

A Names & Faces Case Study with King James

KINGJAMES



Why creativity truly can come from anywhere at King James

King James is one of South Africa's leading agencies with offices in Cape Town and Johannesburg. One of their key values is that creativity can come from anywhere.

"We signed up for Names & Faces at the time we took on two really big clients and had explosive growth in terms of the number of people we added to the building. To maintain your culture at that growth level is extremely difficult."

- Taryn Walker, MD

KINGJAMES

LOCATION

South Africa

EMPLOYEES

350

INDUSTRY

Advertising

DATA SOURCE

Google Sheet

FAVOURITE FEATURE

Client info on profiles

From disastrously ugly PDF to fast, visual tool

The reason King James adopted Names & Faces in the first place was to solve a growth problem. They had a tradition of manually producing a printed PDF directory of who was who in the building which MD, Taryn Walker, describes as 'disastrously ugly, time-consuming and increasingly unwieldy to produce'.

Adopting Names & Faces allowed King James to build a flexible, digital employee directory, from data in a Google Sheet, and keep it up to date (without printing a page).

“We’re a big agency but someone forgot to tell us.”

The agency’s culture is what Taryn cites as making King James really special. It is defined by seeing people as humans, not employees, with everyone encouraged to bring their whole self to work. A practical example of this: all staff are encouraged to have a side hustle.

“Creativity is a human product so if you don’t make it possible for people to show up fully at work you block creativity.”

Ideas can come from anywhere

When it comes to the work, their commitment to creative product is unwavering. Part of their cultural bedrock is that ideas can come from anywhere which is a principle they try to live and breathe. Names & Faces plays a key role in this:

“Someone can be sitting in the activation agency in JHB, have an idea for Santam – a client of Cape Town - and quickly find the right person to talk to.

It makes it possible for people to get in touch easily with those other teams and live out our core principle of ideas coming from anywhere.”

A tool to help everyone navigate the group’s structure

King James is a group of companies comprising of the main agency in Cape Town as well as *King James Digital* (services and platforms, digital comms and social); *King James Data & Media*; *Proof* (procurement and print production); *HammerLive* (events) and *Atmosphere* (PR).

“The Company & Client fields in Names & Faces help everyone to navigate the multiple companies within the King James Group and find who they are looking for to share an idea.”

Farewell phonebook, hello connection

Names & Faces is available on both mobile and web – and King James has high usage for both platforms. With a lot of staff working consistently at their desks, it's easy to keep Names & Faces open in a tab and access it that way. And it serves as a phone book: nobody stores work numbers on their phones anymore.

New joiners are encouraged to sign on as soon as they start to be able to connect with the right people and know who's who in the building. Names & Faces gives instant access into the King James world:

"It's always on, ready access to everyone in the building. We tell new people to sign up and say: 'There, go: that's King James' "

Challenges & Results

CHALLENGES

A fast-growing team meant producing a printed directory manually took too much time.

Rapid growth meant the 'family' culture that made the agency special was at risk.

Geographical distance and people not knowing who to reach out to for collaboration meant people sometimes worked in silos.

RESULTS

Everyone at King James has mobile and desktop access to a simple, always up to date visual list of who's who.

No matter if you've been around for years, are brand new, or are a contractor - it's easy to find out who's who.

Ideas really can come from anywhere because people can collaborate across teams and departments and get in touch easily.