

The Year of Happy

 By [Janet Kinghorn](#)

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From #100happydays to Pharrell Williams 24hoursofhappy.com, 2014 might well be dubbed the Year of Happy. But social media aside, what will all this happiness mean for branding? Making consumers feel something will become the ultimate challenge. And it's not all warm and fuzzy. Your actions will speak a lot louder than words (or a new logo)!

Here are my key predictions to help navigate this emotional space:

1. Curate before you create

We have so much already, could this be the year where we utilise what we have already created and use it better? Brands should look to their existing equities instead of completely overhauling their identities for the sake of change.

2. The fear factor

Will your brand survive dark marketing, more legislations and social media? Having a strong brand purpose will become more valuable than a nice logo, identity or piece of packaging.

Transparency will make or break you as consumers make their decisions on the good that you do, not the good that advertising creates for you.

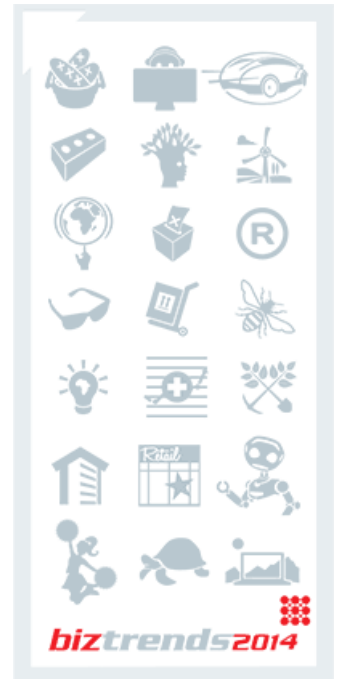
3. Big data - More is less

You have all the information, but is it the right information? With so much research and analytics, the element of chance (humanity) is becoming less and less. Knowing where someone lives doesn't mean you know who they are. Successful brands understand that human insights are more valuable than computer generated data.

4. Smart brands

Everything is becoming smarter; smartphones, smart technology. How will your brand become smarter this year?

Will you be able to seamlessly integrate your brand into the life of your customer - from pack to ad to product to service delivery? Brand experiences will connect your customers not just physically but emotionally to your brand.



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Janet Kinghorn is executive creative director at Brand Union Africa. Over the years she has worked on many of South Africa's most iconic brands like SAB, SAA, and Standard Bank, Johnson and Johnson, coca cola and Nike. In 2011 she was voted onto the Brand Council of South Africa (@BrandCouncilSA), where she is proud to be a part of helping our industry know the true value of brands and branding. Follow @beginmyhead.
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