

BIZ TRENDS 2012



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1,000,010,000 consumers.
527.5 billion US dollars in untapped spending power.
a world of potential on one continent.

COUNTRY	AREA 100km ²
China	9597
USA	9629
India	3287
Mexico	1964
Peru	1285
France	533
Spain	506
Papua New Guinea	462
Sweden	441
Japan	378
Germany	357
Norway	324
Italy	301
New Zealand	270
United Kingdom	243
Nepal	147
Bangladesh	144
Greece	132
TOTAL	30.102
AFRICA	30.221



Africa has a lot to offer. But there are challenges, such as a lack of reliable information and an extremely diverse population that makes it difficult for many marketers to access.

While others talk about building a consistent network throughout Africa - we are actually doing it. That's where Aegis is different.

Aegis is the first company to bring meaningful media insight and strategic planning to Africa with our comprehensive Consumer Connection Studies (CCS), Outdoor Consumer Surveys (OCS) and Integrated Communications Planning (ICP). As the fastest growing network in Sub-Saharan Africa, we've expanded by 400% in the past 18 months and own businesses in 11 markets with affiliates in all key strategic markets.

We've also pioneered the delivery of reliable statistics on internet and mobile phone usage in Africa, our research shows that Nigeria alone has 50 million internet users and there are more mobile phones on the continent than there are people.

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 CEO: Dawn Rowlands
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Agnes Barnard

The year of short-term commitments



As the world gets hotter and we become more connected, and brand interaction is now a conversation and no longer a monologue, the trend we are seeing coming through loud and clear are those of "short-term" commitments.

1. Clients are reluctant to sign off annual plans

In an economy where every cent is under scrutiny, signing off a 12-month budget and plan seems like signing for a lifetime commitment. Therefore, there is a reluctance to sign off an annual plan and more of an inclination to commit in chunks of three and six months.

2. Clients to take a view in the last quarter of their fiscal and, if targets are not reached, budget cuts are applied

Clients set adspend as a percentage of turnover. Therefore, the lower the turnover, the lower the budget. These erratic spending habits are forcing creative agencies to be more strategic with the money they have to work with.

3. TV in general seems to have become less lenient, with negotiation, compensation and even deadline for material delivery

Television needs every cent of ad revenue it can obtain. PVR has come in to households where consumers are skipping through the advert breaks; therefore the potential reach is down.

Therefore TV is less flexible when it comes to negotiating, taking on a "no-nonsense" approach when it comes to things such as material delivery deadlines. The same overheads apply, regardless of the advertising revenue.

4. Through digital specialists, clients are a lot more informed about the medium and a lot more willing to budget for the medium

Clients are being educated on the power of social media and digital marketing. Historically, it was a "nice-to-have" and now it is a "need-to-have", and the digital arena is fully integrated into the marketing mix across the line.

AVB deals are becoming the norm

Pressure is mounting on thin margins and the more clients are pushing better deals, the more media agencies are needing to find other sources of income.

On the one hand, media owners are under pressure from media agencies to do more volume deals. Media agencies, on the other hand, are under pressure in pitches to provide the information on the volume deals they hold with media owners, in some cases just to get entry into the pitch process.

5. CPT trading

The reality of buying TV on a CPT basis is here and already in practice, certain to become the norm - provided the media owners gear themselves up to manage this new trading process. →



About the author

Agnes Barnard started her media-buying career at the SABC then moved into the advertising and creative industry in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. She was one of the founding partners of Full Circle Media, which was bought in 2006 by Aegis Media sub-Saharan Africa (www.aegismedia.co.za). Today she heads up the Aegis Media buying division as director. Contact her on tel +27 (0)21 5266 253, email agnes.barnard@aedia.com and Skype agnes777.



Agnes Barnard cont.

6. New shopper journey - role of digital ecommerce key!

Going back to basics - customers want an easy yet memorable shopping experience where the products they see are available. On the same front, store owners want to follow customer trends and entice consumers into purchasing decisions.

These basics have transferred from the retail space into the e-tail space, where online shopping is fast becoming the norm. Thus, e-commerce involves creating a magic customer experience within the e-commerce set up to convert browsers into buyers.

7. Content seeking platforms

Clients are striving to reach their markets outside of the clutter and traditional formats. Content of clients, and content clients can associate themselves with, is being sourced and pushed to market

8. eBooks are now outselling paperbacks in America

What Apple did for music with the iPod, so has Amazon for books and written material with the Kindle.

Not only is this a convenient way of consuming written media, but it is environmentally friendly and, as the world becomes more aware of the importance of cutting back on paper usage, digital options will slowly but surely make way for traditional print options - be it books, newspapers, magazines or journals (*But what about the cost of rechargeable batteries, energy for recharging, manufacturing and disposing of devices? – managing ed*).

9. Three times more people watch videos on YouTube than download music

One could say that streaming is becoming a trend in media consumption, be in video or audio format. In the music arena, consumers are obsessed with listening to bonus content and alternative versions - live, remixes, interviews being just some of the things that are being watched by music lovers all over the world.

With the emergence of faster bandwidth, which is becoming less expensive, consumers are less cautious when consuming video content of all types on YouTube.

10. 25% of all phones sold in Q1 2011 were smartphones, which is 85% more than Q1 2010

Social media is one of the main reasons for this. Blackberry Messenger has taken on the world by storm and consumers partake in their usual Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn activities while on the go.

This has become an important observation in out-of-home advertising, where campaigns are often integrated with technologies that can be applied by consumers using their smartphones. 📱



Allison Cooper

Getting published in 2012



While 2012 will bring another hard year for some brands and their consumers, there are others which will continue to perform really well.

What is it that makes one stand out from the other? Quite simply, generating positive publicity for the brand in such a way that it's constantly top-of-mind and enables consumers to engage with and experiment with it.

What creates positive publicity for a brand? In 2012, marketers must seek out trends that not only enable a brand to engage with consumers, but also ensure that they are constantly breaking through the media's gatekeeping role to ensure newsworthy publicity opportunities.

1. QR codes

Quick response (QR) codes have taken the spotlight in the public eye. Not only are there various media on which to print them - from t-shirts, mugs, caps to Z-Cards and magazines - but they enable consumers to interact with the brand by engaging their attention.

Any publicity campaign featuring a QR code in 2012 will be well worth its salt, as the opportunities for directing consumers and the media to websites, blogs, online competitions and consumer surveys are endless.

2. Engaging consumers at their leisure

With today's fast-paced lifestyle, consumers have less and less 'downtime' in which to relax and spend quality time with family and friends. As such, the last things they want to be bombarded with during this time are advertising, marketing and in-your-face sales people.

Brands hoping to engage consumers when they are open to absorbing the advertising message need to do so subtly, like after their drink or meal with very clever creative and samples inside the bill folder.

From publicity opportunities in trade and consumers media to word-of-mouth viral publicity, this trend is set to boom in 2012.

3. Social media

Social media is rapidly changing the way that news is reported. It's instant, which means that the reputation you have been trying so hard to build can be destroyed via one person's tweet which becomes a viral campaign before you've even had a chance to log onto Twitter or Facebook.

In 2012 we will see brands realising that they have to be alert, quick and, most of all, honest. Social media is an ideal medium in which to engage consumers. Essentially, they choose to follow and interact with you, which means you now have direct access to them without having to go through a middleman who may or may not change the actual message you were hoping to portray.

In terms of publicity generation, there will definitely be a greater move towards incorporating social media into any publicity plan. →



About the author

Allison Cooper launched specialist writing and publicity agency Allycats Public Relations (www.allycats.co.za) in 2008. Her 15-year career spans publicity generation, journalism and freelance writing across numerous industries. Email Allison at ally@allycats.co.za, follow @AllyCatsPR on Twitter, and connect with her on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).



Allison Cooper cont.

4. Integrity and trust

Integrity and trust are simple words. Yet, so few brands have learnt what they mean to consumers and how they can go so far when it comes to generating loyalty - and thus sales!

The increasingly competitive consumer landscape will demand integrity and trust from brands in 2012. If you do it right, your efforts will be worth talking about to ensure you are kept top-of-mind.

5. Effective communication

Enabling your consumers to get a better understanding of who you are, what you do, and how your products will benefit them is of the utmost importance to ensure loyalty to your brand.

In 2012, it won't be as much about the actual brand name, but what that brand is doing to assist its consumers during tough economic times.

Whether this involves loyalty programmes, special offers or giving back to communities through [corporate social investment](#) programmes makes no difference. It's not going to be about what you do, but how well you do it and how effectively you communicate about it that counts.

6. Going green

What does your carbon footprint look like? Are you making strides when it comes to preserving the environment and assisting your consumers to get rid of your product's packing after they have consumed it?

All environmental issues, as with [COP17](#) in 2011, will continue to be a major focus during 2012 and beyond.

As carbon footprints and conserving the environment are so newsworthy right now, any effort you make - as long as it's genuine and makes a difference - should be of interest to environmental and other publications that consumers read.

With the economy as it is, consumers also want to make what they can from recycling or trading in their used goods. Help them to do this, and you are all set for a more prosperous 2012.

These are just a few of the trends we will see brands resorting to, to ensure consumer loyalty and keep themselves in the spotlight in 2012.

In order to survive in such a consumer-savvy environment, you have to be creative. But, make sure you understand the basics:

- What do your consumers want and need?
- How can you best reach and communicate with them?
- What are they reading?
- What do they want to hear about?

Do you have what it takes to reach beyond puff and create actual news in 2012? 🍷



Amanda Sevasti Whitehouse

Twelve specifically South African social media trends



Looking at the future of social media, it's easy to consider international trends and forget that South Africa is a developing market with unique features. In some ways, particularly mobile adoption, we are ahead of some developed markets, but in others we are still playing catch-up.

Here is what will most likely define the South African market in 2012:

1. Community management moving in-house

This is already happening in developed markets. In South Africa, it will apply to day-to-day updates, while agencies will continue to provide content planning and campaign-specific support. However, many medium-sized companies will still entrust their online brand management to an agency.

2. Big agencies go social

Until now, it has been nimble specialist agencies that have pioneered local community management. But as this moves in-house, large clients will expect their traditional agencies to provide greater strategic input and support. In addition, more big agencies will develop and expand their social media offering.

3. Twitter explosion

Trying to pin down Twitter user statistics for SA is nearly impossible, but the boom in smartphones and stagnation of MXit, combined with more affordable data, will see this channel finally reach a local tipping point.

4. Demise of content

In the world of social media, content is not king - conversation is. People prefer bite-size tidbits to discuss with friends and peers, as evidenced by the frequent lively debates on Facebook and Twitter. They won't watch a five-minute video unless it has sparked a discussion.

5. Rise of planning

Many local brands have been conducting their social media on an ad-hoc basis without having a comprehensive strategy or plan in place. As the industry becomes more sophisticated and established, even social media-phobic brands will start allocating more time to this.

6. The "golden minute"

It used to be an hour, but that's old news. Rapid response times will become increasingly important for brands as South Africans spend more time interacting on social media channels.

7. Social media fatigue

Consumers who have been interacting with social networks for a while will start to use fewer channels less often. Brands will have to be more relevant and useful to sustain engagement. →



About the author

Amanda Sevasti Whitehouse is social media account director at Ogilvy PR Johannesburg and a regular commentator on the digital landscape in South Africa. Before moving into online communications, Amanda worked as a copywriter and creative head for eight years on BTL activations and digital campaigns. Amanda understands that the future of PR and advertising is inextricably linked with online influence and social networking. She dreams of a day when data is free. Email her at Amanda.Sevasti@ogilvypr.co.za and follow [@AmandaSevasti](https://twitter.com/AmandaSevasti) on Twitter.



Amanda Sevasti Whitehouse cont.

8. Filtering and management tools

As a result of this fatigue, there will be greater demand for applications that save time and effort when managing your social presence. An example is the highly efficient "If This Then That" (ifttt.com), which allows users to create formulae for sharing and responding across a multitude of platforms.

9. Verification

Officially verified accounts for both celebrities and brands are already the norm in developed markets. SA has been slower to catch onto the benefits of verification. As Twitter reaches critical mass, more and more companies will take steps to protect their brand names.

10. Tighter budgets

As the recession continues into 2012, PR and marketing budgets will be under even greater pressure. Companies will expect more for less, and agencies will need to be innovative and money-savvy when engaging with online communities.

11. More measurement

Despite tighter budgets, online reputation measurement and monitoring will grow in importance as clients begin to appreciate the huge advantage of having what is effectively comprehensive customer research at their disposal.

12. Increased skills development

As social media matures and online brand management becomes more sophisticated, there will be a surge in the development of local skills. Advertising and PR graduates will be expected to know their way around social networks, while clients will welcome training.

Of course, every year we try to predict the comings and going of an industry that frequently defies any kind of forecast, but it is the surprises that make it so exciting.

Therefore, the most important tool you can have at your disposal is the *ability to adapt*. ❖❖❖



Andre Redelinghuys

Tough year, tighter trends



Anticipating this year's macro environment, most analysts are banking on a European recession. I think this will set the tone for another tough business year globally. With business tightening its belt and household income under pressure, frugality will once again be the driving consumer trend. We can dust off those reports on how to market to tight-budget consumers, not that they have gathered much dust.

Because of this, consumers will be looking for real value. The brands that are naturally positioned to best respond to this situation will be the ones that have the most impact in 2012.

In the last recession, most people reduced their overall luxury spending as expected. However, what was interesting to see was that although reduced, people still concentrated their luxury budgets on substantial items. The thinking was, 'If I'm going to have less luxury I'm going to make it count.' These were not necessarily big-ticket items, but good quality products, services and experiences that left the customer with something to savour.

Looking for quality and luxury within reason will once again be high on the agenda in 2012.

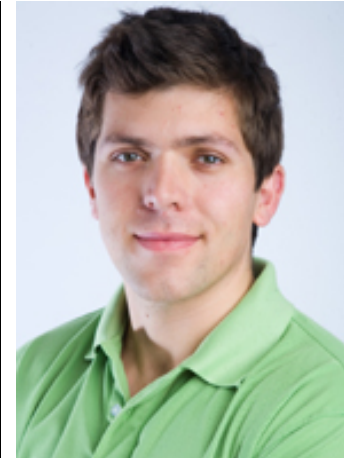
Tough business climate aside, the world of technology, connectivity and communication will continue to march on relentlessly. As we become more connected, so there will be more options, sources and layers of information available. Even though e-commerce is still just a blip on the radar in South Africa, it is clear information is changing the way we consume.

1. Simplicity attracts

Nevertheless, there is a big downside here as well - so much information is constantly being generated that people cannot make sense of it properly before another layer is added to the datasphere.

This is true beyond the digital realm too; the world is overloaded with information, misinformation and 'stuff'. This is increasingly prompting consumers to look for - and see - the value in simplicity. They want products and services that are easy to use and enjoy. These must be well communicated, understandable and part of simple and seamless experiences.

Against this backdrop, brands that play games and that have confusing products and messages will perform poorly. This issue remains an organisational challenge more than anything does, as complex and inefficient businesses struggle to produce simple and efficient goods. Strong performers in Siegel+Gale's annual Global Brand Simplicity Index will most likely become more relevant in the end, as the world becomes more complex. Ultimately, brands that deliver their products and messages simply will benefit in any category, from luxury to consumer goods, and from corporate services to commodities. →



About the author

Andre Redelinghuys is head of strategy at HKLM (www.hklm.co.za; [blog](#)). He develops and transforms brands to drive successful business and sees planning, design, message and medium all as part of the continuous relationship required to build inspiring brands. [Email](#) Andre, follow [@dre_rede](#) on Twitter and connect on [LinkedIn](#).



Andre Redelinghuys cont.

2. Top trends

- Facebook relinquishing some of its lead to Twitter. Facebook is forever changes its interface and shows little regard for its users and their privacy while Twitter's offering remains fairly constant and simple. →
- E-commerce picking up in South Africa, as people search for better value while more international offerings gear up to deliver locally and local offerings mature.
- Perceptions around Asian brands strengthening as manufacturers like Hyundai continue to close the quality gap on Western brands while offering much better value.
- 'Made in China' becoming the call sign for good value.
- More local retailers adopting loyalty and value programmes like Pick n Pay's Smart Shopper, as well as other tricks learnt from retailers in more developed markets.
- Brands, particularly those targeting the youth, leveraging sentiment around civil disobedience as the anti-institutional mood grows globally (as it tends to in tough economic climates). 🇺🇸

Angela Quintal

Media industry encountering unprecedented challenges



The fragmentation of the media and the mind-boggling range of sources of information available to readers, from Wikipedia to Google and the social networks, have conspired to cause publishers of print media to re-evaluate their roles, much as the horse-drawn carriage industry was forced to with the arrival of the internal combustion engine.

Does that mean that print is dead? No, far from it, but periods of serious introspection are nonetheless the order of the day for publishers of newspapers and magazines across the globe.

The market for newspapers will not dry up overnight, or indeed anytime soon, for that matter. In fact, it is likely that there will always be a market, albeit not a "mass market" for the printed page.

Young readers (for young, read 16-35 and older), as well as techno savvy and better-heeled consumers of whatever age, will more and more shift from traditional news vehicles to the convenience of the tablet, Android and ever-smarter mobiles, for their news and information. Already the early-adopters have moved in droves and camped out with the release of every new generation iPad, and Androids phones are attracting similar attention.

This is the twenty-first century, and the much-vaunted Information Super Highway is a reality. Newspaper and magazine publishers and editors are having to jockey for position to retain their status as the trusted news-providers, in this brave new world.

It is clear that their ability to meet the challenging trends of this new age will be paramount to the success and, in some cases, to the survival of publications in the year ahead, and beyond.

Success or failure will lead to their either joining the traffic on an exciting journey of discovery, or accepting the inevitability of decline and extinction - of the kind that saw the magnificently handcrafted carriages of the turn of the nineteenth century relegated to transport museums around the globe.

1. A sense of community

Relevance, relevance, relevance will be the watchword. Understanding the commonalities (and differences) that make up our reader interest groups will be crucial to the survival of titles. Local IS lekker.

No medium can be all things to all people. But there is an irresistible latent force that binds a community and makes it one. The culture of a region is a great intangible that, as media people, we need to understand and learn to work with.

Understanding and staying close to our audience will call for CRM strategies at a micro level. Research, reader advisory panels and even straw polls will become increasingly necessary tools in tracking reader interests on a day-to-day basis, to ensure that our content remains relevant to our target audience.

The affinity that locals have for "their" paper is one of the intangibles that makes a regional paper a good buy for advertisers looking to "connect" with consumers. →



About the author

Angela Quintal is a news junkie with a passion for newspapers and good coffee. In November 2011 she became the editor of *The Witness* in Pietermaritzburg after two years of editing *The Mercury* in Durban. She lost her favorite coffee shop, but not her love of print. Contact her on tel +27 (0)33 355 1317, email editor@witness.co.za, Skype [angelaquintal](#), follow [@angelaquintal](#) on Twitter and connect on [LinkedIn](#).



Angela Quintal cont.

2. Press freedom

The so-called "[Secrecy Bill](#)" has attracted widespread opposition, and rightly so. The National Assembly's ad hoc committee introduced amendments in the hope the proposed legislation would become more palatable. Fortunately, the critics have viewed such obfuscation as window dressing that does little more than alter the tint of the glass.

As things currently stand, the ANC is showing few signs of backing down, despite assurances from deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe that a compromise can be found. The National Council of Provinces phase of processing the bill looks increasingly unlikely to be the conduit hoped for meaningful change.

Do not, therefore, be surprised to see a crescendo of opposition all the way to the Constitutional Court. The bill is a critical issue, not for the media alone, but to all freedom-loving South Africans who believe in transparency, accountability and realise our future hinges on unfettered freedom to expose public sector corruption and ineptitude.

3. Global and domestic economy

The fallout from Europe's stuttering economies is being accompanied by global fallout of extensive dimensions. Without wishing to be pessimistic, there appears to be every reason to expect the global economic recovery to stall in 2012.

For media owners, that's bad news. Followers of the industry are well aware that, whenever economic recessions eventuate, advertising is one of the first budget items to be eliminated. This development will affect traditional media, including the paging of newspapers and the number of magazine titles on the racks, and will undoubtedly slow the growth of digital media.

From all reports, the media and the advertising industry must brace itself for a rough year.

4. Digital

Social media has already become the major source of information for millions. While Twittering and tweeting is unlikely to ever replace well-written and researched journalism, social media will provide a growing number of consumers with a sense of "knowing what's going on" and hence of not needing to either go out and buy a newspaper or even download one for that matter.

The challenge for news providers lies in being able to successfully harness the growing audiences represented by this media and redirect them to really good content and in-depth information. None of this will be entirely new to 2012, but the pace of change and polarisation in news media preferences for consumers will hot up significantly in the year ahead.

Internet/mobiles- the digital genie is out of the bottle. Thanks to the late Steve Jobs and other technological giants of our age, we're spoilt for choice when it comes to access to information. Now market forces will take us where they take us.

Our ability to keep up with the demands of this new digital age, serving our information to the platforms demanded by the consumer, will determine our success or failure in the year ahead. The ubiquitous mobile, and ultimately the tablet and who knows what variations on the theme, will become the message-bearers, while print with its concomitant high-delivery costs and impact on the environment will continue to decline.

The business model - the "free-to-air" model of the internet remains an albatross around our necks and finding ways of generating the kind of revenue that will pay for quality journalism remains the challenge. Advertisers will, however, always go where the audience is, and the key to the dilemma, as Google and FaceBook all know, is to grow your online audience to an irresistible quantum. →



Angela Quintal cont.

In the meantime, many, many brand-loyal readers (bless them) are prepared to pay for a digital form of the newspaper and as iPads and tablets become more and more affordable to the masses, this trend will grow. News delivered on paper may decline, but the demand for up-to-date news and commentary by trusted sources will continue to grow.

5. Reader interactivity

It is likely that [QR codes](#) - that enable readers to download additional content and even undertake "virtual tours" online, watch videos or browse catalogues, simply by photographing an icon on their cellphone - will become common features of print publications.

Not only does this level of interactivity satisfy reader needs, but it also provides innovative new opportunities for marketers seeking to reach and influence increasingly sophisticated consumers.

Some newspapers have already embraced them, but have yet to use them to their full potential.

6. Cut costs but not quality

"Giving the customer what he wants" has become a cliché and, sadly, often no more than a platitude for management intent on maximising every opportunity for profit, at the expense of the very ones they claim to serve.

Content is still king, but in the face of increased economic pressures, the temptation to cut costs at the expense of quality can be almost irresistible. The challenge will be to maintain the standards of quality content and presentation - which readers have come to expect - while running a business that still delivers an acceptable return on investment for its shareholders.

7. Editorial opportunities in the year ahead

Mangaung and an embattled South African president, the Olympic Games, and the US election are among the news events that lie ahead. With much in the way of headline domestic and international events scheduled for 2012, editors will be looking for new angles, quick reaction times and an intuitive awareness of what it is that their readers want.

These events and others like them will present golden opportunities for interaction between editors and their audiences, whether on print or digital platforms or both.

8. Communication skills

As in other areas, there is a greater need for skills development in our country in the arena of the written word. Sadly SMS and social networks, rather than raising the bar when it comes to the art of written communication, have been responsible for a sharp decline in good grammar and spelling.

Publishers and editors have the responsibility as custodians of their language, be it English, Afrikaans or any of the vernacular languages, to protect and encourage written skills, and grow the pool of trained communicators in our country, ensuring good journalism will not only survive but thrive, into the next generation. Any newsroom that fails to invest in ongoing training is setting itself up for failure. ❏



Anice Hassim

Your friend is literally the trend



2012 will bring fundamental tectonic shifts to the balance of power in technology choices. Many of these will be driven by the people and for the people - in 2012 the trend, literally, is your friend. Smart enterprise will embrace this change but big business will very quickly have to learn to shut up and listen to what the consumer wants. On the trailing edge, we'll mark the final death of primetime, and on the leading edge - we'll watch Africa take its place on the global app stage:

1. First African app star

In 2012, the density of activity in terms of brands wishing to take advantage of the rapidly increasing pace in which people are adopting post-PC devices, particularly in emerging markets in which many African countries find themselves, will lead to the first African startup to invent and find success from a globally adopted digital platform. We might well see the next Instagram or Foursquare come out of Africa - or quite possibly a major player to compare with the likes of Facebook.

2. Windows gets cool for the first time (but Microsoft is still Microsoft)

Microsoft has been making a huge noise showcasing its mobile strategy in 2011, leading to this: the year that Windows 8 arrives. Windows 8 is a complete rethinking of the platform, from mobile to desktop to server.

Microsoft has been engineering its tablets from the ground up, one of the few new generation platforms that have been created in this way from a security and user interface perspective. The OS and its devices are going to be sought after and actually quite 'cool', but we're not sure that Microsoft will ever usurp the title of 'cool kid on the block' from competitor Apple.

3. Apple kicks open the enterprise door with iPad and goes mainstream

Apple seems to be becoming all things to all people and this year finally gets acceptance in business, becoming a viable first-tier choice for enterprise solutions. The iPad has made a significant impact on the boardroom, and we'll see IT scrambling to educate and upskill, not only to retain their relevance in enterprise, but to support the devices technically and to stay ahead in terms of advice and hand-holding.

4. The year of realtime/mobile

The impact of the freedom that mobile devices such as the iPad bring is evident in the many of the citizen protests we witnessed and participated in last year. The social revolution that Twitter and Facebook helped engineer show us clearly that the information cycle is going realtime and egalitarian. News is not owned by big media anymore, which can no longer control how the story gets reported - news gets straight to the public while its happening.

5. The death of primetime - cutting the cord

This disintermediation of media is also responsible for the death of primetime. TV has been fractured. Primetime is now your leisure time. You watch what you want, wherever you are, and whenever you happen to be free. →



About the author
Anice Hassim is CEO and head strategist of immedia (www.immedia.co.za), a digital consultancy pioneering South Africa's app development industry and is currently the architect of a number of highly-successful and unique digital strategies for major brands in broadcast media, IT, retail and other segments. Contact Anice on tel +27 (0)31 566 8000, email him at anice@immedia.co.za and follow him on Twitter at [@anicehassim](https://twitter.com/anicehassim).



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6. The reinvention of gaming

Consumers restructuring their leisure time will also lead to the reinvention of gaming. As personal devices approach the speed and power of console devices, consoles need to redefine themselves in terms of their experiential environment. In terms of their technical definition, the Playstation needs to offer a level of immersion and experience that is not replicable in a low-end mobile device like an iPod Touch or iPad. This might imply that consoles go up the price curve - think holodeck-type entertainment. Whatever it does, it will need to separate itself clearly and definitively from the handheld personal screen.

7. The world uncovers the first digital hula hoops

Looking back, we have enough of a timeline to see that not every idea will work out - even in digital. Even good ideas are difficult to make a reality with insufficient adoption numbers and/or lack of buy-in, and often end up being logical dead-ends. Sometimes, a system simply outgrows its original 'reason for being' and has to take a step back and reinvent itself - it's part of the innovation process. After the first digital decade at the end of 2010, we can now start to see the first digital hula hoops - those platforms that seem so important at the time and turn out just to be fads. Facebook is one of them, and this year it will start to be abandoned by users in search of a more resonant and meaningful way to connect.

8. Personal telemetry

People are starting to see the ways in which the social layers and recorded data can be manipulated to bring meaning and usefulness to their lives - as in the case with personal telemetry. Whether that data is for fitness eg jogging or health eg heart rate monitoring, consumers will start tracking themselves in ways that they can visualise and analyse later in terms of progress of their personal goals. We'll be able to access more of these little devices in the form of bracelets and gadgets that will measure data points and transmit the results back to your phone [and from there to your social networks of choice - managing ed].

9. The death of spinning storage media

Yes, we still use them grudgingly, but we're finally in the year when, increasingly, those 'futuristic'-looking discs are going to be legacied to quaint anachronisms. Shuttling entertainment or data on spinning media (CDs, DVDs or Blurays) is just impractical and 2012 will be increasingly irrelevant with cloud storage and on-demand content.

10. Public APIs and big data

Citizenry will demand services, and city government will realise that one of the ways to answer, by exposing public data and APIs in ways that they can leverage for free, is to unleash the creative talent of citizens themselves to create app services and platforms. (Shout out to Shaun Trenery and Paul Cartmel with a local private initiative that does just this).

11. Hyper-local

For database and post-PC services such as Siri to work effectively for you in your region, it means that your local data has to be created, mapped and curated. For example, asking Siri to show you pizza places around you won't work unless a service such as Yelp has been aggregating that particular data. Therefore, as users find the need to have such facilities, hyper-local services such as Yelp will start to boom, as content providers scramble to match up APIs with the user-demanded data sets.

12. Siri defines a new computing interface

As data becomes fluid in 2012, Siri changes everything. It allows you to use a computer without a screen or any traditional methods of interaction, thereby opening up access to users who might not previously been able to use a computer - and who knows what innovation may come from that! 🍷



Banele Rewo

The cheese has moved for brands and youth



How do you entice or sell to a target market that is hesitant, if not sceptical, about commercial brands, although predisposed to being very loyal and capable of independently fulfilling its own needs?

Uniqueness of the SA youth market

Marketing and advertising industries are synonymous with identifying and creating. Sometimes they dictate but mostly they follow trends. To do this efficiently, their strategies have to be interwoven with the target market. As a marketer, a student, an influencer, a brand advocate and a consumer, I have witnessed very few innovative strategies being implemented or conceptualised in South Africa.

From a marketer's perspective, we miss the mark from the moment we fail to understand the uniqueness of the SA youth market. The cheese keeps moving while we are wielding text books and strategies from 1996, 2010 or even September 2011, which may be off the mark and off the streets by June 2012.

From a consumer's perspective, brands need to understand that my generation is not excited by non-engaging one-way media such as billboards and print. Television is for watching sketchy DVDs, complete seasons of a television series in one day or playing video games.

Engaging, sharing, influencing and being influenced

While we are doing these "activities", we are also engaging with friends globally, sharing international news events, influencing and being influenced by peers and, most importantly, talking about your brands, if they're with us.

And every other person within my peer circle either has a company, blog, day-lighting side projects or mostly all three at once, extending from marketing solutions, events, fashion, and music through to a contact in China

Marketers and brands need to form strong and solid, personal bonds with the young erratic yet loyal market. Marketers need to occupy the market's spaces, all the time, from online to the events they attend. As Alexandre Michelin stresses, "Be there all the times and across all platforms".

Influencer vs advocate

Explains Michael Brito Smart Business, Social Business: A Playbook for Social Media in Your Organization, "The term influencer is often used synonymously with advocate, but there is a difference between the two. Advocates provoke action because of the level of trust they have with their circles of influence. They are trusted because they are authentic, and people trust their friends when seeking product advice.

"Advocates also play a significant role in consumers' purchasing behavior and are willing to go the extra mile to answer questions about the brand or product."

Several brands pioneered strategies using influencers and advocates that occupied young people's spaces with varying degrees of success in 2011. Miller Genuine Draft, Nike Sportswear South Africa, Adidas Originals, Thesis Concept Stores, D.O.P.E. Stores, Strussbob, Nokia South Africa and Hansa Pilsner kept messages entrenched in →



About the author

Banele Rewo is founder of creative development and collaborative networking portal Authentic Creatives

(www.icreatewecreate.com).

