

The case for tailor-made campaigns

 By [Charlie Wannell](#)

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Radio promotions are a lot more than buying a spot schedule on a local radio station. So what is the art of a tailor-made radio campaign?

Urban consumption is different: constant choice, abundance and never-ending newness make urban consumers and listeners more sophisticated, more demanding and more mature. This is the trend of URBANOMICS and it makes the case for tailoring your brand campaign to your chosen radio station more relevant than ever before.

In our current landscape radio is still rarely seen as a standalone medium within the marketing mix of brand campaigns. Therefore creative and buying agencies tend to plan their radio using current currency tools such as RAMS and sometimes AMPS to determine which stations best deliver against their target market from a demographic perspective. The same generic creative is then often placed on all these stations.

These tools, however, do not account for the listener nuances and psychographic differences offered by radio stations in South Africa which offer a huge opportunity for advertisers wanting to create differentiation and noise in the market. This is especially true for products where there is a lot of parity amongst its competitors.

Small number of regional commercial radio stations

In mature radio markets, such as the UK and US, stations are sold against numbers because of the sheer number of stations and listeners making tailor made campaigns difficult and cumbersome.

In South Africa we still have a relatively small number of regional commercial radio stations as well as a limited number of media owner groups which leave brands with scope to work with these stations to build campaigns that can effectively and powerfully target communities within listener groups.

There are many case studies available abroad confirming that customised radio promotions are effective. In South Africa there are brands, agencies and media owners who work hard at customising radio promotions and are having success at it. But there are still many advertisers who see the tailoring of radio promotions as a difficult to do, frustrating and as "the job of the agency".

In 2012 however, consumers are savvier than ever and the need for return on investment is at its peak. It is important for brands to get to know different station formats in their catchment area and to build relationships with the media owners to ensure every media Rand is capitalised on. By sharing insights into the brand, its usage and consumers, the media owner

is in a better position to come up with solutions that can be tailored to those specific needs. Media owners in turn have the responsibility to ensure that they share listener and station insights and build the trust with brands by offering solutions that are accountable.

'Flying Blind' promotions

Often clients are in a rush to get their campaign on air which results in 'Flying Blind' promotions. By going solely on their beliefs of the brand's customers and their demographics, advertisers will certainly experience wastage and missed opportunities.

Case studies have shown that data tracking is a crucial element to planning a successful radio campaign and in the absence of direct response measured against each station (such as a dedicated SMS line), post campaign analysis as well as in campaign tracking is important. Media owners need to provide advertisers with recordings of on air moments, SMS stats and any other feedback that could build a post campaign.

What should you keep in mind to plan a successful radio promotion? Take the time to brainstorm. Take the time to share and disseminate information from all sides that could possibly assist the campaign. And most important - build solid relationships with media owners and the radio stations.

ABOUT CHARLIE WANNELL

A stint outside the advertising world saw Charlie own her own "Scrapbooking" business. But the excitement of advertising and radio continued to call and she returned to Radmark in 2010 as Marketing Manager. Her most current challenge was to assist in redefining a mature radio business to a more future-oriented multi-channel organisation called Mediamark - specialising in radio as well as digital with a view to other media areas.

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