

level the playing field against the consumer and counter act showrooming and other cell phone related trends. Empowering staff with the latest product and service trends, product knowledge, pricing information and other key data is going to be priceless.

According to CEO of Ambient Insight, Tyson Greer, Africa now represents a lucrative opportunity for suppliers, and Ambient Insight have revised its previous forecasts significantly upward for most African countries for three major reasons. "First, there are far reaching academic digitisation programs underway in every country in this report. Second, the sharp rise in online higher education enrolments in Africa is nothing short of astonishing, and finally, we are seeing a spike in the uptake of e-learning in the corporate segment, particularly in the booming economies."

Following a recent survey, revenue from e-learning projects in Africa is expected to surge to more than US\$512 million by 2016, and according to Greer, "E-learning projects and products that will generate the highest revenue in Africa throughout the forecast period relate to packaged content."

3. Meaningful gamification:

For me this is already a part of our lives, the plethora of loyalty programmes competing for a space in our wallets (soon to be mobile wallets) is a prime example. We are all playing a giant game to earn more points so we can get better rewards. I think the challenge here is how to create staff or shopper/consumer relevance and excitement with so many offerings that are out there. It is important to get beyond the buzzword.

The Primedia Group is one great example of driving this internally. With 49 different companies getting different individual staff members to engage and embrace company values can be a challenge. The team launched an interactive online portal to encourage innovation and participation by posting challenges from relevant businesses. Employees were then rewarded for their levels of participation and if their ideas were selected. The results speak for themselves with six major challenges posted during the year and a phenomenal 2157 ideas received.

Alicia Fiorlette, associate editor of Retail Touchpoints, reckons the global gamification market is worth approximately US\$100 million and could be worth US\$2.8 billion by 2016.

"Gamification in retail is turning typical retail customer behaviour - purchasing, visiting a website or store, or signing up for a newsletter - into elements of a game where customers receive tangible or symbolic rewards for their participation in this game," says Scott Silverman, co-founder and VP of Marketing for Ifeelgoods, a virtual goods solution provider.

"I would expect that at least half of all national retailers will consciously employ gamification strategies in the next two to three years. The majority of retailers we're talking to today are exploring gamification; it's also a big topic for senior executives. They are in the process of finding the right application to bring it to their business."

4. Authenticity:

This is a personal observation (based on being privileged enough to work in the retail environment and for a mall division that has relationships with over 70 malls in South Africa). I think shoppers are yearning for authenticity. It's almost an opposite effect of technology for me, we are yearning to go back the village days when you asked you butcher for the best cut of meat and fisherman for the catch of the day. I think this will go to another level in 2014. Brands and retailers that embrace this and the experiential component of their business will benefit.

My reasoning behind this is based on the massive increases in authentic retail experiences. Food markets are a great example, there are now more than ever and many offer a world-class and truly authentic experience. Micro-breweries is another example. Safe and secure mountain bike parks (with food, fruit and vegetable, garden nursery additions) and store within store concepts with butcheries, bakeries, fisheries and coffee shops are more examples. It's

everywhere, you just have to look.

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ABOUT DOUG MAYNE

Doug Mayne, MD of Primedia Lifestyle, founded his marketing and advertising career at Ogilvy Durban, where his leadership qualities ensured his progression from account executive to group account director. Joining Primedia Lifestyle in 2007 as KZN regional marketing manager, Doug was appointed MD in July 2011. His particular area of interest is the digital and CRM space within retail, and the use of mobile, social and loyalty tools to drive customer engagement and personalised retail experiences. Website www.primedialifestyle.co.za.

- [Trends 2015] It's not all about the money - 6 Feb 2015
- Retailers need to get real - 26 Mar 2014
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