

Let's not abandon the fundamentals of traditional marketing

 By [Percy Shangase](#)

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I am sure that many of you are exhausted (at hearing about 2020 and moving forward, but we cannot move forward without looking back), and yet would agree with me when I say 2020 is the year we should try to learn from despite business closures, retrenchments, erosion of market share and voice, retrenchments, unavoidable job losses, houses, and cars being repossessed by the financial institutions and the imminent drop in the standard of living.



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The government was caught pants down in this instance as they did not plan ahead post the payment holiday period, the moratoriums that were placed on bonds, and the leadership has been invisible to circumvent this debilitating turn of events for the people of South Africa.

This article is not about the politics of South Africa and does not intend going that route.

However, I would like to argue that starting a year with a renewed zeal, optimism and positivity would rub rather positively on both the consumer and the business landscape. All is not lost.

What we need to do is a repositioning of our mind-set, re-group, re-focus, and re-energise our individual and collective efforts in invigorating our brand/s essence, relevance, affinity, and ultimately the bottom line.

I remain resolute that only cool heads would yield positive results rather than irrational panic. Furthermore, I am under no illusion that we have historical and brands that are still at their embryonic stages (have not taken off and/or have taken off but have not reached the cruising altitude) that have an absolute responsibility to connect with customers effectively and consistently.

Now, more than ever, I would argue that experienced marketers, sales directors, strategists, media buyers and creative directors would need a helping hand in navigating this uncertain yet treacherous period in history. They need to be intentional in their efforts to harness insights infused multiple disciplinary marketing approach in connecting with their customers, who are shrinking owing to eroding discretionary spend.

The handful of people across industries and categories need to immerse themselves with experiential marketing, which will help create tangible/palpable memorable brand experiences coupled with ensuring authentic brand voices and effective/inclusive messaging. This, I humbly submit is non-negotiable.

Digital marketing cannot operate in absolute isolation from traditional marketing methods and yet ever-evolving, and traditional marketing methods cannot operate in isolation to marketing research. It would be the death of marketing as we know it if the perceived panacea is purely digital marketing because in most cases, it borrows from the "traditional" discipline.

Brands need to gravitate towards an enviable position to pivot their strategies that will ensure they remain connected, and relevant with their consumers. This could be effected without brands drowning in the sea of sameness of digital marketing.

I am not for a moment advocating to castigate digital marketing, however, I am throwing caution in the air that all role players should desist from believing that digital marketing is the "only" solution to the current marketing dilemma, but, it is part of the package in circumventing the eroding market share.

As I conclude, let us bear in mind that needs, desires, aspirations, and interests of consumers are dynamic and unique – thus, marketers and their stakeholders need to be poised with effective tools (a collaboration I might add) that will help them with practical projections skimmed from Insights and make well-informed decisions.

I have taken a sober decision to embrace the digital world in obtaining real value insights, yet the need for traditional marketing. Immersions, visual checks, fieldwork remains the core of marketing. I am not oblivious to the realities of the marginalised communities of this country, which digital strategies seem to conveniently forget.

**Note that Bizcommunity does not necessarily share the views of its contributors - the opinions and statements expressed herein are solely those of the author.*

ABOUT PERCY SHANGASE

Percy Shangase is the 1st Black person to win the Prestigious Alan Paton Literary Award. He runs a Marketing and Research Consultancy, despite living with a disability - below knee amputation, however he drives and flies wherever is necessary. He has an insatiable appetite and passion for Marketing meshed with Research and has elaborate experience spanning over 20 years. However, he fails to fathom why Marketing/Research spend are always the 1st to get chopped when market conditions are not conducive.

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