Currently studying integrated marketing communications at the AAA, he has contributed to the success of local and global brands. His blog delivers local and international current-to-future trends in Advertising and Marketing. To win the Cannes Young Lions and Loerie Grand Prix 2014 contact Banele at rewobanele@gmail.com, follow [@Baniroquai](https://twitter.com/Baniroquai) on Twitter or view creative advertising on Baniroquai.Tumblr.com.



Banele Rewo cont.

their markets from within the market by developing and supporting the targets ambitions. The consumers did the marketing and converting for these brands as naturally as putting up a status update.

Room for improvement

However, there is room for improvement for the above-mentioned brands and those that might consider brand advocacy and influence marketing in 2012. I write the following from the perspective of a consumer and brand advocate.

1. Find seeders in the market

Finding topical seeders is not a daunting task but neither is it easy. A few active bloggers and commentators will open doors and links to other seeders and early adopters involved and vocal within their peers and communities, charities, social groups and political movements. We are a group that wields extensive social networks online and off. Also pay attention to the voices we follow and listen to.

2. Organise and group your sources

Building custom lists creates your own content feeds, providing marketers with new insights every day: content that can be trusted and easy to share because it is hand-picked from a network of trusted sources. These sources are excellent for advocating aspiration products and services because we are looked up to and are trusted by others.

3. Participate constructively

As content creators, we thrive on feedback and interaction. Whether you provide support or challenge our viewpoints, generating substantive conversation around our content encourages others to join in. Online interaction with these kinds of individuals creates a persona and a voice for the brand that cannot be created by the best marketing possible.

Added to that, it is better than those annoying questions, starchy quotes and high-school jokes most brands post on Twitter currently.

4. Meet us

Events and regular hot spots of the season provide an opportunity to observe how we experience other brands and interact with one another in a natural environment. These could be trendy restaurants, gallery events or vendor markets.

These spaces provide a fertile ground for opportunities to meet your potential advocates personally. Personal relationships are more valuable than social media connections, and can lead to productive collaborations.

5. What you put in is what you get out

If you need something from your market, then naturally it will want something from you that will contribute to their ambitions. Even Tupperware has financial spin-offs for its cavalry of pavement-pounding "sales people".

Marketers make the mistake of failing to uniquely motivate and support these chosen advocates. If you give me a box full of your products with a task to share them with friends, take photos, tweet about it, like your Facebook page etc, then I am just similar to the guy at the intersection who hands out a flyer that promises to give you winning lottery numbers or enlarge your "product".

Ask me what I need to perform at a peak. Software for my blog, booking into a seminar, lunch with a potential mentor or assistance for a personal project are just basic starting points. 🍷



Bradley Maseko

Social media marketing and the youth



The following is a breakdown of 12 social media marketing trends for 2012 with regards to how businesses will target the youth market. The emphasis for businesses/brands in 2012 will be to avoid becoming subject to the "Social Media Burnout Effect".

These trends are derived through an analysis of the different trends and insights obtained by Brandedyouth from our several Youth Psyche Studies. These were conducted during the course of 2011 and looked at the use of social media among youth in South Africa.

1. Location-based marketing

There will be a need to take advantage of the current trend of checking into establishments via social networks (foursquare etc), and, as a result, we can expect a massive rise in geo-targeted mobile campaigns. It will become more than just checking in, as many establishments will start offering rewards for the positive recommendations or reviews received.

2. Social media gamification

With over 70% of all mobile downloads being games, most businesses and brands have realised that gaming is an important aspect of the youth culture and have taken a creative look at creating social media games that make their brands more fun and engaging. Businesses will thus invest in the idea of linking the virtual world and physical world through offering rewards in social media games that can then be collected physically.

3. Integrated social media ad campaigns

In 2011, we saw some big brands launch successful ad campaigns solely through different social media platforms, the most common being Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. While Facebook is an obvious favourite, the number of SA youth on Twitter is rapidly increasing. This is surely going to attract more brands to launch their campaigns through social media, as this not only scores high on fun and engagement but guaranties an active audience willing to share experiences.

4. Social media youth sourcing

Brands will turn to social networking platforms to encourage open innovation from the youth. Platforms will become a source of research, development and marketing strategies. This will lead to a greater form of relationship between youth consumers and brands, as recommendations and reviews shift from being more than just "peer-to-peer" and elevate to "audience-to-brand".

5. Social media brand advocates

Since the youth trust peer recommendation over any form of advertising and while the ethnographic approach worked quite well before the attention of the youth went online, the landscape has changed and it will therefore be necessary for brands to identify loyal and influential evangelists on the different social media platforms, who will share content with their groups and friends and thus be rewarded for their efforts. →



About the author

Bradley Maseko is the founder and youth market strategist at Brandedyouth Insights (www.brandedyouth.co.za). He provides brands and advertising agencies with qualitative information on the youth market. He is also a writer and speaker, making recommendations on how clients can connect with the youth, based on the analysis made from the insights mined by Brandedyouth. Email him at bradley@brandedyouth.co.za and follow [@brandedyouthsa](https://twitter.com/brandedyouthsa) on Twitter.



Bradley Maseko cont.

6. Social media monitoring

More businesses will realise the impact that online conversations have, not only as a means of safeguarding their reputations but also for mining insights. Social media has given the consumer the power to voice their opinions and businesses will take keen interest in monitoring what is being said in these conversations in a bid to learn more about the youth psyche through keeping up with their latest trends and individual preferences and also to control any form of brand-bashing.

7. Social media relevance

Every 60 seconds, over 600 000 Facebook statuses are updated, over 98 000 tweets are sent and over 600 videos are uploaded on YouTube. Social media has become a noisy playground with too much clutter, thus more compelling engagements are needed to attract the attention of the youth. Businesses will focus on creating more relevant content that cannot only be shared but also add value to the brand or product. Lack of relevance will simply drive the youth away.

8. Increased video sharing and vlogging

Cisco now predicts that 80% of all internet traffic will be video by 2015. More businesses will start paying attention to the fact that most youth, while on social media platforms, prefer watching short videos and going through photos, rather than reading. There will therefore be a need to share more brand experiences and product launches through short videos/photos that will be easy for the youth to understand, enjoy and share with their peers.

9. Corporate blogging

This will come in the form of businesses and brands taking a step to be more human in a bid to foster a connection with their target markets, as the youth want to see the human side of the business. Businesses will take a non-fiction attempt at advertising, focusing on telling the story and showing the people behind the brand and products in a neutral tone. Blogs will help to engage youth conversation, and help in building relationships. Attempts at direct advertising on corporate blogs will thus defeat the purpose of showing the human aspect.

10. Social television

There will be an increase in investment to focus on engagement with the youth through integrating live TV shows and competitions with social media. The ability of real-time interaction appeals to the youth market through having the power to influence or vote while the show is airing. We will therefore see the growth of social and sharable television as tweets and Facebook comments become the centre of most shows and live competitions. This will play an important role in attracting a somewhat active audience for traditional media.

11. Social customer retention

Most businesses will realise that social media is more than just maintaining a presence on social media platforms. They will focus on the effects of using social media to promote not only their sales activities, offering value-add to customer service, but in also rewarding youth loyal to the brand. In this sense, there will be a greater move to use social media as a tool, not only to attract new youth but also to try and retain existing ones.

12. And, ultimately, increased social media investment

While social media seems relatively cheaper than traditional media, an increase in investment will be needed to boost creativity and online activities beyond just the "likes", "comments" and "number of followers". More permanent employees will be needed to maintain this, as brands seek to differentiate themselves in ways that will effectively attract the attention of users. We can definitely expect an increase in social media investment from both small- and large-scale businesses in 2012. 📊



Cathryn Treasure

Back to school for marketers on teen basics



It's back to basics for marketers on teen marketing - between all the talk about millennials and the born-digital, marketers have been swept up in a wave that makes it easy to forget the fundamentals, such as who are these people you are really talking with (not to, with) and what value will they associate with what you post, tweet, broadcast or print.

Here are several fundamentals marketers need to keep in mind when talking with today's teens (age range 11-19), regardless of what channel you choose to use.

1. They are naturally curious and require easy access to knowledge

How did you gain knowledge and information when you were at school? From textbooks and encyclopaedias - the library? Today's teens have access to data on a scale not known before. They are part of a global classroom, with few limits on the information available to them at the press of a button or the touch of a screen. They are feeding their curiosity using all the tools available to them.

It can be as intimidating to brands as it can even be to their school teachers. How do we feed their curiosity, while ensuring that the engagement with them is seamless with the reality of their world today? Do you use the tools at your disposal to tick marketing boxes and to force yourself into their universe, or to communicate seamlessly via fewer but more engaging touchpoints?

As marketers, you need to ask yourselves: do you add to the clutter or do you add value through interaction? Teens will move on quickly from clutter as they strive to quench their curiosity about life and living through useful tools providing easy access to information.

2. They want to believe (in you and in themselves)

You remember a good teacher for the rest of your life. Good teachers have a genuine passion in the wellbeing of their kids. Are you one of those teachers? Do you care enough to know or know enough to care?

The teachers we remember and respected were accountable; they chose to hold themselves so - and they were honest. They knew their subject and how to transfer knowledge.

Teens care about teachers and those who believe in them, who allow them to believe in themselves. This is impossible without honesty, accountability and a real passion to encourage them to be all they can be. It makes an honest exchange of information, rather than one-way marketing messages, essential.

3. They love "against all odds" stories

We all have to survive those teenage years - talk about beating the odds! Teens love stories where people rise up above their circumstances - be it (for the younger set, at least) Justin Bieber, the regular kid who became an unlikely music star thanks to the web, or Natalie du Toit, whose story is as inspirational as any you are likely to hear. →



About the author

Cathryn Treasure is the GM for HIP2B2 (www.hip2b2.com). A former UCT BSc graduate and an A-aggregate student, she also spent several years as head of marketing and communications for the SA office of the World Wide Fund for Nature, before taking on the equivalent role for WWF's South Pacific Program based in Fiji. Contact Cathryn on tel +27 (0)21 461 9322, email cathryn.treasure@hip2b2.com and follow [@CathrynTreasure](https://twitter.com/CathrynTreasure) on Twitter.



Cathryn Treasure cont.

Stories such as these nurture their desire to be something, achieve something, show them how they can make an impact and a difference.

4. They are part of the global classroom

Teens today are part of a global classroom that empowers them more than ever before in terms of allowing them to choose their own influences and inspirations. They know their knowledge of technology is empowering and that it is enabling. Geography doesn't limit the tools or information they have access to.

5. The quick and the dead

Teens believe they are great multitaskers - it's one of the biggest reasons they prefer bite-sized chunks of information, shorter texts etc. They want to get to the gist of the matter in seconds.

Give them the essence of your message - if they want to know more, they will Google it. They prefer shorter pieces of information because it allows them to absorb many different stories much more easily and at the same time.

Their multitasking agility has helped speed up mental response times as well; keep in mind they make instant decisions, though not necessarily well thought through.

6. Visual language

Teens are able to scan and filter large amounts of visual material. Visuals grab their attention - remember, they prefer information that immediately helps them grasp its essence, so make use of opportunities for infographics and remember visual calls to action (use a Facebook button rather than copy telling them they can find you on Facebook - the visual button already told them that).

Visuals also talk to a multi-cultural audience; it's a universal language for teens. But avoid too much of a good thing: too many visuals and too many design elements competing for attention equal clutter.

7. They are getting older younger

Teen development is still sequential (as per [Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development](#)) but they are growing older younger, aided by technology and influenced by popular culture and unrestricted access to information.

They are also getting treated as being older than they really are - even in schools, where often they work with subjects at levels previous generations only experienced in tertiary education.

Educators, parents and, indeed, marketers should be cognisant of the fact that it's easy to confuse their (tech, knowledge) "skills" with emotional or social development. Allowing a kid to skip several years ahead in class means he or she has academic skills but this hardly translates into an equal level of maturity and life experience. Keep your content relevant to their world - not to that of an adult.

Of course, a counter trend is also emerging where parents are seeking to allow their kids a full childhood experience - look at the rise of Waldorf schools - in a bid to keep their development in line with their years and experience. Techno breaks and holidays are also becoming popular as parents want their kids to 'wire out' for their physiological well-being. →



Cathryn Treasure cont.

8. Teens want to belong but...

They want to belong. They also want to develop their individuality and sense of self. These contradictory feelings of emotion are ranging during the teenage years. Self-identity is not yet formed; it is only starting to be revealed and this can lead to a steady state of uncertainty. They're constantly weighing up 'how to belong' versus 'being myself at the expense of going against the grain'.

The majority, due to this development stage, are more likely to succumb to group pressures of conformity. Most often, these pressures are not harmful and the rules of conformity apply to dress code, language, music and 'teen' activities.

By being part of a group, be it family or friends, their need to be connected is fulfilled, which is why social media is so appealing and scores top marks within this group. In this space they can connect and share loss, setbacks and disappointments, as well as triumphs, with 'the group'.

9. These are people

The language of technology and marketing, from "fans" to "followers", makes it easy to dehumanise people, and ultimately, Mr or Ms Marketer, that is whom you are dealing with/selling to. A person.

You need to engage with teens beyond social media competitions, where they become 'fans' and 'friends' of your brands' social platforms and over the long term, as people. Once-off competitions mean little to them - they will forget you quickly.

10. They are socially conscious

Teens want to contribute to society; they want to give back, environmentally and socially. They have a great sense of empathy and want to be part of something nurturing.

A lot of communication has shifted from product advertising to telling the story of how brands are impacting on and contributing to the communities where they do business. Teens respond to this - but, take note, your credentials are key. If you gain their interest, Google and your critics are easily accessible.

11. Be confident

They don't care if you tell them you are cool. They will decide for themselves. They hate being told what to do and how to behave or act; they will be less enthused about engaging in activities that they feel are imposed upon them.

Word of mouth is still one of the most important ways of spreading the word among teenagers. It's much more powerful through the integration of social networking by teens. They are fully aware that their knowledge of technology puts the power squarely into their hands. They are also savvy enough to know that marketers are vying for their attention.

12. They are seen and heard

Teens today, be they in an emerging economy such as South Africa or a developed one such as the US, are among one of the most progressive groups in history. They have and form their own opinions, and are not afraid to share them. Politically and socially they are confident, self-expressive, liberal and receptive to new ideas. 🍌



Charl Thom

Occupy 2012



The past year will go down in history as a time of unexpected political regime change, social unrest and civil protest, from the bloody end to Muammar Gaddafi's 41-year rule in Libya to the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York that spread very quickly around the world.

The global economy continues its inevitable shift from West to East, during the worst global financial recession (GFC) since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Closer to home, the first genuine cracks have started appearing in the ruling party's grip on power, as South Africans grow weary of corruption and the resultant non-delivery that fuels the continued economic imbalance.

The world is in some turmoil, but such conditions make for interesting and exciting times, because they bring change. Lots of change. So here are 10 changes, or trends that I'd bet on (with varying degrees of odds) for 2012:

1. New Brand Order

Uncertain times will separate the adults from the children. Brave marketers will invest behind their brands and seize the short-to medium-term opportunities that are unique to the prevailing economic conditions. Weak or over-cautious marketers will continue to sit on their wallets in an attempt to prop up the bottom line, but do little else than lose market share.

2. Media confluence

"Traditional" media will become newly relevant through use in different ways, as the confluence between traditional and digital media increases. The television commercial must feel a bit like Mark Twain did, after he heard that his obituary had been posted in The New York Journal, and he famously said, "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated".

TV ads will continue to find their way to audiences through digital platforms such as YouTube, and print ads will make their way onto an ever-increasing array of tablets in various guises.

3. The big idea

The big idea will continue to reign supreme and determine the location of brand custodianship. As the Brazilian creative director Marcello Serpa said at Cannes back in 2010, "The only line that matters is the line between good and bad ideas". Agencies worth working with will be capable of blowing these ideas out across the various relevant channels. Including digital which, yes, is just another (incredibly rich and versatile) channel in the overall mix.

4. Mobile power

South Africa often displays what I like to call "technological leapfrog syndrome". A large portion of the market lags behind in terms of the adoption of new technology, due to the prohibitively high cost at the outset. But, as with most technology advances, if you can't afford it at launch, you'll have access to it at a fraction of the price in a year or two. →



About the author

Charl Thom has been group MD/partner of the multiple award-winning FoxP2

(www.foxp2.com) since 2007.

After completing a BComm (marketing) degree and a few seasons sailing around the Caribbean, he set out on a career in advertising which saw him working in media, strategy and account management for leading global agencies in South Africa and the UK. Contact Charl on tel +27 (0)21 424 4802, email charl@foxp2.com, tweet [@charlthom](https://twitter.com/charlthom) and read charlthom.posterous.com.



Charl Thom cont.

So, while most South Africans were unable to afford personal computers to access digital and social media platforms, the availability of smartphones, and affordable Chinese-manufactured Android phones in particular, has seen lower-income South Africans embrace digital and social media in droves.

5. Digital proliferation

Just as traditional media saw increasing proliferation over the last 15 years, particularly post-apartheid, so digital media will proliferate, but at an exponential rate when compared to its traditional counterparts. SA has been plugged into global digital media platforms from birth and consumers will consistently face new choices.

6. Digital fatigue

Proliferation and constantly streaming information will lead to digital fatigue. I have a number of digital streams, which are available for me to monitor on a daily basis: Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Stocks, News24, New York Times and BeachWatch, to name a few. According to Eric Schmidt, ex-CEO of Google, we create as much information in two days now as we did from the dawn of man through to 2003.

Unless you're retired or a social recluse, you won't have enough time to monitor and absorb all the information accessible to you on a regular basis. Consumers are going to become selective about the social media platforms they access and potentially categorise them in terms of frequency of access, or suffer from severe ADD. Understanding which consumers access which platforms, when, will be critical for brands when interacting.

7. Radio Nowhere

In his hit-song Radio Nowhere, Bruce Springsteen deals with the demise of genuine, in-the-flesh, human interaction. The way human beings interact with each other on a one-to-one basis has perhaps changed more in the last 20 years than ever before in history. This is becoming increasingly true for the younger generation, and teenagers communicate almost exclusively via digital platforms. While older generations may bemoan the loss of social skills, it's simply that social skills as they once knew them, are being replaced with a new way, and we will in fact see them become late, but enthusiastic adopters of digital communication and social media platforms.

8. Smaller shops

More and more clients will seek out small-to-medium-sized agencies as they look to find hands-on attention from experienced operators on their brands. While there is a need for agencies of all shapes and sizes, I have always believed that an agency becomes a fundamentally different business when it moves past the 60-80 person mark. In my view, it's simply not possible to maintain the same attention to quality in a bigger operation.

9. Real returns

Upper-income consumers will increasingly seek out authenticity. Brands that speak to them truthfully and honestly and brands that offer a "craft" that delivers according to quality standards of a bygone era.

10. What's in it for me

Lower-income consumers will demand more from their brands. They want to see real benefits and real rewards; no longer is it good enough to promise and deliver a quality product. This trend is evident in the cellular industry, where consumers will have various SIM cards from different operators to capitalise on cheaper call, SMS and data rates offered at different times of the day or week via different brands.

While trends will come and go, brands will continue to play a meaningful role in consumers lives. Good marketers and agencies will understand how they interact with brands and capitalise on this; brilliant marketers and agencies will create the new ways of interaction and determine popular culture. 🍷



Chris Moerdyk

The year of exciting consolidation



It would be singularly arrogant and just plain stupid of me to boast about the fact that nine of the 11 trends I predicted for 2011 were spot on. Quite simply because they were as predictable as the notion that Sundays are pretty much certain to be followed by Mondays. The two that I got wrong were:

"... newspapers will wake up to the fact that taking advantage of online is not just a question of reproducing their print products online? That was a massive mistake in the past and effectively just ended up with newspapers giving content away for free to the detriment of their print products. Newspapers will have to start re-assessing their online activities or simply go bust..."

I also suggested that 2011 would be the year in which print media would become more relevant. Wrong. Newspapers particularly are still being produced as though there were no such thing as the Internet, radio or social media. So, let's look at marketing and media trends for 2012.

1. Marketing rationalisation

Picking up on the momentum set last year, increasing marketing rationalisation will take the form of "reality check" audits to review just how wisely and efficiently budgets are being spent and whether strategy is relevant to the 2012 marketplace.

2. Sponsorship rationalisation

A trend that started in 2010, in which major sponsors withdrew from events because they were simply not making financial or marketing sense, will continue in 2012. As I predicted last year, those gratuitous sponsorships which involves big sports deals to give top management and their clients the chance to attend big matches in luxury and comfort will continue to wane as the return on funds used for this type of marketing is shown to be quite bad.

3. Continued growth of social media

Governments will become increasingly paranoid about the massive impact social media is having in terms of forcing transparency and despotic behaviour. Some will try and curtail its impact but clever governments will use it to their advantage. As I predicted last year, consumers will continue to resort more and more to sharing their purchase experiences with their personal networks and a growing number of consumer complaint websites.

4. Online advertising will continue to grow

It's a no-brainer that online advertising will continue to make inroads into advertising and marketing budget pies.

5. In-store marketing will continue to grow

Just as it was last year, marketing - particularly FMCG - will be all about getting closer to the consumer: brand managers will look towards marketing strategies that involve closer contact with the consumer. In-store marketing, which started gaining impetus three years ago, will continue to grow apace as marketers choose face-to-face strategies over faceless shotgun approaches. →



About the author

Chris Moerdyk was head of strategic planning and public affairs for BMW South Africa and spent 16 years in the creative and client service departments of ad agencies, ending up as resident director of Lindsay Smithers-FCB in KwaZulu-Natal. Chris was recently listed in a Markinor survey as one of South Africa's top 10 marketing thought leaders. Apart from currently being a corporate marketing analyst, advisor and media commentator, he is non-executive chairman of Bizcommunity. Email Chris on cmoerdyk@mweb.co.za and follow [@chrismoerdyk](https://twitter.com/chrismoerdyk).



Chris Moerdyk cont.

6. The start of changes in television

This might be a bit premature but we could see the start of a trend in 2012 where the big TV networks start realising that the existing paradigm, which is based primarily on delivery mechanisms, will inevitably have to give way to a focus on content creation and aggregation. The advent of Apple TV, Netflix and other TV content resources will start to see a few more South Africans applying to the SABC for the cancellation of their TV licences as they start watching their favourite programmes online.

7. The gadget wars will heat up

It is entirely predictable that gadgets, particularly those in the mobile communications and gaming sectors, will continue to mesmerise global consumers. It is going to be the old VHS vs Betamax battle enhanced a thousand times as mobile operating systems slug it out for pole position. I am tempted to suggest that 2012 might well be the year where the world's obsession with iPhones and iPads starts to wane in the light of other manufacturers catching up with Apple, but for the time being it is going to take a cockup of cataclysmic proportions by Apple to knock itself off its perch.

8. Classical advertising continues

TV channels will continue to be well-supported in terms of advertising for the time being. With ad agencies still looking at the production of TV commercials as a primary source of income generation and with South Africa's brand managers still egoistically obsessed with the 30-second commercial, there will be little change in this arena in spite of marketing audits showing some very dodgy return on investment numbers.

9. Online shopping will grow bigger

As I predicted last year, the trend towards more South Africans buying stuff online from all over the world will increase as connectivity improves and becomes more affordable. Once consumers start realising that online shopping is now a lot more secure they'll start picking up on the fact that a lot of products are cheaper online than they are in local shops - even including import duties and door-to-door deliveries. Retailers and especially book stores will have to start rethinking their business modelling [*ah, Loot.co.za, how do I love thee? Let me count the ways... - managing ed*].

10. Cheaper bandwidth

It is also fairly predictable that the costs of internet access will continue to reduce both in the face of stiff competition and a realisation that SA cannot continue to be the most expensive country in the world with regard to online activity.

11. Faster internet

It is also entirely predictable that, in most urban areas, download speeds will increase fairly steadily - although there are still far too many areas that rely on questionable 3G products and Telkom's corroding copper wires that make messaging a lot quicker by using a street urchin with a forked stick.

12. eBooks

It is also certain that more and more books will be published and read in digital format in spite of die-hards claiming that there is nothing to beat the touch and feel of as real book. They will argue that point until they actually try something like a Kindle and find out that the difference between it and the real thing is minimal. 🍷



Craig Kolb

Exciting period for marketing research in SA



We are in the middle of an exciting period in the marketing research industry, with a number of major shifts taking place that affect how research is done. The web in particular has led to multiple developments which threaten to topple the cherished technologies and techniques that have dominated the last two decades.

Key among these is the shift toward online surveys as a credible alternative to telephonic and face-to-face surveys, coupled with the growth of DIY online survey tools. Along with this has come a host of new potential techniques, such as online focus groups and bulletin boards.

1. Online surveys will overtake traditional interviewing modes

South African internet penetration has reached the point where online panels are a viable alternative to telephonic and face-to-face interviewing in many cases. If we judge online surveys by the same standards we applied to telephonic surveys in previous decades, then online is an even better option.

Telephonic was considered perfectly viable, even though landline only had around 10% penetration in the SA population prior to the advent of cellphones. Today, internet penetration (usage) has gone well beyond that point, 31% having used the internet in metropolitan areas and 18% nationally (last four weeks - AMPS 2011).

In the case of face-to-face surveys, the truth is that most face-to-face surveys in practice are urban or metropolitan area studies - very rarely are clients prepared to spend the money on a truly representative national-household survey. Internet penetration is more than adequate in these areas to achieve representative samples of all but the very poorest households.

The bottom line is judicious use of quotas and weighting now allows for sufficiently representative online surveys. Couple this with reduced costs and quicker turnaround, and it is clear that the days of traditional-survey modes are numbered.

2. The decline and fall of call centres

The confluence of WebCATI and faster internet means that the traditional call centre is less appealing than before. Call centres are relatively expensive; they require a dedicated space, with dedicated hardware and have large overheads.

In contrast, WebCATI now makes it easier than ever to manage a large network of interviewers operating from remote locations without the large overhead. To boot, you get rid of the telltale 'call centre background' noise.

Traditional focus groups are likely to become less popular in 2012 as their cost advantage is being eroded

Focus groups are often seen by clients with limited budgets as the low-cost alternative to a survey. But too often focus groups have been required to answer questions they could never really answer - such as reaching conclusions about differences between segments or making decisions regarding a new concepts readiness for launch. →



About the author

Craig Kolb owns and operates South African marketing research consultancy, Acentric (www.acentric.co.za), which conducts marketing research in the areas of new product research, brand equity, customer satisfaction/loyalty, employee/stakeholder satisfaction and public opinion. He is widely published in the area of marketing research, having written numerous articles and conference papers for both local and international conferences. Contact Craig on tel +27 (0)12 683 8832 or email him at craigkolb@acentric.co.za.



Craig Kolb cont.

Since focus groups are less reliable (if you repeat the group you often end up with a different answer each time), have small samples which cannot be generalised to the population and are subject to the 'lemming effect', this no doubt means that many a wrong decision has been made.

Online surveys now offer a more cost-effective and more conclusive form of research. Even when more qualitative insights are required, online surveys have been shown to provide detailed responses to open-ended questions - more so than telephonic and face-to-face. Therefore, online surveys are likely to provide a viable alternative to focus groups for researchers on a tight budget.

3. Online focus groups

For those who still require focus groups for qualitative exploration, online groups are likely to make sense in 2012. Advantages include: lower costs, the potential for longer groups allowing for richer insights, more opportunity for each participant to contribute, and less opportunity for the 'lemming effect' to present itself.

4. Long-term groups (bulletin boards and MROCs) come of age

I also predict that longer groups will also become popular in the form of bulletin boards and MROCs, which are measured in days rather than hours. These groups provide the opportunity for richer insights.

5. Advances in neuroscience will improve the MR toolbox

Mind-reading technology no longer just exists in the imaginations of Star Gate's producers anymore. The University of Berkeley recently demonstrated a major leap forward in our ability to interpret what is happening in the brain in real time. Using a combination of brain scanning and sophisticated software, it was able to obtain a hazy view of the images people were seeing in their mind's eye in response to video footage.

While far from being commercially viable at present, this research offers a hint of what might be possible for marketing researchers in future... frightening, isn't it?

6. Increasing fragmentation of research companies

The last decade has been characterised by a seemingly never-ending series of mergers in the marketing research industry. Most interpret this to mean that there will be "less choice" for clients. I believe it will be quite the opposite, for two reasons.

Firstly, mergers often mean dissatisfied employees who leave and start their own firms. Each merger gives birth to a host of new options. As one commentator on the [IPSOS/Synovate](#) merger stated, at least 40 different companies were formed by ex-employees leaving Synovate globally.

The second major factor is disruptive technology. Twenty years ago, it would have been unthinkable to conduct even a national survey as a single researcher - without the requisite field force, call centre, field managers, data capturers, sales team and statisticians. Today it is quite feasible to conduct a multinational survey as a single researcher if you have the right set of talents.

7. DIY research

As the [2011 Honomichl](#) report points out, insourcing is becoming a major trend internationally. I expect this will also be a trend in SA this year. With the appearance of online panels and online survey tools, it is easier than ever to conduct your own surveys, or to partially insource the survey process. If you want to survey consumers in general, rather than your own customers, all you do is buy 'sample' from a panel.

That said, it is unlikely this trend will mean research firms are going to disappear, but an option is now there that wasn't there before. ☒



Darren Woolley

Strategically solving the conundrums of marketing complexity



The world is sitting in a now familiar state of uncertainty, with debit crisis, stagnant established markets and emerging growth markets and continued pressure to deliver increasing returns. In the face of this uncertainty and continuing increase in fragmentation and complexity, marketers will need to strategically develop more flexibly responses to deal with a range of conundrums.

1. Chasing growth and maintaining share

Global marketers are looking for growth in the emerging markets, often funding this investment in at the expense of maintaining or defending their existing markets. The conundrum in 2012 is getting the right balance between the two because underinvesting in established markets opens opportunities for competitors, which could erode the funding required to penetrate the growth markets.

2. Knowing as many and as much about your customers

Customers are no more diverse than before; it is just now they have a voice and power of numbers. Before, marketers could treat them as an amorphous group or segment. But today the individuals within that group can - and do - connect and share and flex their muscles.

The continuing conundrum this year will be how to continue to reach a mass while being able to connect with the individuals within that group in the way they want.

3. Matching, making and managing channels

Everyone talks about owned, bought and earned media. But marketers struggle with getting the balance right. The conundrum appears to be go for reach with the traditional bought media with little budget for investing in owned and earned, or invest in owned and earned media for greater engagement at the expense of reach.

Striking the balance is difficult but in 2012, a "test-and-learn" strategy will provide the answers.

4. Working globally and locally

The idea of the global village is a reality with universal internet connectivity. But it is a village of multiple communities and cultural diversity. Global and multinational marketers are confronted with the conundrum that what they do in one market will be shared across all. Therefore, in 2012, there will be an increasing need to have a consistent global strategy with aligned and localised implementation.

5. Having customer "do" or "know"

Traditional advertising has been focused on awareness. But following awareness is engagement. "Tell me how" is one thing. "Show me how" is another. But let me "do it for myself" is engagement. The conundrum is how to strike the balance in investment between driving awareness and engagement to meet expectations. →



About the author
Darren Woolley is the founder of Trinity3 (www.trinity3.com), an Australian-based a marketing management consulting company with an international network of more than 30 industry professionals that helps people to achieve commercial purpose through creative process. Email him at darren@trinity3.com, read his blog at www.trinity3.com/blog/ and follow him on Twitter at [@trinity3](https://twitter.com/trinity3).



