

Yappy days for the woofers from an old Buddy...

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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A sure way to get the attention of many soft suburban people for your marketing pitch is to go the cute route. This has worked very well for Toyota over the years, with Buddy the Boxer endearing himself to people across the country, which can have done the brand no harm at all.

Personally, I thought that in the end, his exposure was getting a little overdone... although when I suggested he be put out to pasture, I got hate mail from two sectors – Toyota fans and animal lovers.

But I can't help but think that Toyota and its ad agency, FCB Joburg, are on to another winning recipe for the company's new Etios Sprint.

First of all, given the fact that the car industry is in particularly dire straits at the moment, it is a clever move by Toyota to come up with a "marketing model" of the Etios. Under the skin, the car is fundamentally the same as the lower segment hatchback it has always been, but now it has been tarted up a bit and called the "Sprint".

Whether the Etios can out-sprint anything except another entry-level econobox is a moot point, but the car's cool factor has certainly been upped.

To get across the point, FCB went the 'cute doggies' route again, throwing in scores (well, it seems like it) of the sweetest hounds you're ever likely to see on a TV commercial.

And they're all over the place – from emphasising the car's airbags to its power steering, alloy wheels and, its entertainment system, which has four "woofers"... four cute puppies on the back seat (ha ha ha).

The end result is that the viewer see the cars and the puppies in the same light – as cute and faithful. Just what you need in a new car.

Well done people. Buddy would be proud. Orchids to Toyota and FCB (again...)

I know I am going to get hate mail on this one – but here goes, anyway.

McCain – the food-producing giant – has been doing a number of touching, real-world TV ads, which feature people doing “amazing” things for their moms. It is sad, though, that cooking your mother dinner is considered amazing in this day and age. It is also sad that sticking McCain’s oven chips into the oven is considered really going out of your way to say thanks to the person who raises you.

Be that as it may, the concept is not bad. But, the execution we saw on TV this week elicited grumpy comments from both me and my wife.

We see cute little Jessi, who is also full of herself (as you’d expect from someone who wants to be on stage some day), telling the world how she’d like to do something special for her mom who is, apparently, a single parent.

Fair enough. But chicken nuggets and McCain’s chips are hardly earth-shattering.

But what gobsmailed us, as we listened to sweetness-and-light Jessi telling us how “she” was going to do something for her mom, was a shot of the family’s domestic worker putting the food into the oven and then taking it out. Seriously?

It’s a bit of a sad indictment of white South Africa that a) a girl of that age can’t put a simple McCain’s packet of chips into an oven and heat the contents and b) the domestic worker is (as always) only in the background.

Some things never change, do they? #andyouwonderwhy people get angry

An onion to McCain for not thinking this one through.

For more of Brendan Seery's writing, see: www.orchidsandonions.net

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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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