



LIFE IS A GARDEN STRATEGY MARCH 2015 TO FEBRUARY 2017

Members on the Marketing Committee are elected for a two year term. At the SANA annual AGM a Vice President Marketing is announced who stands for a 2 year term and chairs the LIAG Marketing Committee. This committee will maintain the drive of the Life is a Garden Campaign and are the voice of the SANA members in endorsing copy produced and distributed to consumers. They too oversee all marketing activities and initiatives throughout the year. The role of the Marketing Committee is also to prepare a strategy that will be implemented by the administrator. This has been done by looking at current marketing initiatives within the LIAG campaign, discussing what worked to build on and those areas that need more focus. The importance is that the marketing of gardening through LIAG remains vibrant and active and at the same time measurable for the members who contribute financially to the campaign.

A strategy has been put in place that is achievable with the limited funds that are available from SANA.

The **main objective** of the 2015/2016 campaign will be: *the benefits of gardening*; cost effective ways of entertaining family and friends. Focus will be on the educational content as well as regional support to position gardening as “fun, easy and inspirational” and gardening can be easy for the whole family.

The **second objective** of LIAG is to continue producing industry endorsed content regarding gardening that is relevant to our industry and South Africa and to distribute this information to as broad a spectrum of publications, online options and the consumers in general on a regular basis.

Electronic media marketing and print media marketing are two of the ways that this gardening message can be expressed. Over the past two years this angle to the campaign has matured into a well received programme and is the source of everything done within LIAG.

The Online strategy is one of the future growth aspects of LIAG but at the same time to continue and sustain the good work that has been achieved within the print media. Our core for the campaign apart from disseminating information to the gardening public is to target new consumers and investigate further online options, as well as keep up-to-date and inform GCA members about retailing trends and align with other industries which compete for the leisure rand.

Where partnerships can benefit the objective, marketing concepts can be developed on a national basis. Additional new target markets must be inspired and the administrator is mandated to improve our relationship with gardening radio and TV personalities and find ways to increase the LIAG exposure.

In the next year the committee also mandate the administrator to maintain the Kidz-grow campaign and share it with more of the GCA members. It is important to find projects and activities that can promote gardening to children and their caregiver's within the prescribed budget. Using kids terminology of “Sow What's Up”, “Trust me I am Home-grown”, “Hanging with my Gnomes” and “Gardening is child's play” and other catch phrases to be incorporated into getting kids excited and enthusiastic about gardening.

If there is an opportunity to run a national campaign through the online strategy then the administrator for LIAG will be expected to coordinate this campaign. An example of this was the initiation of the YouTube clip that was piloted in the 2013 campaign.

Life is a Garden is the consumer face of SANA and as such must be visible in all material produced either as a logo or as part of the copy. The www.lifeisagarden.co.za must be used in conjunction with the logo.

Should the committee wish to add to or change any of the strategy set out for the year ahead after its initial approval by the SANA EXCO then these changes need to be taken to the SANA EXCO for further approval before any changes can happen.

1. The LIAG Campaign:

A national campaign with four seasonal themes will be put together by the committee. These themes will act as the foundation framework which will guide the administrator in producing industry endorsed communication to consumers creating the basis of all content generated under the banner Life is a Garden.

Tied into this LIAG will continue to produce articles that are relevant to events and have a link to activities such as mother's day or arbor week etc. with relevant information to the broader consumer base. The produced articles are at the centre of the campaign and will be applied to the different marketing platforms that will be used in 2015/2016.

1.1 Electronic Marketing

Website – www.lifeisagarden.co.za

The consumer site is the connection between industry and the gardening consumer. This site is also a hub of information and an archive of all the articles and media storylines that are generated by LIAG. The articles will be subedited to suit the nature of the site and for best layout. The analytics of this site must steer its development and updates must be continuous to keep it relevant and improve rankings. Monthly updates are vital. These analytics will be produced on a monthly basis and reported to SANA. The website will be hosted and remain the property of SANA and hosting costs will be carried by SANA.

The Kidz-grow page is to be enriched through 2015/16 and to include children's projects and colouring in pages. The idea is that these pages can be used as value-added by GCA members throughout the year with GCA and linked in newsletters as activity pages increasing and creating awareness for children's gardening activities.

A LIAG Gardening Club was set up in 2013 and attracted gardening clubs, show gardens and other interested organisations that are looking for industry endorsed gardening articles and information regarding marketing of gardening to the consumer. The 2015/16 LIAG committee will continue with the growth of this membership as a manner of information sharing.

Advertising on the site was approved by the SANA EXCO and the administrator will continue with this arrangement through 2015/16. As part of the SANA Sponsor programme the Diamond Sponsors will have access to this feature at no cost to promote their brands. A target of 10000 unique visitors monthly to the website is an achievable aim which needs to be obtained by the end of February 2017.

Facebook

www.facebook.com/lifeisagardensa has become an integral part of the electronic marketing strategy. The objective is to grow the fan base of South Africans and to increase communication with consumers.

