



Newsletter

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The art of storytelling: What is your brand story?

By Mariam Maina-Kamau: mmaina@brand.ke

If there is one company that has mastered the art of storytelling is the Coca-Cola Company. The multinational company boasts of over 137 years of refreshing the world, with a footprint in over 200 countries offering a beverage portfolio of more than 200 brands. Impressive, right? But what has us gulping are the refreshingly, creative, cool Coca-Cola adverts that hit our TV screens, radios, billboards, newspapers, and magazines, etc daily.

My favourite is of course the Coca-Cola Christmas Caravan but that does not beat the season when the world got to drink a Coke Zero via an ad. The amazing drinkable ad allowed the consumer to watch as Coke Zero is poured from a bottle on TV to a glass on their mobile, which then requires the consumer to catch the ad's sound with their Shazam app. When the glass was full it unlocked a mobile coupon to redeem a free bottle

of Coke Zero at participating outlets. This was so cool.

Another favourite is the Coca-Cola Love Story. Love Story is about two bottles who fall in love as they meet over and over after being disposed of properly and recycled into new bottles. The ad aims to encourage more people to recycle and highlights how plastic bottles can be reused to produce more plastic bottles.

Coca-Cola has invested in telling its brand story in a way that captures its audience's trust and love. We might not have the funds that the Coca-Cola Company has but we do have a story to tell about our brands with the resources that we have. A brand story conveys the history, purpose, and values of a business in a narrative that resonates with consumers and makes audiences feel emotionally connected. A brand story should be meaningful, personal,

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Editorial

Mariam Maina - Editor

Joanne Wanjala

Irene Van De Graaf

Molly Wambui

Gertrude Mirobi

Stephanie Mutuku

Samuel Njaaga - Layout

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emotional, simple and authentic. So how do you create a story like this for your brand?

Know your own story

There is a reason why you started this business. Well, obviously you went into business to generate an income, create employment, have a career, etc but there is also the other side of it. Why did I start this business? A compelling brand story should tell who you are, what you do,

What you care about, and why it matters. In short, what is at the heart of your brand? Who is your target market and why? What message are you trying to get out there? Once you have a clear idea of who you are and what you are trying to do, then you can begin to examine the stories that will help you communicate that.

The story behind the product is key. What has it taken for it to end up in the consumer's hands? Describe the process, the team involved, the sacrifices made, the satisfaction to see the results and the issue being addressed or the luxury or solution being created.

Take coffee for example. Kenya is known for her coffee. It is a known fact that Kenyan coffee is among the best in the world. When reading about Kenyan coffee, words like rich body, high acidity, intense flavor, delightful aroma, its in-your-face acidity, berry undertones are thrown here and there. How can these coffee companies tell their brand story? What a beautiful brand story this would make, right? Tell us the story

behind the journey or the process it has taken for that coffee to end up in a client's cup in the morning or on that first date in that restaurant, brewing young love.

Brand storytelling is a powerful tool that can help you build your brand, connect with your audience, and communicate your values and vision. It also helps you deliver a more memorable experience to your customers.

Your brand story can help communicate the values and core of your corporate identity, allowing you to position yourself clearly. This can be especially helpful in differentiating yourself from the competition in a competitive business marketplace.

An authentic story

Brand stories are a powerful way to build trust. To build an authentic story you need to make it personal. Add that touch that humanizes the company. In addition, keep your story simple and one that is relatable because a good brand story touches the heart of the people. In your story, mention why your brand exists. You need to connect with your customers. Let your story show how you relate to your customers and how you understand them. As someone once said, 'customers buy your story, not just products.' The beauty of story telling is that others can tell your story. The same applies to a brand story. Package it in a way that others can share your in their own words.

TIPS FOR PACKAGING YOUR EXPORT PRODUCTS

By Gertrude Mirobi GMirobi@brand.ke

It is important to consider the unique needs and preferences of your target market when packaging your export products. A well-designed and high-quality

package can help your products stand out and appeal to a wider audience.

Here are some packaging tips to help you with your export business:

Branding

Your packaging should reflect your brand and create a memorable impression on the customers. Use high-quality packaging materials and printing techniques to make your product stand out.

Labelling

Accurate and clear labelling is crucial for compliance with import regulations and for customers to understand the product. Your labels should include information such as product name, weight, dimensions, country of origin, and instructions for use. You may also need to include warning labels and handling instructions.

Consider cultural differences

Different countries have different cultural beliefs and values. Make sure you research and understand the cultural norms of the country you are exporting to. This



includes understanding color symbolism, packaging design preferences, and language.

