

# Your customers are your business model

By [Chris Swanepoel](#)

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Increasingly, customers are engaging with brands remotely - this is the age of online shopping and deliveries, with apps and online services making it increasingly easy for customers to buy and consume without leaving their homes.



Getty

Seemingly, this development poses a threat to businesses that are built around in-store experiences. The challenge is to retain brand recognition and resonance alongside what may seem like a trend that naturally separates brand and customer. However, 'delivery' channels do not need to mean 'distance'.

Nando's prides itself on its restaurant design and physical customer experience that is representative of our love for and support of South African art, design, and visual creativity in general. Naturally, we want people to visit our restaurants.

However, with the rise of the digital space, all businesses need to ensure that the principles that go into creating inviting and visually coherent locations are applied to all contact points with customers, however new and non-traditional they may be.



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As customers visit restaurants and stores less and less, brand resonance and alignment becomes more and more important and also more challenging. From operations as big as Nando's to small businesses in the community, the customer and their needs must always dictate direction – if the customer wants to stay at home, we need to meet them there in a way that our brand comes right along with us.

Change is inevitable, but progress is a choice. In the fourth industrial revolution, it is our response to change that defines us. We need to remain relevant, customer-driven and, always, consistent and recognisable. In short, customers and the way things are done to meet them may change, but the brand need not, and should never, lose its visibility and essence.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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