The page is administered by the LIAG administrator creating a gardening community which links to the LIAG website and LIAG E-News - consumer newsletter. The daily or weekly posts are at the discretion of the administrator and the endorsement of the committee. Analytics will be produced on a monthly basis and reported to the SANA EXCO. Target set by the LIAG committee is to grow the Facebook Page to 8 000 likes by the end of Feb 2017.

Twitter

The page is administered by the LIAG administrator and the committee must endorse the content. The Twitter feed became more active in 2012 and continued to grow through 2013 and 2014. The objective is to create a platform where industry endorsed information is shared with the consumer and active consumer interaction is encouraged. Analytics will be produced on a monthly basis and reported to SANA. The LIAG committee feel that gardening has a storey to offer and the target would be to have 500 followers by the end of the current administrative contract.

YouTube Channel

The YouTube Channel will be expanded upon this coming year to include interesting clips of both a How-To and Inspirational nature and the administrator will be responsible for maintaining, promoting and reporting on the progress of the channel.

Pinterest

The Pinterest page will be responsibility of the administrator. This page needs to be maintained and promoted. The administrator is responsible to report on the progress of the page.

E-Newsletter

The consumer newsletter (Life is a Garden E-News) will remain a monthly newsletter. The content must be generic and promote gardening within the set themes as planned by the Committee. There will be more hyperlinks to other relevant pages on the LIAG website as well as linking to and promoting the Facebook page and Twitter feed.

Additional articles, new releases, retail trends and interesting facts can be submitted by SANA Members. The general prerequisite for information offered is that the copy must be lifestyle orientated. Plant material and product for the member contribution portion of the newsletter must include copy that links to our brief and must be readily available through GCA.

This E-Newsletter will be monitored on a monthly basis with regards to subscription and open rates reported to SANA. The opportunity for participants in the SANA Sponsorship Programme to promote their brands in this E-newsletter will be investigated and approval will come from the SANA EXCO. The target set by the LIAG committee is to grow the Newsletter Subscriber base to 5000 by the end of Feb 2017.

1.2 Print media marketing

We acknowledge that due to the articles produced by LIAG and supplied at no cost, gardening received more coverage over the past few years in newspapers. Monthly articles will form an integral part of the 2015/16 campaign and will be compiled monthly under the topical matters of Kids Gardening Activity; Edible Gardening and This month in the Garden. These monthly articles will be shared with SANA members in the form of a Press release sent out by the LIAG administrator in the month prior to the articles being released to the media.

It will remain important for the administrator to measure the success of the media articles, press releases and other gardening content and report back to the committee on this success. Monthly press releases are seen as a way to reach new audiences and to endorse the gardening message to the consumer. The minimum criteria set by the LIAG committee are for the administrator to publish articles in no less than five different places every month.

The seasonal articles produced for the LIAG campaign will be distributed with supporting images to regional and national newspapers. A subedited version will be supplied to other print media which often require smaller articles with high impact images.

LIAG will not produce tailored articles for magazines and newspapers but any articles can be credited to LIAG by approval from and with the knowledge of the committee.

2. Marketing support:

It is imperative to supply our Members with information on how to benefit and apply LIAG to their own marketing campaigns. Particularly in the retail environment where the consumer exposed to LIAG through our strategies will make contact with GCA members.

Point of Sale:

The LIAG Trade pages on www.sana.co.za are the SANA member portal to any information on the national campaign and to download archived POS. The maintenance of this page falls into the responsibilities of the LIAG administrator and is updated on an ongoing basis should the committee feel it necessary.

LIAG will generate POS posters for download which can be used by all SANA members. These will be produced four times during the year to promote the four seasonal themes. These will be designed and developed in both English and Afrikaans and will be available for GCA members to use instore.

SANA Marketing News:

The LIAG administrator will be responsible for setting up and distributing the SANA Marketing News to SANA Members. Distributed every month as a document highlighting and informing SANA members what LIAG is working on and what benefits the members can derive from the work done by LIAG. This marketing E-Newsletter will be monitored on a monthly basis with regards to subscription and open rates reported to SANA.

3. New Initiatives:

The administrator will be expected to come up with new initiatives that will promote gardening and achieve the aims set out by the 2015/16 LIAG campaign within the allocated budget. These new initiatives will form part of the tender document and the LIAG committee for 2015/16 will guide the administrator in the direction set out by the objectives.

One of the new initiatives that need to be investigated is the option of Setting up, growing and maintain a Pinterest account on behalf of LIAG. This forum has been identified by many of our members as the new medium of creating awareness for the green industry.

Keeping up with consumer demands and requirements enables us to ensure that we are constantly adapting and evolving to meet their needs and our focus is getting the message to the consumer that Gardening is Easy and is one of the very few activities that the family can do together and 'outdoors' alongside our next favourite activity 'outdoor recreation'.

Marketing of the LIAG website is very important and part of the budget needs to be spent on creating an awareness of the website amongst consumers.

At all-time these new initiatives must have achievable outcomes and their success must be measurable.

It is very important for the Committee to approve the portion of the budget that is spent on the administration of the campaign.