

# Exploring the ego in advertising

 By Dale Ferreira

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I love advertising. I'm not talking digital, above-the-line or direct marketing. I'm not talking about Maslow, about the human condition or the Zero Moment of Truth. I'm talking about the act of telling a story, the act of creating something meaningful. Marketing a product to someone so well that they're willing to part with money they've earned from hard work or stealing.

How do I show people this without looking like a baggy twat?



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As an agency, Sconetent is staring down the barrel of its fourth year and all the minor achievements feel really big but I can't help but feel we're going to have to push harder. I've already had great staff come and go, I've learned how to understand people and manage them. I've learned to let people move on. I try to inspire the team I have, to be really strategically creative. To do cool shit. To create strategies and concepts that make them happy, because if they're happy, clients are happy. If clients are happy, then my investors are happy. The sell in strategy is also only really about the angle.

My investors are me.

It's easier to become a digital agency in Cape Town than to become a street vendor. Survival is on a par.

I sell our services on self-belief, not passion; they're like the Olsen twins, people rarely see the difference, but they know

there is one.

I've had long chats with a number of people in the industry about how we sell ourselves in advertising. People put themselves out there, their in your face "I am here" attitude wins them a lot of favour with more doubt. The ego of self-promotion is not something lost on me. I've chatted about how we can remove the ego and still self-promote. Let the work speak for itself. Ego is agency currency. People who can't write are calling themselves writers and guys who shamelessly teach you to be a better person don't know a thing about psychology.

Are you better than everyone else if you continue to tell them you are online?

Walking in the rain to get wet on purpose. If you live in the self-created limelight, look to have the digital stool ripped from under you when you do something stupid. Land on your ass and own it or bullshit people into thinking that it was a social experiment. Seeing to the brilliant from the bullshit is the one thing I find attractive about people.

Passion is the number one suspect in a patience murder trial, and self-belief itself is not absent of ego.

I've tried to understand ego. I believe that ego in advertising is going to come to an abrupt end. If Donald Trump offers the world one benefit, it's that people will see through the bullshit. Ego has hit a tipping point. The shameless self-promotion will wash off them like mud and brands that try to sell a "better you" are going to be sitting in the 21st century, drinking Jagerbombs with the all the other pat-your-own-back agencies.

I know we'll never live in a world where we don't celebrate mediocrity, but I hope we'll begin to do it a little less.

It's time to drop the ego. It's time to develop communities with one shared goal. It's time to stop telling people what to do and listening to what we're all going to achieve together. The irony in that sentence is shattering.

It's never been a better time for us to start collaborating, and instead of talking about one voice, let's sing together. Unless you have a better idea?

## ABOUT DALE FERREIRA

Sconetent is a digital agency that looks to partner with the best possible clients to aid them in developing a strategic message that is delivered to the correct audience at the right time.

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