

Making technology work for brands

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#) 23 May 2016

Brands need to find ways to add usefulness in their customers' lives beyond their product.



Pete Case

[Pete Case](#), chairman of Gloo and chief creative officer of Ogilvy South Africa, says brands need to ask what other connection, beside the product/sales pitch can they make with their customer.

“The reason why brands are having to ask themselves how they can create an advantage for themselves and for the consumer is because of technology, but it is also how agencies can add value to their clients,” he says.

For example, [client KFC](#) has 850 stores, each with its own configuration, audience and stock levels changes throughout the day. “By using a system to control the menu board at any time of day to account for stock level changes on a store-by-store basis, we were able to add value to the client,” explains Case.

Agencies can also help brands connect to their consumers by creating more engagements, he says. In 2014 Sky launched smart TV. Trials have been run connecting the smart boxes to the internet, which give a history of segments which, in turn allows brands to target certain segments.

Big data insights

“Imagine what this could do for TV. Of the advertisements aired using this information, there was a 48% decrease in channel-hopping between channels. This technology also opens up the medium of TV for smaller brands.”

Data on its own is inefficient, he says and only when data is used to gain insights does it become impactful. “For example New York, Uber, gave one billion taxi rides but it was the patterns that come out of this number that are interesting. It is on through insights and then overlaying these with great storytelling that data becomes impactful.”

He adds that the data needs to be seen as useful in driving the initial brief – a thinking he does not believe is utilised enough in agencies. “Using data, British Airways gained the insight that young Indian people travel home to see their parents. A brand was then created to create a campaign for young people to visit their parents and this led to the most beautiful stories about young people going home to see parents.”

Brands will need their data and technology to come together with their marketing function. While they are closer to getting this right internationally, it's still a battle locally, adds Case.

Overseas, self-scanning technology is a big trend. “The customer walks in with their trolley, self-scans the products, self-

serves and checks out. This is empowering the customer to do the job themselves, minimising the cost of human interaction and adding efficiencies to the price point for the customer,” he explains.

The anti-smartphone

On the flip side, technology is not brilliant for everything and large numbers of people are revolting against it. As a result, a phone has been developed that can only take and receive phone calls – essentially an anti-smartphone.



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“Remember, as brands and marketers we need to be cognisant that overloading our audience with technology can be quite damaging. Embrace technology to enhance your brand but do not get too caught up in it,” he cautions.

The massive change that technology is enabling means it is an amazing time to be in advertising. “At the same time this change is so huge, such as big data, that it is daunting. So much so that clients and agencies metaphorically shut down as they are unsure of where to start.”

Case was a speaker at the recent Marketing Mix 2020 Vision-Marketing Megatrends SA conference, held at the Bryanston Country Club.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

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