

## PRISM AWARD SUBMISSION

**AGENCY:** BYDESIGN COMMUNICATIONS

**CATEGORY:** BEST USE OF AN EVENT TO  
BUILD/CHANGE REPUTATION

**CLIENT:** ORLANDO PIRATES

**CAMPAIGN:** ORLANDO PIRATES KIT LAUNCH



For football clubs, their kit launch is one of the highlights of the year. To make the 2019 Orlando Pirates kit launch stand out, we turned an event into an experience – creating a visceral connection with the brand by letting media and influencers experience the kit in the same way the players do: pulling on the shirt in the locker room, walking onto the Orlando Stadium pitch, and playing some football.

The results? We sold all the new Pirates shirts in 4 days. We got media and fans talking. Mostly, we made people engage and feel good about, Orlando Pirates.



## STATEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

Our biggest challenge with the launch of the 2019 Orlando Pirates kit was to stand out in a cluttered market. The euphoria of the Womens' World Cup was still lingering. Other big teams, like Chiefs and Sundowns, were launching their kits in the same week. One of the showpieces of the local footballing calendar, the Carling Black Label Cup, launched on the same day.

The opportunity was significant:

- Create an emotional connection to the new kit through a memorable brand experience.
- Leverage the client's commitment to creating an authentic experience for our media and influencers, and its millions of fans.



## RESEARCH

Desktop research:

- Reviewed the footballing agenda to understand the prevailing sentiment and narrative
- Reviewed social media conversations to get a better idea of what football fans think of, and expect from, kit launches

### Stakeholder engagement:

- We've been nurturing media and influencer relationships over several years. This allowed us to directly tap into the media's feeling about Orlando Pirates, and kit launches in general.
- We met with the client and their stakeholders to understand their business objectives and expectations for the launch

### Key insights

- For many fans, launches have become 'wallpaper', and don't engage them.
- The pool of footballing media and influencers is relatively small and a bit jaded. They want new experiences, and need real content to share.

*"The launch of a club's kit for the season is much more than just a new jersey. It's far bigger than that. It's an integral part of the team's identity, heritage and history. It gives the fans the chance to connect to their team in a very tangible way."* Mazola Molefe, Soccer Laduma Journalist

*"As the main kit sponsor for Orlando Pirates, sales of the club's shirt are one of our most significant revenue generators. But the launch of a new kit goes way beyond our commercial interests. The bigger picture is all about highlighting our shared values, building brand affinity, talking about a broader lifestyle, and involving other key sponsors like Shield and USN."* Bob Maphosa, Sports Marketing Manager



## PLANNING

Coming out of our research, our strategy was to build on the notion that the launch was part of something bigger. We had to connect the dots between the club and its sponsors, its fans and the footballing media.

And so our 'big idea' was born: to connect key media and influencers to the brand by letting them experience the new kit in exactly the same way the players do. Arrive at the stadium. Kit laid out and waiting for them in the locker room. Names on jerseys. Newly-launched adidas Hardwired boots. Then play some football with Pirates players and former players.



**Building on our client expectations and insights, we had three main objectives:**

- Stand out in a cluttered market through widespread media coverage
- Create an emotional connection with media, influencers and fans, and increase social reach
- Sell as many Pirates shirts as possible
- Of course, the unwritten objective in any event for Pirates is to outshine their greatest rivals, Kaizer Chiefs.

To do this, we would have to align the various aspects of the launch to get the maximum exposure and value for our brand, and its kit sponsor, adidas.

- We included the launch of a new boot in the kit reveal.
- We made sure the players could wear the new kit to the Carling Cup launch event later in the day, adding further talkability.
- We scheduled our TV and radio interviews in the finest detail to secure the largest and most engaged audiences.

**Key messages:**

- It's not enough to simply play good football, and be adored by millions. You have to look good while doing it.

- Our kit isn't just something we wear when we play. It's part of who we are as team.

### Target audiences

**Primary:** Orlando Pirates fans across South Africa (drive affinity and jersey sales)

**Secondary:** The broader South African footballing community, media and influencers (drive affinity and talkability)

### Media channels

**Earned:** Editorial content and interviews pitched at national and regional broadcast and print outlets

**Owned:** Orlando Pirates and sponsor channels (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

**Shared:** Social media posts by participating media and influencers



## EXECUTION

### Step one: Identify the audiences and create the backdrop

We hand-picked a range of media and influencers, both male and female, with whom we've built personal relationships over the past few years. When they arrived at the stadium, their kit was laid out and waiting for them in the locker room, right down to their own names on their jerseys, and newly-launched adidas Hardwired boots. Together with a host of Pirates players and former players, they took to the field, and played some football.