Darren Woolley cont.

6. Small ideas or a BIG idea

You load up your advertising with the big idea, you aim it at the target audience and you fire. And you keep doing it until you run out of firepower - usually budget. But now fragmented targets requires a more granular approach, with an on-going "test and learn" process replacing the old campaign model. The conundrum is that most marketing strategy (and its funding and execution) is campaign-driven and so 2012 will be a year of transition.

7. Mobile for reach or engagement

The conundrum is not mobile or not, as any brand wanting to engage customers' needs to think mobile (it is the main access to internet in emerging markets). The conundrum is how. With so much opportunity for reach and engagement, too many have failed using the mobile for awareness and there has only been nominal success in brands using mobile for engagement. But in 2012, that will change.

8. Collaboration or alignment

To embrace complexity requires collaboration both within the organisation and across the organisations engaged. But the conundrum is that collaboration requires alignment. But aligned to what? Corporate objectives? CEO vision? Brand? Sales projections? The customer? The first step to creating collaboration is to agree what is it you are collaborating on and to what outcome. Internal and then external alignment

9. Who owns digital?

Digital is not just the all-pervasive platform of marketing. It is the same across the whole of the business world. Websites, social media, and other external communications meet internal finance systems, inventory control and logistics. Nowhere is this more obvious than e-commerce. So the conundrum is who owns digital? This year, the CMO, CIO and the CFO will become new friends for every company embracing social media and e-commerce.

10. Pay for results or value but not costs

Much of the cost of advertising is simply a cost. The cost of media. The cost of agencies. The cost of production. But with the increased pressure on marketing and advertising cost, the conundrum is how do we move from this cost-based approach to a value- or results-based model? It is no longer acceptable to be a cost of business, but for marketing to be an investment, this year we need to stop thinking about costs and start focusing on value and the return on investment.

11. Social media is in-house and out-house

While traditionally many organisations outsource their communications needs to specialist agencies, social media is causing a rethink. In-house or out-house? With the opportunity to engage your customer in a conversation, it is not just a marketing channel, but also a customer service tool, a reputation management function and a customer-relationship management application. So is it in-house? And, if so, who owns it? This conundrum needs to be answered this year.

12. Who is responsible for CSR?

The customer is talking about you. And not just your products and services, but the way you manufacture them, the way you treat suppliers and employees, the environment and, in fact, all aspects of your business. But it is not just another channel to be managed. The conundrum is how do you make corporate social responsibility (CSR) everyone's responsibility? ❏



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Dawn Rowlands

Five African digital trends for 2012



Africa is a mobile-first digital environment with 55% of the continent's one billion people having mobile phones. In South Africa mobile internet penetration is 70%, while desktop internet penetration sits at only at 11%, whereas in Nigeria mobile and desktop penetration are both over 20%.

- With the under sea cable in both West and East Africa, the speed and access to data will drive the sharing and sale of content dramatically. This is due to increase during 2012.
- The launch of smart phones at under US\$80 and tablets at US\$300 has already transformed the Kenyan market's aspirations of mobile delivery.

Brands in these regions are thus now more than ever considering driving their messages through mobile content.

- Print spend across Africa is declining. Aegis Media's press spend has declined by 4% but we have seen digital spend increase by 58%.

Digital spending is expected to increase this year especially in out of home and mobile sectors.

- Television viewership is being affected by ongoing power outages in critical markets like Nigeria. Rising fuel costs in these markets will make access to television less affordable and predictable.
- Distribution via web, mobile and illicit means will quickly become the biggest content distribution channels on the African continent.

Nollywood.com produces over 150 movies a week already and many markets like Kenya for example are already enjoying Nigerian content over other European and USA developed and produced content. ❄



About the author
Dawn Rowlands is the CEO of Aegis Media South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa (www.aegismedia.co.za). She has over 20 years of experience in the media industry and has most notably been a shareholder founding partner of Nota Bene, a strategy agency in South Africa, and is also the founder of Posterscope SA. Contact Dawn via email dawn.rowlands@aemedia.com.



Douglas Kruger

What to expect in public speaking and presenting



Some things you expect to remain unchanged. From the time the first caveman waxed lyrical before a baffled fireside audience, public speaking doesn't initially strike you as a pursuit with the potential for radical change.

Sure, the Greeks added a trick or two, dipping sentences in logic - before going on to collapse the European economy - but speaking is speaking, right? Not true.

In the last couple of years alone, the world of speaking and presenting has morphed and grown considerably. Watch a professional motivational speaker from, say, 20 years ago, and it will look somehow... silly.

And it's not just changing by the decade. It's changing by the year. There will be changes this year too, both through advances in technology and due to trends in what is and what is not fashionable.

Here are my forecasts for the evolution of speaking, in 2012 and beyond:

1. The rich will get richer and the poor will get poorer

The skills gap between professional speakers (who are attuned to the latest global thinking on presenting), and the dinosaurs (whose bad habits are becoming incestuously entrenched; think meaningless phrases such as "All protocol observed"), will increase.

In other words, good speakers will say more and more of value. Poor speakers will say less and less, over longer and longer periods. The contrast, of course, is good news for professional speakers.

2. The nodding audience will become the norm

Audiences will spend less time looking at the speaker and more looking at their laps. Ironically, they will be paying greater attention. This is because presentations are increasingly being consumed in a different way; instead of taking notes, audiences are tweeting.

3. iPresenting will gain momentum

Many speakers are already using iPods and iPads to facilitate their message. As a simple example, you can now use an iPod Touch as a virtual mouse, glancing down at your visuals and changing slides without having to turn your back on the audience to see that the next slide is up.

It might not be long before the necessity of holding a device at all will be redundant. Instead, imagine something like a holographic, virtual touch-screen. The speaker can see it, and change slides on it in the air like an orchestra conductor, while the audience cannot.

4. Feedback will become more agile

Audience voting systems have been around for a while - think of the one in the show 'Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?' - but their use and sophistication will increase. The speaker will ask, "How many of you use that idea right now?" and within moments, the exact percentage will appear on the screen. →



About the author
Better Speaker, 50 Ways to Position Yourself as an Expert, and co-author of So You're in Charge. Now What?. He is a five-times winner of the Southern African Championships for Public Speaking. See him in action, or review his books and articles, at www.douglaskruger.co.za. Email him at kruger@compute.co.za and follow [@DouglasKruger](https://twitter.com/DouglasKruger) on Twitter.



Douglas Kruger cont.

Some conference conveners are already projecting live Twitter streams [*Twitterfalls or Twitterwalls - managing ed*] onto the screen, to generate dialogue real-time, a trend which we'll see more often.

5. There'll be less regurgitation

"One day, a man was walking down a beach, when he saw a youth, tossing starfish back into the sea..." You've heard that story? You'll hear less and less Starfish stories, as organisations like the Professional Speakers Association (affiliated to the American National Speakers Association) become stronger.

These bodies encourage members not to reuse tired old adages, but rather to develop their own stories and content. Rehashing will be increasingly condemned.

6. You'll 'get' more from presentations

Value is a big deal in most industries these days and, in the non-tangible world of speaking, it is particularly important. The world-wide financial squeeze has also ensured that meeting planners want demonstrably higher levels of value from speakers

This means less waffle, and more useful, implementable ideas.

7. You'll be able to consume a speaker's ideas through multiple platforms

There is a growing trend for speakers to see themselves as 'experts who speak, write and train' on their area of expertise. After a presentation, you will be able to buy the book, audio CD or online course version of the topic you have just heard.

As with VW's 'pick a size' approach to cars, in which the different models all look fairly similar and differ mostly in proportions, you'll be able to consume topics in a hierarchy of depth and duration, ranging from the mini video blog (vlog) (like this example), up to speeches and workshops, all the way up to boot-camps and year-long training programmes.

8. Speakers will hang hyperlinks in the air

As speakers develop greater knowledge in their niches, it will become harder to convey all of that knowledge in one-hour keynotes. Consequently, speeches will become like a man showing you a set of rabbits, then setting them free.

Those who are interested in more can follow any rabbit they want as far as they'd like to pursue it down that trail. Each idea will be like a hanging hyperlink to more.

9. Dry will become wetter

Because no one can tolerate boredom in the name of education, there has been - and if heaven is merciful - will continue to be an increase in the use of humour, stories and metaphors to make cardboard-dry content come alive.

And a final prediction that's perhaps more of a prayer? I hope we'll see the death of the bullet-point, which has never had any place in oratory. As trainers of proper presentation skills, we'll keep fighting to relegate them to laundry lists where they belong. 🍷



Dustin Chick

It's not about trends, it's about a reality check



There are no trends in the communications industry this year. There are realities. Fundamental, yet often simple, factors which then influence how communicators can bring value to the organisations they work within. Indeed, value is the rub. It's the communicators who understand these realities and how they translate into results that are able to move beyond just "Peee Aaar". 2012 is wholly and completely about understanding what is likely to influence how communicators bring value. Critically, this is about a clear and considered reality check both of how we work, and the environment we work within.

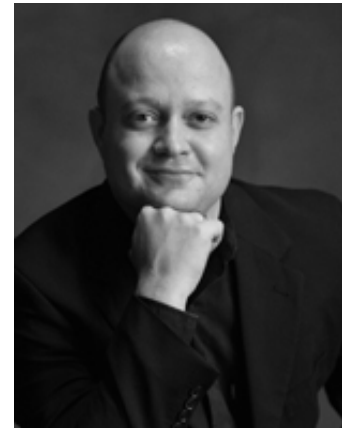
How we work...

- "Pee Aaar this" is not a brief. It's delegation to the point of abdication. There is no way any communicator can begin to meet expectations of those around them if these expectations have not been clearly articulated.
- Success is not something we determine after the fact. If communications is not benchmarked at commencement, it will never be successful (or at least it will never be perceived to be).
- Measurement should be embraced, not something communicators should be afraid of. When considering measurement metrics, don't be afraid to link communications and business metrics. AVE is not a business metric, no matter how much you tell yourself it is.
- Credibility sets the rats from the mice. Marketing is not communications. Remember this when communicating both your company and its products.
- A frame of reference is a table stake. If your people don't have one, along with a strong understanding of business and current affairs, you should panic. A lot.
- Research without interpretation is just data. Having the right insights about the world around us is the key to communications that works and just the start of the communications value proposition.

The environment we work in...

- Information is critical. The information environment is changing. The introduction of the [Protection of Information Bill](#) is the single biggest influencer of our work, especially if we work in the public affairs space.
- Budgets are small. Expectations are big. Finding a way to marry the two successfully is our job. Make it happen and spend money wisely to get the best business results. It's tough out there and this has the biggest influence on expectation of return.
- People could not be more important. Almost anyone can organise an event. It's not the same as communications. If you want your communications to positively and measurably influence your brand, then make sure you are using the right people to do it.
- Skills requires the most investment. The gap between senior communicators and junior communicators is too big. It is the responsibility of those in the industry to close as a matter of urgency.

Look forward to the year ahead. Just make sure you have a reality check in the progress. 🍷



About the author

Dustin Chick is head of strategy for Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide. His experience includes the development of the reputation management strategy for Brand South Africa and successful campaigns for the World Economic Forum and the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Dustin has managed SA and pan-African communications campaigns for several major multinational brands, including Western Union, BP, Konica Minolta and Henkel. Contact him on tel +27 (0)11 709 9660, email Dustin.Chick@ogilvypr.co.za and follow [@dustinchick](https://twitter.com/dustinchick) on Twitter.



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Erik Warburg

OOH - people are getting out more



Currently, out of home (OOH) is an exciting sphere to be in. People are spending more and more time out of their homes, and there are an increasingly growing number of OOH options available to the advertiser.

With increased accountability and measurement in the medium, OOH is finally taking its rightful place alongside the likes of TV, radio and print on the media planner's schedule. Digital is elevating OOH to new heights, and with the growing trend of convergence in the market place, OOH is able to provide targeted, relevant advertising to a growing number of people.

Trends we foresee happening in 2012 are as follows:

1. Convergence

Different media platforms are converging. Cellphones are now creeping into the OOH space. Response to advertising is easier than ever. People can be tracked via social networks to physical locations. Never before has it been so easy to reach people as accurately outdoors as now.

2. Digital

OOH is going digital. This is happening faster in some areas than others (eg Europe and the Far East are a lot more digitally developed on outdoor than we are). South African is catching up, though, with newer and better screens and networks opening all the time.

Currently there are good networks in airports, business hubs and some retail networks. Expect more to follow, as prices come down and quality improves.

3. Fragmentation of opportunities

There are more options on OOH than ever before, from billboards to activations to mall advertising, bus advertising, cab advertising and bespoke, custom-made opportunities. OOH is no longer just billboards, but an ever-expanding list of exciting options and possibilities.

4. New brands testing outdoor

As fragmentation of OOH continues and cheaper options appear, more brands are testing it out. With geographic-specific data now available, the extra measurability means that brands that have previously ignored OOH are now testing the waters.

If the alcohol ad ban gets passed, expect even more new brands to test OOH, as a large set of good OOH inventory will become available overnight (similar to what happened with tobacco advertising).

5. Improved accountability

OOH has for many years suffered from a poor reputation due to a lack of accountability. This is changing, due to specialist auditing companies and independents monitoring the OOH space on a frequent basis. →



About the author
Erik Warburg is MD of Posterscope South Africa (www.posterscope.com), part of Aegis Media (www.aegismedia.co.za) one of the world's largest out-of-home communications agencies, with offices in 21 countries. In 2009, under Erik's leadership, Posterscope pioneered the first-ever comprehensive and accurate data on South African media and marketing segments. Email him at erik@postersopesa.co.za and find him on Skype as erik_warburg.



Erik Warburg cont.

Also, the competition amongst OOH media owners has never been so stiff - there are now literally hundreds of media owners competing for the same spend. This is ensuring that media owners are improving their offerings, and accountability is one of the areas that is attracting a lot of focus.

6. Improved measurements

OOH has struggled historically with an accurate way of measuring performance. Without an accurate measurement system, advertising spend is often lost to the other ATL media types, such as TV, print and radio, especially now with an increased focus on accountability by the larger advertisers.

However, there are newer, better measurement systems being introduced and tested which should help the industry to compete with the other media types.

7. Consolidation of media owners

As mentioned, there are literally hundreds of OOH media owners in SA. With the recent recession, the competition has become intense, and I foresee a period of consolidation happening in the OOH space over the next few years, as the larger media owners acquire the smaller ones.

With stricter council regulations in place, this process will happen even faster as larger media owners seek to maintain their holdings.

8. Alcohol advertising

The [proposed ban of ATL alcohol advertising](#) is still on the cards, although when this would happen is anyone's guess.

Some alcohol companies are viewing this period as a time to maximise their OOH exposure to gain the last advantage before the ban kicks in, while others are already cutting back on OOH advertising to focus on other channels which are more sustainable.

9. Smaller formats, more packages

Advertisers have become a lot more frugal with their budgets - demanding better results with less money. In the OOH arena, this has meant that smaller formats (eg citilites and primelites) have been particularly successful, at the expense of larger, more expensive formats.

The move to package sites together is also gathering steam, as the SA market develops and becomes closer in nature to the European markets, where almost all OOH is bought as packages.

10. Outdoor used to push search

OOH has been proven to be a great catalyst to get people to search online. As the world of personal computing continues to expand, this is becoming ever-more relevant, as people are now using their smartphones, iPads, laptops and other personal devices to stay in contact whenever and wherever they are.

11. Competitive prices

Much of the pricing in SA in 2011 was off the back of the inflated 2010 ratecards, especially in the airports. What has happened is that occupancies have been low in these areas, and prices have dropped as a result.

I foresee this continuing into 2012, as there is still a nationwide surplus of OOH inventory (approximately 20% of billboards were empty in August 2011, as an example). 🍷



Frances Gordon

Trends in business communication



In the past two years, many large companies have reshaped, restructured and rewritten their content - from print to web to mobile and SMS. The catalysts for these large and often expensive changes have been neither business imperatives nor technological innovations, but new laws.

The [Consumer Protection Act \(CPA\)](#) and similar laws and regulations ([Companies Act](#), National Credit Act, [Treating Customers Fairly Roadmap](#), for example), are forcing companies to adopt a large-scale rethink of their content, mostly because of the new requirement for '[plain language](#)'. The changes are often driven by compliance and legal departments, rather than marketers or professional communicators.

This new regime of laws that have a direct impact on business communication is the backdrop of my approach to predicting these six content trends (in this article, I use 'content' widely to refer not only to print, but also to web, mobile, SMS, call centre, and all other types of content):

1. Companies start getting strategic about content

Smart companies, or those that have learnt their lessons from rushed, unplanned rollouts, are realising that they need to think before they implement. They know that, if you don't have good editorial and other planning tools, trying to do many pieces of content at the same time is just a waste of time. It leads to massive inconsistencies, process bottle-necks and wasted resources.

[Content strategy](#) is the discipline they will turn to for help. There's so much being written about content strategy at the moment that it's impossible to keep up - and much of it is good, practical methodology. According to industry leaders [Brain Traffic](#), content strategy comprises four elements:

Substance (what content is needed)

Structure (how content is organised)

Processes (both for launching and maintaining content)

Workflow (governance)

Although content strategy is often centred on online content, there is no reason the methods and approaches cannot be applied to all channels and media. The good news is that there is a great opportunity to learn more about content strategy in 2012.

Thanks largely to the efforts of [Kerry-Anne Gilowey \(@kerry_anne\)](#) of Cape Town content strategy consultancy [August Sun](#), [Content Strategy Forum 2012](#) is coming to Cape Town. This content-strategy conference will bring international speakers and experts - and, I hope, will encourage SA organisations to apply this discipline to their own environments. →



About the author
South African brands on print, web and mobile content. In 2005, she co-founded training and consultancy firm Simplified (www.simplified.co.za) in Johannesburg. In 2010, Frances sat on the Plain Language Association InterNational board and she's currently part of the International Plain Language Working Group. Tel +27 (0)11 483 3418, email Frances@simplified.co.za and follow [@Simplified_SA](https://twitter.com/Simplified_SA)



Frances Gordon cont.

2. More content audits and better ones, too

While 2012 will see some SA companies doing their very first content audit, most companies will improve and extend their content audits.

Right now, SA content audits tend to focus on one channel (usually the web) or one issue (often, compliance with plain language requirements or usability). While this is far better than no audit at all, companies are realising that each piece of content has multiple requirements and purposes, and it saves time and money to look at it all at the same time.

3. Responsive design for content

Designers and technology gurus are getting excited about responsive design. 2012 will see an exploration of the equivalent in content. Content repurposing is a field that always attracts controversy as it is very difficult to apply one strategy to different situations.

2012 will see more companies asking, "How can we be more efficient in using our content appropriately in other channels or media?" This will happen more and more in 2012, and will result in better use of content management systems and processes, and more consistent content.

4. Lawyers and marketers listen to each other

We will see more thoughtful and respectful conversations between marcomms and legal experts. Marcomm professionals have to start appreciating the legal intent of some documents, just as lawyers must start respecting the skill-sets that can help to make content useful and useable by ordinary South Africans.

5. Copywriters get to grips with the subject matter

Copywriters need to start understanding the detail so that they can ensure that their content is accurate and comprehensive, and does not hold any potential for misleading the consumer.

Eg, the user-friendly summary of your life insurance that you read on the web must be consistent with the wording in the policy. If 'insurance benefit' or 'investment value' is used in both a policy document and an advert, it must hold a consistent meaning.

6. A widening content divide

In short, in 2012 we will see an increasing divide between the companies that view content changes as a necessary evil and those companies that consider content to be a business asset.

The former will continue to pursue short-term approaches, in which they ask, "What is the least we can do to comply?" This unthinking approach must result in poor implementation - and increased cost in maintaining content across channels.

The latter will shift to a strategic view of content, and learn what they can from various disciplines, including plain language, usability, online publishing and digital strategy. They will then have the foundations for reaping the rewards: content that's cheaper and easier to produce and that makes a bottom-line difference. ■■■



Gilda de Araujo

Reasons not to 'touch that dial'



2012 heralds a brand new chapter for radio advertising and, more and more, savvy advertisers are acknowledging that successful campaigns demand the time, effort and nurturing of an involved team and more. [multimedia]

Here's the lowdown on what to expect from radio (advertising) in 2012...

1. Branded content

Programming and advertising are supposed to form a symbiotic relationship. This was demonstrated none more clearly than in 2011 by former 5FM broadcaster and now UK-based radio specialist Mark Gillman.

Brand programming technology as Gillman calls it, is about programming that evokes a feeling. It outlines the fact that, for radio advertising to work, it needs to 'move' or entertain first, and then be skilfully integrated into a station's compelling programming lineup.

Of course, this means that the excuse about radio not being 'visual' simply won't fly in 2012 because as Gillman explains, "It doesn't have to be visual. Programming is not creative - it's about being a human being. Someone must cry, laugh, be offended or be moved - something has to happen. Thereafter, it becomes easier to make the brand fit".

Exciting stuff and definitely something to look out for this year.

2. 30-second ads are not the be-all-and-end-all of radio advertising

Without taking credit away from the classic 30-second recorded ad, which has most often been what radio is to the media industry - a firm foundation - more and more advertisers are seeing it as de rigeur to go beyond the realm of the generic ad via features such as interviews, drama serials, sponsorships, outside broadcasts and generally more innovative programme integration and listener relevance.

3. The idea first, then duration

FNB successfully demonstrated in 2011 with the "[Steve](#)" campaign that the quality of the idea is more important than media length, and that some ideas need a little more time to come to life.

In 2012, it's the ideas that will dictate how we use the medium. These concepts should have the staying power to work within whatever new timing parameters they're presented with.

As international radio specialist Tony Hertz puts it, "How long should a commercial be? Write the commercial, rewrite it, get it right, then act it out loud. That's how long as it needs to be".

4. In touch with the emotions

Radio's strengths lie in the personal relationship it has with listeners. For the savvy advertiser in 2012, radio will increasingly liberate brands to be more transparent, authentic and create ads that reflect human truths. →



About the author

Gilda de Araujo is GM of the Radio Advertising Bureau (RAB) (www.rab.co.za). De Araujo is no stranger to the South African radio landscape, having garnered more than 15 years' of experience in radio advertising sales management and advertising sales, most notably within Primedia Broadcasting, United Stations, SABC and as head of radio specialist agency RadioHeads. Contact Gilda on +27 (0)11 325 6487, follow [@iamgilda](#) and [@rabsouthafrica](#) on Twitter, and connect on [Facebook](#).



Gilda de Araujo cont.

5. The return of the jingle

Along with a move towards longer, more emotive radio ads is the return of another firm radio favourite - the jingle.

More and more radio ads will include jingles and pneumonics that will instantly trigger brand recognition in the hearts and minds of the listeners, helping brands build firm relationships with listeners and to stand out from the media clutter.

6. Radio drives online

Granted, an ever-growing element of each campaign includes online and the social media space. But have you considered that when new media platforms are used as a sound-bite to spark conversation, where do you expand the conversation to achieve meaningful reach? On radio, of course.

As brands connect more and more with consumers through their social media communities, they will look for radio stations to drive this. Radio has the power to create communities of interest, and to act as a focal point for communities to talk about things that are happening around them.

By tapping into its immediacy and power to start, maintain and grow conversations, radio will remain one of the best mass-reach media to boost awareness of brand presence on new media platforms.

7. Station-advertiser 'collabo'

Gone are the days of campaigns or concepts being exclusively station or client driven. Marketers in 2012 will see the need to collaborate with stations, increasingly becoming content generators with the focus of entertaining and engaging listeners.

Considering that radio is set to invest more and more in the creation of content, this synergy can only bode well in creating great entertainment, whatever the commercial message.

Advertisers will, of course, look to stations to develop ways for their brands to be integrated into this ever-expanding content generation. This will also see the audience becoming the source of content/concepts.

8. Power of personality

One of radio's strengths lies in the personal relationship created between listeners and radio personalities. Consider that radio personality Gareth Cliff ([@GarethCliff](#)) currently tops the South African list of key influencers on Twitter, with four more radio presenters holding positions in the top 30 list.

And, with the ever-expanding scope of radio presenters' influence via social media platforms, we'll see more brands matching themselves to a show or host. 🍷



Gill Moodie

To fret or not to fret?



If you're viewing 2012 with trepidation, you're not the only one. Most of us in the media - permanent employees and freelancers, big companies and small - know we share the same precarious boat, as innovation in technology and the rise of social networking means the way people consume media is changing fast.

On top of that, advertising revenue is bound to be tepid this year because of economic downturn.

The long and the short of it is that 2012 is a year of reining in spending for all so we can expect marginal media products to be shut, retrenchments and other forms of cost-cutting.

But it's not all gloomy as I peer into the crystal ball so let's look first at the sunnier spots for SA media this year, wherein lies opportunity for the smart operators:

1. It's going to be a great year for news.

On the sport front, there is the London Olympics while business media anywhere in the world can go to town on analysing the fascinating global economic situation.

In South Africa, it is the year of Politics with a capital "P". The power struggles within the ANC and the tripartite alliance leading up to the party's December [elective conference in Mangaung](#) are epic. This may not be simply a battle for the ANC presidency but a battle for the soul of the party and whether it should chart a course for more leftist waters. Fascinating stuff!

2. Power struggle

As we saw in the battle between former president Thabo Mbeki and president Jacob Zuma, political power struggles tend to stir up the dirt so we can expect revelations of corruption, personal scandal and maladministration this year as the players seek to oust each other from the battle field.

Most top ANC people are up to their armpits in arms-deal verneukery anyway, so there's plenty of dirt to fling around. My guess is that the revelations about the president's spokesman [Mac Maharaj](#) late last year was leaked to the media from a Zuma rival - possibly the ANC Youth League that was slapped down so publicly. The Sunday papers and the Mail & Guardian can capitalise on these dynamics in a big way.

3. The other kind of power struggle

Another big story to watch unfold is SA's billion-rand [nuclear-power expansion](#) (we will be building up to six nuclear stations before 2030). Megabuck construction projects such as these - with myriad government tenders, complex supply chains and foreign money - lend themselves to corruption and kickbacks.

Watch this space as it's going to get very interesting and the SA firm Aveng, led by Roger Jardine (formerly CEO of media company Kagiso), is a prime contender at the lucrative trough. →



About the author
Gill Moodie ([@grubstreetSA](#)) is a freelance journalist, media commentator and the publisher of Grubstreet ([www.grubstreet.co.za](#)). She worked in the print industry in South Africa for titles such as the Sunday Times and Business Day, and in the UK for Guinness Publishing, before striking out on her own. Email Gill at [gill@grubstreet.co.za](#) and follow her on Twitter at [@grubstreetSA](#).



Gill Moodie cont.

4. Circulation

Talking of the M&G, it will be very interesting to see if it can sustain its circulation growth of last year, built mostly on investing in [quality people and kick-ass content](#). I hope so.

While it goes without saying that most SA papers will continue to be squeezed on both sides by declining circulation and depressed advertising revenue, we can expect to see some of Media24's titles arrest circulation decline now that the company has largely fixed its [terrible problems](#) with the Cycad CRM system.

Beeld in Gauteng, for instance, was showing an increase in the last available ABCs (for the third quarter of 2011) and I hear that the Daily Sun, the big daddy of SA's tabloids, should show an arrest in circulation decline in the ABC numbers for the last quarter of 2011.

5. City Press the one to watch

Also at Media24, SA's biggest media company, City Press is the one to watch as its highly regarded editor, [Ferial Haffajee \(@ferialhaffajee\)](#), has reached that sweet spot where anyone who's hot and happening wants to work in her newsroom.

Success breeds success, so I've noted with interest that Haffajee has been bagging some excellent journos over the past year: Mandy Rossouw ([@MandyRossouw](#)) and Yolandi Groenewald ([@YolandiG](#)) (both from the M&G), Carien du Plessis ([@carienduplessis](#)) (from Daily Maverick) and early this year Natasha Joseph ([@TashJoeZA](#)) (from the Cape Argus) will join as news editor.

Behind the scenes, market-research whizz [Jos Kuper](#) (who worked closely with the late [Deon du Plessis](#) on the Daily Sun for many years) is working her magic at understanding the paper's market, so I think there are many more good things to come from City Press.

6. New broom for Media24 Newspapers

In fact, Media24's entire newspaper division is about to get a new broom in [Fergus Sampson](#), when he takes over from [Abraham van Zyl](#) as head of newspapers in the first quarter of this year.

[Sampson](#), who is CEO of the English newspapers (Daily Sun and City Press) at the moment, will be adding the Afrikaans papers (Beeld, Die Burger, Volksblad and Rapport) to his stable.

A big job, but I'm sure he's up to it, as the grapevine says Sampson is a results-man and not to be trifled with.

7. Avusa's possibly poisoned chalice

While on corporate movers and shakers, the announcement of a new Avusa CEO (to replace [Prakash Desai](#)) will be interesting. The word is that acting CEO [Mike Robertson](#), previously Sunday Times editor, is not in line for the job and the board is looking outside the company.

The question is: who would want the job? Given that Avusa is knee-deep in legacy businesses and it's hard to read its noxious boardroom politics, it might well be a poisoned chalice.

8. New news editor for *The New Age*

It will also be interesting to see if *The New Age* can keep up the tempo, now that veteran news editor Raymond Joseph ([@rayjoe](#)) has handed over the reins of the paper's news desk. It was an inspired move by *The New Age* editor [Ryland Fisher \(@rylandfisher\)](#) to lure Joseph from Cape Town to Joburg to run his news desk last year but where to now for the one-year-old paper? Newspapers live and die on the shoulders of their news editors but I've heard positive things about Joseph's successor, Terry van der Walt, who was tabloid training manager at the *Daily Sun*. →



Gill Moodie cont.

9. Closing down and/or repositioning

On the delicate issue of products falling by the wayside this year, we can probably expect some of the more marginal magazines in competitive categories such as décor and women's general interest to be axed.

And I wouldn't be at all surprised if Independent Newspapers repositions its two afternoon papers - the Daily News in Durban and the Cape Argus in Cape Town - and makes them morning papers or closes them down. Afternoon papers across the world have been in trouble for quite some time and a depressed economy makes tough decisions a necessity - especially at Independent Newspapers, where its Irish owners are ruthless about profit margins.

10. Up its game

The country's first iPad-only newspaper, [iMaverick](#), will have to lift its game in terms of subscribers if it is to grow but the company's CEO, [Styli Charalambous \(@StyliChara\)](#), told me late last year that he hopes to seal a couple of corporate deals soon that will boost the numbers substantially. I do hope they pull it off.

My guess is the deals are with blue-chip outfits such as financial services firms who want to give iPads to their top people. Maverick's overheads are so low compared with traditional-media houses that one or two deals such as these will be just the ticket for founder [Branko Brkic \(@brankobrkic\)](#) and his enterprising crew.

11. News-reading habits

And then, Twitter is becoming so ubiquitous within media circles and beyond, that it really is worth noting the seismic shift of social networking - and that most of us now get our news headlines off Twitter feeds (and not newspapers) and read articles recommended by our Twitter and Facebook buddies.

We're all reading far more widely and eclectically. Loyalty to any particular title is over.

12. E-readers

Likewise, more and more people are getting tablets and e-readers, whether they be iPads, Kindles or Kindle Fires. My hairdresser has a Kindle, for heaven's sake, and the other day in a suburban doctor's office, I sat next to a 60-something woman noodling away on a tablet.