Keep it simple

A simple and minimalist packaging design can often be more appealing to international markets. Avoid cluttered designs and excessive text. This can help your product stand out in the global market.

Use high-quality materials

The quality of the packaging materials can influence how your product is perceived by consumers. Choose durable materials that can withstand transportation and storage while still looking good.

Use multi-language labelling

Ensure that your product labels include translations of important information, such as the product name, ingredients, and instructions for use. This will help consumers who speak different languages understand your product and use it correctly.

Follow shipping regulations

International shipping regulations vary by country. Ensure that your packaging meets the specific requirements of the country you are exporting to, including labeling, packaging materials, and customs requirements.

Consider eco-friendly options

Many consumers today are concerned about the environmental impact of packaging materials. Consider using eco-friendly materials, such as biodegradable plastics or recycled materials, to appeal to environmentally conscious consumers.

Test your packaging

Before launching your product in international markets, test your packaging with a focus group or consumer panel to get feedback on the design and usability. This can help you identify any issues before your product hits the market.

Rules of Origin

To take advantage of preferential trade agreements, it is essential to know the rules of origin of the country or countries you are exporting to. Proper labeling and documentation can help ensure that your products qualify for preferential treatment.

Product protection

To prevent damage to your products during transit, use proper packaging materials like bubble wraps, foam, or packing peanuts to cushion and protect them. Make sure the products are secured inside the packaging and cannot move around during transit.

Professional assistance

If you are unsure about how to package your products, consider hiring a professional packaging company that specializes in international shipping. They can provide expert advice and ensure that your products arrive safely and comply with all necessary regulations.

The Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency has a team dedicated to guiding you on how best to package your products for export.



TFO WOMEN IN TRADE PROJECT - MISSION TO UK

By Irene Ouko irenev@brand.ke

Kenya will be represented by 10 SMEs at the International Food and Drink Event (IFE) which will be held in London from 20 -22 March 2023. The SMEs are the beneficiaries of the Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (WIT) project which is being implemented by the Agency in partnership with Trade Facilitation Office (TFO) Canada.

The selected SMEs who are based in the agro-food sector were drawn from a list of 98 beneficiary trainees who attended the training workshops conducted by the Kenya

Quote of the month

“Unity is strength, when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved.” - **Mattie Stepanek**

Export Promotion and Branding Agency (KEPROBA) in collaboration with TFO Canada between February and March 2022.

The UK is a major trading partner for Kenya and therefore, the event will provide an ideal opportunity for Kenya to increase her market share in Britain's imports. Further to this, a market familiarization tour has been planned for the SMEs to engage with local experts, distributors, and regulators in the UK ahead of the IFE event. The market familiarization tour will provide a platform for SMEs to assess the requirements in the UK market and devise ways to adapt their products to the UK standards.

Among the 10 selected SMEs include, Turadah Agribusiness Ltd, Teascape Africa Limited, Fresh Approach, Masedi Limited, Home premier tea ltd, to mention a few. The SMEs are currently going through a coaching programme to adequately prepare for the event and maximize the opportunities presented by the IFE.

The IFE, which is an annual event, will see 25,000 food and drink professionals come together, face-to-face, to sample new products, make lasting business connections, and find suppliers who will give their business a competitive edge.

Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (WIT) is a 5-year (2019 - 2024) project funded by Global Affairs Canada and TFO Canada. The project seeks to address the main constraints faced by women exporters including limited skills, resources, and networks to be able to access global trade markets, and low levels of involvement as members and leaders of trade support institutions.

The project is working with KEPROBA to support the gender strategies we have in place as well as to build the capacity of Kenyan SMEs (particularly women-led) on how to do market research, competitive analysis, development marketing and communications strategies and export marketing plans.

The projects focus is on products and services in sectors with high employment potential for women and prioritizes products and services with low environmental impact. The sectors were selected through a gender-sensitive country market and sector research. The sector focus is on Agro-based (tea, horticulture, coffee, avocado) and textiles (apparels & clothing accessories).

FLOWERS:

The world's special plant

By Molly Wambui mwambui@brand.ke



Flowers are lovely to look at. There is this floral scent that is fresh and revitalizing that you cannot ignore - actually one cannot adequately describe the smell of flowers but naturally, when presented with flowers, one consciously

tries to pick be defined.

use the fragrant,

the scent. The beauty of flowers cannot To describe a beautiful flower, you can use the adjectives like aromatic, elegant, pretty, radiant, ravishing, etc but is that enough? Flowers are just wonderful.

Kenya is the world's third-largest exporter of cut flowers. The sector employs 150,000 people and contributes 1 percent of the country's GDP. Kenya sells 70 percent of its flowers to Europe. According to the Kenya Flower Council, flower sales generated \$960 million in 2019.

