

# DStv gets a gold for its top Olympics coverage



By [Brendan Seery](#)

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It wasn't old Wayde van Niekerk's triumph that had me glued to DStv over the past fortnight - I have rediscovered the fascinating, multifaceted world of international sport and have been watching events I never would normally dream on wasting time on - gymnastics, archery, shooting, even the lesser attractive field events like women's discus.

SuperSport has done a great job of bringing everything into my living room and for that it deserves an Orchid.

However, what it did really well was a series of ads about our South African athletes, which has got many people talking.

I missed the one featuring the previous Olympic rowing medal winners – colleagues said it was awesome – but I did catch the one done with silver medal swimmer Cameron van den Burgh and his parents and his girlfriend.

It was shot, reality-style, allowing all three of them to speak, from the heart, about one of our top performers. And, it was tough. These years and years of getting up long before 5am, the triple-daily training sessions... the dedication.

It was the scene of his father, wishing him but choking with emotion which almost brought a tear to my very cynical eye. The best was that DStv resisted the temptation to do any gaudy marketing of specific programming, which would have ruined the poignancy.

Very sensitive, but also the sort of marketing I would like to see more of: responsible and caring.

Also, it showed the brand in the background as a facilitator, bringing a customer something extra. Thanks for that DStv, and an Orchid to you.



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Absa is trying to show everybody, in its new TV ad for its online banking services, how clever its technology is. But what would worry me is that whoever put it together and approved it has no real idea of the web and what its clever words actually mean.

So we see a cute little robot playing around with someone and showing that it loves the bank's new online system. The punchline is something along the lines of: the online banking system loved by people "and bots".

Now, here's a brief lesson for Absa: On the internet, where your high-touted system will be working, the term "bots" does not refer to cute little, benign electronic helpers. A bot is an automated script or programme which goes about its work automatically.

Of course, bots are supposedly neither good nor bad – they just are. However, the reality is that many of them are malign, perhaps even part of "malware", which can invade and infect a computer or, more critically, automatically harvest your data from your machine while you are blissfully unaware it is doing its thing.

So to say your online banking system is loved by bots implies to me – and to quite a few geeks I know – that the malign code writers will have a field day with it.

When you put out a marketing communication message that can be misinterpreted or, worse, means the opposite of what you are trying to say, it is bad marketing.

So, Absa, pick up your byte-sized Onion.

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## ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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