### Step two: Launch the media blitz

- We announced the launch of the new kit on national TV in the morning, and the press release, video and imagery were distributed at 6am.
- Three mainstream TV interviews were completed before 9AM.
- 44 media attended the event, which started at 11am.
- 7 radio interviews were completed in the evening, as well as an additional TV interview. Two TV shows broadcast the video from start to finish.
- We also made sure that the launch took place before the press conference of the Carling Black Label Cup later in the day, so the Pirates players and media were able to attend in their dazzling new kits, adding further talkability.



### Step three: Keep the momentum going

- We followed this up with a series of radio interviews in the late afternoon, with the specific aim of securing the largest and most engaged audiences.
- We sustained the launch momentum by driving further product seeding for the next week, piggy-backing on the buzz already created.



## New shirt reflects 1995 glory

By Staff Reporter

**T**he last time Orlando Pirates wore a white home shirt with black stripes, they brought the country to its feet by being the continental champions following an incredible Champions League campaign through to 1995 followed by a Super Cup win in 1996.

This week, the Buccaneers launched the new home and away kits ahead of the season - and have embraced the colours which heralded the announcement of the Sports Illustrated as the continental champions.

Pirates new home shirt sees the return of the white colour-way with black striping, which not only pays homage to the club's heritage and traditional colours, but also marks the first time adidas has created a white shirt that incorporates black stripes.

For the away shirt, adidas has retained the red colour from last season, with added black motifs, a black neck collar and the trademark three stripes down the side of the shirt.

The new kit will be unveiled for the first time on the 17th July, when the Buccaneers kick off their season with Santos FC at Kaizer Mosele Stadium in the season-opening Calloway Black Label Cup.

"You can never truly move forward if you don't know where



you're been, and it's only for us to unlock the potential of a successful future we need to draw inspiration from our past successes, because it's in those lessons from the past which guide our next steps."

"We remember iconic players who sported this look and made their indelible mark on the great Club, setting the tone for what we want to achieve once again. It's with that very inspiration that we look to the class of youngsters and hope that when they don this fresh look, they can draw from those lessons and from their own mark which will remain long after they've gone," said Sibusiso



Mabasa, Orlando Pirates Brand Activation Manager.

Commenting on behalf of adidas SA, Paul Swain, Senior Brand Activation Manager said, "We've gone back into the Club's archives to draw inspiration for this season's kit. Fans amongst a modern, contemporary design that stays true to the needs of the club."

The new Orlando Pirates kit will be available on July 17th at the Pirates Shop at Orlando Stadium, online at [pirateshop.com](http://pirateshop.com) and [adidas.com](http://adidas.com), to allow supporters and selected sports retailers across the country at a retail price of R199.



## EVALUATION

1. Stand out in a cluttered market
  - ✓ 91 pieces of coverage across print, broadcast and online.
  - ✓ This included 4 mainstream TV interviews and 7 radio interviews. 2 TV shows broadcast the video from start to finish.
  - ✓ R8.5m in earned media, and total reach of 23 million.
2. Create an emotional connection with media and Pirates fans, and increase social reach
  - ✓ 80 social media posts across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We reached more than 4.6 million people.

3. The big business objective: sell the new Pirates shirt

- ✓ All of them. In 4 days. It was the first time ever that all stock was sold out in the first week.



It was a great launch, and a great story. But the real success of this event lay in really thinking about our media in a world where people aren't connecting like they used to, and understanding them.

Word Count: 1095

Please see client letter of PRISM entry approval on the next page.



## CLIENT ENDORSEMENT LETTER

### ORLANDO PIRATES FOOTBALL CLUB

Reg No. 1988/007210/07



03 February 2020

To whom it may concern

#### RE: PRISM AWARDS 2019

This letter hereby certifies that I, Thandi Merafe, in my capacity as head of Media & Supporters at Orlando Pirates acknowledge and endorse ByDesign Communications' use of the "Orlando Pirates Kit Launch" submission into the PRISM Awards for 2019.

Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact the undersigned at Orlando Pirates.

Yours faithfully,

Thandi Merafe



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