

Transforming an industry that thrives on reinvention

The advertising industry has been at the cutting edge of creativity and innovation for many years. There are differences of degree between agencies but most if not all pride themselves on their creativity.

 By [Richard Clarke](#) 10 Jun 2003

Transforming the inequality and inequities that were bequeathed by the previous regime is a subject that has caused much debate within the industry.

Neo Mashigo is in advertising because he watched campaigns aimed at yet never reaching his market. He is deeply convinced that there are nuances in hitting or missing a target market and if you don't understand the market and live in it you cannot hit the spot.

He says that advertising must be interesting and entertaining not just full of messages. The challenge that drives him is selling campaigns across different media and target market segments.

His favourite campaign that he has been involved in so far is the Cell C one that included outdoor billboard in townships that spoke to the market in the township vernacular.

It sounds so simple and yet this broke new ground in the industry and forced others to sit up and take notice.

The critical factor that he adds to an agency is an insight into a massive market that most people in positions of authority in the industry do not grasp and many don't know how much they don't know.

There are obstacles involved in the transformation process and yet for an industry that prides itself on creativity and innovation these should line up as challenges.

One of the biggest problems is the lack of positions available for graduates that have set their sights on a career in advertising.

Levelling the playing fields in an industry where there is little if any employment growth is tricky. Maybe the answers will come from the next generation of people that are currently learning the ropes as copywriters.

Answers that redefine and re-grow the relevance of advertising and avoid treading water and simply fighting over existing clients.

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ABOUT RICHARD CLARKE

Richard Clarke founded Just Ideas, an ideas factory and implementation unit. He specialises in spotting opportunities, building ideas and watching them fly. Richard is also a freelance writer.
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