



Filtering coffee culture in Africa

Nestlé Central West Africa

Africa is a continent of myriad cultures. In each country alone, a range of local languages and traditional alliances mix with the western cultures of Africa's colonial past.

For global brands this poses a significant challenge.

How do you position brands in a way that is at once relevant to local country cultures, yet consistent across an entire region?

This was the challenge for Nestlé Central West Africa (CWA) in the coffee category.

In the Central and West African Region Nestlé operates in 22 countries with a focus, where coffee is concerned, in four key countries: Cote D'Ivoire and Senegal (Francophone) and Ghana and Nigeria (Anglophone).

Due largely to their history with the French, the Francophone countries have a slightly more established coffee culture. For similar reasons, the Anglophone countries are tea drinking nations with underdeveloped coffee consumption.

In order to grow their share across the region and to grow the coffee category, Nestlé CWA wanted to test and evolve some preliminary innovation concepts which had been designed to get both non-consumers of coffee and existing consumers of roast and ground coffee in the francophone countries to switch to NESCAFE. And to get non coffee drinkers in the Anglophone countries to start drinking coffee.

In addition, the NESCAFE mother-brand positioning needed some fine tuning to ensure relevance across all the countries.

Understanding the cultural nuances of coffee within each of the key countries formed the foundation of the work.

An in-depth cultural Decoder allowed us to analyze the key socio-economic and category cultural themes emerging in each country.

For example: African and Proud. The work revealed that one of the cultural drivers defining people's identity was a renewed cultural pride, coupled with great confidence in African heritage. A growing acceptance and pride in who they are, both politically and culturally.

By exploring the different expressions of African Pride we could weave positioning platforms for NESCAFE that would resonate with African heritage and identity.

This and other key themes became the bedrock of a series of positioning concepts and ultimately a brand positioning for the NESCAFE mother brand and each of the innovation concepts. Positionings that were differentiated and culturally relevant across the region.

How did we Add Value?

We helped to confirm the nuances of the culture of coffee within the African cultural context, providing the lever for Nestle to cement the brand in the region by innovating for growth.

Nestlé Central West Africa had two key challenges in the coffee category. In the complex, fascinating and shifting landscape of Africa, how could Nestlé position their NESCAFE brand in a way that was both relevant to local country cultures, and consistent across an entire region? And how could they leverage local cultural insight for growth?

How did we Add Value?

Steeping ourselves in Nestlé's four key coffee markets, we ground out the nuances of coffee culture in Africa. And filtered them for opportunities. The insight provided the means for Nestlé to cement the NESCAFE brand in the region by innovating for growth.



Life is more fun when you move!

Virgin Active

By the late Nineties, the buffed-up image of gym bunnies in spandex was feeling a little passé. Health and fitness had moved on, becoming less about how you looked and more about how you felt. Less steroids and Mr America, more lifestyle and balance.

And in South Africa, where out-door living, sport and exercise are a way of life, only a small percentage of people were actually using gyms.

So the obvious question was why?

Virgin Active, new to the market, could sense the opportunity. The starting point was to look beyond the category and dive deep into the culture of wellness in South Africa. We spoke to western doctors and traditional healers, sports scientists and stress relievers. And we explored the places people might go to get their dose of endorphins, from walking clubs to health centres, yoga retreats to sensory spas.

The work revealed a cultural shift, from iron man fitness and the quick-fix diet to a desire for holistic health and lifestyle management.

And the insight?

"People want to feel good, but exercise feels like hard work."

Gyms, as they were, felt like muscle Meccas. For Virgin Active, this opened the way to differentiate themselves from just another gym brand to a more holistic health partner.

The next step was to understand attitudes to gym. The members, the non-members and those who'd rather stick pins in their eyes than go to an aerobics class.

Because while people might want to watch their shape, talking to them didn't mean one size would fit all.

Mapping the market through segmentation revealed another key insight: "Not all people go to the gym to exercise."

The gym was a place to relax. To unwind. To meet people. And to feel better about themselves.

For Virgin Active, seven clear consumer typologies opened up a range of ways to connect with people - the old faithfuls and the new potentials.

It meant having more focus when planning gyms - from the high energy stress and fitness focused hubs of the city to the pamper and indulgence clubs of the leafy suburbs.

It meant being better equipped to choose new locations, create premium service offers and design new products. Like Mind and Body studios for yoga and Pilates and high energy dance-based classes designed to make moving more fun.

How did we Add Value?

We looked further than the gym floor to understand the culture of wellness, helping shape the Virgin Active positioning and creating a common consumer focused language within the team. A shared vision that let the right people make the right decisions and helped Virgin Active become much more than just a gym.

Virgin Active wanted to grow their market share in South Africa. Muscle-mad gyms were feeling passé, so we needed to look further than the sweaty floor of the gym, and out into the wider category of health and wellness. What we discovered was that not everyone goes to the gym to exercise. This was an opportunity to create more compelling offers and become more than just another place to bench press your best.

How did we Add Value?

We gave Virgin Active the big picture view of their playing field, and helped them become more than just a gym brand.



Innovating hotel living Southern Sun

Picture this lifestyle: Less formal, less structured, less corporate, less routine, more mobile, more diverse, more energetic, more open.

These are some of the characteristics that define the New Age Traveller. It's no wonder they are dissatisfied by the big chain, corporate hotel offerings that:

Instantly cut you off from the vibe of the city.
 Make you feel like you're in an airport terminal when you check in.
 Make you wish you had a GPS to get down the corridor to room 1500.
 Remind you why the world has rejected matching carpets and bed spreads.
 Reintroduces you to the blanket.
 Lack style, unless you're fond of poster art.
 Have more neon light than sun light.

For hoteliers Southern Sun, the insight meant an opportunity - to re-engineer the traditional hotel and create a vibey and stylish yet affordable option for a new kind of business traveller.

SunSquare was born.

Their vision: to be more stylish, more bold and more natural across all the hotel touch points.

The result: it's goodbye to the conventional.

SunSquare offers hi-tech check-in kiosks instead of a desk-based reception. The traditional lobby goes in favor of a stylish cocktail bar overlooking a restaurant where skilled chefs display their artistic international culinary skills in front of guests. This is a new kind of meeting space, making that quick business meeting pleasurable and entertaining.

The rooms are shaken up in line with the vision. The expensive-to-build separate bathroom is traded in for a stylish alternative - a high pressure shower, and quality toilet and basin are incorporated into the room, hidden by a frosted glass enclosure.

The staff are young, hip and happening, recruited specifically from outside the hotel industry - hired for attitude and aptitude, and trained for skill. Many of them are earning cash to get into theatre or art school. The result is a more interesting and engaging service experience for guests.

Finally, it's located in an entertainment hub. SunSquare ensures its guests never feel cut off from the city vibe.

How did we Add Value?

We delivered deep qualitative insight into the future of South African business travel to create a vision for the next generation of business hotels.

We then workshopped every touch point of the new hotel with the Southern Sun marketing and design teams to turn the vision into reality. And with 80% occupancy, a great place to stay!

In South Africa, young business travellers were tired of big, conventional, corporate hotels. Their more fluid and mobile lives demanded something with a little more energy and a lot more style.

SunSquare was born. An unconventional answer to hotel living.

How did we Add Value?

A deep understanding of where the evolution of travel was heading meant we could partner with Southern Sun to develop a new kind of hotel. And with 80% occupancy, a great place to stay