

The future of communication

 By Leigh Andrews 7 Aug 2015

Highlights of IMC day 2 included delving into future-enabling technology like programmatic media buying and a reminder of the importance of measurement in any marketing effort...

Sparking magic and logic in customer dialogue: Enzo Scarcella

The second day of the IMC kicked off with Enzo Scarcella, Chief Marketing Officer of Telkom, talking about the changing face of communication and a need for the industry to get back to why people buy. Scarcella said digital communication and globalisation have conspired to drive great innovation and efficiency in advertising, but the excitement in the medium has stopped us from looking into what's actually behind that purchase decision. He says the answer is simple: emotion. Consumers buy because of how brands make them feel and what that says about the brand. Therefore, all communication from brands needs a rethink, to check whether it is fulfilling this fundamental human need. "We need more magic and less logic in our dialogue with customers," he said.

Scarcella recommends taking a step back to look at marketing as a whole: It's a business principle based on vision, simplicity and emotion, and there are three key drivers of how we will communicate in the future. The first of these is the rise of social, with consumers speaking back to us, always on, all the time. The second is big data and the ability for computer science to compress that data and use it to better personally communicate to consumers, with the third driver that of mobility, both tablets and smartphones as well as the cloud, where all of today's intelligence sits.

Scarcella concluded that all media technology is converging onto mobile, especially in Africa, yet marketers spend less than 5% of their time on this and creatives, less than 2%. No matter how technology may change, the purpose of marketing is to get people aware of your brand, to buy more of your product and to drive that premium. Digital simply compresses the process into a few clicks.

Finding your targeted customer with programmatic media buying: Paula Raubenheimer

Second keynote speaker of the second day of IMC, Paula Raubenheimer is MD of SouthernX. She says [programmatic media buying](#) isn't just something people are talking about, it's happening on a grand scale. As a marketer or advertiser, it doesn't need to be an area of confusion. Raubenheimer says you'll simply take your marketing goals, as well as inventory data and consumer data, select the most appropriate ad format and potential media buyers you'd like to reach. You input that into the software, then make decisions using multiple data points about the most effective strategy going forward, pinpointing the consumers you'd want to speak to in a perfect world.

Raubenheimer then elaborated on the value of programmatic without getting bogged down in the detail - it means you can avoid the spray and pray approach and get that much closer to your intended campaign results.

That's important because consumer behaviour is changing rapidly, so marketers need to ensure we have all the tools at our disposal to make informed decisions quickly, not only after many hours of manual analysis, many hours after the campaign has run.

Raubenheimer admits that within the digital media space there's been much talk of programmatic but its technicalities are confusing to most. That doesn't mean we should ignore it though, as it's gained much traction for the fact that it allows brands to make buying decisions immediately, based on a huge amount of learned data.



Raubenheimer in action

Honing your omnichannel content strategy: Mel Attree

Melissa Attree, director of content strategy at Ogilvy & Mather, was next at the podium. She spoke of using effective content strategy to strengthen campaigns and boost customer engagement in an omnichannel world. The state of the current customer and brand communication space is complex and sometimes messy, which has made it harder to create content that works seamlessly across different communication channels. That's why it's important to note that the way we create and distribute our stories will determine whether we are able to engage with customers in a long-lasting, relevant way or not.

Those customers have changed drastically in the past few years alone. For example, at any one time, a student may have two or three different cell phones on them. They use the iPhone to impress others and the Nokia if they're planning a night out where it may get lost. Of course they also know the different network specials and rates at any given time. This makes that much harder for marketers to cut through the clutter and distraction and get a relevant message across. Attree says "Don't simply slap a hashtag onto it all and assume it's going to get through," and she warns that the concept of second screening or 'TV+' is rubbish as we can't really multitask and simply split our attention across multiple devices.

Attree's advice going forward is to break down the internal company silos and instead form internal editorial teams to develop solutions that are customer-centric. This applies to all content you put out there; you need to make sure it actually adds value. Also note that collaboration is crucial, we need to work with people who are already good at this and treat it as you would a Hollywood deal, producing content with existing content creators so as to not waste time and money reinventing the communication wheel. The great thing about digital is that it offers us the space to change something, says Attree, adding that if the brief you started with is still the same at the end of the campaign, we have a problem as it must be dynamic.

She shared the example of how the Marriott hotels have moved into the publishing space with the [JacksGap collaborative movies](#) and [Two Bellmen movie](#) it set at the Marriott LA. This is just one example of how each and every business needs to start investing in content. We already use it all the time to communicate with customers, so let's take things a step further by making it central to all businesses.

The dancing elephant in the room: measurement with Tanya Bertram

Tanya Bertram, head of CRM and customer loyalty at OFyt, spoke of the importance of measuring the impact of marketing planning. From conversion funnels and sentiment scores to top boxes and reach frequency, she said it's safe to say today's big data economy and plethora of metrics can seem overwhelming, and that today we measure everything, just because we can.

Bertram says it's an exceedingly complex process in the absence of a single-view dashboard that connects the dots between the seemingly disparate metrics, which is why we need to remember that marketing is both a science and an art. We also need to debunk some of the myths around measurement for the sake of measuring, as it's all about ROMI or return on marketing investment.

6 pivotal questions to ask when you do ROMI

1. Do you know where your consumers are coming from?
2. Do you know what they're buying?
3. Do you know what they are doing?
4. Do you know how to find them?
5. Do you know what effect they have on others?
6. Do you know how long it'll take to change their behaviour?

Knowing the answers to these questions means you'll have an idea of where you are headed from the outset. It's a myth that you can only start counting in the next fiscal year or that there's anything wrong with guessing.

I wish I'd done that: creative inspiration with Adam Weber

Adam Weber, ECD of Joe Public, was the last speaker of the IMC conference, and he left us with some creative inspiration by talking through his creative history and favourite pieces of work.

Weber spoke of creative executioners - pointing out that the word 'execution' means both capital punishment and to carry into action, similarly creatives can kill an idea or bring it to life. But it's not an easy process, as he points out that for ideas to be carried into action, thick-skinned creatives must make it so clever and amazing that even the sharpest committees can find no fault with the work. Weber quoted Lee Clow, who said, "Make it smart, make it beautiful," but Weber adds that 'smart' creative work is neither complicated nor easy. At the end of the day, beautifully smart work should inspire just one response: 'I wish I'd done that'. His favourite example of this is the 'Simon the ogre' work by Thomson Holidays, embedded below:

Your brief? Keep it simple, make it smart, and use the data that's already out there to make sure it hits consumers where it has the most impact - right in the emotion.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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