The tech keeps getting smarter and cheaper faster and faster, so beware those who think that the feel of ink on paper will bear out in the end. There's no going back for media consumers on this one. 🍷



Gillian Rightford

The metaphor of the Age of Aquarius



Whether this year actually brings the end of the world as we know it or not, 2012 is an interesting year from an astrological point of view. Here's what one expert, astrologer Mark Borax, says: "The coming together of Jupiter, Neptune and Chiron [the healer] is this millennium's Star of Bethlehem." It's the launchpad to 2012 and the full emersion into the Age of Aquarius....It's an ignition point, he says, to speed the evolution to the essence of who we are.

And, with this triple conjunction, he invites us to get past the cloud of gloom, and focus on the rays of light. He writes, "Regardless of your birth sign, the Aquarian in you - the future being in you that your old self was an early prototype of, gets the go-ahead to come out, come out wherever you are. As everything falls apart, the time is right to crack open to the new. Dowsed by this powerful celestial event, old stories have to change or die. Old structures fail. Old stories give way to deeper stories of the soul that were always hidden within them."

So what does this mean for our world, as we know it? Let's take a peek in the crystal ball.

1. Digital comes of age

Aquarius traditionally "rules" electricity, computers, flight, democracy, freedom, humanitarianism, idealists, modernisation, astrology, nervous disorders (more about this later), rebels and rebellion. So the trend will increasingly move towards accepting digital as is, not digital as special or different or only for some people. The digital world continues its merger with the old world.

2. Digital4all

Mobile will drive the lower income groups' engagement with digital, catapulting the power of the platform.

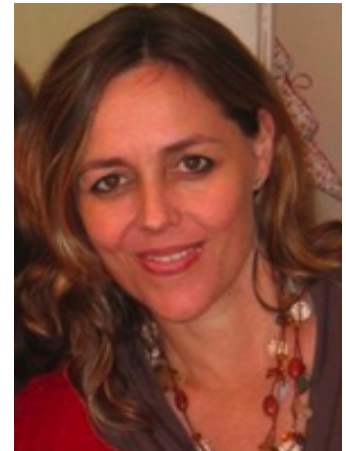
3. ATL, BTL, UX?

The notion that 'digital' has to be treated differently in the communication field will fade and instead its true potential will be accessed through merger, collaboration, experience, learning and creativity. The current industry structure will not last.

4. Traditional structures are broken down

In fact, all traditional business and service-delivery models will continue to have their existence (and costs) challenged and broken down to improve efficiencies and relevance to the user.

This will apply whether it's an insurance policy, a government, or the way an ad agency or a production house is structured and charges. It will also apply to rigid work hours and an insistence on coming to the office. The same old way of working won't work for anyone. The spotlight will turn on companies making excessive profit, particularly the mobile companies, as data consumption and storage needs multiply. →



About the author

Gillian Rightford's CV is a mix of marketing, advertising, and management. A former group MD of Lowe Bull, she started Adtherapy (www.adtherapy.co.za), a company that aims to improve the quality of advertising out there through better skills and better client/agency relationships. Contact Gillian on tel +27 (0)21 761 2812 or email gillian@adtherapy.co.za, read her blog at adtherapy.blogspot.com and follow her on Twitter at [@grightford](https://twitter.com/grightford).



Gillian Rightford cont.

5. It's not on the box

The consumption of media in ways different to what was originally imagined will continue. Those who adapt will survive, those who don't, won't. But it doesn't mean every soapie or newspaper has to go digital. "When the world zigs, we zag," says [BBH](#). Traditional models may be able to zag, and turn their experience into something worth the diversion. (Read the brilliant book by satirist Gary Shteyngart, [A Super Sad True Love Story](#), for a view of the future).

6. It's all about creativity, stupid

Creativity will be recognised as a staggering business tool, and the era of the paint-by-numbers approach to advertising will start its death rattle. Anyone who has read Steve Jobs' biography, and still thinks that creative people only exist in ad agencies to win awards, is a moron. Creative people exist in the world's best businesses, and more creativity is needed to unlock powerful consumer engagement, not less.

But creativity isn't just an ad. And, actually, it never was.

7. Experience = confirmation

Brands will increasingly be held to account in social forums: what they promise has to match what they deliver. In every way.

8. Rebellion against 'a million little lies'

Consumer vigilantism will grow, especially as the income demographic of participation broadens in South Africa, and the less affluent, who are more ripped off, realise they have a strong voice. It's about rebellion against untruth.

9. Do, not tell

The flip-side of this is that more and more brands will cross the line through to creating content, experiences and philanthropy, in order to let consumers feel the brand through living it. And with this cross-over from clear marketing communication to "wait a minute, was that an ad?" will come some ethical challenges.

10. Are you talking to me?

Technology will allow more personal, customised advertising - whether it's on the internet, on your phone, on a billboard you drive past. The ads will know you, your friends, what you like and don't, and talk to you in ways that will either give you the creeps or make you wonder how they knew that (from my [2011 trends prediction](#))! This will bring a renewed focus on privacy: an "old story" for some, but a drawing of the line for others.

11. I'm talking to you!

The consumer will continue to grow their dialogue with their favourite brands, becoming more involved in the creative process through marketers' efforts to get them to feel closer to the brand.

12. And finally, I'm OTG

As the internet and mobile define how we consume information, go about our daily tasks, and talk to each other, people will need to get 'off the grid' in order to avoid serious 'nervous disorder'. This will become harder due to the spread of technology, everywhere, always on, and therefore increasingly more valuable a commodity. The OTG experience will become sought-after, if you can do cold turkey. 🍗



Gisele Wertheim Aymes

Is life the new start-up?



Our fast-changing and **über**-connected world impacts the way in which we work and live and, to stomach the harsh realities of life in 2012, we will all need to learn how to live!

1. A South African state of mind

South Africans face an interesting socio-political and economic year in 2012. Political parties are gearing up for what could be a watershed year, with a string of significant events on the political horizon.

The Sword of Damocles hangs over [media freedom](#) with the proposed introduction of the [Protection of Information Bill](#). Continued global financial volatility may place us under further pressure, but also presents many opportunities for growth and development.

Indeed, some business analysts and executives predict a more positive year for SA than most. CEO of FNB, Michael Jordaan ([@michaeljordaan](#)) made a prediction on Twitter recently, saying: "In 2012 the SA GDP growth rate will comfortably exceed that of the rest of the globe."

2. Über-interconnectivity or overconnectivity?

The heightened global interconnectivity is the subject of concern as global financial markets heave and so it should be.

First [Scientist](#) and now Forbes reported on "three systems theorists at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich took a database listing 37 million companies and investors worldwide and analysed all 43 060 transnational corporations and share ownerships linking them. They discovered that global corporate control has a distinct bowtie shape, with a dominant core of 147 firms radiating out from the middle.

"Each of these 147 own interlocking stakes of one another and together they control 40% of the wealth in the network. A total of 737 control 80% of it all. Economists say the danger comes when you combine hyper connection with the concentration of power."

Interesting times indeed!

3. Rise of second economy through digitisation

Economist W Brian Arthur, longtime visiting researcher at PARC and external professor at the Santa Fe Institute, quantified this phenomenon recently in a [PARC Forum video](#) and [McKinsey Quarterly](#) article. "The second economy... is vast, silent, connected, unseen, and autonomous (meaning that human beings may design it, but are not directly involved in running it). Arthur argues that this second economy, which author Nick Carr in turn dubs the age of 'deep automation,' may represent the biggest shift since the Industrial Revolution, and lead to increases in productivity output as well as decreases in physical jobs."

According to Arthur's back-of-the-envelope calculations, the second economy could surpass the physical economy in less than three decades. The nature of work will change, jobs will change, organisational structures will change, institutions will change, and economies will change. →



About the author

Gisele Wertheim Aymes' media career of over 20 years spans a broad range of experience, from editorial, marketing, publishing and advertising sales to media innovation and strategy. Among the many hats she wears is that of publisher editor of Longevity magazine ([www.longevitymagazine.co.za](#)), which she bought from Avusa in 2010. Email her at [gisele@longevitymag.co.za](#) and follow her on Twitter at [@giselewaymes](#).



Gisele Wertheim Aymes cont.

4. Rise of consumption equality

Andy Kessler a former hedge-fund manager, told the [Wall Street Journal](#): "It used to be so cool to be wealthy-an elite education, exclusive mobile communications, a private screening room, a table at Annabel's on London's Berkeley Square. Now it's hard to swing a cat without hitting yet another diatribe against income inequality. People sleep in tents to protest that others are too damn wealthy.

"Yes, the wealthy can strut around in more foo foo Jimmy Choos and Harry Winston pendants, but so what? That's all they've got left. Being envious of someone's nice outfit is no way to go through life."

Kessler argues that just about every product or service that makes our lives better requires a mass market or it's not economic to bother offering. "Those who invent and produce for the mass market get rich. And the more these innovators better the rest of our lives, the richer they get, but the less they can differentiate themselves from the masses whose wants they serve."

It's the Pages and Bransons and Zuckerbergs who have made the unequal equal. So, sure, income equality may widen, but consumption equality will become more the norm. Compared to 20 years ago, or even five years ago, chances are that you're richer.

I agree with Kessler: we should stop moaning and enjoy it!

5. Socialisation of everything online

I don't think anyone would argue this trend with Robert Hof who wrote in Forbes, "With more social network accounts than email accounts as of 2009, there are now 860 million social network users. In other words, it's the next great media platform. The monthly time spent on social networks now has passed that of all the portals, not just Yahoo, but also CNN, AOL, and others.

Then there's gaming (think Zynga, which [went public in December 2011]). All that's going to change completely the world of entertainment, from music to television (if it hasn't already)."

While in SA we continue to lag the developed worldwide average online/broadband penetration trends, the game is changing so very, very fast.

6. The always-ticking millennial

Increasingly, corporate business is recognising that [Generation Y](#) staffers (the ones called [millennials](#)) will not work a 9-to-5 day.

Industry trendspotter Marian Salzman, CEO of Euro RSCG Worldwide PR, [says](#): "The new digital generation works anywhere, anytime. 2012 to be the beginning of an era in which notions of time are divided differently; especially when we all know work nowadays is a 24/7/365 proposition. All hands on deck, but at different times."

SA CEOs, take note!

7. Transparency vs privacy

With the proliferation of social and traditional media use, people will start experiencing full-blown information overload and seek privacy. We're seeing it on Twitter, with more and more Tweets suggest exasperation across the globe at invasion of privacy with spam and even the deteriorating quality of some dialogue.

"Do you think Bob Dylan cares what 'How to get more traffic' blog posts have to say? Hell, no." tweeted cartoonist and author Hugh MacLeod ([@gapingvoid](#)). →



Gisele Wertheim Aymes cont.

Despite a personal need for privacy, people will not absolve politicians or companies and will continue to expect them to act transparently. Consumers are realising they have a loud voice online and what they won't say to someone's face, they will say online. Increasingly transparent conversations about brands and companies are taking place.

In SA, Woolworths has been experiencing since the December 2011 period, when its [dispute with Frankie's](#) became the centre of a Twitter and Facebook attack on its brand reputation.

8. Self-care

Wellness continues to top the global trends agenda. In SA, we're an increasingly unhealthy lot. In fact, our mortality rate will be the same in 2015 as it was in 1955. There are a number of factors impacting on this: childbirth mortality, and poor access to health services, HIV and TB.

However, the SA government has noted its concern about rising levels of obesity and some media suggests consideration is being given to placing restrictions on not just [fast food](#) and [alcohol advertising](#), but also a "[fat tax](#)" on sweets and alcohol.

The Economist recently reported: "South Africa has become one of the world's fattest countries. Six out of ten South Africans are now clinically overweight or obese, according to a survey by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), a pharmaceutical company. So, apparently, are a quarter of teenagers and one in six children under nine. Another study, by London's Imperial College, found as many as three-quarters of South African women to be overweight, up from 57% in 1980; it classified 43% as obese, up from 24% in 1980."

South Africans prepare for the introduction of [National Health Insurance](#), which aims to equalise the access of health facilities across the broader population and improve services to less advantaged citizens. In this scenario, self-care becomes increasingly critical.

I loved this trend from one of the world's leading trend firms, www.trendwatching.com, on DIY health, which it says is a key trend to watch for: "DIY goes 'good for you' in 2012: novel apps and devices will increasingly let consumers discreetly track and manage their health by themselves. The Do-It-Yourself trend is not going to slow down in 2012.

"Now, there are two kinds of DIY: the kind (most!) consumers hate and the kind they love. For 2012, the latter category will show endless innovation driven by, what else, technology, which in turn feeds off a never-ending desire among consumers to be in control."

9. Eco-cycology

It's just a sexy variation on recycling, but what a great turn of phrase. Simply meaning brands taking back all of their products and recycling them responsibly and innovatively. Says Trendwatching.com, which tabled it: "While in times of recession, economic interests tend to overrule eco-causes, the quest for a more sustainable lifestyle will remain a most pressing issue for years to come. The phenomenon of brands helping consumers recycle by taking back all old items from customers, and then actually doing something constructive with them is coming to the fore."

In SA, a large [waste management](#) market exists through collection of waste by the both the formal and informal sector which make a living off waste; however, to date, brand companies have not taken recycling to the next level as their international counterparts. So here's a challenge! →



Gisele Wertheim Aymes cont.

10. Be a flexitarian

More people are becoming "Flexitarians", those who consciously reduce their meat intake for health reasons, but still occasionally enjoy animal protein. One of the best evidences of this trend is the growing popularity and social media following of the nonprofit [Meatless Monday](#) initiative, developed in association with [John Hopkins' Bloomberg School of Public Health](#).

PS it may help with global warming too, less demand for cows, results in a reduction of global emissions.

11. Cash-less society

SA banks have already led a revolution locally in mobile banking, which boosted the innovation of cash-less banking and is seeing meaningful penetration across the broad mass market. E-Wallet from FNB, Cash Send from Absa and Vodafone Group with Nedbank and M-PESA all enable customers to send money to anyone with a valid SA cell number.

Globally, Trendwatching.com says we should keep an eye on Google's free, NFC-enabled mobile payment system [Google Wallet](#) and the US online [payments processor PayPal](#), which has a mobile payments application for Android devices. [Square](#), an electronic payments service, enables users to accept credit card payments by using a card-reading portable device connected to their iPhone, iPad or Android device. [iZettle](#) is a device that enables consumers to accept credit card payments while on the go. The portable chip and pin reader plugs into iPhones or iPads, so that card transactions can take place instantly.

12. Life is the new start-up

Euro RSSG's Salzman talks about how people's overtaxed lives will add to the "in the moment" movement, which for many people will be the only way to stomach the harsh realities of life in 2012, and [www.good.com](#) masked readers to predict trends for 2012. I'll end my predictions with one of its readers' choices and my favourite: Life is the new start-up.

When it comes to distracting us from what is going on in LIFE, we are masters. TV, social media and gaming consoles provide continual escape. iPods, Driftas, iPads all desensitise us from physical activity, and music and Blackberry and friends numb our interaction with family and community.

Our brains occupy a constant state of analysis, worry and prediction, leaping from one thought to the next. In order to thrive in an over-connected world, we'll have to learn to live in the moment, free from doubts and worries, to experience life unbarred and allow some refuge from a world in turmoil.

As Seneca the Younger (BC4 to 64AD) said: "As long as you live, keep learning how to live."

Note: All references include the links, so you can explore these ideas and trends further. [Trendwatching.com](#), quoted above, sends out monthly trend briefings to more than 160 000 subscribers worldwide in nine languages. 🍷



Greg Whitfield

Loyalty programme trends for 2012



When reviewing loyalty programmes, which are proliferating, the key question is, "Are they adding value to the customers' experiences?" Here is what I think will make loyalty programmes stand out from the pack in 2012.

1. Great branding

Branding a loyalty programme is as important as branding a product or service. Not only does it promote the usual good stuff like recall and liking, it creates a platform off which to develop a long-term relationship with the customer. Customers who feel some kind of emotional pull to your loyalty programme are more likely to sign up for it and less likely to move to a competitor.

Loyalty programme branding that also reflects the known values of the core brand reinforces that brand's positioning and desirability and vice versa. Moreover, a unique and memorable name goes a long way too.

2. A perfect fit

Different consumers have different needs, and this should be reflected in the way in which each loyalty programme is structured. For instance, a loyalty programme for a top-end credit card should offer different rewards to those offered by a large supermarket chain.

The credit card customer is unlikely to be interested in discounts and is more likely to be attracted by rewards that have a high perceived value, like air miles or points that can be accumulated towards the purchase of luxury items. This customer is also more likely to donate his or her points to a charity, so that option needs to be available too. Not only does it provide additional choice for the customer, but also introduces a feel-good factor that enhances the experience of the brand and the propensity to stay loyal to it.

The broader customer base of a supermarket chain is, on the other hand, more likely to be price-sensitive and therefore more likely to be attracted by discounts or cash-back offers, whether these are instant or redeemable from time to time. A good discount off the month-end grocery bill every few months will mean a lot.

In short, value needs to be tangible, and it needs to be meaningful to the customer base.

3. Simple, simple, simple

The way in which some loyalty programmes are run is complex and often confusing. As a result, consumers get lost along the way, either losing interest in the programme or developing negative feelings towards the core brand.

Therefore, whatever format you choose for your loyalty programme, it is important to make the way in which points are earned and redeemed clear and to make the accumulation and redemption processes simple. Life is complicated enough for a consumer, without having to figure out how their loyalty to a brand benefits them. →



About the author

Greg Whitfield is director at ComeDine

(www.comedine.co.za), an online restaurant booking website.

Greg's background is in investment banking. He studied a Business Science degree in Economics and Honours in Finance at the University of Cape Town before working in London and South Africa. Starting ComeDine Online Restaurant Bookings with partner and school friend, Martin Rose, Greg has taken on a big change and challenge in the entrepreneurial direction. Follow

[@ComeDineOnline](https://twitter.com/ComeDineOnline).



Greg Whitfield cont.

4. Points alone do not create loyalty

This is the crux of the matter for 2012. Loyalty programmes need to be about more than earning points. They need to be a hub around which the customer can develop a real relationship with the brand and around which marketers can manage and enhance loyalty.

This is where add-ons come in, like surprise discount vouchers or special offers for particularly loyal customers. It is also where social networking comes into play and where loyalty programmes have the opportunity to become part of more than just the shopping experience, but of the greater social experience as well.

5. Make it interactive

Loyalty programmes that encourage customers to interact with the brand have far greater 'stickiness' than those which don't and, like the kind of rewards that are offered, the form of interaction needs to be customised to suit the customer base.

Downloads of recent ads, mobile apps, ringtones, screensavers and interactive games may work well in the youth market, while more mature, discerning consumers might value the opportunity to post their opinions about products and services online.

6. Chuck the gimmicks

Gimmicks, like Christmas crackers with cheap toys inside, never live up to expectation. Chuck the gimmicks and give real, consistent rewards that will encourage real, consistent customer loyalty.

7. Loyalty matters (really)

Loyalty matters - and it needs to be guarded and nurtured. If you do not use your loyalty programme to do this, you are missing the point.

For instance, it is up to five times more costly to gain a new customer than to sell to an existing customer. That is a huge benefit to every business right there. Selling additional products, new variants and range extensions to existing customers is also much easier to do. Loyal, satisfied customers are likely to purchase more frequently than occasional customers are or to consciously choose the brand they're loyal to over competitors.

So never take loyalty for granted, it is incredibly valuable and, once it's lost, it's lost forever.

8. Please don't go

Something that is seldom acknowledged is the value that loyalty programmes have in managing attrition. If loyal customers are encouraged to interact with your company on a regular basis, this presents the opportunity for you to deal with problems, as they arise and so to strengthen the customer relationship rather than potentially losing it.

Loyalty programmes are also a mine of management information, and can help perceptive marketers pick up developing trends quickly, identify changing customer needs and identify trends in service delivery complaints.

In short, properly structured, managed and used, loyalty programmes add great value - not only for consumers, but for your business as well. 🍷



Ingrid von Stein

Who you are shouts too loud!



2012 started with an announcement that, for the first time, digital music sales topped physical CD sales. Therein is the undeniable fact and confirmed trend for 2012 in communications: digital is officially the leading arm of the communications platform.

1. True communications platform

We will continue to see communications companies trying to incorporate digital into the PR mix as a value-added service but, alas, you will have missed the boat. It's not a value-added service but a true communications platform that is here to stay and within five years will have replaced traditional print media.

2. Demise of AVE

We will also see the final demise of the old AVE rates being applied to work out PR coverage. It's no longer about the thud factor or the conversion of ad rates multiplied by three or seven - depending on how arrogant you are. That may have been the basic system adopted for years but, in today's new media, it has absolutely no value any more.

3. True engagement and interaction

Where we should have already been years ago is true engagement and interaction between a brand and its market. Gone is the one-way, top-of-your-voice monologue, shouting out how great your brand is. Moving forward, as of yesterday, it's all about engagement and conversations created between a brand and its market where the market gets to tell you how great it really is - or isn't.

**I CAN'T HEAR WHAT YOU ARE SAYING....
because who you are shouts too loud!**

New media communication is not a page on Facebook or some randomly placed tweets that go out every so many hours. Do brands ever read what is being put out about them and the interaction that it creates or, as in most cases, does not create?

4. Niche online radio stations

The days of promising clients an on-air interview with the major national stations are also a thing of the past. Today, the true communications specialists are using niche online radio stations to create and continue conversations between brands and markets.

Today's consumers are not stupid. They choose whom they want to engage with. 2011 saw the rise of online radio sweeping through the South African market as the traditional radio stations floundered around, trying to create an online 'presence'. But the hybrid is not working.

Dedicated online stations are going from strength to strength, coming online in an explosion of creative energy. Here, at last, is a platform where the consumer becomes a participant and collaborator in determining what is aired, from the music played to the conversations initiated. →



About the author

Ingrid von Stein is the founder and MD of Indigo Zebra Communications, NGO Marketing (www.ngomarketing.co.za) and BizRadio (www.bizradio.co.za; [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/indigozebra)), South Africa's first dedicated online radio and live social media platform serving the business community. She is a strategist, brand architect and crisis communications specialist who has been innovating the communications industry in Africa for over two decades. Email her on ingrid@indigozebra.co.za and follow [@littlezebra](https://twitter.com/littlezebra) on Twitter.



Ingrid von Stein cont.

Because of its immediacy, there is continuous interaction via the online medium, using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Skype to engage directly with the community. (Yes, we now call them 'communities' and not 'listeners').

5. Evolution of newsletters

Traditional newsletters should have adapted in 2011 but, hopefully, 2012 will see this adaption finally come about - short, interesting and engaging information. Gone is the MD posing with a baby as he or she hands over the cheque, replaced by material that is both pertinent and relevant to the reader.

Precise, hard-hitting and entertaining video and audio clips with direct links to your live blog, updated every few hours (not once a month!) is what it's about.

If you're not going there, why are you even bothering? What you're putting out is that 'We're boring. We don't have the time for you. We have nothing of interest to say to you but we'll say it anyway.'

6. Real stories

The new media is being trawled by savvy smart journalists who are looking for the real stories. Continuing to bombard them with vacuous news releases is guaranteed to get you unnoticed.

2012 will be the best year yet for new media communications and there will be a few players who lead the way, much like Google or Facebook did a few years ago.

Times have changed. Have you changed your communications? Sit back for a moment and let your community tell you what you need to hear because frankly, my friend, they can't hear you. If no one is listening, then surely it's time to think about what you're saying, how you're saying it and where you're saying it.

The conversation is online and the world is already there and listening; there's really no longer any need to shout loudly. 📡



Janice Spark

A ratcheting up of existing trends



Looking forward, we can expect a ratcheting up of existing trends throughout 2012. Whether you're a politician, an executive or a consumer, the odds are strong you're going to need to hang firmly onto your hat.

2011 was the year of rebellions and revolutions, from the Arab Spring to the abstract destruction of the London riots through to the Occupy Wall Street movement. But the structure of nation states was only one half of a tumultuous equation equally influenced by a buckling Eurozone economy.

It is no understatement to say that the political events of 2011 were made possible by new generation communication channels and tools. Equally, digital communication continues to impact profoundly on the world of business and the daily lives and experiences of consumers.

1. Crowdsourcing

In 2011, the momentum behind crowdsourcing really picked up thanks to rapidly advancing digital communication tools. Whether it's NASA's initiative to measure crater sizes, P&G's attempt to thread crowdsourcing into its approach to innovation or an ongoing quest to leverage public power to [decode whale linguistics](#), harnessing collective intelligence is now open to all.

In 2012, expect a snowballing of new crowdsourcing initiatives. But remember, sometimes the reality is a little more prosaic than the hype would have us believe. Standard reality TV fare, including staples such as Idols, also illustrates the crowdsourcing concept in action.

2. Cloud computing

The hype is that cloud computing will transform the way that businesses use ICT services within the next two years, as uncapped ADSL products finally come within a reasonable price range.

South Africa still faces the challenge of expensive telecommunications costs, and as long as the status quo remains, the cloud could stay tantalisingly out of reach in the wider economy. New trans-Africa fibre optic cables are set to come online in 2012, which could change the cost calculation involved quite fast. But potential savings still need to be passed on to consumers before the cloud has genuine impact.

An often-ignored reality is that most corporations are already using the cloud extensively, via the informal use by staff of services such as Facebook and Twitter [and Gmail, Google Docs, Dropbox and accessing work email via smartphone- managing ed]. Few have experienced major security breakdowns as a result, which tells you all you need to know about whether cloud-based services are viable or not.

3. Viva Britannia

2011's London Riots threw an unprecedented spanner into Brand Britain's master plan, impacting significantly on London's ability to take full advantage of the forthcoming 2012 Olympics. Nonetheless, the city has moved swiftly on and appears to taking all the necessary steps to deliver on its vision of the most open and accessible games yet. →



About the author

Janice Spark is a director and managing partner of Idea Engineers (www.ideaengineers.co.za), an advertising and PR agency which she co-founded in 2002. She has directed the marketing efforts of leading global organisations for over 20 years. Contact Janice via tel +27 (0)11 803 0030, email janice@ideaengineers.co.za and follow her on Twitter at [@janicespark](https://twitter.com/janicespark).



Janice Spark cont.

The on-going economic blight that is the Eurozone could well dampen the general vigour of the event. It's also possible, however, that London 2012 will provide urgently required positive vibrations within the UK.

Whichever way it pans out, there's no doubt that the year will have a distinctly British tinge to it.

4. Local is lekker

Globalisation, powered by digital communication tools, is forging a homogeneous global identity. But it's also important to remember that the reverse holds strangely true. Ordinary citizens are using communications tools to connect and interact locally, and are loving the results.

Facebook is particularly effective for members of a community looking to interact on practical, local levels. The popularity of emerging portals such as Foursquare testify to the fact that localisation matters more and more in our globalised context, across real world and virtual spaces.

Thinking and acting with a local focus will gain increasing traction in the year ahead.

5. Conscious consumerism

The 'occupy' movements that proliferated in 2011 demonstrate quite clearly that global consumers are unhappy with the capitalist status quo. As a result, corporations are being forced into levels of transparency and disclosure that would have been unthinkable a decade ago.

The rise and rise of the vigorously conscious consumer means that brands able to clearly demonstrate their triple bottom-line credentials will be operating on the strategic front foot. Brands now simply have to be aware of the community in which they are operating, and also how their operations are impacting on that community.

Rolling out the standard community-focused verbiage isn't going to cut it for much longer. Visible, verifiable community action is required.

6. Austerity backlash

Expect a subtle evolution in the broad European austerity narrative as a deeper reality takes shape.

Austerity on its own, without the increased productivity levels required to boost GDP growth over the long term, will not solve the Eurozone slump. Europe needs to stop spending too much in some areas, but it also needs to make sure that it doesn't kill off all prospects of growth in the process.

This paradigm is likely to influence governments, brands and consumers alike as they attempt to balance the complex requirement to cut expenses while still spending.

7. High touch - online and offline

Mobile internet access is booming via smartphones and tablets, and new real-world 'connecting technologies' are emerging at pace, all of which means the distinction between offline and online is blurring by the day:

- consumers are scanning QR codes while in the shop to read reviews, access discounts and compare products and costs
- research also shows that increasing numbers of consumers research products online before purchasing in-store
- brands are now using the check-in features on social media platforms such as Facebook to promote their offerings and products, and geo-marketing and augmented reality are new marketing buzzwords that describe the on-going integration of offline and online experiences. →



Janice Spark cont.

Consumers don't just want to shop...they want to experience. They want to touch, feel and be entertained.

In an age where so much of our lives is high tech and impersonal, the ability to deliver high touch has become a serious differentiator. And high touch will increasingly be delivered seamlessly, across real world and virtual spaces.

8. Cashless society?

Near field communication (NFC) looks set to influence one of the fundamentals of commerce - the checkout. NFC allows for simple and secure short range communication between devices. A maximum range of 20cm, in combination with a normal pin and password process, assures high levels of security.

Consumers can pay for purchases via NFC devices by simply touching their mobile phone to pay points. NFC can also be used for coupon and loyalty systems. Companies such as Molo Rewards are already implementing systems that allow users to download electronic coupons onto their phones, and then use these at pay points, via NFC.

NFC is expected to become a dominant force in the US soon, thanks to its ability to circumvent the traditional failures of technologies such as Bluetooth, which are notoriously taxing on battery life.

MasterCard and Visa are already part of the NFC Forum, while the latest BlackBerry smartphones are NFC-enabled. Samsung's Galaxy S II will ship with NFC, as will the Samsung Wave. Most Android 2.3 phones will include NFC and Nokia has said its smartphones will ship with NFC. iPhone NFC rumours are also bubbling under. ☰



Jason Levin & Jessica Oosthuizen

Generation Y Not



South Africa's young consumers are more savvy and demanding than ever before. Not surprisingly, marketers have to work harder and smarter to make their brands compelling to kids, teens and young adults. 2012 stands for pace, progress, challenge and increased 'prosumer' power. Here are 10 whats and hows, ending with some of the hottest youth brands to look out for this year.

1. Net working

The internet is not a novelty to millennials; it's part of their daily lives. However, for many brands, digital platforms such as Facebook and Twitter represent new outposts from which to connect to young urbanites.

But parking off on Facebook is not going to create brand appeal. In 2012, we see brands having to work hard to uncover new ways to networking socially. A good starting point is to understand that meaningful relationships with brands are developed offline and the web is just a tool for enhancing this experience.

Adidas's "Get On The Bus" campaign was touted as a Facebook hit but only because the real-life experience was hot enough to get them there.

2. Boundaries

2 258 907 people are linked by their association with "[Yelling at Inanimate Objects](#)", a group on Facebook. However, the more crowded their lives become with 'web clutter', the more resilient and resistant young urbanites become to brand and other non-peer communication (on and off the web) that doesn't meet their needs or appeal to them immediately.

This year, there's zero tolerance for pushy brands.

3. Just do more

Brands that jump on the CSI bandwagon to rally up brownie points with a once-off campaign won't cut it anymore. Young people can smell a wannabe do-gooder campaign a mile off and they'll easily see through pseudo-green veneer.

Long-term sustainable brand engagements are more meaningful than ad hoc big-budget attention-seeking gigs. Young people don't just want brands to make more effort to impress them - they expect them to.

