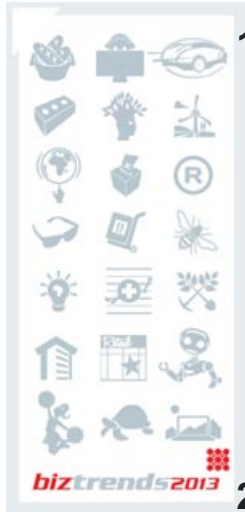


SA's youth trend-o-meter

 By [HDI Youth Marketeers Team](#)

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Young South Africa is savvier than ever before. If you are looking for a smart and discerning [prosumer](#), this group of kids, teens and young adults will give you more kicks than you've ever bargained for. They know just what they are looking for from any brand, and this makes them that much more satisfying to please. Here are a few trends to look out for in 2013.



1. Social'cise

Exercise has become fun and nobody is lapping it up quite like the youth. The aim is no longer solely to tone up and keep fit, but it's also now a novel way of having fun with friends. Nike woke up to this phenomenon quite early, and is reaping the benefits of this with two [Nike Run Jozis](#) in Johannesburg already.

In 2013, we'll see even more running apps popping up as more people join the movement. Apps such as [Nexercise](#) and [Fitocracy](#) take it even a step further, offering discounts to customers based on their workout records.

2. Say "i"

BlackBerry has seen some great times in the South African market [*and let's see what happens now that [BlackBerry 10](#) has launched!* - *Biz Trends Report editor*]. Although still stable in terms of local sales, Apple products are now the most sought-after commodities among the youth.

Though many are still far removed from any likelihood of owning any of these products, all echelons of tech savvy youth are extremely tuned in to their capabilities and attractive product offering and, with each new release, desire grows - interestingly, for the badge value of the bitten fruit insignia, as much as anything it delivers. Many youths would trade their left arms for a bite of that Apple.

3. Photomania

It's all about the snaps this year. The fascination with photography seems insatiable, with close to 30 billion photos being posted to Facebook in 2011 alone. And competing smartphone apps are helping fuel the hype.

With [Instagram](#) making waves in the iPhone, and recently Android, markets, BlackBerry launched [PicMix](#). In addition to that, for each of these popular apps, there are a number of other apps that can be downloaded to enhance their use. It's all about the pouts, and treated modelesque photography.

Suddenly, everyone is a professional photographer, and you no longer have to spend thousands on a good camera. Not to mention that an edit suite is also now in the palm of your hand.

4. (Accessible) fashion expressionists

Although shopping is increasingly perceived as a hobby by youth, rather than a necessity, fashion and dress are becoming a high intensity art form for the youth, rather than just the tail end of a shopping adventure.

On the one hand, this cross-gender, cross-race phenomenon plays into the hands of retailers such as [Mr Price](#),

which has managed to level the playing field: rich or poor, it provides fun, value clothing for all.

On the other hand, the advent of clothing auctions, second-hand hanger events and clothes swops gives youth the opportunity to purchase items they would otherwise not be able to afford. With the upswing in vintage, it's no longer about how much your item of clothing costs, but all about how fashionable it is, and how good it looks on you. After all, in the words of 16-year-old Kim from Johannesburg, "Money can't buy you style."

5. My music, our music

Nigeria created a great example of an African country that shows "love" for its local artists. Findings, which came out of polling 1000 Nigerian youths, resulted in the Coolest Musician (male or female) category, with seven of the top 10 artists being Nigerian, and eight out of the top 10 African.

In South Africa, a similar trend is finally growing in popularity, with local artists coming into their own. This phenomenon can be traced to local stars receiving international respect - looking at the success of [Die Antwoord](#), Tumi of [Tumi and the Volume](#), [Thandiswa Mazwai](#), [The Parlotones](#) and [Freshlyground](#), to name but a few.

User-generated music is also on the up, especially with male under-23s, who are using technology to share their own musical creations.

6. Eating iKasi

Although the KFCs and Nando's of Mzansi have a stronghold on the takeaway food market, we are going to see the increase of availability in so-called "Kasi" foods. The number of [Chisa Nyamas](#) is speedily on the rise, and even KFC has jumped onto the bandwagon (albeit slowly), with its offering of pap as an alternative to chips.

7. Real reality

Reality TV was introduced to SA silver screens a number of years ago, with the debut of international reality shows on the paid TV front. Following soon after that came the dawn of SA reality shows, based entirely on their licensed American franchises. Last year, SA audiences enjoyed their eighth season of Idols South Africa, second season of Come Dine with Me, and the very first of Masterchef South Africa.

A trend which was locally started by [Nonhle Thema](#), local reality shows are now a reality for all SA viewers. Where previously, this form of entertainment was only available on paid for TV stations, e.tv and SABC have followed suit with providing shows for their audiences such as "Rolling with Kelly Khumalo" and a show rumoured to be coming up on one of the SABC channels - "Housewives of Soweto".

8. Real-time marketing

More than ever before, the expectation among youth is that brands will respond to their queries, complaints and interest within minutes. Waiting 24 hours for a brand to revert with feedback is slacking in the eyes of these millennials.

If a brand insists on leveraging social media networks, they had better be able to back it up. Automated and delayed responses are unacceptable in the eyes of these prosumers.

9. e-Motional

Facebook friends are not regarded as real friends and this year we'll see a growing consciousness emerge among

20-somethings over the value of meaningful friendships vs online ones.

We'll also see a growth of internet dating in this market, too, as online dating sites are used more frequently to develop relationships.

10. Health cam'pains

Young urbanites are inundated with campaigns instructing them to eat healthily, avoid peer pressure, practice safe sex, etc.

Campaigns that leave a paper trail of posters become wallpaper. Brands that really want to reach beyond the 2D surface and aim to actually activate behavioural change are in a better position to have real impact... HDI's 360-degree [You Decide campaign](#), aimed at curbing underage drinking, is an example of the success of a multifaceted approach.

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ABOUT HDI YOUTH MARKETEERS TEAM

Jason Levin is MD, Jessica Costhuizen is writer and analyst and Mokebe Thulo is communications and publicity manager for HDI Youth Marketeers (www.hdiyouth.co.za). All three spend their time deepening their understanding of what makes young South Africans tick. Contact Jason, Jess and Mokebe on tel +27 (0)11 706 6016. Email Jason@hdiyouth.co.za, Jessica@hdiyouth.co.za or Mokebe@hdiyouth.co.za. On Twitter, follow [@HDIYouth](#) and [@mokebe](#).
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