

Step Away From the Herd to Market Your Business

Before I attended and spoke at the Global Speaker's Summit in Cape Town South Africa, my family and I took a photo safari at Zulu Nyala. Zulu Nyala is a small but wonderful game reserve in the Kwa Zulu Natal Province of South Africa. Because of Zulu Nyala's relatively small size there are no resident big cats on the reserve so the antelope, zebra, warthogs, wildebeest and Cape buffalo are plentiful and unafraid.

The reserve is named for an antelope called the Nyala. Nyala travel in twos or threes, were found throughout the reserve, and were the most common antelope we saw. Kudu are the largest antelope on the reserve. We saw a few of them including one impressive male with four foot long spiraling horns. The tiny Duikers are solitary and shy antelope. Red Duiker live in the forest while Gray Duiker live in the brush. Philemon, our Zulu guide, pointed them out to us a few times during our five days of game drives.

The antelope that interested me the most were the Impala. They live in larger herds than the others with fifteen to fifty Impala living together. Thin, graceful, and athletic, they jump, chase, and race about as they interact with each other. Their herds are either breeding herds containing one dominant male along with does and fawns or bachelor herds. The bachelor herds are populated by males who are not leaders of breeding herds.

There was a bachelor herd of Impala that lived along the main road to the lodge so we were able to watch them quite often. It contained thirty male Impala who looked amazingly the same. They were clones not only in appearance but also in activity. Like sheep they ate, rested, and played in unison. If one turned left they all turned left. If one lay down they all did.

I wonder if this is how many of us look to our clients or customers. Do they have trouble sorting you out from your twenty-nine competitors? With the economic downturn it's more important than ever to separate yourself from the herd. Unfortunately many of us are hunkering down, cutting marketing budgets, and any innovative activities that might help us to stand out from the crowd. Now is the time to gain market share while the competition is waiting on the sidelines. Let your clients know how you differ from the herd and thrive despite the economy.

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