

Mondstuk van die Suid-Afrikaanse aartappelbedryf • Mouthpiece of the South African potato industry

CHIPS

VOL 36 NO 1 • JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2022

**OOS-VRYSTAATSE STANDPROEF
ONDER AANVULLENDE
BESPROEIING IN REITZ**

**THE POTATO LEAF MINER:
ORIGIN OF THE FIRST FLY
INFESTATIONS OF THE SEASON**

Tegnologiese ontwikkeling: | Effect of fungicide application | Engagement with New Era
Gebruik van QR-kodes | on potato cultivars at Cedara | farmers in Limpopo

Peeling the true essence of PSA's generic promotion efforts

By Immaculate Zinde, Potatoes SA

Every human being on this planet is in one way or another engaged in marketing. Whether it is to capture the attention of an audience at a speaking event or convincing a panel of interviewers for a potential job – we all take conscious actions to arouse interest for a desired outcome to be achieved. As such, marketing, and ultimately promotion, is not a futile, fruitless or thoughtless exercise. It is intentional.

It is acknowledged that for the 4Ps of marketing – place, price, product and promotion – to work in an organisation's favour, it must produce a product or render a service for which there is a need, it must be made available at prices that consumers can afford or are prepared to pay, and it must be easily accessible. Last but not least, product/service awareness is of paramount importance. How else will consumers choose a product/service if they do not know about it, its features and benefits, and its extrinsic rewards?

About PSA's marketing division

The National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) regards generic promotion as activities carried out to create awareness of a commodity. Coincidentally, the marketing division of Potatoes SA (PSA) describes its strategic mission as to inform, educate and inspire. Indeed, it is the mission of PSA marketing to communicate with targeted consumers in a compelling manner to impart product facts and information, educate and inspire consumers to select potatoes as their number one food commodity.

To this end, all PSA marketing campaigns are carried out with

the intent of stimulating demand. PSA's marketing communication is disseminated through the promotional mixed elements of above-the-line advertising, public relations, digital marketing and regional sporting events.

Above-the-line advertising

Between July and December 2021, PSA launched a mass media campaign on radio and television to elevate the Farm to Fork Initiative. The commercials were flighted on SABC 1 and SABC 2 as well as on Metro FM, Kaya FM, OFM and Jacaranda FM.

The marketing communication is gaining traction and being well received. In the very first focus group commissioned to measure the efficacy of above-the-line advertising, the respondents listed the distinctive attributes of PSA's television and radio commercials as follows:

- Recognition for the potato industry.
- The nutritional value of potatoes.
- That it is a South African product.
- An increased appreciation for potatoes.
- An increased appreciation for producers.
- Being proud to have potatoes as part of their diet.

Public relations

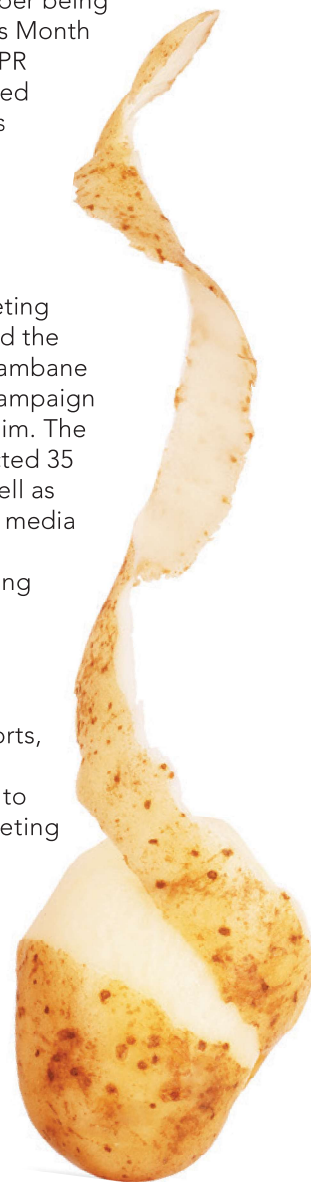
Without the many public relations (PR) efforts PSA has initiated over the years, it would be impossible to build good relations with the public, especially the consumer and media as primary stakeholders in all marketing efforts.

Market research conducted by the Heart and Stroke Foundation

South Africa revealed that year-on-year, products with the Heart Mark endorsement grow in popularity, and the Heart Mark is a sought-after logo. Since 2017, potatoes have been endorsed as a heart-healthy vegetable when cooked with skin on, prepared correctly, and dressed in quality herbs and spices.

With September being Heart Awareness Month in South Africa, PR efforts were aimed at flagging PSA's endorsement during the months of September and October 2021. The marketing division launched the #WeHeartAmazambane PR and digital campaign to positive acclaim. The campaign attracted 35 broadcasts as well as print and online media exposure worth R920 000, reaching just over three million South Africans.

Without effective PR efforts, PSA would not have been able to elevate its marketing communication message to a wider audience. In many respects, all PR efforts have augmented and backed



generic promotion efforts, thereby strengthening its success rate.

Digital marketing

Over the years, the marketing division has produced recipe, health and nutrition content that has kept its captive audience of 74 000 glued to Potato Nation's social media platforms. The division has observed growing engagement, deepened interactions and ever-growing product loyalty. It is safe to say the social currency of PSA's platforms is a melting pot of golden opportunities. The ideal is to reach 100 000 followers by the end of June 2022.

For 2022, the drive behind all PSA's digital marketing efforts will be injecting more humanity into every communication message. When all is said and done, people want to be heard, understood and genuinely cared for. This means marketing that establishes genuine, unadulterated and warm connections with identified core markets.

Someone once said: "Just be nice, take a genuine interest in the people you meet, and keep in touch with people you like. This will create a group of people who are invested in helping you because they know you and appreciate you."

Sporting events

Sporting events are a unifier. For PSA, regional sporting events will be an extension of the organisation's efforts to connect with potato lovers in key production regions. Sporting events will serve as additional marketing communication deployed to reach a wider consumer audience, using both new-age and traditional marketing tactics.

In closing

As we welcome the new year, we aim to put levies at work in a decisive, productive and valuable manner. The power and efficacy of good marketing must never be undermined.

The year 2021 was one of great firsts for the industry in respect of its marketing efforts. The year has taught the division that projects founded on research needs play an instrumental role in performance management.

The year awoke us to the resilience of the value chain. The inaugural State of the Potato Industry Address revealed and demonstrated that the potato industry is unshaken and committed to its vision of "Together towards excellence in the potato industry".

In 2021, the marketing division finally implemented the farmgate sales study with enterprise development producers in Limpopo. This collaboration with the transformation division showcases cross-divisional collaboration aimed at serving all potato producers in a manner that derives value.

The marketing division commits to unleashing greater rewards in the last six months of the 2021/2022 fiscal year through all approved and planned marketing campaigns. 

For more information on PSA's marketing initiatives, send an email to Immaculate Zinde at immaculate@potatoes.co.za.



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