Flowers thrive in areas with well-drained soils and moderate temperatures such as Naivasha, Mount Kenya and Uasin Gishu. The



main varieties of flowers grown in Kenya are roses, carnations and alstomeria. Notable flower growing and exporting companies in Kenya include Finlay Flowers Limited, Magana Flowers and Uhuru Flowers.

Roses come in a variety of colours, with each colour conveying a distinct meaning. White roses signify purity and innocence, orange roses signify enthusiasm, yellow roses signify friendship while red roses signify love and romance. Of all the colours, the red rose is the most popular.

Valentines' Day is the biggest day for roses. An estimated 200 million roses are grown worldwide to celebrate the day of love. The Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency (KEPROBA) celebrated this special day by gifting staff members with red roses and chocolate. This gesture was well received by staff and it brightened the mood in the office. We hope that this shall be an annual event going forward.

FUN FACTS ABOUT ROSES

- ✂ There are over 100 species of Roses grown worldwide.
- ✂ Rose petals are edible.
- ✂ Roses are one of the oldest flowers to be grown on earth
- ✂ A rose bush can live up to 35 years
- ✂ During the Napoleonic era, soldiers would boil roses with white wine to rid themselves of lead poisoning from gunshot wounds.
- ✂ Ancient Romans were known head-over-heels in love with roses. At dinner parties, which they referred to as the "Hour of Rose," they would sometimes cover the entire floor with rose petals, sometimes measuring up to one foot in depth (now that's a dinner party we'd love to attend!)



According to the University College of London, flowering plants first appeared between 149 and 256 million years ago. The ancient Mediterranean civilizations are said to be the first to cultivate flowers while the ancient Egyptians were the first to practise flower arrangement for decorative purposes. During the ancient times, flowers became attractive since they signified an impending harvest of crops. – As you design, have this in a separate column with background colour

Packaging your business on social media

By Stephanie Mutuku

The evolution of technology has seen a shift in day-to-day operations of businesses all over the world. This is more so evident in recent years, where the use of social media platforms has increased significantly. Currently, there are over 4.2 billion active social media users across the globe. Digital media has therefore become the most effective and efficient choice for communicating with customers.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the subsequent interruption of business flows, the online marketplace started expanding with each passing day. An online presence for businesses has never been more crucial. Adding a digital marketing strategy, as part of your business operations is a fast, inexpensive, and effective way to reach almost half the world's population.

It is important however, to consider what you hope to achieve by having a presence on social media, this is what informs the content you will publish for your audience to see and interact with. It could be as a business you hope to build your brand awareness, boost sales, generate leads or become a thought leader in your sector of business. All these objectives are valid, but it is important to focus on your top objectives for utilizing social media as part of your marketing and communication strategy.

Another important aspect to consider is the audience you hope to reach through social media. Instagram, Facebook LinkedIn and Twitter are just a few of social media platforms that can be utilized by businesses. It is crucial to consider whether the audience you hope to reach is in any of these platforms. For example, Instagram's demographic is made up of 31% women, 24% men and 55% of users online are 18 to 29-year-olds. This information helps inform how to craft your messaging in an effective way for your desired audience on specific platforms.

While utilizing social media as a business, a huge following should not be the only prioritized goal. It is just as important to establish valuable connections with your audience. Though it may be harder to building a connection and making your loyal to your brand, it is still possible and the payoff is worth it in the long term. The content that connects with your audience needs to be, catchy, memorable and authentic. That way, the audience is able to feel connected to your brand and this will also positively affect interaction with your audience.

Consistency is a key ingredient in ensuring social media success for businesses. This applies in all aspects from visual identity to content messaging. Ensuring your business is easily recognizable across all your social media platforms can create a more positive experience for your audience as well as increasing brand awareness. Ensuring that your company's tone of voice is consistent across all your social media platforms will also set you apart from other businesses online. Maintaining a consistent and relevant messaging schedule is also key in keeping your audience engaged, your brand is also perceived as reliable and active. Maintaining a messaging schedule is made easier through a variety of social media tools that maintain a social media calendar that would help you plan, schedule, and view your content beforehand.

Lastly, it would do your business good to measure and analyze the results of the content you are putting out especially in the ways your audience

may be reacting to your content. Establishing what is working and what is not helps you to make relevant adjustments to your content which will turn increase engagements, shares and eventual conversions.

It is clear that social media has transformed the dynamics of the online marketplace by building networks of consumers

and businesses. Having a share of voice on social media platforms provides the opportunity for businesses to bring in new customers, retain customers, and build brand loyalty among existing customers.

