

Local, lekker — and loved

Linda Doke talks to four of South Africa's 'living brands'

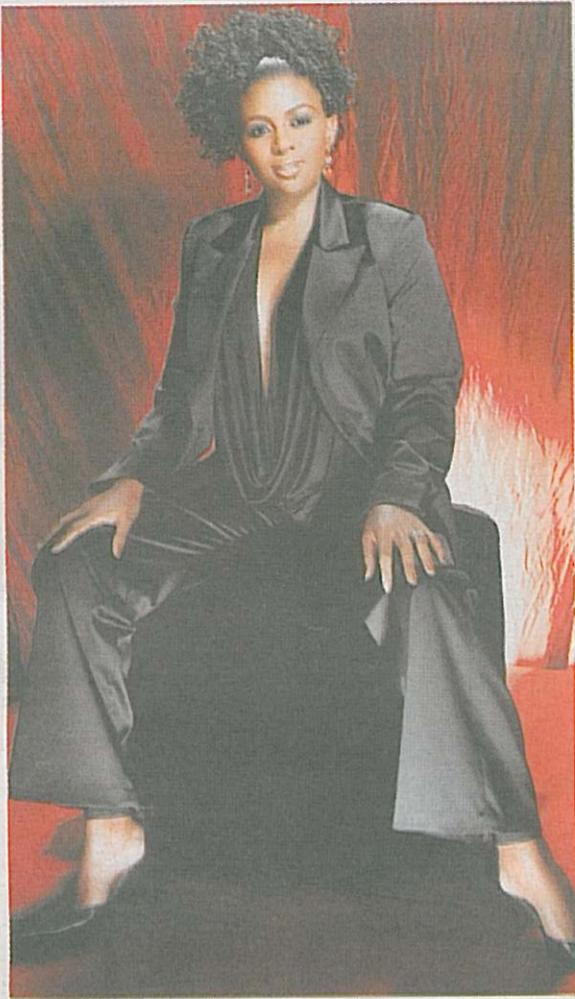
FROM Bovril, Bakers and Bournville to Marmite, Mercedes and McDonald's, household brands have been around as long as anyone can remember.

More than just a collection of images and ideas representing a product or service, and more than a company name, logo or design theme, brands are the amalgamation of name, identity, personality, value and promise that evoke emotion.

But more than that, brands can be living personalities that hold specific appeal in themselves and by what they represent. British tycoon Richard Branson, golfer Tiger Woods, pop queen Madonna, and talk show host Oprah are all examples of individuals who are brands in their own right, household names and highly regarded by millions.

South Africa can proudly claim its own nest of brand individuals, who have pushed the boundaries beyond the badge of celebrity into the category of their own brand.

Meet four of our best-loved brand individuals.



BASETSANA KUMALO: Cultivating a brand that is relevant, sustainable and has crossover appeal

Brand ambassador

BASETSANA "BASSIE" KUMALO

President of the Business Womens' Association; anchor presenter on Top Billing; Unicef ambassador, nominated by Femina as one of the Top 10 most glamorous women in SA; voted by Sunday Times and Elle in the TV Style Awards as the most stylish female magazine/entertainment show host in 2002/03; Miss South Africa 1994; first runner-up Miss World 1994; graced the covers of numerous magazines, including Cosmopolitan, Femina, Fair Lady, You/ Huisgenoot, Drum, Tribute, Ebony, True Love, Soul and Bona.

You have your own clothing, eyewear and cosmetic range. Please sketch the details. I am the brand ambassador for Milady's ladies clothing, I have the Bassie range of optical products and eyewear, launched five years ago, that is distributed through Specsavers countrywide. I also have the Bassie range of cosmetics.

Which brand would you love to represent? I have the great fortune that I already represent brands that I love, enjoy and am truly proud of — in clothing (Milady's), cosmetics (Bassie Cosmetics), optical and eyewear (the Bassie range, distributed through Specsavers) and, as the brand ambassador for Cadillac, I have the pleasure of cruising in the Cadillac SRX.

