

Marketing 101 in the age of the consumer broadcasting

Issued by [icandi CQ](#)

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icandi communications (Pty) Ltd recently attended the IMC (Integrated Marketing Conference) in Johannesburg and after listening to almost 20 hours of speaker sessions, outlining the latest industry trends, there's much to say.

Just take Google, Diesel Island, 30 Seconds to Mars and the Johnny Cash Project, and see how online and offline activities are integrated to build brands, fans and products. Then take a deep breath and enjoy the rollercoaster ride.

We're talking Web 2.0 as a key component of the business and marketing strategy. It's a 'can't-do-without' part of the new media mix. It's basically multi-media and 'word-of-mouth' on steroids. It's live, online, 24/7. The 5P's are more fragmented, and the customer is king. Again.

Client and agency marketers must collaborate for a richer result. The show is not just the TV Ad, it's a creative concept that's compelling, entertaining and stretches over and through traditional and online media. The message and the brand is consistent, but nothing is static. It's not a series of campaigns. It's a continuous marketing entity that evolves as the business twists and turns. Navigating technology from one medium, site or device to another must be simple, seamless and satisfying.

What's making everyone sit up are the sheer numbers of people networking or broadcasting online (600 million on Facebook worldwide and 50 million mobiles in SA alone) and the speed with which an idea can spread.

In December 2010, the power of homegrown online activism through Facebook and Twitter was an instrumental factor that propelled Tunisians to take to their streets and eventually [led to the ousting of Ben Ali](#).

No one has control over what content people share. For companies, it's time to LISTEN. The customer is now the audience and the broadcaster, what they blog or tweet is the media that they create... and the company must integrate.

Businesses working in this framework use a central, live 'dashboard' of analytic data tools which track and measure the online conversations. The business then makes or changes messages and reorganises resources to meet campaign or crisis challenges as they happen.

Staff are also consumers, using their mouths and their mobiles, and are becoming a critical part of the integrated marketing operation.

This new terrain is tricky. So get educated. Get Experts. Get the money, and do it properly. Customers and consumers no longer trust marketing 'speak'. If you insult them with shoddy work, creatively or technically, you run the risk of reputation damage. But commit to them and they'll become your fans and they won't begrudge you your price. That's marketing 101! Has anything really changed?

For more contact kim@icandi.co.za.

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