

#BehindtheSelfie with... Ben Schoderer

 By Leigh Andrews

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This #AfricaMonth, we find out what's really going on behind the selfie with Benjamin Schoderer, digital manager at KFC Africa, awarded Black Pixels for marketer of the year and brand of the year respectively in the IAB SA's 2018 Bookmarks Awards earlier this year.



Schoderer randomly running into one of his idols, German coach Jürgen Klopp, at the Facebook head office in Menlo Park, California.

1. Where do you live, work and play?

I was born and raised in Germany, but I now live in the buzzing city of Johannesburg, working for a finger-licking good brand.

I play in my garden often with my kids and dogs as well as on the internet, of course.

2. What's your claim to fame?

I had my five minutes of TV fame when I happened to stand behind the Spanish soccer coach Vicente Del Bosque while he was being interviewed on the pitch immediately after Spain won the 2010 Fifa World Cup at Soccer City.

I worked as a media volunteer for Fifa during the world cup at all Soccer City games. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I am a true soccer nut – most Germans are – and besides this experience, the whole event was just amazing to be a part of.

3. Describe your career so far.

After University in Göttingen, Germany I basically started my career selling ringtones. I joined Bertelsmann, a European media company, more specifically their mobile content division in Hamburg as a key account manager selling mobile content solutions like ringtones, games and music to network providers like Vodafone.

In 2007, I decided to move to my wife's home country, South Africa, and joined Vodacom in Midrand. After having an absolute blast for seven years building their digital capabilities, I decided I had enough of the telecoms industry and joined KFC, where I have been the lead for all things digital marketing since 2014.



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Ogilvy South Africa 27 Mar 2018



All in all, I really have been blessed for working with some amazing people and mentors throughout my career, allowing me to do what I love to do and do best – you know who you are!

4. Tell us a few of your favourite things.

Spending time with my family. I also love sport, especially SV Werder Bremen, my home team. I attended the Sundowns vs. Barcelona game in Soccer City and it was absolutely electrifying! Besides that, I enjoy reading and travelling.

5. What do you love about your industry?

I love the fact that the digital industry is developing every day, and constantly throwing new challenges at you. I also love the fact that I am learning something new literally every day.

Then, I also love the fact that “digital finally seems to have grown up,” as an industry and found its place within the broader business realm.

“ More and more, brands move away from ‘what’s our digital strategy?’ to ‘what’s our business strategy in this digital world?’, which is great to see. ”

Lastly, I think about all the exciting tech that is about to hit our lives very soon. It’s such an amazing time to be alive and working in digital!

6. Describe your average workday, if such a thing exists.

School run, clear inbox, meetings, agree strategies, design digital campaigns, sell chicken, have fun!

7. What are the tools of your trade?

Sadly, I’d have to say Microsoft Outlook! On a more serious note, I’d probably go for the internet. I don’t think there is a single day where I don’t look something up I’ve heard about to find out more and understand how to apply it to what I’m working on.

8. Who is getting it right in your industry?

From a proposition perspective, I believe Netflix is doing a fantastic job in offering exactly what their consumers are looking for. I also love their use of insights and user behaviour and marketing.



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Then I recently came across an Adidas case study and how they use their understanding of consumers to design in-store experiences, fascinating!

Lastly, I came across a brand in the US recently called Away.com who basically sell luggage, but tell wonderful stories about travelling in all their communication. Simple, yet brilliant and I still ask myself why I've not yet come up with a concept like that!

“ Last week I attended the [@iab](#) global digital advertising conference in Palm Desert, California. Here are some of my thoughts and learnings <https://t.co/wBdP519mRI> (Spoiler - fascinating times ahead - whether you work in digital or not). Thanks [@iab_sa](#)— Benjamin Schoderer (@beninsa) [February 23, 2018](#) ”

9. List a few pain points the industry can improve on.

Education and reduction of complexity – I think too many marketers are still too intimidated by digital technologies and thus avoid understanding them better. The industry needs to do a better job of educating especially young marketers to ensure they are future fit.



Latest Warc report focus on threats to the digital advertising ecosystem

29 Mar 2018



Another pain point is the ongoing struggle in the digital media space around **ad fraud and brand safety**, which need to be resolved satisfactorily to ensure advertisers don't lose trust in digital as an effective media channel.

10. What are you working on right now?

Making it easier and more convenient for our consumers to access our brand through e-commerce channels. Truly exciting times to be working at KFC.

11. Tell us some of the buzzwords floating around in your industry at the moment, and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself.

Omnichannel, data, AI, chatbots, digital/mobile strategy, integrated strategy.

“ Listen to [@beninsa](#) from Yum! Restaurants on the [#WITEE](#) Chatterbots [#show](#). Getting candid: What it takes to build a 21st Century [#brand](#). Click here to listen: <https://t.co/yLV4n3BY6a> or subscribe to Boo-Yah! by Carmen Murray on [#iTunes](#) and never miss an episode— Boo-Yah! (@BooYahZA) [April 30, 2018](#) ”

I am not really a fan of buzzwords so unless you figure out how these trends or technologies can actually make your consumers' lives easier, I think they're pretty useless.

12. Where and when do you have your best ideas?

I keep a notepad or my phone close at night as I often wake up randomly with an idea I think is worth exploring the next day. Unless I write it down, I won't be able to remember it.

Travelling is also a great inspiration for ideas, often gives you a different perspective on how other cultures “do things”.

13. What’s your secret talent/party trick?

I do reasonably well at quiz nights and am unbeaten at the “Settlers of Catan” board game.

14. Are you a technophobe or a technophile?

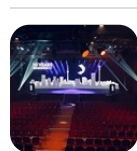
I absolutely love tech!

15. What would we find if we scrolled through your phone?

Tons of audible audiobooks, the German Kicker app for the latest on football, and lots of selfies of my kids.

16. What advice would you give to newbies hoping to crack into the industry?

Be curious and stay curious! Be brave, try new things, ask when you need help or advice – don't be afraid, you can only learn. I love Nike's “Just do it” tagline, and try to remember it every time I am struggling to make a decision.



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Simple as that. Follow Schoderer [on Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#), and follow KFC South Africa: [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

*Interviewed by [Leigh Andrews](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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