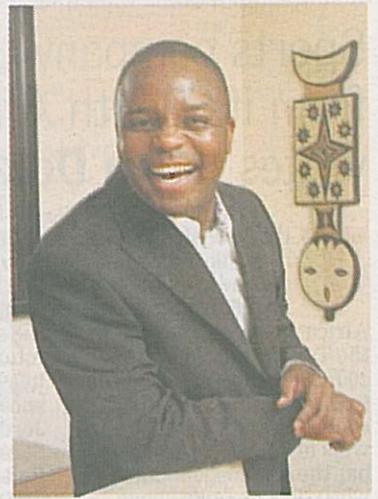
On whom do you model yourself as a brand? No one in particular. Instead, I decided to cultivate a brand that is uniquely South African, that is relevant, sustainable, and has crossover appeal. Sun Goddess, Gavin Rajah and David Tlale are some of my favourite designers. I also love wearing Max Mara, Escada, Yves Saint Laurent, Carolina Herrera and Diane Von Furstenberg.

Retail store? Apple Store — I like gadgets, use a MacBook Pro, and listen to my iPod most of the time.

Food? Sushi — I just can't get enough of it. I also love all things French, including their cuisine and bubbly.

Soft drink? Cranberry juice.

What are the three strongest aspects of a good personal brand? Integrity, credibility and innovation.



SA'S MR BRAND: Thebe Ikalafeng, author, businessman and public speaker
Picture: JEREMY GLYN

In the end, I speak only for myself

THEBE IKALAFENG

Dubbed "Mr Brand" in South Africa, Ikalafeng is a sought-after speaker, prolific writer and adviser globally on personal, political, commercial and nation branding.

What brand do you represent? Brand Thebe Ikalafeng. It's all I can truthfully represent. Everything around or on me is but a superficial layer that reflects what I'm about, but not who I am.

Which brand would you love to represent? Country: Brazil — joyful, playful, unpretentious and authentic; commercial: Intel — other than technicians, no one has any proof it exists or can be understood; can't do without it: Virgin — irreverent, challenging, real and fun; personal: Mandela and Mother Teresa — authentic, principled and enduring.

On whom do you model yourself as a brand? My brand is multi-dimensional. I model my passion for what I do after Richard Branson. I model my technical brand after Jack Welch — a "geek" who's widely respected for what he knows and does as a practical thought leader. On a personal level, on Mandela for the congruence of his life, values, sacrifices, passions and work.

Favourite brand of car? Mercedes-Benz — it speaks of stability, success and unpretentiousness.

Clothing? Dunhill — the Mercedes-Benz of clothing — classic tailoring, conservative but not boring; **retail store?** Apple Centre in Sandton City; **cellphone?** Palm and Nokia; **food?** township food — dumplings with *tshotho* (meat overcooked, deboned and shredded) and anything cooked in a township home; **soft drink?** I drink tea like most people drink soft drinks. No alcohol.

Supermarket? Tesco in UK — it's forward thinking, and Woolworths in SA — perfect for bachelors;

What brand are you most loyal to? Colgate Palmolive, not because it was my first formal job in New York, but because I've been using it all my life. My whole family was raised on Colgate.

Where would you take an overseas visitor to shop and eat? If I couldn't take them home to a typical South African home, I would go with the proverbial Mzoli in Gugulethu or Wandies in Soweto because they are unapologetically African. They demonstrate our "home values" and "African way of life".

Lucas Radebe proudly represents Brand South Africa

LUCAS "THE CHIEF" RADEBE

Professional soccer player with Kaizer Chiefs, ambassador of the SOS Children's Villages, captain of Bafana Bafana (1997-2003), captain of English side Leeds United (1998-2005).

What brand do you represent? The Lucas Radebe brand, which I have tried to model on values I believe to be important: caring, iconic, inspirational, proudly South African and respected. I have been fortunate to have entered into long-term commercial relationships with Coca-Cola, FNB, Aquafresh, Discovery and Woolworths. I also have Adidas as my equipment and apparel sponsor, and Southern Sun as my home away from home.

Which brand would you love to represent? What I would love to represent, and I hope that I have done so with conviction over the years is "Brand South Africa".

On whom do you model yourself as a brand? Nelson Mandela has always been a role model to me and many of my beliefs that I have adopted along the way have in some way been inspired by him.

What is your favourite brand of car? I do not have a specific favourite car brand. **Clothing?** I'm generally a jeans and sneakers kind of guy although I don't mind dressing up when necessary.

