

Effective Measure on the future of SA's digital advertising landscape

 By Leigh Andrews

16 Jan 2017

Greg Mason took on the reigns as regional lead for sub-Saharan Africa at Effective Measure on 3 January. With two weeks in the role under his belt, I checked in to find out his plans over the coming months as well as a few digital and programmatic trends to expect from 2017.



Greg Mason

A decade of experience in digital marketing means you were there from its early days and have seen it stand on its own two feet. That's exactly what Greg Mason has done, having dabbled in display, search, mobile and social media marketing over the last nine years, with stints at MSN, BBC, CBS Interactive, Sky News, Sky Sports, Daily Mail, Times Live, Career Junction and various other leading local publishers. Most recently he worked at AddSuite after his own online ad sales house Mason Media's merger with the Olè Media Group, where he grew and managed the premium and programmatic sales across their bouquet of websites.

That's why he summarises his skills on [LinkedIn](#) as follows: "I have a deep understanding of the digital marketing eco system and understand the intricate roles publishers, ad sales houses and agencies play in working with leading brands to deliver holistic and successful digital marketing campaigns. He's thus well suited to his role as regional lead: sub-Saharan Africa at Effective Measure, which is the IAB SA's official audience measurement partner that helps advertisers and publishers understand and engage emerging market audiences

with its focus on audience measurement, consumer insights and audience data.

Understand and engage with your audience, or else...

Speaking of his new role, Mason says he's most looking forward to now being in a very strong position to directly influence and grow the digital advertising landscape in South Africa. On the importance of Effective Measure for digital publishers, he explains: "As it stands currently, advertising is paramount to any digital publisher commercialising their publication. In order to do this successfully, advertisers and publishers need to work closely together to send the right message to the right person at the right time and if possible in the right mind-set as well. This can only be done with intelligent data and Effective Measure is one of the global leaders in online audience measurement. This data adds extensive value for the publisher to be able to effectively commercialise their publication with digital advertising.

One way to make use of this is through Effective Measure's new Dashboard 2.0. It's designed to make audience data more accessible as well as more powerful and help your business as a result through a process of **reflection and projection**. This is a direct result of having made the dashboard's interface user-friendly and easy to use, whilst also adding new features that empower customers to use data in their businesses. Mason says the most outstanding thing about the new dashboard is how it challenges customers to be creative with data and to use it to take everything from campaign planning to competitor analysis to the next level, all as simple or sophisticated as you'd like.

Good news: The personal touch still trumps complete automation

Broadening the scope to the digital and programmatic trends we can look forward to from 2017, Mason says **programmatic media buying** will continue to grow aggressively, with more agencies and advertisers allocating a bigger

percentage of their budget to programmatic buys, and anywhere upwards of 20% to 25% of digital display budgets being allocated to programmatic media buys.

With this increase in programmatic media buys, Mason says savvy advertisers and buyers will naturally progress onto the next step of programmatic, which is **data**. More and more agencies and brands will make the shift to buy their digital display on an audience-centric model rather than a site-centric model. This means they'll be less concerned with what site their ad is showing on but rather that their ad is showing to an accurately profiled person who matched their target audience. Further to that, Mason says more publishers will begin to package and sell their audiences through trusted data management platforms.

But there's a caveat: Despite programmatic media buying being the new buzz, Mason says *publishers and advertisers alike will quickly realise that programmatic media buying cannot all be done with the click of a button behind a computer*. They will learn that **face-to-face dealings and account management** are key. He concludes, "Now that the scale of operations can be so much larger and happen so much faster with programmatic, it is more important than ever to work very closely with your suppliers, partners and clients to ensure each campaign runs smoothly and is optimised in real-time to achieve the results you are looking for."

Take that as both guidance and warning for the year ahead. You can follow Effective Measure and [@GregMasonSA](#) on Twitter, visit [their website](#) for more and connect with Mason on [LinkedIn](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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