

Challenges of marketing, branding in this day and age

 By [Terry Levin](#)

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How does one market and brand in 2009 when faced with at least 400 local websites on which you can place an ad, as well as 36 terrestrial channels, YouTube, podcasts, Facebook, radio, newspaper, magazine, mobile and sundry outdoor media options?



Dale Unstead and Jenny Pheiffer, brand police for Standard Bank

This was the question posed by Japie Swanepoel of longtail in his keynote address to those of us attending the Marketing, Branding and Web Optimisation Conference held by Syncom Business Intelligence in Sandton last month.

At first glance, what do marketers at the branding coalface such as Lyndsay Webster-Rozon, who has been responsible for expertly driving the recent Pick n Pay rebranding exercise, or Jenny Pheiffer, who steers the proudly African identity of Standard Bank on a global level, have in common with die-hard digital players such as Arthur Goldstuck or Mobione's Brett St Clair?

Answer: The need to find ways to connect and engage with their target audiences in meaningful and added value ways. Even in 2009 and beyond, no amount of digital smoke and mirrors is going to obscure the fact that there is still no substitute in marketing for the big idea, sound business models and motivated brand teams.

In addition, according to international trade consultant Richard Zurba, speaking on the second day of the two-day event, South Africa is ideally poised via its geographical position on the Indian ocean rim to act as a knowledge portal to India, Australia, the UAE and SADEC countries!

Household media figurine, Deborah Patta, added to the knowledge bank by unpacking the evolution and identity of the e.tv brand.



Shikaar Juglall and Joanne Balwanth with Deborah Patta of e.tv.jpg

The take out of the conference overall: that media, whether digital, mobile or traditional, are the means by which marketers can and must make meaningful connections and relationships with their target markets - in this a single theme becomes apparent - that it is incumbent on both the media and the marketer to have clearly focused identities that will make it easier for consumers and advertisers faced with unlimited goods and channels - to choose yours!



Brett St Clair of Mobione

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