Retail store? I love shopping. Sandton City and Maponya Mall are two of my favourite shopping spots. Music, fashion and cars are my weakness.

Cellphone? Various. Battery life is crucial for me, particularly when I'm on the go.

Food? Chicken, specifically Nando's. And there are few things better than a home-cooked South African meal.

Cool drink? Coca-Cola.

Supermarket? Always Woolworths, although I believe it's a lot more than a supermarket.

Sportswear? Adidas, of course.

What brand are you most loyal to? All the companies I'm associated with are companies and brands that I believe in.

Who do you think has the biggest/best personal brand? Madiba. Other fantastic brands are Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods and Brand Beckham, who have all built their brand from highly successful sporting careers.

If you could choose someone to represent a major brand, who would it be? Depending on what the brand is, I would identify someone who identifies with the specific brand's values. The "fit" is key.

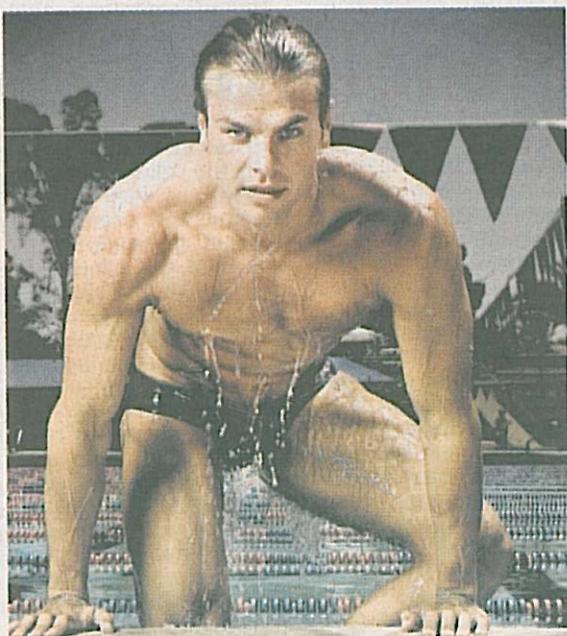
Where would you take an overseas visitor in SA to shop and eat? In Gauteng we have great places where visitors can experience the



INSPIRED BY NELSON MANDELA: Former Leeds captain Lucas Radebe

sights and sounds of South Africa. Places like Nambitha's and Wandies would be high on the list of places to eat.

What are the three strongest aspects of a good personal brand? Integrity, commitment and belief.



SET YOUR GOALS AND PERFORM: Ryk Neethling, Olympic gold medallist and freestyle world record holder

Olympic gold medallist has it all

RYK NEETHLING

Professional swimmer, member of the SA Olympic swimming team, Olympic 100m freestyle and 100m medley gold medallist, and 4x100m freestyle world record holder.

What brands do you represent? Vodacom, ProNutro, Red Bull, Arena, TAG Heuer, Sandown Motors, Aramis, Cipla-Medpro, Jenna Clifford, Muscle Quest, O2h! and Visa.

Which brand would you love to represent? I feel I already have the best sponsors any swimmer could ask for. I appreciate the support of my sponsors tremendously.

On whom do you model yourself as a brand? Myself. People can aspire to be as good as X or as professional as Y, but for me my grounding and training came with my exposure to international competitions, and training in the US for nine years.

What is your own favourite brand of car? My dream car is a Mercedes-Benz SLR.

Retail store? The Apple Store — I love gadgets.

Cellphone? Motorola. **Soft drink?** Red Bull.

Supermarket? For a bachelor the best has to be Woolworths.

Sportswear? I am lucky enough to be sponsored by Arena International so I get training and sports clothing from them.

What brand are you most loyal to? Definitely the ones that have supported me.

Who has the biggest/best personal brand? David Beckham.

If you could choose someone to represent a major brand, who would it be? Tiger Woods.

Where would you take an overseas visitor in SA to shop and eat? Probably Sandton Square or Melrose Arch — I'd take them to Moyo's. And then visit a game farm.

What is the best local brand? Vodacom, ProNutro and biltong!

What are the strongest aspects of a good personal brand? To be true to yourself and always aspire to do better. Set your goals and perform. Be patient and understanding of the time commitments in your life, and keep your feet on the ground.