Kenya eyes Australia as value added tea destination.

By Jonah Karanja



CS Agriculture and Livestock Development Hon Mithika Linturi flags off value added tea to Australia at the Port of Mombasa.

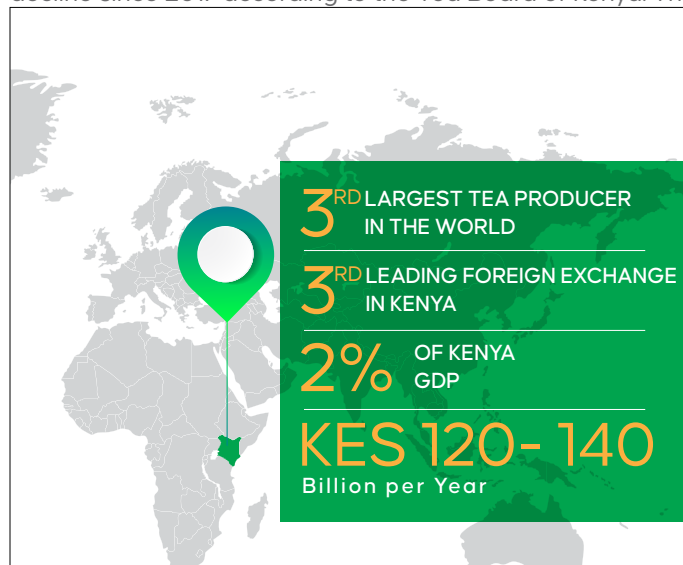


KEPROBA acting CEO and team lead Floice Mukabana poses for a picture with the Keproba team, Team Board of Kenya team and the Chinese economic diplomacy officials.

Kenya flagged off the first ever consignment of value-added tea to Australia on Friday 10th February 2023 in a move that is aimed at diversifying the country's export produce.

The demand for Tea in the international market has led to the decline in Kenya's tea export in the last one year. Tea export has also plummeted due to the raging Russia-Ukraine conflict, persistent drought in major tea producing areas and the weakening shilling against the dollar. Tea price has been plummeting since the beginning of 2023, with the first sale recorded at \$2.2.

Kenya's overseas Tea exports fell by 22% to 333.4 million kilograms in the first 9 months of 2023 signalling the first such decline since 2017 according to the Tea Board of Kenya. The



tea production in the 9-month period dropped by 2%.

The emergence of Australia as a potential tea export destination will help farmers diversify their export markets hence reducing the reliance on the traditional markets. The largest markets for the Kenyan beverage between January and September of 2022 were Pakistan, Egypt, the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates, accounting for 69% of the exports.

The Oceania nation has been purchasing less tea from the auction, but the volumes are on a steady rise, increasing by 20% last year to 2,005 tons as compared to 1,665 tons last year.

Kenya is continuously investing millions in the tea sector a move that will not only create jobs but also increase forex earnings. President William Ruto has also directed the ministry of Trade to increase the export of value-added tea from the current 5% to 50% in the next 5 years.

Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency aims at broadening Tea export base by focusing on value addition to open market penetration and counter competition from similar producers. Export markets are leaning towards value-addition in order to maximize on export proceedings. Our sectors such as tea, flowers, fruits, vegetables, coffee and textile have enough resources to create a secondary means of income thus, the Kenya Export Promotion and Branding



Agency and its stakeholders are working on the means to educate our production base while also actively scouting for new markets globally.

The Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency team is currently in Mombasa on a tea factory visit in the company of Tea Board of Kenya and Chinese Economic diplomats. The aim of the visit is to discuss areas of collaboration and the market access of Kenyan Tea into the enormous Chinese market.

H.E President William Ruto on October 5th, 2022, flagged off the inaugural consignment of value-added tea to Ghana under the AfCFTA Initiative on Global Guided Trade programme aimed at kickstarting among African nations that are ready to start trade relations through utilization of AfCFTA Preferences.

In his bid to increase Tea exports and to optimize the Tea industry in Kenya, President William Ruto announced the funding of a public-private processing and packaging plant in Mombasa besides approving \$6 million to increase the production of orthodox tea at 10 Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) factories.

Kenya through the AfCFTA ad hoc committee identified several products including tea, batteries, confectionery, leather bags, incinerators, beaded products, vehicular filters, textiles, sisal fibre, avocados and fresh produce for the pilot phase of the programme. Kenyan tea will therefore be in a position to penetrate the intra-African market thus increasing our forex revenue besides uplifting the economic well-being of small-scale tea growers and farmers in the country.



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