4. Boredroom brainstorm

Since 2009 [we've reported](#) on the evolution of the consumer towards the [prosumer](#) (producer + consumer). Urban youth want brands to facilitate their experiences, rather than impose brand monologues on them.

International trend analyst Josh Dhaliwal refers to the "The End of the Big Idea" because it overrides the customer's own narrative.

The "big idea" approach is no longer a plausible marketing solution for drumming up interest from teens who want to dictate their experience of the brand. Brands have to work harder and smarter to consult and connect to humbly become a peer of their consumers. →



About the author

Jason Levin is MD and Jessica Oosthuizen is writer and analyst for HDI Youth Marketeers (www.hdiyouth.co.za), both spending their time understanding what makes young South Africans tick. Contact Jason and Jess on tel +27 (0)11 706 6016 or email jason@hdiyouth.co.za or jessica@hdiyouth.co.za.



Jason Levin & Jessica Oosthuizen cont.

5. I'm an (Afri)can

Eighteen years of democracy in South Africa has created kids and teens fuelled by the promise of realising their potential. A cluster of highly successful entrepreneurs have emerged and are idolised by "can-do" kids who want to do exactly the same.

In 2011 we reported on the growing chasm between what kids aspire to own and achieve and the necessary hard skills like numeracy which are undeveloped. The challenge here is to provide kids with the resources they need to realise their dreams.

According to the Sunday Times Generation Next 2011 study, education is the number one thing that young South Africans would focus on if they were president. In 2012, we see more brands coming on board to invest in education to assist in the success of 'Generation Y Not?'

6. Tweet success

Socialite Nonhle Thema made headlines when she declared she'd only release carefully thought out tweets in 2012. With over a million followers, what she says holds sway.

Twitter has provided millennials with an open forum from which to share their thoughts and views, and has given birth to a whole new breed of thought leaders. However, there isn't a simple recipe for success, and many brands fail in their attempts to rally up popularity with Twitter. "You have to already like what they're about before you follow them on Twitter," says Hloni, 16.

7. Mobile money gateway

"What happens if my battery dies?" is a common response to why young South Africans don't use their cellphones to make payments.

Twenty-pluses might find it hard to believe, but for teens a low battery is panic-inducing, and is one of the many deterrents to cell banking (along with their suspicions that hackers will tap into their mobiles and steal their cash). Even though they're inseparable from their phones, cash remains the preferred payment method among local teens and young adults.

Elsewhere in Africa, though, mobile payment services have enjoyed major success. M-Pesa in Kenya has over 14 million users and is currently the world's most successful mobile payments system.

The time is ripe for a mobile payment service in this country that's convincing enough for all, including youth, to adopt.

8. The broadest of bases

It's not news that SA is characterised by high levels of inequality (our Gini coefficient is way above average at 57.8%, according to the UN). However, real world income has very little to do with the level of expectation expressed by young consumers, and the bottom of the pyramid is getting a lot more attention.

Elsewhere in the world, other developing countries are looking at ways to cater to this market, whose aspirations far exceed their cash-on-hand. The Philippines and other emerging countries are developing trendy low-income

housing from converted shipping containers while, locally, products such as DSTV Compact are making satellite TV accessible to millions more. →



Jason Levin & Jessica Oosthuizen cont.

9. The Dark Side

Like the chicken and egg, did the influx of vampire-inspired movies and TV shows induce an appetite for the "dark side" or were TV producers just responding to an appetite for the supernatural? Either way, there's been a steady decline of vanilla-style TV content as teen viewers demand more grit and darkness from the small screen.

The post-recessionary consumer has tired of inflated brand promises and idealised nuclear family narratives, but they're easily engrossed by storylines so far-removed from their real lives that it provides real fantastical escape.

Hot List

1. **Niche eating and quirky foods:** Young adults from high-end suburbs seek out quirky organic eateries that offer farm-fresh goods and home-grown delicacies. The Neighbourgoods Market has become a hit in Cape Town and launched in Joburg late last year. A far cry from the teens, who spend most weekends malling and crowding out KFCs.
2. **(Other) tablets:** iPads have become "lust'ware" for youth in the last year or two. In 2012, we see other competitors - Samsung's Galaxy Tab, Lenovo's Tablet, and the Blackberry's Playbook - working hard to get their share of the (apple) pie.
3. **Group exercise:** Whether it's fun runs, yoga classes or boot-camps in the park, group exercising will pick up the pace. Add digital, and this takes off for youth. Mobile apps such as Endomondo and Nike+ provide the tools needed to track training progress and compete with friends (*and now there's [Nike+ Fuelband](#) - managing ed*). Thumbs up to the Department of Basic Education that plans to implement extramural sport at all schools by the beginning of 2013.
4. **Local celebrities:** Local celebs are gaining international traction. In mid-2011, local band Goldfish ([@GoldFishLive](#)) joined David Guetta and other DJ superstars in Ibiza and home-grown swimming champ Charlene Wittstock made international headlines when she became Princess Charlene of Monaco. Most recently comedian Trevor Noah ([@Trevornoah](#)) was a hit on the Tonight Show broadcast in the US.
5. **Retro-fresh:** Retro gets a new look in 2012. Original streetwear brands spice things up with bold colour schemes. Watch these brands: boxfresh, Supreme Being and Superdry. This year, old school is very new school.
6. **Gaming:** Hot items on the gaming front this year are Sims 3 Pets, Need for Speed The Run, and new Singstar variants (Singstar Afrikaanse Treffers flew off the shelves in 2011). 🎮



Joanna Oosthuizen

The year of the phoenix



Twenty Twelve, year of the dragon, a leap year and the year the world as we know it is meant to end. I believe it will, not in a dooms-day fill-my-bunker-with-canned-food kind of way but in a thinking, progressive, collaborative and connective way. It's a phoenix year, where great ideas and people will rise from the economic ashes and drive informed action.

These are industry trends I think will feature and develop in 2012.

1. Pure

There has been a social, technical and design move towards bold, simple and accountable. All of these qualities develop and enhance the purity of the device, campaign or brand.

In the fashion world, colour-blocking is a visual expression of this thought.

Distilled ideas seem simple but they are the result of deep, rich consumer understanding. Brands, companies and technology that are easy to interact with will continue to boom.

2. Human

The essence of humanity is connectivity and interaction; we have seen a trend in the past of companies and brands using TV commercials, newspaper articles and billboards as the only interaction with their consumer, in effect a one-way conversation.

This will be the year for dialogue, where companies continue to become human. People want to interact with people and companies that understand this will grow in 2012. It is more than social networking: its face-to-face, one-on-one interaction between the consumer and company.

3. Television

Watching content on your computer will rapidly change this year and we will start to welcome this content onto our living rooms.

Online video is a monster trend this year and yet another technological advance that will rapidly develop and change advertisers thinking and application.

Channel "Me" will become a reality with Apple TV, Google TV and Boxee.

4. Gender

Exit left [manscara](#) and [guyliner](#); enter Bear Grills. Gender and its appearance constantly changes and the emerging trend is fiftiesque women who are rediscovering cooking and good housekeeping.

I say fiftiesque, as this is a choice, rather than a societal expectation.

Watch the rise and introduction of 'housekeeping' publications. Food and particularly cakes shows have exploded on television, illustrating the trend towards staying at home to cook. →



About the author

Joanna is MD of Ogilvy Public Relations South Africa

(<http://ogilvy.co.za/about-us/ogilvy-pr/>).

She started her career at Microsoft SA before going on to London, where she worked at Schroders Investment Management. In 2005 Joanna returned and joined Ogilvy PR SA as an account director in the agency's consumer team, later becoming consumer business director. Contact Joanna on tel +27 (0)11 709 9630, email joanna.oosthuizen@ogilvypr.co.za and follow [@joopr24](https://twitter.com/joopr24) on Twitter.



Joanna Oosthuizen cont.

5. Share

Many hands make light work; many minds make a solid idea. In the past great, ideas were held onto and owned but we are moving into a trend where great ideas are shared and become brilliant.

Sharing encourages multifaceted, robust and market leading ideas that then drive dynamic action. It also kills ego and hedonism, which are fast becoming extinct traits in our socio economic climate.

It takes courage to share - be brave and set ideas free.

6. Influence

Expanding on the above trend is a sister trend, influence. Differing schools of thought such as environment, philosophy, journalism, science and technology consistently influence advertising.

Now, more than ever, our marketing ear has to be listening to a multitude of different thought frequencies. I believe this will be a strong trend that will evolve this year, given rapidly developing mobile devices and the urgent need for climate change.

7. Fluid

We all know about social networks and platforms - that's old news - but the dynamic between them? Now that's something worth watching.

I believe 2012 will be the year that social networks will increasingly drop their fences and information will pass more fluidly between all the platforms.

The data will be the ship that sails freely through all platforms, allowing the consumer to be the captain that has all access. Let's face it: if they don't, they won't be visiting your waters.

8. Graphs

Statistics and data ensure transparency and accurate reporting. This is imperative and fast becoming robust and accurate due to social digital expansion.

Our life online has given us all a unique footprint and marketers are feverishly tracking the trail you walk. From this rich data, social graphs are developed. These are reporting gold.

Social graphs are going to continue to give us insight into consumer habits and opinion. They give us a visual understanding on how to navigate social platforms, so they are only going to get deeper and richer.

9. Always on

Mobility and now the cloud make data and communication available anywhere, anytime, across all touchpoints. This means that business and consumers can communicate any time on any kind of device - this penetration will continue to deepen though out 2012.

This also builds on the human trend as people are growingly interacting with people. It's the constant open line of communication that makes for a good relationship. 📱



John Beale & Heike Meyburgh

Strong and continued growth for social media



With 2011 in the rearview mirror, we expect a strong and continued growth on various social media platforms in 2012. The increased online penetration and a strong drive from mobile operators to connect more people to the internet through smartphones or dongles will undoubtedly lead to more people joining social networks.

The year in review

As more South Africans learn to enjoy the benefits of leading the connected lifestyle, the more our national online community grows. 2011 brought considerable growth to the SA social media landscape. According to the most recent World Wide Worx survey:

- Twitter has grown from 88 000 users in 2010 to over 1.1 million users in 2011. Admittedly, only 40% of these users engage actively, with the remainder using Twitter as a breaking news source.
- Facebook grew from 2.8 million users to over 4.2 million users. However, as of August 2011, only 3.2 million South Africans visited the site in the year-to-date.
- LinkedIn also reached the 1.1 million mark - enjoying an 83% growth from 2010 to 2011
- MXit acquires 43 000 new users per day on average, and are sitting at close to 50 million subscribers, making them the largest social network on the African continent [*stats supplied by MXit - managing ed*]



About the authors
Digital strategists John Beale and Heike Meyburgh are members of Cerebra (www.cerebra.co.za)'s social media strategy team. They have extensive experience on both global and local brands within the social media and digital environments. Tel +27 (0)11 465 5709 and follow [@jtbeale](https://twitter.com/jtbeale) and [@heikemey](https://twitter.com/heikemey) on Twitter.

With Facebook's growth stagnating in the UK and the US (Facebook has over 800 million users worldwide, 75% of which are outside of the US), emerging markets such as South Africa are where growth is focused, and Facebook sees our predominantly mobile market as a huge opportunity.

What to expect in 2012

Our hope is that more companies emerge on mobile and social media platforms in 2012. Although mobile is already a major player in the social space, all signs point to further growth.

With the likes of [Alan Knott-Craig Jnr](#) at the helm of MXit, we expect brands to take MXit more seriously, but also foresee the platform receiving a much-needed makeover. Although MXit's subscriber numbers declined sharply in the past year due to BBM and other instant messaging applications, it can still be used by brands to engage with its fans by availing exclusive content downloads to users (unlike BBM et al). MXit will remain a relevant and viable option for brands that want to engage.

Brands that made investments in what could be called the first-mover phase of social media in SA will now be reaping the rewards of huge amounts of analytics and data. The downside to this data is that it does not necessarily link backend customer data to frontend social data - "social CRM" is an emerging trend seeking to answer this problem. →



John Beale & Heike Meyburgh cont.

Integrating tools with legacy backend systems

We expect to see a huge drive from these brands to start linking social profiles and customer profiles, allowing smarter decision-making on business and social fronts, as well as more tangible social insights to business. The only issue here is integrating tools with legacy backend systems.

As social gains further momentum, and those on social become accustomed to the transparency and accountability that brands have on these platforms, consumers will become more demanding and expectant of brands in 2012. This could possibly also have a detrimental effect on brands that are late to the social network bandwagon, as more consumers come to expect brands to be online. These socially schooled users will invariably be looking for more valuable content, rather than fluffy updates.

Consumers becoming smarter

2011 has been an information-and-sharing overload. Everywhere we looked, brands were pushing their social media sites and demanding that their consumers engage. Thankfully, consumers are becoming smarter and brands need to keep up. We hope that brands change their tactics and strategies in the year ahead in order to keep up and stay ahead of the curve.

Brands also have to be genuine participants in social media, rather than dictators. Brands shouldn't necessarily jump on board every social media platform that's available. Instead, they should be wise and strategic in their decisions, choosing platforms that suit them and their messaging.

Keeping that in mind, yes, context is key, but content still drives conversation. Find a platform that suits the brand, talk to consumers by enhancing their lifestyle, and spark conversation that encourages participation. How? Content.

Great content

Great content will allow brands to not only let consumers engage with them, but will allow for them to actually do something constructive with that content.

We also foresee a stronger link between social and TV, as brands realise that they can better harness the money spent on traditional media - consider the three screens most consumers have immediate access to: television, computer and cellphone.

Examples of this would be hashtags before certain shows, helping to categorise conversations. This will also drive consumers onto branded content, sponsorships and brand advertising. With a strong link between mobile, TV and social, we expect to see an increase in after-hours interaction on social platforms, especially with micro-blogging (ie Twitter).

Not enough integration between PR and social media

Finally, public relations. While PR is a much older industry than that of social, there is still not enough integration between the two. It is understandable as traditional public relations officers like to keep things "traditional". We hope to see more social media agencies, or social media departments being created by public relations firms. Underestimating or ignoring the medium could serve as a death knell to many agencies. →

Ultimately, brands have to become more creative (read as effective and not necessarily gimmicky) with their solutions and campaigns. Although we are a developing country, it doesn't mean our campaigns are below par; SA is truly amazing and some of our executions and campaigns are on a global scale.

2012 will bring forth some exceptional ideas and executions, and we look forward to seeing all the great things this country has to offer. 🍷



Karen Ashwin

Been there, done that, now let's get really smart!



Thanks to the human race's preference for face-to-face interpersonal communications, meetings, events and marketing activations enjoy pride of place as fabulous marketing tools. However, we also know that great events come at a price.

1. More so than ever, the heat is on to ensure that events deliver serious marketing and financial results - and that clients are assured of their incomparable experiential value, especially when paired with the latest trends and technology!

With face-to-face contact and personal interactions taking the number one spot as the most prized (but often the costliest) form of communication, **the pressure to deliver memorable live event experiences and ROI in an increasingly competitive environment is set to increase.**

2. The communication technology available - live crossings, feeds, broadcasts, Skype and webinars - which promote real-time, online consultations and exchanges of ideas in different locations (across the country and the world) have certainly presented a challenge to the event industry.

Companies and individuals are **questioning and closely examining the costs and benefits associated with face-to-face meetings and events.** These can be considerable, when taking into account travel, accommodation - not forgetting the associated carbon footprint which is now also factored into the equation.

3. So, when the event route has been selected as the way forward to achieve a business objective, the **pressure is on to ensure that this premium option delivers everything - and more** - for both the customer and their specific target audience.

4. Working within the limitations of a looming recession, tight budgets and pressure to deliver something exceptional, clever **creativity remains a key differentiator** to delivering value for money and an unforgettable "wow" element to any event experience.

5. The clever use of increasingly **smart technology** in every single aspect of the event process is set to increase - enhancing everything from budget limitations and effective niche marketing to a very select target audience and database management to paperless delegate management and extraordinary creativity.

6. **Social media** (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), **QR codes, microsites and mobile apps for iPhones and iPads are enjoying increasing popularity** to enhance the live events process and this will continue, especially as all these forms of communication continue evolving and becoming more sophisticated themselves.

7. **All about the brand:** focused events, tight messaging and invaluable business networking opportunities will predominate over a more relaxed and entertaining approach to events. Time and budget pressures will ensure that event objectives and formats are simplified and rendered more powerful by focusing on the brand as the golden thread, binding everything together. →



About the author
Karen Ashwin is the founder and MD of The Event Production Company (www.theeventcompany.co.za),

South Africa's event pioneer. Karen is considered one of the industry's leading personalities and has a more than 17-year track record, The Event Production Company having conceptualised and executed most of South Africa's largest and most innovative events. Contact her on tel +27 (0)11 883 0470 or karen@eventcompany.co.za.



Karen Ashwin cont.

8. However, the trend and push for ever more slick, technologically smart and creatively astounding and memorable event experiences is balanced by the global demand for events - be they meetings, incentives, conferences or exhibitions - which are sustainable from a social, environmental and economic perspective. The **People, Planet, Profit** sensibility and way of doing business is here to stay.

9. **Think global, act local.** So while we're globally connected and competitive, looking at the rest of the world as our playground, we need to take into account the communities on our doorstep and behave ethically and inclusively.

This includes supporting local communities in terms of buying locally produced food, arts, entertainment, crafts and other supplies related to the entire event process, as well as ensuring that our carbon footprint is minimised through not only the reduce, re-use and recycle concept, but also initiatives such as planting trees as carbon credits in an effort to minimise the environmental impact relating to events held.

In keeping with this, corporate will embrace this trend, enhancing their corporate social responsibility efforts by including teambuilding events such as **voluntourism and community and environmental interventions** on their annual calendar.

Now for some really good news! As the international economic community increasingly regards **Africa as an attractive investment partner and destination**, this will translate into corporate meeting and event opportunities, not only within South Africa, but also the rest of the continent as well.

SA boasts an exceptionally well-developed, professional and competitive events industry and SA companies will find opportunities to work further afield on the continent, as the demand for services increases. 🍷



An **intelligent** approach to the constantly shifting media and marketing landscape must incorporate the **views** of both marketers and consumers. Here at Full Circle Media, our team of experienced strategists **don't** formulate media recommendations until we fully understand a client's business. Our philosophy is not to **just appear** to understand your market dynamics, but to have the knowledge and insights to adapt to changes as **they're** happening. Because we know that we can't give you Business Advantage through Media™ unless it's **planned** by specialists to accommodate the challenges and opportunities of a proliferating media environment.



Contact Karen on 0861 66 66 64

Karen Phelan

GFC's impact on media-marketing arena



There are a number of trends forecast for 2012 that will have an impact on all facets of the media-marketing arena.

1. The Global Economic Recession (GFC)

It is going to be a tough year, what with everyone very uncertain as to what is happening in the Eurozone and its ultimate impact on the global economy. The US, however, is showing some good positive signs that it is on the up and, if their consumer demand picks up, it will rub off on world economies especially the BRIC countries. This will be gradual and not sudden, though.

The Eurozone is South Africa's biggest trading partner so we are still going to be beholden to its trials and tribulations. China has internal problems and inflationary pressures, so its growth will not be stellar and we anticipate that the Indian market will probably be a hotter one but, obviously, it will not have the impact on global economies like China could have.

Global brands which are adversely affected by the economic recession will have budget cuts, which will impact negatively on local investment as well.

2. Adspend

We predict that adspend will grow with a natural inflation of about 7% but with added increases probably taking media inflation closer to 10%. However, we are not sure if budgets will be increased by much more than 5% and the only really big play and new driver of advertising will possibly be in retail, where Walmart force its competitors to advertise heavily to protect their existing market shares.

We do not see the financial industry doing significantly higher new investment unless it is panicked by the success of Capitec and African Bank and starts chasing the lower end more aggressively. The cellular industry will probably have muted adspend growth this year.

The liquor industry may boost spend a bit to preempt the possible [dark marketing](#) that is possibly around the corner [*thanks to the [proposed alcohol advertising ban](#) - managing ed*] but it is already a heavy spender and cannot afford to up the adspend hugely.

We predict that the motor industry will spend well as the SA consumer still seems to be buying many new cars. But there won't be fireworks as the consumer is going to be showing a lot of debt stress in the first six months.

3. Events

There are no big events that will impact directly on the adspend, except possibly the Olympics, which will mostly benefit TV and digital adspend.

4. Media

Television will probably continue to make gains in market share, especially as TopTV becomes more aggressive, and digital will continue to grow rapidly. Print media will continue to see erosion and fragmentation and, if the economy does not pick up, the lower end will not be able to afford to buy magazines and newspapers. →



About the author

Media director and founding partner of Full Circle Media (www.fcm.co.za), part of Aegis Media (www.aegismedia.co.za), Karen Phelan has over 23 years of industry experience and has always focused on the media side, especially her personal love, the research side. In addition to her daily business activities, she is also the Cape Town chair of the Advertising Media Forum. Contact her on tel +27 (0)21 5266 258 or karen@fcm.co.za.



Karen Phelan cont.

5. Impact of mobile devices

As more people get mobile devices such as iPads and Galaxy Tablets, there is going to be an increasing move by publishers to have e-versions of their titles and corresponding interesting interactive opportunities to these more upmarket consumers.

6. The rise of the luxury discounter

The increase in sites such as [Wicount](#), [Groupon](#), [Cityslicker](#) and [Ubuntudeal](#) means your middle-class citizen has access to places and services that were previously only accessible to the upper-income consumers.

7. Neighbourhood tourist

With the credit crunch, the increase of discount offers and cities becoming more tourist friendly (rapid bus routes, bicycle routes, new parks, walking routes etc), increasingly people are using their city as a tourist would, trying new experiences and "going on holiday" in their own backyard.

8. Urban farmer

A definite move towards self-sufficiency has begun. Growing your own vegetables, baking your own bread, owning a water tank and installing solar panels. A conscience movement to go-back-to-basics but also an awareness of the impact on the environment from a consumer and household level.

9. Back to the source

An increasing awareness and appreciation of people who produce, be it food, furniture or foot-ware. There is a need to not only know where your purchases come from but to build a relationship with the person involved in the manufacturing process.

There will be an increase in neighbourhood markets and small suppliers offering custom products.

The new celebrities being profiled in magazines are not the heads of big corporate but the bloggers who have their own websites and small up-scaling furniture stores.

10. The funding of the SA Advertising Research Foundation or The Levy

Unless a workable solution can be found in terms of collecting and administrating the levy, the acknowledgement by all media that everyone needs to subscribe to it and what the structure of what the levy should be, will mean that we are in serious danger of losing SA's research as we currently know it and seeing the demise of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) of SA.

11. Increased pressure on the middle class's discretionary income

At the end of 2011, there were newspaper stories doing the rounds that the Government intends restructuring medical aid rebates. The restructuring would result in the rebates received by the lower income groups increasing significant, while those individuals who fall in the 30-40% tax brackets would receive significantly lower rebates.

Should this come to fruition, it will result in an economic segment of society that is already feeling significant economic pressure losing further discretionary income.

This economic segment's income is not keeping pace with increases in commodities, such as electricity costs and petrol, that have had a major impact in the last few year. It's their discretionary income which purchases magazines, up-market liquor brands, shops at designer stores, goes to restaurants regularly and the likes of Woolworths for food. →



Karen Phelan cont.

Should their discretionary income contract further, there will be an impact on what sales of brands this market buys.

12. Magazines

With the pressure on consumers' discretionary income, magazines sales will continue to decline, with consumers choosing only their monthly favourites or whichever cover shouts the loudest in terms of their needs and aspirations. Magazines will become more and more of luxury item and bought less frequently→

focused campaign that meets the information and emotional needs of your community and contributes significantly to the bottom line.

Data mining will uncover opportunities and threats and identify all the influencers are you should be working with. The PR team at SAP, the world's leading provider of business software, found that while they were working with 15 influencers, there were in fact 45 important influencers they should be engaging.

Media relations:

The international media landscape is dramatically different from what it was five years ago. As media consumption patterns change, so too does the PR media-relations function have to change. Every media outlet has a website and is eager for online content. Journalists are looking for more than just a print press release - all news content has to include multimedia digital assets.

Although a recent Statistics South Africa report shows that only 10.9% of South Africans have access to the Internet, it would be wise to keep an eye on the rapidly expanding use of mobile phones to access the web for news and information and to communicate with peers. 📱



Kevin Bassett

Mobile - why, what and maybe



Mobile is trending and 2012 won't be any different. But the products will, so here's a look at why, what and maybe. [video]

Q: Why mobile in 2012?

A: 1. [Mobile Commerce](#), following the money in 2011, reveals that in the nine months prior to December, mobile spending doubled to 3.74% of total retail revenue (US). RichRelevance's CEO David Selinger predicts that mobile retail sales will reach 10% by the end of 2012.

A: 2. Mobile data consumption is the best measure of mobile activity and [Nielsen](#) reports a 300% year-on-year increase (to 500MB per person per month) in the US's young adult age group (18-34). The fastest growing category in mobile data consumption is Asian youth.

A: 3. Mobile as a percentage of total data consumption is climbing and November 2011 topped the charts, when 24% of all online traffic was mobile-originated.

A: 4. Mobile multi-tasking will be the big 'enabler' as smartphones and tablets increasingly interact with our daily activities.

What will 'trend' in mobile in 2012?

1. Near field communication (NFC)

My first trend to watch is the technology behind 'Tap to Pay', which will have customers 'tapping' their phones to pay for purchases in retail outlets - [near field communication \(NFC\)](#). A combination of banks, credit card companies, network providers and operating system developers is driving this investment.

Once the major retailers install [NFC](#) technology for payments they will leverage it into their businesses for the identification of customers and the distribution of coupons and vouchers. (Technical explanation: [Wikipedia](#).)

Have a look at NFC in action: [Google Wallet video](#).

2. Mobile virtual shopping

PayPal recorded a 397% increase in mobile payments on Cyber-Monday (the Monday after Thanksgiving) and it expects total mobile payments of US\$3.5 billion in 2011.

Virtual shopping is not new but the mobile version will continue to trend ferociously in 2012. The online average order value (AOV) for desktop connections in April was US\$149, while mobile recorded US\$153, a 2.7% difference; by December the AOV difference grew to 9.1% in favour of mobile.

But what might be more important to retailers is mobile sites offering consumers the ability to make product price comparisons en route to the shopping centre, or while standing in the aisle. The sites then show the cheapest online offer - with delivery before you arrive home. Have a look: [Tesco Homeplus video](#). →



About the author

Kevin Bassett, an instant communications specialist, is the founder and CEO of Floodgate Communications (2004).

Floodgate (www.floodgate.co.za) specialises in mobile

communication strategies that deliver solutions for marketing and advertising, corporate internal communications, call centres and customer queries. Call Kevin on cell +27 (0)82 652 0530, email

kevin@floodgate.co.za, follow [@KevBassett](#) and

[@FloodgateComms](#) on Twitter or SMS kevin to 34007 (R2), and he'll call you right back.



Kevin Bassett cont.

3. HTML5

HTML5 is a relatively new programming language; it is very mobile-friendly. In 2011 the development of Operating System Applications (OS Apps) highlighted the different expectations of mobile and desktop surfers; mobi is not scaled-down web. But OS Apps are operating system-specific and therefore problematic. I predict that [HTML5](#) will make web-based mobi-apps, that behave like the current OS Apps, possible. Have a look: [Sports Illustrated magazine – HTML5 video5](#).

4. Text message marketing (SMS)

Research shows that 96% of text messages are opened within four minutes - but 85% of marketing emails are not viewed by the intended recipient (blocked or deleted). Opted-in SMS databases are platinum in the marketing alloy blend and will trend in 2012.

5. QR codes and MS Tag

[Quick response \(QR\)](#) codes and [Microsoft Tags](#) are the product-code 'squares' being seen in the retail market at the moment. Once scanned, these 2D barcodes can open the phone's browser and display a webpage. [Microsoft has launched](#) a 2D scanner to read all 2D barcodes; this will increase market acceptance. Have a look: [Microsoft Tag video](#).

6. Location-based marketing

The Holy Grail of marketing is to offer the right deal at the right time - but nothing beats offering in the right place! I believe location-based marketing will boom. Broadly there are two methods:

- Using the network operators to plot the position of a handset based on triangulation from the cellphone masts. This needs the enquirer to opt in to being located.
- Using the navigation software in smartphones to identify proximity to a point. This requires a smartphone and a downloaded app to interface with the navigation software.

And the maybes? (This is the cool stuff coming...)

7. Indoor location positioning

Location-based services (LBS) cannot give precise location information indoors; the network operators can identify that you are in a building but not which floor you are on. Navigation systems lose satellite reception indoors and cease to function. Location positioning takes LBS 'underground'. Systems to operate inside malls, airports, trade fairs, hotels etc are being developed, which will allow for the distribution of specific offers based on exact indoor locations: [Nokia Indoor Navigation video](#).

8. Audio watermarking

Systems have been developed that can recognise pre-programmed sound 'objects' and perform actions. ABC developed an interesting iPad app that listens to TV shows and displays additional content on an iPad while you watch the show. The Greys Anatomy app is a great example: have a look at the [video](#).

9. Object recognition and Google Goggles

It is possible to register images and then identify them when they are scanned with a smartphone loaded with the necessary software. The possibilities for marketing are obvious but the assistance this can give the visually challenged is truly humbling: [LookTel Real-Time Object Recognition on a Mobile Device](#) video. →



Kevin Bassett cont.

Google Goggles is Google's object recognition system which, as one would expect, adds information to object recognition: [Google Goggles video](#).

10. Augmented reality

Going a step further, a suitably armed smart phone can recognise an object and super-impose computer-generated information or graphics onto the screen, making the scene interactive and digitally manipulable - [augmented reality](#). Have a look: [advertising application video](#).

11. Articulated naturality web

Articulated naturality web (ANW) is AR on steroids and close to magic. Imagine pointing your phone at the sky to see the weather forecast appear on your screen, clouds and all! Watch this: [Future of Augmented Reality video](#).

12. Contact lens computing

My final trend for 2012 is that mobile multi-tasking will become completely seamless in our eyes... er, lives. Fully integrated mobile will be when your screen is a contact lens running ANW. Read this: and watch this.

Predictions in this industry are a fool's work, but if I'm right about one thing, it will be that there are exciting times ahead in mobile commerce, marketing, media and strategy. self-service and a quarter said their own employees were not familiar with their companies' self-service initiatives. ❏



Lana Hindmarch

Getting found in 2012



In 2011, further innovations in the online space meant that consumers became even more savvy about blocking out traditional forms of advertising. Buyers also showed that they have the capability to evaluate the products and services they need on their own.

In 2012, businesses will take a more aggressive approach to transforming their marketing efforts and reducing their cost per lead, by focusing more on permission-based, [inbound marketing](#) programmes that allow customers to find them.

Here's how they'll do this:

1. Brands will fight to become top dog online

According to [eMarketer's 2012 Digital Usage Report](#), more than three-quarters of the US population will be online by the end of 2012. That's an audience of 239 million people who are searching in blogs, search engines and in social media for the products and services companies are selling.

This brings huge opportunities for companies to be found online - but to be found first they will need to be extremely clever.

