

Digital media, TV fight for audiences



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Recent statistics show that an average person spends about 14 hours per week watching TV, and spends the same amount of time online. Digital media's share of worldwide advertising has almost doubled from 8% in 2008 to 15% in 2009. These figures show that there is no turning back in the world of digital media, which experts believe has proven to be a catalyst in the current socio-economic revolution.

Shifting power

"Mobile internet, for instance, is the biggest driver of social change in human history," Motribe co-founder Vincent Maher said, speaking today, 9 September 2010, at the Snackable Digital Content conference hosted by Microsoft SA in Bryanston, Johannesburg.

"Digital media has given way to marketing flux, child literacy, ambient intimacy and access to knowledge that has shifted power. It has also reinvented politics and established news as a cultural currency," he added.

"Even a child can now understand that the digital world and the physical world co-exist in our generation.

"It is harder nowadays to cover up a political or environmental mess as BP found out because almost everyone is digitally connected."

Maher added: "The potential to empower is now far greater due partly to the concept of transparency that has begun to settle in our world.

Changing society

"Location is now elastic. Content is no longer consumed in one place. Location changes, rapidly, and adds an unpredictable context of consumption."

London-based Justin Dewhirst said his company, MSN, has embraced the digital media because of the audiences and its potential to change society. "This is a medium that has started to come together just like any other medium," he declared.

Dewhirst is MSN regional executive producer for Europe, Middle East and Africa. MSN has partnered this year with South Africa-based Kagiso Media in the quest to marry global expertise to local expertise and deliver 'relevant' digital content to local users.

"What MSN is looking for is a long term outlook, growing digital footprint and media expertise. And what Kagiso can deliver is, among others, deeply local media expertise and a commercial media experience."

Digital advertising, on the rise

It is reported that by 2013, digital advertising that targets new consumer behaviour will account for almost one-fifth of global advertising revenues, a proof that digital media is beginning to emerge as a force to be reckoned with in this fast-changing socio-economic environment.

Maier said: "Media depth plus technology strength equal to a winner. Kagiso-MSN is then a win-win venture that is going to put more of the relevant content at the hands of local users."

MSN runs through 46 countries, and has 421 million users worldwide and boasts more than 600 content partners.

ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

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