In fresh produce retail, communities, farmers, growers and speaking directly to the consumer is more important than ever. The focus will continue to be about finding out what their needs are and making sure the brand more than satisfies."

The female purchase decision-maker

For clients, obviously it's about adding value. More than a trend, Currey says this should be a way forward for the industry. "Rather than just the concept and the execution, more than offering the best price, it's about giving the customer more than they expected – whether its recipe development, or ideas via cross-merchandising and communication. It's about becoming more convenient, proactive and accessible. At the heart of your client relationship, it should be about making life easier, as we all have less time in which to do things.

While Currey took the time to follow her own business dream and make a success of it, she says it's easy to emulate: You just need the right attitude and opportunity to do so.

"In this modern era, the glass ceiling in advertising is well and truly broken and there's no limit to the career successes that you, as a woman, can achieve. I firmly believe that hard work, a great work ethic, passion and determination is what wins the day – not your gender."

Currey reiterates that it should by no means be seen as a man's world out there. Instead, as creatives and clients alike, we need to consider the fact that women offer so much value to the workplace in terms of their perspective and understanding. "Women often bring unique insight into the creative space with their ability to empathise and understand the day-to-day rigours of being a professional, a mum, a friend and a family member." Insight when brainstorming a new idea or product

in the food and retail industry, where women have such a big influence on purchasing decisions, is also invaluable.



Put yourself in your consumer's shoes and you'll soon see what's lacking and where your business can step in to fill a gap. [Click here](#) for more on Hamiltons Advertising.

The Hamiltons Advertising staff pic.

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ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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