2. Content will drive everything

This is how the clever brands will succeed. Content will continue to sit at the heart of the industry. The difference this year is that budgets for content marketing will go up, and spending on traditional push marketing tactics will drop. According to the report [B2B Content Marketing: 2012 Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends](#) (2.09MB pdf), 60% of B2B marketers plan to increase their content marketing budgets this year

3. Blogging will soar

Marketing has become personal. Rather than viewing a corporate profile, consumers want to know what companies are thinking. They also want valuable advice that's going to make a positive impact on their lives.

4. Brands will use social media to know their customers better

The focus this year will be on the lifetime value of a customer. To do this, brands need to be ever-present in social media. My hope is that they use this research to provide the right content in the right channel, at the right time, to the right customer.

5. Social media gets the second slice of the budget pie

In terms of getting found online, companies will realise that social media without a content strategy is futile, and this will shift budgets slightly.

6. Newsjacking becomes a marketing tactic

Smart marketers will realise that real-time content creation is a great way to get found and will piggyback off newsworthy info to create buzz for themselves. David Meerman Scott ([@dmScott](#)) calls this [newsjacking](#). →



About the author

Lana Hindmarch has 12 years' experience in the marketing industry, with specialities in inbound marketing, visual communication, digital marketing, integrated advertising, presentation development and public relations. She is currently the MD of HolyCow (www.holycow.co.za), an interactive agency offering traditional and online services. Lana has held this position since 2008 which has involved driving and implementing the company's growth strategy. E-mail her on лана@holycow.co.za.



Lana Hindmarch cont.

7. Relevance or bust

Until now, it was sufficient to frequently produce large volumes of content to draw customers in. This year, true marketers that put their audience's needs before their boss's will push the boundaries of 'awesomeness' to produce content that is more relevant than ever, content that ticks all the social sharing boxes.

8. The smaller social channels come out to play

2012 is going to be another massive year for Facebook as the company goes public. While Facebook is printing money, consumers will start paying some attention to more non-traditional social channels such as SlideShare, Instagram, Yahoo and Google+.

9. SEO will no longer be seen as a marketing tactic

It will rather be part of a process that includes... content! So while it will still be important to ensure a website is optimised for search, it will be even more important to ensure that relevant, fresh content is created and then optimised for search. This will guarantee the likelihood of getting found in search rankings.

10. Brands become mobile ready

Mobile internet users will reach 113.9 million in 2012, up 17.1% from 97.3 million in 2011, according to an [eMarketer report](#). And [Gartner](#) says that, by 2013, more people will use mobile phones than PCs to get online.

Those companies that haven't done so already will get their sites mobi-friendly in 2012 and companies will start producing more content in fresh, bite-sized chunks that are easily digestible for mobile consumption.

11. This is the year for online video

As companies realise the brand interactivity and user experience that online video offers, coupled with the local predictions for faster internet and cheaper bandwidth, online video as an advertising medium will grow exponentially in 2012. Maybe exponentially is too soft a word - an eMarketer report proposes that in the US, online video viewers will reach 169.3 million in 2012.

12. Ecommerce companies are the largest adopters

It is expected that 83.9% of internet researchers will make at least one purchase via the web during 2012. Recognising this, companies that sell their goods online will pull out all the stops to ensure they get found when buyers are looking for what they're selling.

When it comes to trends, it's always a challenge to keep predictions as non-self-serving as possible. In other words, to differentiate between what I hope will happen versus what I think will happen... and having the wisdom to know the difference. Only time will tell.

Here's to 2012, and hoping that we - and our customers - find what we're looking for. With the help of great content, it seems pretty certain we all will. 🍀



Leanne Freeman

The new frontiers of market research



I think 2012 will be a fascinating year for market research in South Africa, as more specialist tools and techniques are increasingly absorbed into mainstream methodologies. New technology will be a key driver, but this will be carefully balanced by efforts to really understand consumer behaviour by directly engaging respondents.

Internationally, there has been a clear shift from 'classic' qualitative research. In-home and in-store interviews were previously the exception but, more recently, whole studies are being conducted purely based on these surveys (although focus groups remain an industry staple). In addition, clients no longer simply accept being told about consumer behaviour; they now want to see it for themselves, with their own eyes. These international developments, combined with South Africa's current research landscape, have informed my forecast for 2012, which comprises seven key trends.

1. Qualitatively: break viewing room mirror, get closer to consumers

Clients are under more pressure to have answers at their fingertips and to be able to make informed recommendations and decisions. To do this, though, they need to be in the driving seat where they can gain more direct insight into consumers. This also helps improve the quality of the research and ensures more bang for the client's research buck.

Ethnographic approaches to research, such as observing consumers in real-time purchasing or consuming environments supplemented by in-home and in-store interviews, can help generate a deeper level of insight to supplement those from more traditional methodologies. These can also help clients at all levels get really close to their consumers. They sometimes bring consumers up against their own behaviour too (they realise that what they do in reality isn't what they thought they did), and that can lead to interesting chats.

For more developmental projects, an ideal workshop would be where the traditional focus group mirror is removed and clients and respondents are equal and work together. These are particularly good for concept development and new product development. Respondents feel important because they're working with clients to produce something they'll perhaps see on the shelves one day, and clients are thrilled because they get to personally engage their target audience.

2. An increasing interest in lab-based techniques

Neuroscience or neuromarketing is a particular scientifically-based approach to understanding consumers by tracking their sensorimotor and cognitive responses to a set of stimuli, using sensors to measure changes in brain activity and physiological responses, such as heart rate etc. Essentially, this technique measures responses in a person before their conscious thoughts can affect that response.

Eye-tracking involves monitoring the automatic movement of the eye before a person has a chance to register what they're seeing. People's eyes are naturally drawn to things the first time they see them, seconds before they're actually consciously aware of them. Respondents wear glasses that have embedded technology that is able to pick up these movements. The technology was first used to assess user response to online pages, but has since been incorporated into pack design and advertising research and would be ideal to assess shelf displays. →



About the author

Leanne Freeman is the consumer research manager at BMI Research (www.bmi.co.za). She has been involved in the project management side of international qualitative market research for nine years, and recently returned to South Africa from the UK to head up BMI Research's new Consumer Research Division. She can be contacted on tel +27 (0)11 615 7000 ext 3023; or email leanne@bmi.co.za.



Leanne Freeman cont.

3. Behavioural economics

Traditional economic analysis assumes that humans are rational and behave in ways that promote their individual self-interest. Behavioural economics looks at things differently by understanding what people do and not what they say. Some principles here include: people doing things without consciously thinking about them; people doing the 'right thing' even if they don't always want to; and people needing to feel involved in a process of change.

Researchers have been trying to understand behavioural economics for years, but this is gaining momentum now as - as per the first trend - clients demand more depth and detail by observing and being with consumers in their own environment. I think we'll see an increased focus on these techniques going forward.

4. A move towards more technological methodologies such as online research

In SA, where the penetration of internet usage is relatively low, online research has previously only been suitable for a particular audience. But as more of the population has access to computers and faster connections, together with increased usage of smartphones, so this research will become more applicable. While online research started out with 'chat'-type focus groups, it now includes webcams, with the idea of getting as close to simulating a face-to-face focus-group scenario as possible.

In a different direction, online research may also be useful for internet-connected but time-poor respondents, such as doctors and other professionals: chat rooms can run over several days, doctors/other targets can access at a time convenient to them, post comments, and react to others' comments. The moderator can post new questions/stimulate debate or post stimulus (concepts, ads, product descriptions, packaging ideas) as the discussion develops.

5. Embracing multi-methodological approaches

I think there is a general shift to wanting more, more, more - deeper insights from various vantage points. So research methodologies will no longer be viewed in isolation, and strategies will be tailored to comprise a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This thinking isn't limited to clients merely commissioning researchers to apply multi-methodological research studies; it could also include taking all the different sources of information and research that already exists, and combining all of those to see the bigger picture, rather than looking at each output in isolation.

6. Tapping into social media

Social media presents an interesting research opportunity and, although more social media research is being undertaken, I think the general consensus here and abroad is that the data is unreliable. Social media offers another platform to reach consumers that we never had before, and would be particularly good for tracking trends. But I think devising ways to approach this research to ensure the integrity of the data is still a big question mark for most research houses. That will undoubtedly become a key objective in future.

7. The rise of viral/mobile research

Viral research is where respondents are sent questionnaires on their mobile or smartphones. Respondents answer a few demographical questions, followed by a short series of questions about a specific topic. Respondents are incentivised with airtime top-up vouchers, although they can opt out at any stage (in keeping with SAMRA/ESOMAR guidelines). Respondents can forward the link to friends and family, thereby increasing the respondent pool and forming a viral/mobile research panel. This tool is ideal when wanting to reach large numbers of people, predominantly younger respondents, although not for in-depth analysis or detailed research. There's a lot of potential in this methodology, especially in SA. 📱



Linda Hamman & Daniel Munslow

Communication is an investment, not an expense



It is never easy to predict the future, but the last two years have given us a great indication of things to come in the brand engagement and internal communication space. There has been a drastic shift among corporate South Africa towards recognising the strategic business role and benefits that engaged employees can deliver.

Arguably, one of the most significant realisations has been the necessity to focus on leadership and engagement, as opposed to communication channels.

1. Re-engineering corporate structures

2012 will likely see a greater realisation of the business benefits that communication can deliver to the bottom line. To achieve this, communication must take into account other key business functions and tailor their activities to business and reputational priorities.

For 2012, these are likely to be around productivity in the marketplace after two difficult fiscal years; streamlined management structures and rightsizing; and a re-evaluation of technological platforms at a business level.

These times of economic uncertainty are a treasured opportunity for communicators to raise their profile and have their voices heard at C-suite, providing they are able to demonstrate how an intangible can produce and impact upon tangible results.

2. The role and responsibility of the internal communicator

2012 should see internal communicating becoming more active at a strategic and executive business level, where they help shape, develop, and deliver the business strategy. It is their responsibility to translate that into a vision of the company's direction and create a brand engagement compass that will demonstrate the role of leadership and employees in delivering the vision.

As the next few years will see a drastic shift away from once-off internal brand activations and other broadcast media - such as industrial theatre and passive tools - to a greater focus on the role leadership and management play in the organisation, internal communicators will find space to step-up their support of management to build their communication abilities.

2012 will also see business leaders requiring sustainable business initiatives from communicators which have a fundamental and lasting impact on corporate reputational priorities.

Thirdly, professionals who occupy the internal communication space will be called on more than ever to increase their focus on partnership with external communication and marketing to ensure alignment between what the company says it does, what it actually does, and what customers' experience.

3. The role and responsibility of leadership as an engagement driver

It is becoming increasingly important to raise the profile of senior leadership, as well as the communication capabilities of supervisors and management. The last two quarters of 2011 already showed many local →



About the author

[Linda Hamman](#) is CEO and [Daniel Munslow](#) is chief communications officer at Talk2Us (www.talk2us.co.za), a consultancy that specialises in employee engagement and the implementation of strategies that inculcate a communication culture through behaviour change. Talk2Us was launched by Linda in 2000, motivated by her philosophy around staff alignment with the brand promise and customer experience. Email linda@talk2us.co.za or daniel@talk2us.co.za and follow [@Talk2Linda2](#) and [@Talk2Us_za](#) on Twitter.



Linda Hamman & Daniel Munslow cont.

companies moving towards this international trend, recognising that broadcast media tools alone cannot achieve an engaged workforce.

In 2012, we should expect to see communicators providing their managers and business leaders with practical, tangible communication skills that can enhance trust and improve transparency in business communication.

While certain internal brand activations may have their place, few - if any - drive management accountability for their leadership role; foster a culture of dialogue; or enhance management confidence - all three critical areas for achieving engagement.

In order to drive business results, these training sessions must go far beyond an online module or classrooms. They need to be reinforced and supported by the communication department and business regularly. Effectively, unlike passive broadcast media, this becomes a continuous learning experience. An investment, as opposed to an expense.

In 2012, internal communicators should also start involving management more in drafting their communication strategies to (a) better align them to business priorities, and (b) secure buy-in for their programmes from the outset.

4. Measurement and research

2011 was definitely a turning point for measurement and research in internal communication. 2012 and beyond will no doubt see more financial directors demanding to see the impact of their budget allocation to communication in a meaningful way. We are already seeing FDs in large multinationals asking for impact measurement of internal communication campaigns to show that their investment has produced results that can in turn benefit the bottom line of the business and the brand value on the balance sheet.

All in all, there are some tall challenges ahead in the internal communication space for 2012. Without a doubt, the biggest shift is the role of leadership. Communicators will have to step up in support of their leaders, and ensure the implementation of interactive programmes that empower managers to have critical conversations with their employees, and do so effectively. 🍷



Lindsay Grubb

The write stuff for 2012



In talking to a fellow writer recently, we got onto the topic of client trends that came out of 2011. One of the most noticeable for us was that clients are on the lookout for something different from their agency/writer/creative.

The days of offering your client a standard advert/blog/article are over. Clients need to stand out from the clutter and general advertising methods aren't cutting it anymore.

Existing and new clients also appear to be focusing on producing the best quality written content they can for their customers. Regardless of the chosen medium, the focus has definitely begun to shift towards unique, personal, high-quality, informative, relevant and useful information.

In terms of trends for 2012, I would put the following at the top of my list:

1. Tighter briefs

In 2011, there were a few clients who missed the boat with their briefs because their team wasn't all on the same page in terms of target audience, message content, tone and style.

I believe in 2012 greater efforts will be made by clients to spend more time putting together tighter briefs with more detailed information which speaks directly to their desired outcomes (ok - so maybe this one is a hope, rather than a foreseeable trend.)

2. Increase in content marketing budgets

I believe that clients are starting to see tangible returns on their content marketing spend and will therefore factor this into their marketing budgets for 2012 (if they haven't already done so).

According to the [Content Marketing Institute](#), 60% of respondents in its recent survey plan to increase their content marketing budgets over the coming year.

3. More focused communications

In 2012, I believe it will be even more critical to focus your company's communications on specific niche groups which are a part of your overall customer base.

How well do you know your customer? The more I know about your customer, their habits and their reasons for choosing your company/brand, the more capable I am of producing targeted communications which are more relevant and successful for you.

4. The embracing of your company's sparkling personality

I predict companies/brands will be getting a "life" - a personality - in 2012. While your communications should always be professional, it's time to set yourself apart and share your company/brand's personality with them. The perfect place to do that is in your written communication. →



About the author

Lindsay Grubb is a passionate communicator, a freelance writer and the owner of L Communications (www.lcommunications.net), a Johannesburg-based marketing and PR consultancy. She's in the business of figuring out what it is you're trying to say and helping you get the right message across to the right audience. Follow her on Twitter at [@lindsayanngrubbs](https://twitter.com/lindsayanngrubbs) and connect with her on [LinkedIn](#).



Lindsay Grubb cont

Again, it's important to really know your customer so you know what boundaries can be pushed and what tones can be used, but the successful communication of a brand's personality goes a long way to generating customer loyalty - just ask Nando's and FNB which got it right last year - or Shoe City, which didn't.

5. Interaction satisfaction

Let's be honest, you're not looking for a quick fling with your customers; you're looking for something deeper and more meaningful. This year, I believe, more companies will be braving the social scene, getting to know their customers, sharing experiences and information with them, growing together and building lasting relationships.

I see SMMEs and bigger corporates getting on board and having a professional handling these interactions to achieve a more interactive and satisfying experience for both the business and the customer.

6. Saying sorry and meaning it too

There is nothing quite like an angry customer with a Facebook or Twitter account. Be mindful of the messages you send. Contribute, generalised messages only raise the angry customer's blood-pressure and send them back to Facebook and Twitter.

I see less companies sending out quick fixes and more companies compiling carefully considered and well-written apologies - where they accept responsibility and offer a solution, rather than shifting the blame.

7. Harnessing the power of up-and-coming thought leaders

We have a whole new generation of thought leaders making their mark. By identifying and engaging with these thought leaders in a meaningful manner, you will reach a whole new audience.

8. Greater honesty

I see a definite trend towards more open and honest communication from my clients. They are embracing who they are, what they offer, and what they're good at, and sharing that with their customers - and this seems to be working well for their overall business strategy, too.

Rather than spreading themselves thinly, they're focusing their efforts on their core competencies.

9. Simplicity

Already in 2011, there was a focus on getting to the heart of the message in a shorter time frame -so keep it up, stop the waffle and get to the relevant point quickly and cleanly.

10. More companies using strategic editorial calendars

Planning ahead makes things easier for you. Identifying those important times of year for your company and aligning your messages ahead of time takes the pressure off your team and your writer and gives you time to perfect the message.

11. Cross-education

We all survive best on a well-balanced diet. For your customers' benefit, why not share information on complimentary products, services and events that will add value to their daily lives?

12. Plain English

I'm already seeing a trend to communicate in a language everyone can understand. Companies worldwide are dropping techno babble in favour of terms the end user can understand and appreciate. 🍷



Lisa Dawson Biggs

Re-evaluating the way we work, communicate



2012 will be a year in which we will be forced to re-evaluate the way we work and the way we convey our clients' messages to the market. Here are my tips and predictions for the months ahead.

1. Count your pennies

The global recession is going to continue to impact on consumer behaviour, which will have an effect how we as PR professionals work.

2. Behaviour

Consumers' lives are stressful and busy. They have been inundated with conflicting messages and have become cynical. The advent of technology means that consumers do not take breaks from work. Emails accessed from cellphones means that work is taken on holiday.

We need to understand our consumers better and adapt messages, taking into account their state of mind.

3. Messages

As a result of the recession, consumers are doing more research before they make a purchase or believe a story. Value has become an important driver for purchase.

4. Costing

As the global recession continues, consumers and business will be watching their spending. This will continue to put pressure on PR companies to cost campaigns properly and appropriately. Key to this is also putting in place measurement criteria that show a ROI.

Sadly, while we would all like AVE measurement to be ruled out, the cost of measuring a campaign's credibility remains very high and often outweighs the cost of implementing the campaign in the first place.

5. Consumer Protection Act

Consumers are more aware of what they want and of their rights. Now, more than ever before, PR is about honest communication.

You cannot proactively promote a poor product or service. Consumers expect truth from the creators of information.

6. Strategic thinking

PR will continue to become more of a strategic tool, with senior management coming to rely on PR professionals for everyday advice and direction. We are no longer media specialists but public relations specialists - we are returning to our roots.

In an age where consumers are embracing credibility and authenticity, rather than official brand campaigns, the impact of PR is going to continue to be felt. →



About the author

Lisa Biggs' career spans over 17 years; she is currently business unit director: Cape Town for Redline (a division of Draftfcb South Africa). Major achievements while at Redline include securing the Metropolitan PR account across all six divisions. A graduate of the Cape Technikon, she has also completed a PMD with distinction from the UCT Graduate School of Business. Contact Lisa on tel +27 (0)21 680 7725 or email lisa@draftfcb.co.za.



Lisa Dawson Biggs cont.

7. What about the workers?

The quality of PR practitioners entering the market will continue to be poor. The ability of young interns to write, communicate in full sentences and spell remains one of my biggest concerns.

There is no excuse for poor grammar and spelling; communicating a message effectively and properly in 140 characters is a specialist skill not to be sneezed at.

8. If you have nothing important to say - don't

Many businesses rushed into the social media and online space and helped created pages upon pages of useless information. The content was less important than being seen to be embracing the technology.

I believe that this trend is no longer the case. It is now more about providing relevant content, easy to find and navigate, that adds value and engages with the consumer in their personal space.

9. Give them the good news

Consumers are looking for the good news. It breaks through the clutter. 📺



Louise Marsland

No, the world hasn't ended yet



If you're reading this, it means the world hasn't ended yet. Oh goody gumdrops! I prepared my annual industry predictions for 2012 in advance due to our print deadlines on *AdVantage*, so I'd be really pissed off if there was no one left to read them and I'd angsted over them for nothing. So here goes...

1. The world won't end, but business as we know it has. Aside from global politics and the economic meltdown, the way we do business - across all our industry spheres - has been changing for a long while, since the birth of the internet, nourished by frenetic growth in social media and encouraged by a global surge in activism (ie the Occupy movement).

2. Harassment of journalists and editors will increase in South Africa with some potentially being detained, as Government inevitably starts flirting with implementing the euphemistically-named [Protection of Information Bill](#). The fight to take POIB to the Constitutional Court will be one of the biggest stories of 2012. Journalists will be wearing a lot of black this year as a result.

3. There will be more print media closures in the South African media landscape - pure economics, not politics - not only from all the big media groups, but also from smaller independent publishers who have been struggling for a while. Advertising dollars did not return after the original recession cutbacks as advertisers played it safe, and there will be an inevitable consolidation of resources in the media world as a result.

4. This impact does not exclude digital publishers, whose low rates and attractive user numbers have made them somewhat immune in the past to the same budgetary pressures of print publishers, who have seen costs soar and revenues slump. Digital publishers have to diversify beyond their reliance on a single medium or brand and straight display advertising. They have to do more marketing and they have to take their brand offline, in some instances, to allow more direct user engagement.

5. Everyone needs to think like a brand strategist and a creative director (up to a point, of course) and put their brand first, and that includes ensuring all employees and suppliers in the brand cycle/product value chain have bought into the same message. Innovation is the word of choice here and many big brands are appointing innovation officers.

6. Experience marketing is on the increase, not just for consumers, but thought leaders as well, including those bloggers who have successfully tapped into niche segments of culture and society. Endorsement by a 'celeb' or a media influencer, including bloggers and journalists, is becoming more important than the press release, particularly for luxury brands.

7. Creative spaces: a growing trend in the advertising, media and marketing fraternity in SA is for that of senior people to relocate to the *dorp* or seaside village of choice, for a more value-driven lifestyle, commuting to head office in the larger cities. We've seen it with more than a dozen creative and marketing senior appointments in the industry over the past couple of years, as well as returning expats. →



About the authors
Louise Marsland is editor-in-chief and brand strategist of *AdVantage* magazine (www.advantagemagazine.co.za)

. These trends have been published in the [January 2012](#) issue as part of the editor's column, 'Vantage Point'. Email louise@advantagemagazine.co.za, read her [blog on Bizcommunity](#) and follow her and *AdVantage* on Twitter at [@Louise_Marsland](#) and [@advantagemag](#).



Louise Marsland

8. Privacy will start becoming a bigger issue among individuals and corporates *vis-à-vis* their employees' social media engagement online. The lines have blurred extensively as to what is personal and corporate information, the personal and corporate brand, as well as how the mega digital brands such as Google and Facebook are plotting our search and user habits online.

9. The broadband wars will continue in SA as the telecommunications providers battle it out for market share; the consumer will ultimately win as costs decrease.

10. Face-to-face and specialist engagement will be a growing trend as more brands open their own digital channels to target consumers directly, FNB being the bank that impressed everyone in the past year.

11. Facebook's shift to monetising its corporate pages, 'F-commerce', will be a hot topic in 2012.

12. SA politics will take centre stage as the battle for leadership of the ANC and SA's top job heats up on the Road to Mangaung. 🍷



Lyn Davis

Print - the new 'cool' in 2012



Smart printing, that fulfils a particular need or niche, will survive the digital shift into 2012 and beyond. I like to think that print will never disappear. With many people spending their entire working day in front of a screen or glued to their smartphone, easing the commute with a newspaper on the Gautrain or relaxing in the bath with a book after a long day are some of life's great luxuries.

Everyone's still talking about it...[Two Sides Autumn Seminar](#), held in London towards the end of 2011, reaffirmed the popularity of print as an essential medium, citing print as 'the new cool' and having a unique appeal. Speakers talked about how important print is and results from their surveys suggested the younger generation actually preferred reading on paper than reading on screens!

Comfort factor

According to the November 2011 issue of *Loyalty* magazine, editors found that when they transferred their offering from print to online, they received many concerned messages from readers who 'want to be able to flick through and browse' the articles. Many readers suggested that the online news service lacked the comfort factor of a 'real' magazine, so Loyalty decided to go retro and now publish a printed version three times a year.

We here at PocketMedia Solutions are strong believers that print will always be a reliable and innovative way to market your brand. As former BBC online editor Ashley Highfield suggests, "The trick is to help move those brands into the digital age and get the right balance between print and digital." Print is a crucial component to any successful marketing or advertising process.

Trends that I foresee in 2012

1. Chunky catalogues continuing to be replaced with small hand-held forms of print communication in 2012, directing consumers to websites or being used as quick reference guides.
2. Manufacturers finding more ways to become efficient at a lower cost through workflow changes, new equipment purchases and diversification.
3. More use of [QR codes](#) providing marketers with integrated marketing campaigns
4. More dynamic use of [augmented reality](#), with print communication as the driver.
5. The continued growth of [ambient media](#); we are always looking out for something new.
6. Smaller print runs becoming more cost effective with digital print
7. [Going Green](#) - companies are turning more frequently to environmentally friendly solutions to lower their carbon footprints.
8. Shorter turn-around times - in print everyone wants everything yesterday; gone are the days of two week turn-around times.
9. All-in-one print mailing solutions became popular towards the latter half of 2011. I expect this trend to boom in 2012.
10. ROI - finding a marketing solution that consumers can keep offers a greater ROI for brands
11. For the FMCG market, interactive bottle hangs are becoming popular and I expect to see greater growth with this application in 2012 - especially those that include a QR code or UFO, which opens to reveal a prize. 🎯



About the author

Lyn Davis is marketing director and co-owner of PocketMedia Solutions and Z-CARD Africa, India, Middle East and Turkey (ZAMI) (www.zcard.com). She has spent numerous successful years in marketing and her research of the African market continually ensures new growth for the company, with offices already established in Mozambique, Kenya, Nigeria, India, Botswana and Angola, among others. Contact Lyn on tel +27 (0)11 340 6737, email lyn@zmedia.co.za and follow [@Pocketmedia1](https://twitter.com/Pocketmedia1) on Twitter.



Maja Rode

Out with the old, in with the new marks PR's revival



2012 is the year that the South African PR industry may finally shed its image of a sub-standard party-planning service and muscle its way into the big leagues. And the main vehicle to get us there is social media. This also means that the traditional PR toolkit is due for a complete overhaul.

Who knows - perhaps 2012 is the year that we finally bury the press release as we know it (at least when it comes to consumer PR)?

Here is my list of these and other trends for the year ahead:

1. Social media handled by PR

Social media channels will increasingly be managed by PR agencies on behalf of their clients, rather than being handled by copy writers/marketers. PR agencies should have an in-depth understanding of their clients from a consumers' perspective, and are generally able to communicate in more subtle ways than advertising agencies do. The digital agencies that are still hanging on to conversation management will soon lose this stream of work to PR agencies with social media divisions.

2012 will undoubtedly be the year that sees those brands that employ social media to build their reputation as authentic and personable, rather than to advertise and sell, come out on top.

2. Brand 'fails'

That said, there will be a flurry of new brand 'fails' on social media channels. It seems as though big brands - and a few big personalities - are still skimping on their social media management and those that decide to go it alone in 2012 (or use advertising agencies to manage their content), risk a repeat of last year's Durex South Africa tweets-debacle.

3. Social media for brand-building

2012 will also come with a deeper understanding of how new social media platforms (Foursquare, Google+) can be used to build brands. PR agencies will have to incorporate a variety of social media platforms into digital strategies this year, ensuring that a holistic approach to how a brand lives online is adopted.

4. Pitching at bloggers

Bloggers are fast catching up to journalists as a focus for PR practitioners. But what many haven't grasped yet is that the two are very different beasts, and therefore require very different approaches. Expect to see more informal, personalised and tongue-in-cheek pitches specifically aimed at bloggers in 2012. →

5. Death of the press release

This brings me to my next point: the much anticipated death of the press release as we know it (and, possibly, Outlook's mail merge function). Traditional press releases will be replaced by more tailored communication in 2012, supported by multi-media content. That being said, certain PR disciplines, including financial and some corporate communications, will be relying on the press release for years to come. →



About the author

Maja Rode is an account director at Corporate Image Cape Town (www.corporateimage.co.za).

With qualifications in marketing, economics and business administration, she's a firm believer in the power of smart communication, of which she thinks there is a serious shortage in SA. Maja believes that PR, driven by the increasing integration with social media platforms, will play an increasingly important role in the boardroom - no more boobs-and-balloons. Email Maja@corporateimage.co.za and follow [@majarode](https://twitter.com/majarode) on Twitter.



Maja Rode

6. Death of 'marketing speak'

From one death to another, 'marketing speak' in PR communications will cease to exist in 2012. Journalists and bloggers alike have not only stopped responding to press releases containing tag lines and the constant repetition of a brand's USP, they're openly deriding them.

This is the year for PR professionals to stand their ground and demonstrate to clients that communication is more effective when it is subtle, honest and newsworthy.

7. Poaching of journalists

Intelligent writing will also become a necessity this year (due to the points mentioned above), and I predict that journalists can expect to be poached with increasing frequency.

8. Moving away from AVE

Evaluation and measurement - the bane of the global PR industry - will continue to move away from AVE this year. Instead, clients and agencies will increasingly have to agree on other sets of deliverables, including message uptake and sentiment.

This also means that a bigger share of PR budgets will have to be allocated to reputation measurement and research than in the past.

9. Bad year for start-ups

As the old economic powerhouses continue to deteriorate, clients the world over will continue to be increasingly protective over budgets, preferring to tie themselves to established communications agencies with strong track records, rather than new PR-shops. 2012 won't be a good year for start-ups.

10. Phasing out of 'PR this'

Expect the phrase 'PR this' to be slowly phased out in 2012 as clients begin to understand that a creative, well-planned PR campaign, developed and executed by industry professionals, can set the agenda for ATL and BTL to follow.

11. Closer integration of marcomms

The closer integration between marketing and communications functions on the client and agency side will continue in 2012.

Undoubtedly, turf wars will continue to rage, but it is those who recognise the power of combining the two disciplines, while not stepping on each other's toes, who will reap the creative industry awards this year.

12. PRing PR

Collectively, the industry will have to work on doing PR for ourselves, for our industry as a whole and for our agencies. We have a lot to prove, and 2012 is the year to prove it. 🍀



Marcela Ospina

Anthropological trends in the digital space



When putting these trends together, I focused on socio-cultural changes that will transform our interaction with digital technologies. I used the concepts of nature and culture to explain the role that we, and technology itself, play in closing the gap between these concepts. The results are 12 trends that describe how our relationship with the environment, politics and one another will shape the future use of digital devices and technologies.

1. Increase in micro-communities

Due to the uncertainty caused by the economic climate, including political and natural changes, the number of micro-communities increases. People will start noticing that they need to tighten up their close networks in order to survive, or to live in harmony.

2. Micro social orders

Consequently, this will reflect on the online space, with multiple micro-social networks being created that will serve particular interests and may spread out at a small scale, but will impact directly on the communities' lifestyle (ie emergence of micro-social orders).

3. Paradigm shift

Enhanced by online social platforms, a trend that points out a fundamental change from traditional socialisation is the fact that unit will not be achieved through political consensus, but by what I call a "philosophical view of the world". This means that individuals will group more and more around their own interests, opinions, and cultural beliefs, as opposed to conforming to a unified model.

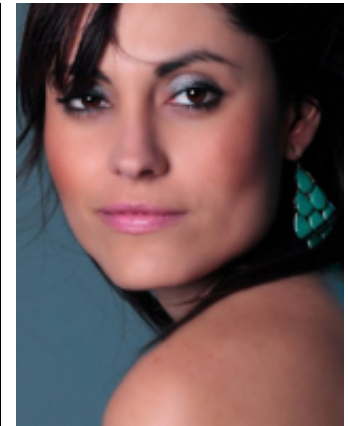
In the digital space the implications include customised advertising, brands that adapt to what people predict for themselves, and social networks that emerge accordingly.

