

It's time to socialise



By Ashraf Garda: [@ashrafgarda1](#)

25 Jan 2011

The following list of 2011 media and marketing trends, plus one wish, has been informed by the various interactions I have with guests, media personalities, creative directors, digital marketers and consumers of media and marketing on my [Media@SAfm](#) radio show.



1. Stand-up comedians as social/political commentators:

Comedians are being taken a lot more seriously- both in their endorsing of products and in delivering a message to an audience. I foresee a growing trend of these funny people passing judgment on politicians with impunity, in a way talk show hosts or political reporters cannot do. Soon political parties will cotton on to their value and will be signing them up to knock out the opposition, all for fun. Trevor Noah's Cell C collaboration has paved the way for the blurring of lines

2. Wikileaks:

The Wikileaks cables have proved very embarrassing for diplomats around the world. I foresee diplomats now ensuring that all discussions are minuted and agreed by all parties -getting an official on-the-record transcript may be easier than stopping any cover ups, now that the Wikileaks information dyke has truly opened. Also expect a flood of Wikileaks copycats, which will be fuelled by the public and the media's naturally inquisitive nature

3. Bizcards:

Business cards or name cards will be experiencing the first signs of a slow death. With applications to mobile phones already providing contact lists and South African company IMPI now finally providing BlackBerry users with business card capability, I foresee a surge in database updates via mobile data transfer, with all the bells and whistles of a traditional business card. The Japanese must be cringing at the thought.

4. Integrated advertising:

The drive towards convergence will continue to grow rapidly, and marketers and ad agencies will find themselves pressured to do so.

5. Converged sales teams:

With the emphasis on convergence, account executives will need to multitask, too. An account executive in radio will have to have a sound knowledge of mobile marketing and social networking marketing, as well as print and visual, to make a mark on media planners. Campaigns cannot be viewed in isolation. The days of Jack-of-one-trade-in-media sales are over.

6. Twitter as a news medium:

Twitter has experienced a rapid growth as a deliverer of news to the newsrooms in real time. But the mass retweeting of the rumour of the death of former South African president Nelson Mandela proved embarrassing. Twitter will have to look at ways to filter tweets - particularly when it concerns world leaders and political hotspots. Failing that, it will lose

credibility with more tweeters pushing for immortality by prematurely killing off world leaders.

7. Social networking tutorials:

School teachers are becoming Facebook friends of their learners. I see this trend increasing, with even school principals finally realising the need to communicate to learners in their space. Official School Facebook pages will become the norm.

8. Social networking lessons:

And this leads me to the next step in the school/learner relationship: I can see tutorials actively promoted and workshopped by teachers through social networking sites such as Facebook and Mxit. Time to take the medium seriously!

9. Talk show call-in:

Radio stations will come under pressure to hold callers to talk shows more accountable. A trend has developed where callers have become unaccountable on-air activists, doing their on-air toyi-toying with up to three - and maybe four - different radio stations in one day. While their right to voice their opinion has to be maintained, it cannot come at the expense of a quality interview.

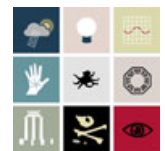
10. Social networking activists:

2011 will see an increase in social networking activists - the Woolworths Christian books row and the political change in Tunisia are examples of this. The public's share of voice will grow, leaving companies which ignore the sheer force of social media vulnerable to huge reputation loss. Expect growth in social media consultancies converging with PR and reputation management companies

11. The double editorial:

This is on my 2011 wish list rather than a trend: I look forward to the day when competing newspapers carry the editorial of other newspapers alongside it, all in the name of nation-building . For example, *Beeld* newspaper carries an editorial supporting labour brokers and publishes the *Sowetan's* opposing editorial view alongside it. This should help polarised South Africans understand each other a little bit more than we do.

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I host the Special Assignment Investigative Journalism show Thursday 9.30pm on SABC 3 - and I present the Media@SAfm show - Sundays 9-11am as well as Afternoon Talk on SAfm Radio weekdays 2-4 pm.

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