The year of exciting consolidation

By Chris Moerdyk: @chrismoerdyk

9 Jan 2012

It would be singularly arrogant and just plain stupid of me to boast about the fact that nine of the 11 trends I predicted for 2011 were spot on. Quite simply because they were as predictable as the notion that Sundays are pretty much certain to be followed by Mondays [*aha, Rebecca Black taught you something... - managing ed*].

The two that I got wrong were:

"... newspapers will wake up to the fact that taking advantage of online is not just a question of reproducing their print products online? That was a massive mistake in the past and effectively just ended up with newspapers giving content away for free to the detriment of their print products. Newspapers will have to start re-assessing their online activities or simply go bust..."

I also suggested that 2011 would be the year in which print media would become more relevant. Wrong. Newspapers particularly are still being produced as though there were no such thing as the Internet, radio or social media.

So, let's look at marketing and media trends for 2012.

1. Marketing rationalisation

Picking up on the momentum set last year, increasing marketing rationalisation will take the form of "reality check" audits to review just how wisely and efficiently budgets are being spent and whether strategy is relevant to the 2012 marketplace.

2. Sponsorship rationalisation

A trend that started in 2010, in which major sponsors withdrew from events because they were simply not making financial or marketing sense, will continue in 2012. As I predicted last year, those gratuitous sponsorships which involves big sports deals to give top management and their clients the chance to attend big matches in luxury and comfort will continue to wane as the return on funds employed for this type of marketing is shown to be really quite bad.

3. **Continued growth of social media**

   Governments will become increasingly paranoid about the massive impact social media is having in terms of forcing transparency and despotic behaviour. Some will try and curtail its impact but clever governments will use it to their advantage. As I predicted last year, consumers will continue to resort more and more to sharing their purchase experiences with their personal networks and a growing number of consumer complaint websites.

4. **Online advertising will continue to grow**

   It's a no-brainer that online advertising will continue to make inroads into the advertising and marketing budget pies.

5. In-store marketing will continue to grow

   Just as it was last year, marketing - particularly FMCG - will be all about getting closer to the consumer: brand managers will look towards marketing strategies that involve closer contact with the consumer. In-store marketing, which started gaining impetus three years ago, will continue to grow apace as marketers choose face-to-face strategies over faceless shotgun approaches.

6. **The start of changes in television**

   This might be a bit premature but we could see the start of a trend in 2012 where the big TV networks start realising that the existing paradigm, which is based primarily on delivery mechanisms, will inevitably have to give way to a focus on content creation and aggregation. The advent of Apple TV, Netflix and other TV content resources will start to see a few more South Africans applying to the SABC for the cancellation of their TV licences as they start watching their favourite programmes online.

7. **The gadget wars will heat up**

   It is entirely predictable that gadgets, particularly those in the mobile communications and gaming sectors, will continue to mesmerise global consumers. It is going to be the old VHS vs Betamax battle enhanced a thousand times as mobile operating systems slug it out for pole position. I am tempted to suggest that 2012 might well be the year where the world's obsession with iPhones and iPads starts to wane in the light of other manufacturers catching up with Apple, but for the time being it is going to take a cockup of cataclysmic proportions by Apple to knock itself off its perch.

8. **Classical advertising continues**

   TV channels will continue to be well-supported in terms of advertising for the time being. With ad agencies still looking at the production of TV commercials as a primary source of income generation and with South Africa's brand managers still egoistically obsessed with the 30-second commercial, there will be little change in this arena in spite of marketing audits showing some very dodgy return on investment numbers.

9. **Online shopping will grow bigger**

As I predicted last year, the trend towards more South Africans buying stuff online from all over the world will increase as connectivity improves and becomes more affordable. Once consumers start realising that online shopping is now a lot more secure they'll start picking up on the fact that a lot of products are cheaper online than they are in local shops - even including import duties and door-to-door deliveries. Retailers and especially book stores will have to start rethinking their business modelling [*ah, Loot.co.za, how do I love thee? Let me count the ways... - managing ed*].

10. **Cheaper bandwidth**

    It is also fairly predictable that the costs of internet access will continue to reduce both in the face of stiff competition and a realisation that SA cannot continue to be the most expensive country in the world with regard to online activity.

11. **Faster internet**

    It is also entirely predictable that, in most urban areas, download speeds will increase fairly steadily - although there are still far too many areas that rely on questionable 3G products and Telkom's corroding copper wires that make messaging a lot quicker by using a street urchin with a forked stick.

12. eBooks

It is also certain that more and more books will be published and read in digital format in spite of die-hards claiming that there is nothing to beat the touch and feel of as real book. They will argue that point until they actually try something like a Kindle and find out that the difference between it and the real thing is minimal.

For more:

- Bizcommunity Special Section: Biz Trends 2012 - sponsored by Aegis Media
- Bizcommunity Search: 2012 trends
- Bizcommunity: Biz Trends 2012 twitterfall
- Twitter Search: #biztrends2012

ABOUT CHRIS MOERDYK: @CHRISMOERDYK

Apart from being a corporate marketing analyst, advisor and media commentator, Chris Moerdyk is a former chairman of Bizcommunity. He was head of strategic planning and public affairs for BMW South Africa and spent 16 years in the creative and client service departments of ad agencies, ending up as resident director of Lindsay Smithers-FCB in KwaZulu-Natal. Email Chris on moerdykc@gmail.com and follow him on Twitter at @chrismoerdyk.

- Covid-19 boosts trust in traditional mass media - 21 Jul 2020
- Don't listen to the post-corona marketing hysteria - 17 Jun 2020
- Let's talk about marketing after corona - 15 May 2020
- Will the mass media learn anything from Covid-19? - 28 Apr 2020
- Covid-19: Secure online advice, mentoring and workshop facilitating - 23 Mar 2020

View my profile and articles...