4. Micro-segmenting

Closely linked to the previous one, brands will need to adapt to this new "view of the world". If one of the effects of the current paradigm shift is the emergence of micro-communities, brands will have to relook at their current marketing segmentation models, as messages will have to be addressed to groups of people with different needs, even if they belong to the same social-cultural structure. It is likely that the criteria to group them will differ considerably from traditional models as values are changing quickly.

5. Meaningful content

In line with the individuals' need to fight for a common cause that reunites them, brands must create and activate content around things that mean something to people (ie how to adapt better to the current environment, political consciousness, increased consciousness of themselves and others), as opposed to content that serves the brand only (ie new products, information about brand, offers). →



About the author

Anthropologist Marcela Ospina Salcedo

(www.marcelaospina.com)

specialises in helping brands understand consumers from a cultural viewpoint. By using ethnography and drawing from neuropsychological principles, she advises on developing marketing plans, launching new products, and innovating communications strategies. She has a MA in sociology from Wits and eight years' experience doing ethnography and qualitative research in South Africa, South America and other African countries. She currently works at Aquaonline as a strategist. Email me@marcelaospina.com and follow [@marcela_ospina](https://twitter.com/marcela_ospina).



Marcela Ospina cont.

6. Adapting to complexities

Degrees of complexity will continue increasing in the digital technology field, which means that individuals will adapt to the complexities in ways that impact upon the social, political and economic realms. The use of digital media is already being combined with traditional media, and the use of mobile Internet will continue growing, but in South Africa a significant number of internet users will adapt their use of online platforms to their offline consumption of information. After all, reading the news online does not have the same implication as online shopping and other examples of digital behaviour conversion.

7. Behavioural conversion

Because of the above, people may be more susceptible to achieving behavioural conversion in the digital space. In the context of the current environmental, economic and political situation, individuals will be encouraged to improve their use of digital platforms. For instance, with petrol prices going up, it may be cheaper for someone in a semi-rural African area to buy online, as opposed to going to the shops in person. If this is going too far, people will at least get information about products from online sources, prior to paying a personal visit.

8. Intermediaries between nature and culture

The modern digital selves are aware of the importance of being intermediaries between nature and culture. With the success of digital products that fit into lifestyles, individuals have been empowered to manipulate the sophisticated link that connects us with nature in a very different way. While in the past humans relied on their observation skills and their astrological knowledge to predict natural disasters, or political revolutions, the modern selves use digital technology in order to create their own future and change, and interfere in the course of history (ie political revolutions enhanced by online protests).

9. User-generated design

The fact that we as humans have the power to make use of technologies in order to know/manipulate our natural world has a positive aspect concerning our role in initiating dialogue with brands and products. The voice of the people is powerful because it creates the trends; it is responsible for them, it drives them. This in the future will mean that products will be co-created by us, as users. This means we will be designing our future devices.

10. Expert systems still strong

Oracles determined the future in ancient times. The oracles of the present are a hybrid of nature and culture represented by big technology companies that will permeate even more strongly our private lives with their devices. The main takeout here is that, regardless of us creating and developing our own products, the presence of expert systems is still strong in closing the gap between nature-culture.

11. Shaping the process

As a result of the supposed "civilising process" we have been going through, our own use of digital technology will start altering the way we shape the process. This is not to say that the devices or the technology itself will make us less or more social. It rather points out that, by progressively integrating the above-mentioned into our lives, our social interactions will adopt different dynamics - such as increasing our need to write about ourselves, or telling others about our lives, successes and achievements, among others.

12. Immediate content defines identity

Lastly, key to brands and media, it will be the need to align the content shared about themselves and others with a mind-set that is being reformulated as it is written. In other words, more than ever, individuals are writing history the moment they post or upload content. The content defines their identity. 📱



Marcus Sorour

Thoughts to challenge SA's communications industry



With social media and connectivity transforming communications, clients are asking for dedicated, proactive and tech-savvy teams who can provide content and counsel which talks beyond 'the product' and positions them as industry leaders. Lower marketing budgets and higher client expectations means agencies need to continually develop and deliver more to address the challenges faced by the communications industry in 2012.

1. The rise and rise of integrated communications

Integrated communications has long been a 'buzz' phrase in the industry, but many agencies fail to realise its potential and fall back on thinking in silos - with public relations (PR) separate from other marketing and sales functions. Relying solely on core legacy services, and a lack of expertise or strategic intent to counsel beyond their traditional remit, means many agencies are failing to provide clients with a strong ROI. In 2012, clients will demand an integrated approach to communications from their agency.

2. A demand for sector experts

As clients look for ways to stretch their communications budgets, they will demand an agency partner with deep knowledge of their sector in order to reach a specific target audience. Sector expertise results in targeted communications, which leads to sales and measurable outcomes.

More agencies in South Africa are waking up to this and focusing on a few sectors, rather than trying to be a master of many. Those who are passionate about a particular sector, and have in-depth knowledge of the buying decision-making process, stand a better chance of winning business in 2012.

3. The emergence of the trusted advisor

Agencies need to be prepared to spend more on learning and development in 2012 to retain clients, who expect a trusted advisor and not just a doer. Communications consultants who aren't constantly learning and developing will be left behind.

The skillset of a communications consultant in 2012 is multifaceted, from the delivery of strategic communications consultancy to the creation of multichannel content and social media community management. Communications consultants will be expected to deliver digital projects and introduce clients to a wider array of influencers.

4. A renewed focus on staff retention

Agencies will need to work even harder to retain staff in 2012. They need to be creative with how they design jobs, offer employees more flexibility, and provide strong development programmes to ensure talent is not just attracted but retained over the long term. →



About the author

Marcus Sorour is GM of the Johannesburg-based office of Waggener Edstrom South Africa (www.waggeneredstrom.co.za), a worldwide communications agency specialising in the renewable energy, technology and social innovation sectors. Over the past 15 years, Marcus has worked in the media and communications industry, providing counsel to local and multinational brands on business-to-business and consumer campaigns. Contact him on tel +27 (0)11 881 5981, email msorour@waggeneredstrom.com and follow [@marcussorour](https://twitter.com/marcussorour) on Twitter.



2012 Biz Trends Report



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Marcus Sorour cont.

5. Rethinking measurement

With more influencers and engagement channels than ever before, and the unpredictable nature of social media, the SA communications industry needs to rethink measurement. In 2012, the explosion of data supplied by automated monitoring tools will be used in conjunction with human insights to create issues-based dialogue between a brand and its target audience. But what makes a successful campaign? There should definitely be a direct link between communications and business objectives.

I believe there will be much debate during the year around implementing a standardised set of measurement, such as those proposed by [The Barcelona Principles](#).

6. Spotlight on offshoring

The depreciation of the rand, favourable labour costs, solid infrastructure and world-class skills will result in more global brands and agencies looking to SA for the following offshoring services in 2012:

- project management
- design
- development of web properties and mobile applications
- content development, and
- measurement services
- Growth in digital services start-ups

In 2012, we will see more individuals leave agencies and corporate environments to open their own one-stop digital shops - there is a huge opportunity for entrepreneurial-minded individuals to supply services directly to corporates or partner with agencies. These services include digital counsel, application development, web development and design.

7. The expert community manager

Thanks to social media, we are now all capable of influencing people and the public agenda. Community management is a specialist task, involving strategy, process and content development. There will be an increased demand from clients for agencies to provide expert counsel and community management in 2012.

8. Profiling the authentic leader

Brands with an executive who is visible and positioned as a thought leader across multiple media channels will end up building trust with consumers. In 2012, successful communications agencies will work closer with client leadership teams to show the human side of a business through increased social media and face-to-face engagements.

9. Interest from overseas

There are still a number of global communications agencies with either no local presence or a tenuous link to a SA-owned public relations agency. During 2012 we will see an increase in global agencies looking for a firmer footing in SA, either through more meaningful affiliations or acquisitions of local agencies. →

10. Local is more than just lekker

English may be the language of business across urban SA, but it's only one of our 11 official languages. Local content and the targeting of local-language influencers will result in better ROI and increase trust between a brand and its target audience. Dependent on sector focus and client base, SA's communications agencies will need to hire a more diversified workforce and improve their language skills during 2012. 🇿🇦



Marion Scher

What's up in media for 2012?



Ever since I read Faith Popcorn's *Clicking* in 1998 (and I can't believe you haven't read it - really?) I've been hooked on trends and how important it is not only to pay attention to what's affecting people right now but what could happen around the corner. Because you need to be around that corner, armed with what you need to reach your market.

1. Screen culture

Up to a year ago, mention the words citizen journalism and you'd get a giant sneer from anyone in the media industry but look around you and what do you see? People glued to screens, small, medium and large - all reading someone's words, but definitely not just fine journalism. They're part of the 'screen culture' which we're all engaged in on a daily basis.

No longer do we wait with baited breath to receive the evening news read by one of our articulate (not) news reporters. What's happening is being thrown on to our screens by people as it happens. Today's news breakers are rioters, strikers, students, housewives, accountants and anyone who can type!

2. Writing the mobile way

For many years I've tried to get corporates to use more conversational writing in order to make their messages more readable. Now a new challenge has been thrown up - getting a message across, not necessarily in 140 characters for Twitter (although that's a good thing), but certainly one that fits and makes an impact on a mobile screen!

3. The marriage of social and traditional media

Again the naysayers said 'never would these marry' - well, guess what, they have and the word is they're living happily ever after.

When you're planning a press campaign today, there's no way around it: you have to look at how you can use both social and traditional media, preferably merging them into one smooth campaign. Remember people are far more likely to see your release if it's on a Facebook page or a Twitter teaser.

4. How is media covering events?

Perhaps this should be called the death of the social columnist. Everyone and anyone who happens to be at a social bash can have their say online and do.

Harness this and find someone in your organisation who can write well enough to tell people what your company is doing and why your events are ones not to be missed!

5. Clearly defining readers' needs

With the screen culture comes variety like never before. Today you can have a whole publication tailored to your needs - well, at least if you're a Zite reader. If you want to reach your target market then know who they are. Their age group? Are they rich or middle-class? Do they want to read about luxury travel or value-for-money bundu bashing? →



About the author
Marion Scher

(www.mediamentors.co.za) is an award-winning journalist, lecturer, media trainer and consultant with 20 years experience in the industry. For more of her writing, go to her Bizcommunity profile or to www.marionschat.blogspot.com.



Marion Scher cont.

6. Social media - a journalist's dream for sources

In the 'old days' when we needed an interview subject, it was a case of spreading the word around your colleagues and friends and hoping that maybe they'd know someone who knew someone... Today, all you need is Facebook, LinkedIn or whatever way you choose to reach your outer circle. Within hours, even minutes you have an abundance of sources - journalism bliss!

7. Monitoring what others are saying about you

Most companies today realise the value of their websites, and have included Facebook and Twitter as add-ons. Good thinking. BUT how many actually monitor the feedback received on these and do anything about it? It's no good setting up a two-way street that only goes one way! Employ a youth while he or she still knows everything - it'll be good for you.

8. Go niche

To get that little bit of time that people have in between gaming, checking Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, their stocks, the weather and so on, target your readership. If you see a gap in the market for cross-dressing brides or ambidextrous golfers, then go for it.

9. Trending and the media

Again, something I'm always telling my clients is to hook on to whatever's happening, whether it's Malema, the euro's decline or the latest exercise craze - grab on to it. When someone presses Google, you want to come up on the other side.

10. To blog or not to blog

Well, before you check out how much I blog, I have to confess to not keeping up with my blogs - and I am definitely the worse for it. But at the same time I don't always have something witty or bright with which to enlighten you or perk up your day. Having said that, blogging is becoming bigger and it's worth looking at how you or someone in your organisation could add value to your company with a regular blog.

11. Specialisation

All clients want to get on television or radio, so what's stopping them? Perhaps the fact that why would anyone want to listen to them unless they have something truly original and, with the age of specialisation, maybe they should concentrate on being the go-to person on their topic (whether it's air conditioning or fast food)?

Get media-trained and become in demand for talk shows and comments [and be reliable: don't cancel at the last minute without good reason or you won't be invited back again, after having caused a hole in someone's programming before the show goes on air -managing ed].

12. Check out your apps

There could just be one application on your phone that you could tap into to reach your market - but if you only use your phone to make calls and send smses, then you're so last year... 📱



Martin Rose

Online business set to grow



If 2011 is anything to go by, 2012 is set to be a fast-moving, event-packed year. Social and consumer trends are developing and morphing faster than ever before and they all influence the way we think, interact, play and do business. So what are the top consumer trends we can expect in 2012?

1. Social networking goes large

In 2011, social networking became more important and influential than ever and this is a trend that's set to continue. Facebook and Twitter are now mainstream, with businesses, politicians, the media and non-profits all claiming space alongside thought leaders, trendsetters, fashionistas, social activists, consumers and the downright wacky.

However, make no mistake about it, this is where conversations are started, opinions formed and trends defined. Plus, this is where messages go viral.

2. The future is online

So there is no doubt about it, the future of business is online. No matter what kind of business you are in, you need to have a strong online presence that speaks to your target audiences or you'll be left behind.

As more and more consumers gain access to the internet, either through computers or smartphones (or both), purchasing habits are changing. Not only that, but the way in which consumers interact with sellers and with each other is being re-defined all the time, so business models and marketing strategies need to take these fast-developing trends into account.

3. Now means now

Bottom line: now means now. If a consumer is looking for information about your specific product or services offering online, you have to be there or they will simply move on. Youth and exclusively online brands in particular cannot be caught napping and they have to have an active, engaging and responsive social networking presence - as well as innovative and captivating web sites.

In addition, if something goes wrong, the communications team needs to respond straight away, even if it's just to say "We know what's happening and we're onto it."

Disappointingly, some of South Africa's most iconic brands still don't 'get it' as far as this is concerned. In a world where news travels faster than you can read your Twitter timeline, responding to and managing what happens online and in the social networks is vital and that goes for responding to customer complaints and feedback that arrive through channels that are more traditional too. In 2012 - more than ever - you snooze you lose...

4. Must love mobiles

In a recent survey conducted in the US, a third of the respondents said they would rather give up sex than give up their mobiles. Therefore, there is no mistaking how important the move to mobile is! →



About the author

Martin Rose is director at ComeDine, an online restaurant booking website. He has wealth of development knowledge of the online restaurant booking industry having worked in London at Livebookings, a European online restaurant reservations company. Martin's strength is grounded in the development of web applications and particularly mobile web development. Follow

[@ComeDineOnline](https://twitter.com/ComeDineOnline).



Martin Rose cont.

The advent of smartphones, mobile apps and mobile web sites has made the mobile phone the fastest-growing and most groundbreaking delivery channel there is. So providing mobile access to information and services must be at the top of every company's list. Simply put, you must love mobiles.

5. I want 'easy'!

With so much information out there, making the purchasing decision easy is more important than ever.

If you are lounging on the beach and want to find a great place to have supper, for instance, you do not want difficult. You want to be able to find and compare restaurants in a few easy clicks, make a booking quickly, and then get back to working on your tan. If it is difficult to interact with a business - or the experience is disappointing in some way - consumers simply vote with their feet (and their wallets).

6. Get personal

The aim of customer relationship management has always been to build a personal relationship with the customer, but as technology connects us in ways we could not even have imagined five years ago, this is taking on a completely new meaning.

CRM now means more than personalised e-mails, monthly newsletters and special offers, it means interacting with consumers in a way that adds value to their lives. Above all, it means maintaining an active, friendly and engaged social networking presence and building a truly personal relationship with your customers. Be there or be square.

7. Loyalty matters

In the same way, loyalty matters - and has to be rewarded. However, loyalty programmes are a dime a dozen now, so your programme needs to add value in a way that is meaningful to your customers.

Firstly, it has to be innovative and engaging - and has to have something that makes it stand out. Secondly, the rewards you offer need to be meaningful for your particular target audience and then, very importantly, there has to be choice about how rewards can be used. The one-size-fits-all approach does not cut it anymore, whether you are a big business like a bank or a small business like a restaurant. Personal choice is everything.

8. Power up the testimonial

Word-of-mouth testimonials have always been a powerful tool. Leading brands like Omo have built their reputation and their leading market share in just this way. Now, as social networking really takes off, the testimonial is going 21st century.

Therefore, it is important to power up the testimonial in your business. Make it easy for customers to say good things about you - and for you to manage the situation when they do not. The conversation is happening anyway - you have to be part of it. 📱



Matt Rose

Apocalypse now!



2012 is the year of the apocalypse (thanks, Mayans). But if you think about it, in a way they are right. Every year it ceases to be the end of the world as we know it. The world is in a constant state of revolution and innovation.

One of my personal heroes, Marshall McLuhan (the American media guru of the 1960s), said that "[i]n an age of multiple and massive innovations, obsolescence becomes the major obsession." So cheers to obsolescence, Prof McLuhan.

For those who love iron clad five-year plans, imagine how unexpectedly different your goals, priorities and perceptions are to your somewhat naïve answers five years ago. The important thing to do is remain calm. Embrace change and roll with the punches in these uncertain times.

With that said... here are six of my trends for 2012:

1. Infographics

The method and culture of information digestion is changing and different audiences prefer to consume it in different styles. Infographics were a massive hit in 2011 and I strongly believe they will become more popular through 2012.

Implementation of stunning infographics will be more than just displaying numbers or stats on annual sales reports or how many users Facebook has now, but will spearhead a new breeding ground of innovative corporate collateral, such as CVs, restaurant menus, product ingredients, instructional messages and many other forms of communication.

The problem is that we have endless data and are only now exploring the best ways to make that data easily understandable to the masses - Watch This Space.

2. Middle-class mind-set rising

A trend in any nation experiencing an increased distribution of wealth to the middle class is the adoption of more suburban lifestyles. One of the examples I like to refer to in a South African context is the move from pet-ownership to pet-parenthood.

A dog in a middle-to-lower socio economic household is often thought of as a functional guard dog that earns its keep. As middle classes adopt more suburban lifestyles and pets increase in popularity, we see the dog being thought of as more of a part of the family, to be pampered.

'Mass-tige' products offer a previously unseen level of sophistication to everyday household items, and it's a great time to move into a mind-set of trial products, rather than sticking to the tried-and-trusted.

3. Bulking up

The introduction of a retail 'game changer' such as Walmart in South Africa is going to shake things up a bit. Consumers in SA are going to be following the 'bigger is better' approach. The Walmart/ASDA experience is going to redefine what it means to purchase in bulk. →



About the author

Matt Rose, an avid trend watcher with a passion for the people of South Africa, is a strategic planner at Publicis Groupe Johannesburg, specialising in market research, shopper marketing and behavioural psychology. He brings a grounded yet often controversial approach to uncovering consumer insights. Honours include 2010 Loeries finalist (Digital) and 2011 Cannes Lions shortlisting (Digital). Email mlwrose@gmail.com, follow [@mattrose_rsa](https://twitter.com/mattrose_rsa) on Twitter and connect on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mattrose_rsa).



Matt Rose cont.

Brands that can ride this wave, by shifting communications to their heftier product ranges, will prosper. Greater value in the consumer's mind will follow from bulk deals, a "more-is-more" approach to household items especially.

4. Instant grass

The symbols of status have become more complex and, more often than not, flashier doesn't translate to higher social status; this is especially true in the premium FMCG brand sector. We are seeing a need for consumers to be able to tell a novel story about why they purchased that a particular product.

Brands that can be instant conversation-starters become points of social interaction. As societies are slowly starting to bestow additional recognition and respect on those straying off the beaten consumer journey, 'new' status can be found in acquired skills, green/eco-credentials, interesting hobbies, and definitely in the influence of one's personal online presence.

This is a marked change in the tone in how consumers relate to each other. This means status and aspiration aren't as straightforward as "big bling" anymore.

5. Network diversity: seeing beyond the giants

Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn have all been trending for some time now. It's basically impossible to get through a marketing briefing without hearing the words 'social media'. But in 2012 I look forward to a more diverse approach. Facebook and Twitter are just two popular channels but there is a vibrant fringe world beyond them waiting to be explored by brands in 2012.

"Social media burnout" means that networks that have elements of the artistic, exclusivity, niched and personal offerings will carry greater social clout in 2012 than the now-mainstream social networking channels.

Include these less mainstream networks in your next brainstorm:

- www.lockerz.com/
- www.instagram.com/
- www.pinterest.com
- www.path.com

6. Democratisation of creativity

Brands continue to let the consumer play a role in product development. Crowdsourcing was a buzzword in 2011 also but in 2012 I think we will see it rising further.

I think it goes beyond picking a flavor or new logo, rather into a small of communal achievement. Imagine an online artwork that could only be possible through the participation of 100 000 people. This will give the consumer the opportunity to say he/she was part of something bigger than themselves and a feeling of "I was part of that". Minute contributions that add up to something monumental.

7. Uniquely African flair

As SA changes and grows as a nation, expect the general trend to follow global counterparts but, as always, with a uniquely African flair. It's great to be in a developing economy as the ratio between opportunity and infrastructure is optimised for innovation.

Innovation is where successful brands thrive. So 2012 is going to be an exciting year for marketing professionals as we learn more and more to allow consumers to become partners in brand development. 🍷



Matt Ross

Bob, where's my flying car?



Well, much like the '50s 'World of Tomorrow' projections of flying cars, jetpacks and teleportation that we all guffaw, laugh and point at... I'll risk joining their esteemed ranks of ludicrousness by jumping in the mire of guesstimation.

I'm not focusing on any specific area of our industry; after all, any development affects us all. As John Digweed ruminated, we're all connected. I have tried to be broad, though.

Remember, dads play Xbox, too. Oh, and I've avoided trends. The points below will be stalwarts for years to come. The temporary is never attractive, anyway. Unless you married Liz Taylor. And I've only chosen five. I just like that it's an 'S' that's highly strung at the top.

1. Your TV will actually become *your* TV

The promise of internet-connected television has been around for a good few years - so much so that you may think it's skirting the edge of Flopville. That couldn't be further from the truth.

Sixty five percent of TVs globally sold in 2012 will be connected TVs. And, in South Africa, we love our televisions. Add to that the likelihood of an Apple-made TV hitting the market within the next 18 months and suddenly we've moved from Flopville to Boomtown. We recycle our TVs every three years on average. By then, with any luck, we'll actually have the internet accessibility that is necessary.

At the same time, we're starting to see content providers open up their offerings to alternative viewing options such as Xbox, which will help warm consumers to the idea of consuming content through their televisions via the internet.

YouTube is investing R800 million in original web-only programming that will also be available on connected televisions, where YouTube is often a default channel. That R12 billion that Google bought YouTube for may very well be the bargain of the century.

These will ultimately lead to the TV of the future: consumers enjoying the same diversity of choice in video programming in the living room that they currently enjoy on the desktop. And, for advertisers, that means the biggest marketing medium of them all opening up to the same type of targeting that was previously only possible on the web and, more recently, mobile devices.

2. Rubbish user-generated content and involvement

Brand A: Hey consumer! Come and upload fun videos of yourself enjoying our brand and you'll have a one in 100 000 chance of winning your own monocycle!

Consumer A: Piss off.

Not so long ago, UGC or user-generated content was all the rage. Brands creating owned media spaces to encourage earned media.

It's over. →



About the author

For over 15 years, Matt Ross's passion for original, ground-breaking ideas and technologies has taken him worldwide to create multi-award-winning digital and integrated creative campaigns for numerous clients. He's just joined King James (www.kingjames.co.za) as ECD, plus as head of Punk (formerly Mnemonic). Contact him on tel +27 (0)21 469 1500, email matt@kingjames.co.za, Skype dd-mattr, follow [@matthewsross](https://twitter.com/matthewsross) and connect on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/matthewsross).



Matt Ross cont.

In 2012 (and beyond), we'll no longer see shallow [user-generated content](#). Brands will provide more content for their consumers, rather than expect them to create their own.

So, creative charlatans... beware. You'll actually have to come up with your OWN ideas.

3. Dear John Doe. We love you. Need a lawnmower?

The personalisation of advertising has taken for bloody ever to arrive, hasn't it? We were promised relevant and hugely personalised communication from brands via email, social networks, mobile and every other 'digital' channel (one of the large dollops of wool that purveyors of digital used to drop over the eyes of unsuspecting clients). We would never have to browse the shops again. Joy!

Instead, we received grossly irrelevant ads ("Hey, Susan! Do you need a penis enlargement? Well, look no further!") and creepy corporate libel suits about how brands were recording our every movement.

Well, finally that's over. Communication will become more personalised as data about individuals becomes increasingly specific and available.

4. Technology will die

Oooo... Augmented reality! Oooo... building projections (and yes, I did do one in 2011)! Oooo... holographic car phones!

Whatever.

Technology will become less and less the glittering lure it has been for the first decade. It'll go mainstream (well, most of it already is), and that means slipping beneath the surface and being imperceptible. You know, like magic.

Which means that the age-old truth - that reality and true human experience will always be the best form of storytelling - will again rightfully regain its place at the head of the pack. And, in advertising, we either tell you a story or help you tell yours.

Welcome back, creatives who are specialists at doing that, and the technologists who allow you do it in new and amazing ways. And, no, that isn't a f*cking banner.

5. Scrooge McDuck will have to sell his money silo

Remember. He used to while away the hours swimming in his piles of cash. No longer. The way that we will begin to transact when buying our all-important stuff will make credit cards and cash look a bit like a feudal medieval bartering system. Anyone used Google Wallet yet? No? Well, me neither. But that will change. Fast.

Products such as Google Wallet, PayPal Wallet, Facebook Credits, Zungus and Square, M-Pesa - not to mention the oft-rumoured prospect of Apple moving into the mobile payments space - all promise to connect social, location, deals and purchasing all through your phone.

When you combine that concept with ads that are integrated seamlessly across media platforms, you suddenly have the purchase process of the future on the horizon.

And it's going to change everything. Again. 🍷



Mike Abel

With apologies to Cindy Lauper: boys and girls just wanna have fun



It's been a trying time aboard the good ship GFC (Global Financial Crisis). But like all sailors on the sea of life, if rough becomes the new normal, the seasickness begins to ebb and we can start moving away from being "bent-double" over the side of the boat and assume steadier footing through these turbulent waters.

It's not as if the Greeks have stopped drinking Ouzo or smashing plates. Or that Silvio Berlusconi has holed himself up in a monastery, or the Americans have stopped going to baseball games, or Uncle Bob has stopped intimidating those flame-grilled chicken lovin' folk, so why should we be the party poopers?

Bring it on, I say, which leads me into the first trend for 2012, The Year of the Windscreen (versus Rear-View Mirror):

1. The Windscreen

As an industry, this year is going to be about opportunity, braver choices and decisions. We could already see, at the end of last year, some major accounts with established and historic agency relationships, going out to pitch.

Gone are the days of relying on the tried and trusted past. Clients are once again un-battoning the hatches and looking for powerful business relationships that cut to solving the very real challenges they face, as opposed to the old "lipstick on a pig" so-called solutions. Bolder and bigger RELEVANT ideas will win the day.

2. The 3rd P

The rise and rise of Etail. Distribution (Place) and selling platforms are shifting at a rapid rate. Unless traditional retailers offer an enhanced experience or better value, the non-intermediated and most convenient form of purchase will win.

Retail outlets need to raise the game, speed up service, delight and reward if they are to keep customers in their brick and mortar outlets. Your marketing strategies need to determine why you actually have physical outlets and how to amplify the reward and enhance the stickiness.

Customers know that physical shops are a great way of "researching" what they want to buy, but if they can get it at a better price online - or with less hassle, that's where they're going to go. And Etailers have just as big (if not bigger) an opportunity to do personalisation and high-touch selling - so beware of relying on your supposed "loyalty cards" as the panacea.

3. Mobile everything

About seven years ago, I gave a keynote address around the future of cellphones which I titled "And you can even make calls from it!". As the title indicates, my observation at the time was that, in-between it being my alarm clock, diary and email manager, child entertainer in restaurants (ie the games), banking and stock trading device as well as travelling thesaurus and encyclopaedia, I would also occasionally make calls from it. 2012 is going to see a radical increase in mobile marketing spend. →



About the author

Mike Abel is chief executive partner of M&C Saatchi Abel, which he launched in South Africa in February 2010. He is the former COO of Ogilvy South Africa and CEO of M&C Saatchi Australia. Contact Mike on tel +27 (0)21 421 1024 (Cape Town) or +27 (0)11 263 3900 (Johannesburg), email mike.abel@mcsaatchiabel.co.za, follow him on Twitter at [@abelmike](https://twitter.com/abelmike) and read his blog at mikeabel.wordpress.com.



Mike Abel cont.

With over 92% handset penetration, the channel is finally coming of age and it is mindless to not include it as part of your mix in targeting certain markets.

Its use as a transactional tool is also going to grow exponentially over the next few years, where ultimately it will replace the need for traditional plastic. I, like many, now use the barcode to check in at the airport.

On a lighter note (or not...), beware the phone hackers and taking naughty pics.

4. Is an app apt?

As smartphone penetration increases with more affordable handsets hitting the market, businesses will realise the potential of investing in a bespoke app for their brand.

We've already seen FNB take a pioneering path with its banking app which is available across leading smartphone platforms. It's using the app as both a tool to simplify things for existing customers but also as a means of opening new accounts with new customers.

With technologies such as HTML5 streamlining the mobile app development process, we should see more local South African brand apps surfacing.

5. Brand gate-crashing

It can't be disputed that there's been a disproportionate emphasis given to social media in the digital "mix" over the past few years and, as a result, consumers are faced with the prospect of their social media activity becoming increasingly cluttered by brands trying to engage with them. I think we'll start to see consumers "unLiking" a lot more brands as they offer nothing useful through their social media endeavour.

Consumers are becoming increasingly discerning about the things they really do "Like" and follow in the social channels. Social media fatigue is setting in so brands will need to shift emphasis to exploring mobile as a "traditional" marketing opportunity, as well as perhaps revisiting what experience they're offering customers through their own website.

6. You may lose some friends

How many people on Facebook are your real friends? We seem to have an ever-growing list of extraneous attachments who - whether you met them briefly in a meeting, were in Grade 4 with them, or they've fixed your loo - they've somehow joined your "inner-circle". This is the year to say "Ciao!"

So, in looking at "The Year of the Windscreen" you need to decide whether you have the right partners to solve these problems in a fresh and imaginative way, for if not, you'll be the bug - not the driver. 🐞



Mike Freedman

Sustainability and beyond



Trends arise from major shifts in global thinking. Otherwise they tend to be fads and blind alleys. And so to only look at trends is like trying to map the ocean by studying the waves. We need to dive deep, to the currents underneath, the reefs and the ocean floor.

It is a time of fundamental change and it is happening at bewildering speed.

Economic meltdown meets incipient environmental catastrophe; an aging Western population is confronted by the youthful vitality of the South, the sheer mass of the East.

City regions, rather than countries, are becoming the hubs of prosperity, innovation and hopelessness.

We are connected and disconnected - a child can travel the virtual world long before she can cross the street.

In this maelstrom, new trends are fashioned that spill over to the clothes we wear, the transport we choose, the holidays we take, the food we eat.

