

Engaging with connected consumers - Part 3

By  Danette Breitenbach

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Marketers have to think about innovative ways to use social and the internet and how to engage in conversations that push your brand and earn triggers...

In the last of this three-part series, *Connected Life*, a leading global study from TNS, of the digital attitudes and behaviours of over 55,000 internet users across 50 countries, exploring how technology is transforming the lives of consumers across the world, the path to purchase is examined.



"How consumers connect and engage with brands has changed and consumers are part of our marketing message. But not all consumers are equal, and some are more equal than others," says Aggrey Maposa, Regional Director, TNS Connect Africa, Middle East and Mediterranean.

This is where the four segments (from [Part 1 of this series](#)) come in - Observers, the Connectors, the Leaders, and the Functionals, he explains. For example, the Leaders will push a viral campaign by discussing it. They will start the conversation and their connections (Functionals) the conversation and his connections (Functionals) will pick up on this and broadcast it.

Marketers must understand...

"The different roles of consumers online must be understood by marketers. People who talk more in the social space are important to marketers and change the marketing model."

In our part of the world, people also want more from brands; they expect more. This gives brands the opportunity to provide branded content and the clever brands are the ones who will do it first before consumers complain, he says. "Consumers want to engage with brands to make their lives easier."

Marketing has become more complex, but relevance is still the heart of marketing.

E-commerce has low presence, but if consumers are going to shop online, they need to be relevant to the consumers in this space.

Maposa states simply: "Putting your catalogue online is not going to work."

Three principles

He says if marketers want consumers to shop online then they need to speak to the heart of consumers through three principles:

- Shopping online must save them money
- It must save them time
- It must lower their level of frustration with the process

"Until online retailers provide solutions to overcome these three things, consumers are not going to become online shoppers." His point is that online shopping is not as easy for consumers as it sounds to marketers.

Create moments

South Africa is in the second state (Trust) of a four stage (Access, Trust, Experience and Price) process when it comes to online shopping. Therefore, many South Africans are actively searching, but very few are actively searching for price and then buying, and this, he says, is what we need to address.

Maposa suggests marketers create moments for consumers. "Marketers can achieve this by linking the brand's loyalty card to the consumer's mobile and credit card. While the initial registration might be a bit painful, the result is a simple easy and painless transaction. A good example of this is Starbucks, where you swipe your mobile in-store when you buy your coffee."

The reality is that there are also certain products that are better offline, he adds. "Therefore, marketers must have an integrated marketing solution. We are marketing in the age of digital and so realise that consumers have different lives offline to online. We need to integrate that. Start online, and finish offline and vs to fit into their lives."

[Read Engaging with connected consumers - Part 1](#)

[Read Engaging with connected consumer - Part 2](#)

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from VMts.

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