Four major shifts

- We see four major shifts:
- Sustainability and beyond
- Demographics as destiny
- Power of city regions
- Connected and disconnected

For this article, I look at the first and some of the resulting trends we expect to see more of in 2012.

Touch every part of our lives

During 2012, the financial case for sustainability will gather unstoppable momentum - it will touch every part of our lives.

1. New energy

The stakes here make the arms deal the equivalent of tin soldiers in a lucky packet. Bidding will start on nuclear power stations that the Mail & Guardian estimates to be worth over a trillion rand. Companies from six countries are contenders and all will need heavy-duty lobbyists, plus PR and some worthy causes to back.

Meanwhile, the anti-nuke brigade will be out in force with funding to communicate the nuclear peril. Expect social media to be aflame.

Fuelled by municipalities setting bold targets for renewable energy, new solar product and service brands will enter our lexicon while, in the wings, own-labels - from Builders Warehouse to Woolworths - ready themselves to pounce. →



About the author

Mike Freedman, a doyen of the advertising and branding community, is founder of Freedthinkers (www.freedthinkers.com) which has offices in Johannesburg and Cape Town. He was a prominent copywriter at some of the big ad agencies in London and here before helping form ad agency Freedman and Rossi, and then Freedthinkers. Contact Mike at mike@freedthinkers.com and follow [@Freedthinkers](https://twitter.com/Freedthinkers) on Twitter.



Mike Freedman cont.

It will become fashionable to flaunt your solar credentials on the roof of your home, while the Prius is joined by a flock of new hybrids, as car manufacturers seek to be more eco than thou.

Scientists and technologists will have money thrown at them to develop affordable carbon capture and storage - we have too much invested in the coal industry and too much coal is still underground to close up shop - clean coal is a South African and world game-changer. It may never be cheaper than dirty coal, but it could soon cost less than any other sustainable energy source.

2. Redefining capitalism

Capitalism 1.0 is in dire straits. A rising tide of anger and mistrust threatens to turn into a financial tsunami. The other 99% are not going away soon. Consumers are beginning to realise their power; investors are asking more searching questions; employees search for a sense of purpose.

More multinationals will follow the example of Nestlé and reflect on how to create shared value (CSV) across their whole value chain. CSV is the brainchild of Michael Porter, doyen of Capitalism 1.0, indicating the Road to Damascus begins at Harvard Business School.

Expect ads for pork sausages to feature local farmers who have happier, plumper pigs due to the brand's intervention. Expect a new kind of bank that only invests your money in environmentally and socially responsible projects - delivering better returns.

3. Revaluing green

The penny is finally dropping - the Green Economy is about jobs, jobs, jobs. Solar water heaters can employ 10 times as many people as coal-fired power-stations, to produce a similar amount of energy.

We are also seeing the value of biodiversity - nature's gift. UNEP declares for every dollar humans make, Nature delivers one for free (in South Africa, we are far more conservative - believing Nature only contributes 7% of our GDP - that's over R80 billion, each year.) But 65% of the world's ecosystems are degraded. When humans lend a hand, we reverse the degradation - and that's more jobs, from clearing aliens to biochemistry.

Expect more and more farmers' markets - the economics are simple; when you buy your supermarket carrot, the farmer will be lucky to receive 7c in the rand for his money, labour and risk. For consumers, buying fruit and vegetables straight from local farmers reminds us that peas come fresh from a pod, not frozen from a supermarket shelf.

We grow for people we know is a rallying cry that can be a real threat for established retailers. Expect initiatives such as Tesco's promotion of local milk, or an enterprising New York supermarket owner who grows the vegetables he sells in a giant greenhouse on his roof.

4. All is revealed

WalMart has been an unlikely eco-champion and is now undertaking a project that will pressurise producers to reveal the total environmental impact of their brands on their labels. As WalMart consolidates its presence in SA, consumers here will be made aware of more and less sustainable choices.

As attention and understanding grow, social media will be delighted to out any brands that are economical with the truth. The more-aware shoppers will have apps on their smartphones that scan a bar code to reveal the total social and environmental story. →



Mike Freedman cont.

Eco-endorsement labels such as Biodiversity & Wine Initiative (BWI), Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Marine Stewardship Council, Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) [and Southern African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) - managing ed] are just some of the brands behind the brand that will sway our choice of food, drink, clothing, furniture and accommodation.

Sustainability is a new communications high ground and brand winners will be those who combine seduction with a healthy dollop of soul.

5. And beyond...

Of course, as soon as an idea becomes mainstream, it will be pushed to new limits.

Is sustainability all we can hope for - to keep our current status quo? It is in our nature to want a better life for our children - and our children's children. We already hear murmurings that sustainability is a bridge to restore-ability. Restoring environmental health and variety, restoring jobs, creating a more just society.

The communications industry is adept at encouraging the world to want more, creating an ever-hungry consumer society. Will we be equally adept at convincing society to face the challenges we have and collectively overcome them? Will we first be able to convince ourselves? This is an undercurrent to watch in 2012. 🍷



Mongezi Mtati

Influencers take to the web and run the streets



2011 saw the rise of more social media influencers and thought leaders; more conversations influenced how brands are perceived; and the fad of a Facebook page became more questioned than ever before. Or did that apply only in conferences and meetings I went to?

Here are my predictions for 2012:

1. Beyond social media presence

South Africa followed the trend of having some or other form of social media existence in 2010 and 2011, where in 2011 presence alone began losing its appeal. In 2012, brands will ask more value-based questions and search for influencers and thought leaders with whom to align themselves.

Organisations will be more open to innovation, where the approach will include more experimentation, rather than working within the norm.

2. Rise of influencer engagement

Brands are beginning to understand the importance of being talked about both online and offline. They asked us some testing questions in 2011 about the meaning and reach of conversations, which was proof that they are looking for more meaningful engagement.

In 2012, brands will measure their reach and want more value for their money, which will mean campaigns will be more focused.

3. Reach beyond the numbers

The hype of 100 000 Twitter followers or "likes" on a Facebook page will slowly start being questioned, as companies learn to understand the value of engagement. In 2012, I predict that clients will search for relevance and insight, rather than numbers and more meaningless chatter.

4. Proof is in the data

The importance of understanding people who show an interest in brands online will increase this year, as I have seen clients questioning the fad.

While we know that social media platforms present us with nuggets of information about customers, accounting for an estimated 10% of total reach, I foresee that more marketers and advertisers will be tasked with analysing that data and interpreting it in useful ways for their clients.

5. Growth of the app economy

Access to mobile internet is soaring due to cheaper devices; developers are constantly building web and mobile applications; and companies want to connect with customers on their terms. These three factors will see an increase in the mobile applications built and customised for individual companies in 2012.

Some of these apps will include platforms that enable rating and recommendation to facilitate easy online shopping →



About the author

Mongezi Mtati (@Mongezi) is an entrepreneur and the founding MD of WordStart

(www.wordstart.co.za). Apart from being a kite-boarding and sandboarding adventurer, Mongezi connects companies with measurable word-of-mouth through young African influencers at WordStart. For the latest trends in word-of-mouth follow [@wordstarters](https://twitter.com/wordstarters) on Twitter.

Mongezi's blog is available at

www.mongezimtati.co.za.

Contact him at

info@wordstart.co.za.



Mongezi Mtati cont.

6. Location-based shopping and interaction

Over the past few months, I have noticed that more companies, their customers, and developers alike want to interact in real-time.

This, in my opinion, will give rise to more in-store ratings of customer service and customer experience, which will be public. It will increase the ability for people and brands to increase interaction and improve customer satisfaction.

7. Real-time takes to the fore

More organisations improved their real-time interaction in 2011, which I predict will increase in 2012. The few brands that mastered it in 2011 and retained customer loyalty will have more competition this year.

8. The crowds lead

Following the need to analyse data and insights sourced from the web as a sample of what customers want, companies will begin listening and implementing solutions that mirror the needs of their customers. It will happen faster than ever before, as more organisations will harness its advantages.

Organisations, instead of just implementing campaigns, will listen first and engage the customer - as opposed to reaching out blindly to the masses.

9. Customer engagement platforms

Related to analysing data and understanding what customers want, I foresee more organisations building their own platforms to engage customers. The consumer, along with the Customer Protection Act, will give rise to more accountability, where the most innovative brands will reap rewards.

10. Peer-to-peer recommendation moves up a notch

Brands are slowly beginning to realise that their reputation hangs on thought leader and influencer perceptions. They will begin to seek more organic growth through conversation, as opposed to simply launching themselves at the masses.

11. SA companies increase gamification

Simply put, gamification refers to the idea of having attributes that are adapted from video gaming. This spans from having different levels to rewarding participation in some way.

As companies look to differentiate online, rewarding interaction and participation will be more significant.

12. Mobile payment grows

SA businesses have begun to understand the importance of having mobile platforms and mobisites.

I predict that, in 2012, we will begin to see more of them creating ways to monetise and accept payment from these platforms. 📱



Odette van der Haar

Ad industry to continue defining, redefining itself



2012 promises to be just as eventful as ever, as the advertising profession continues define and redefine its operations and creativity. I expect to see the following 12 trends and industry issues emerging in 2012:

1. Digital integration

Technology evolves so quickly that it's difficult to say what 2012 will hold for us. However, there is one concept that I believe will not only transform the advertising and communications landscape, but keep it fluid in order to keep up with the dynamism of the economy and technology - integration.

Innovation within the online advertising sphere has increased exponentially over the past few years. 2012 will be about integration, better understanding of the use of new media and using the various media options together to better reach and communicate with consumers.

2. Video advertising

It is becoming increasingly difficult to define advertising in terms of channels. It is not the channel through which we consume advertising that is important but rather the content we choose to consume that is important.

After years of 'channels' competing to deliver impressions, it seems 2012 will finally be the year that video advertising delivered telephonically or via broadcast transmissions, satellite or fibre optics will co-exist and complement each other. Video advertising has a strong and healthy future - one only needs to look at the massive success brands have achieved by projecting their advertising into the ether through portals such as YouTube - Old Spice, VW and Nike, to name but a few.

I believe 2012 will be the year when content is embraced and when it is accepted that technology simply provides a means to generate a viewing audience.

3. Full-service agencies

It is largely expected that the digital (including mobile) and experiential sectors will yield great future growth. During 2011, we saw a gradual move by clients back to full-service integrated agencies, especially those incorporating digital and experiential in their overall offering. Such diversity within agencies is being heralded as the answer to agency survival - without the complete erosion of the entire industry.

4. Social media

We have seen the social media sphere explode in the past year and expect to see it becoming increasingly integrated into our marketing strategies. According to Dreamgrow.com, social media marketing will not be a separate activity but rather one facet of an overall marketing plan. Much like SEO or email marketing, social media will be another valuable tool in the box.

I believe we will also see large-scale integration of social media content into digital properties. Brands will use social media and user-generated content (UGC) to get closer to customers. →



About the author

Odette van der Haar has been CEO of the Association of Communications and Advertising (ACA) (www.acasa.co.za) since October 2007. Prior to that, she headed up Sentech's advertising, events and sponsorship portfolios. Contact Odette on tel +27 (0)11 781 2772, email ceo@aaalttd.co.za and follow her on Twitter at [@odette_roper](https://twitter.com/odette_roper).



Odette van der Haar cont.

5. Introducing the "new normal"

The [annual JWT trends forecast speaks](#) of a "new normal", whereby more brands in more categories will open up entry points for extremely cost-sensitive consumers. Marketers will find new opportunities in creating stripped-down offerings, smaller sizes and otherwise, more accessible products and services.

6. Shared value

Also highlighted as one of JWT's trends for 2012 is that some corporations are shifting their business models to integrate social issues as part of their core strategies. The aim is to create shared value, a concept that reflects the growing belief that generating a profit and achieving social progress are not mutually exclusive goals.

7. Sector growth

Again economists have warned that we are approaching yet another global economic downturn, which will no doubt affect advertising and communications revenues. In fact, [MagnaGlobal](#), the strategic global media unit responsible for forecasts, insights and negotiation strategy across all media channels, cut original advertising growth predictions in the US by almost 2%, bringing the total expected growth to 2.9%, as opposed to the original prediction of 4.8%. These figures should not be seen as doom and gloom for South Africa, as we are fingered as one of the top five growth countries in the EMEA region, with a projected advertising growth rate of 11% over the next five years.

8. Protecting IP

New business was scarce during 2011 as less big pitches took place and a few large tenders were cancelled, thereby limiting agencies' potential to grow revenue. During 2011, agencies became a lot more discerning about participation in onerous, expensive and unreasonably competitive new business pitches. In addition, agencies have become a lot less agreeable regarding parting with their intellectual property free of charge; after all, it dilutes the currency of the profession.

9. Alcohol advertising ban

Government has earmarked 2012 as the year to tackle the social issues around alcohol abuse and unfortunately [advertising of alcohol products](#) has come under fire. It is likely that outdoor and sponsorships will be the first casualties, with severe restrictions placed on TV, radio and print. The Association for Communication and Advertising (ACA) will remain close to this matter and will keep members informed.

10. Research and self-regulation

[Funding](#) of the industry's requirements for research and self-regulation is at a critical stage. This is an issue that threatens the continued existence of industry structures such as SAARF and the ASA. As an industry, we need to stand together to ensure the longevity and professionalism of our profession.

11. Skills-farming

It is no secret that we are experiencing a critical shortage of skills in the profession, particularly copywriting. It's likely that, during 2012, agencies will take the expected economic reprieve as an opportunity to grow skills within their respective agencies and invest in fresh SA talent.

12. Effectiveness in advertising and communications awards:

Due to the current global economic climate, clients demand ROI and not just creativity. The two are not mutually exclusive. In fact, creative communications campaigns are greatly effective and as such we have seen that ROI and creativity are becoming progressively more interrelated. The shift we are seeing whereby [awards shows](#) are taking into account the strategic solution that is creatively presented to address the (sales) problem is welcomed and embraced by the profession because it emphasises that a good idea is as important as its efficacy! 🍷



Oresti Patricios

Media trends in Africa for 2012



The continent's future is tied to its media. Free open media promises much for flourishing democracies and economic growth, but authoritarian states will struggle to let go of controls.

2012 is upon us after being the subject of much superstition, with beliefs ranging from this year being a time of transformation to more apocalyptic myths that the world's going to end because of indications contained in the Mesoamerican Long Count, or Mayan calendar.

A mixed bag for media in Africa

These madly divergent high and low road 'scenarios' are about as mixed as the media's fortunes in Africa. 2012 offers massive opportunity for the continent's media, but there's also great peril.

The year had no sooner started when the [Centre for the Protection of Journalists](#) announced that two journalists had been held in Somali's Puntland without being charged; Gabon had suspended a TV station and newspaper for covering opposition politicians; and that a journalist and videographer were shot and killed in Syria.

Authoritarian Africa, dangerous for journalists

Journalism proved a treacherous profession in Africa in 2011 [where Daily Maverick reports](#) that 12 journalists were killed, while 52 journalists were incarcerated on predominantly manufactured charges. However, despite the clamping down on free and fair media in more authoritarian parts of Africa, there were promising signs of moves toward open access to information and media freedom in other parts of the continent.

In September last year journalists, academics and government officials from across the continent gathered in Cape Town to sign a declaration calling on the continent to promote access to information across Africa. In June President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya launched that country's Open Data Initiative which made key government data freely available to the public online.

Two months earlier President Goodluck Jonathan signed Nigeria's Freedom of Information Bill (FOI) into law. Under the act the destruction of public documents and the denial of access to information are punishable by law, but the act has yet to be taken fully advantage of in that country. For media to be truly free, statutes mustn't just be proclaimed in government gazettes, but need to be tested and taken advantage of by civil society.

Secrecy bill blight on SA media freedom

The move to a more free media and open access to information by some African governments must be lauded, but one needs to bear in mind that currently only six countries have freedom of information laws in place (Nigeria; Uganda; Liberia; Ethiopia; Angola and South Africa). And South Africa is engaged in fierce protesting to stave off a [Protection of Information Bill](#) or 'secrecy law' that will have a profound impact on media freedoms. →



About the author
Oresti Patricios, CEO of the Ornicogroup (www.ornico.co.za), has been in the media information business for over 25 years. He has an MBA from the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) and a huge body of brand knowledge and experience, which he brings to the brand intelligence offered by the company. Contact Oresti on tel +27 (0)11 884 5041 or email Oresti@ornicogroup.co.za and follow [@orestaki](https://twitter.com/orestaki) on Twitter.



Oresti Patricios cont.

While pockets of progress are promising and must be encouraged, 2012 will remain a year in which journalists will continue to fight against tight-fisted control of public information and media freedoms by more authoritarian governments. In South Africa the ANC's recent 100 year celebrations contained speeches which indicated that the battle lines between the ruling party and the media have been clearly drawn. The attrition that was so clear between the two last year will continue well into 2012.

Even though authoritarian governments in Africa have sought to restrict media freedoms, the media sector is buoyant and offers good investment opportunities. Parminder Vir, director of PVL Media Consultants told [TradelInvest](#) that African media remains one of the continent's fastest growing industries and that media and entertainment industries are showing above average growth.

Media shows good growth in Africa

She says Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and South Africa offer the greatest opportunities for both media content and media distribution across television, digital media, mobile and other media. The reason for the media boom she says is urbanisation, youth and the expansion of an emerging middle-class who will contribute to the sectors future growth.

Another promising sign of growth in the sector is the boom in participation in the African Media Leaders Forum (AMLF) which was formed some four years ago. Focused on helping media owners to create more effective business models the AMLF hopes to develop a vibrant media sector on the continent to "help citizens affect social, economic and political change" and to hold leaders accountable to their mandate. When the AMLF held its first meeting in Dakar, Senegal four years ago 50 media leaders attended. In 2011 that mushroomed to 350 delegates from 48 African countries.

During the last conference the media leaders signed the 2011 Tunis Declaration to urge African leaders to recognise and strengthen the role that media plays in consolidating democracy and good governance in Africa. "We believe the media sector can play a hugely supportive role in the expansion of democracy through an informed citizenry, and support processes of good governance through exercising the traditional watchdog function. Deficits in democracy and governance are inimical to the growth of Africa's media sector," the signatories to the declaration said.

Growth in Africa hinges on open access to information and free media

The media leaders are right in that Africa's media and the continents fortunes are directly tied to each other. Research shows that free media fosters vibrant democracies, thriving economies and creates open environments with a contestation of ideas that investors want to participate in. Close, dictatorial and authoritarian environments aren't good for media growth or investment. To promote positive growth trends African nation leaders need to realise that media openness, freedom, growth and diversity is crucial. 📺



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Peter Stewart

Setting the scene for search-based marketing



Search-based marketing may be broken down into conversion, search engine optimisation (SEO), paid search and performance email information. In setting the scene for the rest of 2012, here are various trends per category.

Conversion trends in 2012

1. Source-to-sale reporting

This is all about measurability, campaign ROIs, setting web KPIs, contributors and properly following through.

It is important to highlight how web KPIs contribute to the entire marketing mix. Furthermore, we need to analyse performance and compare various marketing channels (impact of ROI per channel). This approach is a continuous improvement, though, as well as a very serious attribution modelling topic.

2. Development of mobile within the mix and growth of tablet apps

What is the role of mobile and various devices? Which influences have multiple digital setups on conversion rate? Which audience can be reached best by which device and how do the various conversion rates and user experiences differ from each other?

3. More in-depth user experience testing

Something which cannot be ignored in 2012 is testing, testing, testing! Don't assume what could be possible, but audit, analyse and use data to build powerful hypothesis. Test your variables and learn from your users. What will work? What doesn't work?

4. With the death of IE6, better adoption of HTML5

With the death of IE6 we can move forward to [HTML5](#). How will the user experience change? And how easy will it be to deliver solid experiences across sites?

SEO trends in 2012

1. Personalisation

A trend in SEO 2012 is that there is already more focus on personalisation of search results, using a variety of social signals from Google+, Facebook, Twitter and blogs.

User approval and acceptance of content (votes) on the web has got to start playing an important part in rankings, which in turn will mean that websites consisting of "thin" content will be marked down in the rankings and quality content will remain as important as ever, but even more so now.

2. Google launches Your World social search integration - "Search plus Your World"

Members, and to a lesser extent others who are signed into Google, will be able to search the broader web and their own Google+ social profile, with Google+ circles, photos, posts and more integrated into search. →



About the author

Peter Stewart is the MD of award-winning digital conversion agency Clickthinking/iProspect (www.clickthinking.com), which he founded in 1999. In 2011, the company was acquired by Aegis Media (www.aegismedia.co.za) and is now part of the iProspect network. Pete has judged both local and international direct marketing association awards. He serves on a select group advising Microsoft engineers on ways of improving its search products. Tel +27 (0)21 404 1801 or email pete@clickthinking.com.



Peter Stewart cont.

3. Private content In your web results

Personalised results include listings from the web that are enhanced by personal behaviour, personal connections and public posts and photos - both consumer-owned and shared with them.

Paid search trends for 2012

1. Performance display advertising

With a strong growth in 2011, there is no doubt that in 2012 there will be a strong emphasis on budgets moving more towards performance display media.

With traditional media buys on the digital front costing more each year and the return on those rands spent becoming less, one can expect clients to adopt a different approach when looking to secure their ROI in 2012.

Clients are more aware that the presence of their digital creative does no longer suffice; in order for them to communicate more about their brand, their target market has to 'click'. Stepping into a performance-based pricing model opens up that opportunity for advertisers who want to achieve multiple brand objectives.

2. Facebook

In 2012, we will be seeing a big impact on budget percentage shifting to Facebook PPC ads. With clients growing more aware of where their brand is being talked about and how social media can play a role in communicating their brand and product messages, it's no surprise that we are starting to see more pay-per-click activity on Facebook.

3. YouTube

YouTube being owned by Google allows advertisers to get high premium ad placements at the same cost-effective performance-based pricing model.

In 2012, we can expect to see more advertisers run their above-the-line 30-second TV ad spots onto the YouTube network as part of their media-plan rollouts.

Performance email information trends in 2012

1. Mobile messaging is on the rise

According to recent statistics, there are more than double the amount of mobile internet users (62%) than desktop internet users in South Africa. Additionally, the increasing availability of smartphones such as BlackBerry (which hold 67% of the smartphone platform market share in SA) means that more users will be retrieving emails via their mobile/smartphones.

So, while mobile messaging continues to be an important part of communicating with South Africans, ensuring your email messaging is also optimised for mobile viewing is going to be vital in 2012. →

2. Qualified data needs to be a focus

With the inception of the [Consumer Protection Act](#) in 2011 and the future implementation of the national opt-out registry, unsolicited messaging will carry real-world penalties for those sending direct marketing communications.

Make a point in 2012 to confirm that the recipients you're targeting have indeed opted in to hear from you and that your list acquisition practices are above board, carrying the necessary checks and balances. →



Peter Stewart cont.

3. Relevance is essential

We've seen numerous studies out of 2011 showing that one of the top three reasons for users unsubscribing from email communication is irrelevance.

Using your subscriber's name to personalise your communications to them is no longer enough - you need to bring them targeted, relevant content that speaks to their individual needs and preferences. If you don't do this, you'll almost certainly lose that relationship in 2012.

4. It's no longer just marketing - it's an on-going, integrated digital conversation

With so many marketing channels available to both business/brands and consumers, gone are the days of the "silo" approach.

Integration of profile and behavioural data across different marketing channels such as search, mobile, social, eCommerce etc will prove to be the key to understanding your customer and accompanying them through their individual journey with you.

Without a doubt, 2012 will see the rise of true one-to-one digital conversations. 🍷



Petros Kondos

Twelve thoughts for the mobile space



Marketing and communication via mobile media and the web are always evolving. New players in the space appear and disappear, almost on a monthly basis. As we all progress with the new and exciting opportunities that they open up, we can only explore further, fail, move on and start again.

1. Cellphones, brands and Twitter: a business perspective

Twitter only works with followers. The dirty little secret we all suspect with Twitter is that a follower is not always a follower. No one really knows, but maybe for every 100 followers, up to 30 will be spam/porn bots hoping to sell you something. Another 30 or so are probably dormant or dead, and of the 40 who are left, maybe two or three will actually be reading the stream as we tweet.

Twitter is here and now; in a few seconds it's too late. The Twitter steam moves fast and old tweets are dead (unless you are a politician with a bit on the side). This compounds the problem when companies just don't get that they are not nearly agile enough for Twitter. The Twitterati are always online responding or initiating communication and companies can never hope to match that.

Many brands will spend another year following agency advice based on mainstream media experience, wasting another year getting it wrong. Don't believe me? When last did your company monitor Twitter on a Sunday evening and respond to a complaint in real time?

2. Point of sale, coupons, QR codes, NFC and cellphones

Many more retail companies will enter this space with hugely mixed results. Technology is moving faster than customers' comfort levels. Another obstacle is the race by suppliers to corner the market in this space, which creates conflicting platforms and makes it that much more difficult for everyone.

We are fast approaching the time when the bulk of our purchases will be made via the cellphone but it won't be in this decade. (Banks will ensure this.)

3. Free

The internet provided the way for free content. Companies came along, sometimes willingly, but mostly unwillingly. How long will it take for mobile to follow? Consumers are fast catching on that most of the mobile content offered for sale is available free somewhere on the internet. I predict a lot more free content for mobile users in 2012. Where it's not offered, the users will find it.

4. Apps -what apps?

Despite the plethora of apps currently available, we will see the era of the app fade away as companies realise that mobile web is just easier, simpler and more convenient. →



About the author
Petros Kondos is a CRM, mobile media and customer communications specialist. He has extensive experience making cost-effective CRM work for a range of industries specialising in retail and the financial services space. Recently published to exceptional reviews, his book on location-based marketing can be downloaded from www.petroskondos.com. Email pk@telkomsa.net, follow [@Petros99](https://twitter.com/Petros99) on Twitter and connect on LinkedIn.



Petros Kondos cont.

5. Less PC on cellphones

Brands will use mainstream media for the politically correct stuff but we will see more edginess in mobile communications. Well-managed data bases will allow brands to get closer to their target market through clever segmentation, leveraging racial and cultural preference (not racist preference) to sell more products, without alienating other market segments.

6. Media agency apathy will peak

Agency commission from big budgets drives spend to established media. Mobile media is often far more cost-effective than traditional media. It's now getting to the point where the bigger agencies are losing out to the smaller guys, and the door that they allowed to be opened is due to their lack of meaningful activity in the mobile space. As it starts hurting more, the big guys will adapt and learn to embrace mobile. Forget the social media specialist label. Mobile communications and technology are what they need to make the transition.

7. Mobile TV

The psychology and promise of TV is based on bigger screen and bigger sound. The constant drive to get TV onto mobile will continue to fail. Mobile is small screen with small sound.

8. Mobile location-based marketing will show its face again

Bluetooth marketing led the way in this niche and, with its death, a bunch of new technologies are slowly gaining ground, primarily near field communication (NFC) and geo-tagging. No one can argue that getting to the customer in the store is the holy-grail in marketing. The problem to date has been the structuring of co-ordinated and viable strategies to correctly leverage the opportunities.

9. The simpler alternative

We may see a trend towards simplicity in cellphone operating systems with devices that offer the basics for various population groups, but no more. I think that there are far too many people out there stuck with devices that they wish would offer them more of what they want and less of what the makers want them to have.

10. Converging media

Most of the marketing activity generated thus far in the mobile space has been single channel orientated: either SMS, MMS, QR codes, etc. Brands are realising that a convergent approach will assist in reaching and keeping profitable customers. CRM is all about finding, keeping and growing profitable customers. Companies on the leading edge will cotton on and we are bound to see more of "use everything and select what works" segmentation 2.0. →

11. Social media to interest cluster

The current free-for-all amorphous structure of social media will see a tendency towards clustering into specific user groups, formalised and localised to cater for specific interest groups. Savvy marketers will further develop localised groups around common interests to enable effective and efficient growth of market share.

12. Resistance building to the regular players

2011 has seen murmurs of dissent for the large social media players. No company is absolute and, most definitely, no company is forever. The beauty of the web is that it cannot be controlled by anyone (well, the Chinese do try hard). 2012 will see the rise of the next generation of social media a lot faster than anyone of us believes. 📱





Carat



REDEFINING MEDIA.

Sadika Fakir & Lerina Bierman

Twelve trends that will redefine media in 2012



Whether it's agencies competing for similar pieces of new business to TV still holding strong while consumers seeking gratification through multiple screens and touchpoints, the year ahead will see much redefining media and marketing/advertising.

1. Agencies extend their offerings to get a bigger slice of the pie

More and more agencies are adding new specialisations to their core business, be it digital or social media offerings, activation divisions, or BTL specialisations. 2012 will see a rise in the level of competition between traditional media, and ATL and BTL agencies, which have traditionally worked together on the same client, as they start competing for similar pieces of new business.

2. On Facebook, 'Like' does not equal 'Love'

2011 saw an explosion of brands on Facebook - all with the same call-to-action: Like us and Win. Hundreds of Facebook ads grew page numbers into the thousands, with the incentive of a trip, cash or even just a free pair of flip flops. However, what many brands didn't plan for was what would happen next?

In 2012, more brands will be taking social strategy much more seriously – by planning out their communication plans across the entire year. This will not only incentivise, but also educate, entertain and allow interaction with the Facebook user on an ongoing basis.

J&B implemented this type of strategy incredibly well over the past 12 months, with ongoing communication dotted with interactive and relevant competitions throughout the year, while constantly keeping the behaviour of the Facebook user at the forefront of its strategy.

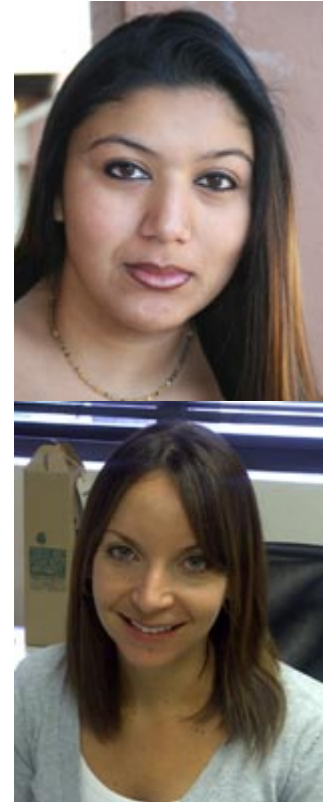
More brands need to follow suit in the next 12 months, or prepare to be Unliked.

3. TV still holds strong

While clients are starting to dabble with digital, and interact through activations, there is still a very strong attachment to the traditional TV ad, and 2012 will not see this waning.

Marketers want to see their brand on TV and creative agencies will continue to push TV ads, being a large source of income for them. While an overreliance on TV could prove unwise for top-end and youth target markets, it has to be said that TV can still achieve high levels of reach in South Africa, with very little fragmentation in the mid-to-lower income groups.

This means that TV will almost certainly remain the first choice for most marketers. →



About the authors

Sadika Fakir is a business unit head at Carat South Africa (caratsa.com), which is part of the world's leading focused media and digital communications group, Aegis Media (www.aegismedia.co.za).

She has headed up ZenithOptimedia as media director and worked as communication strategist for TBWA\Hunt\Lascaris and MediaCompete.

Lerina Bierman has spearheaded strategy at Carat SA's Cape Town office for the past four years, working on leading brands and at leading agencies including BBDO and TBWA.



Sadika Fakir & Lerina Bierman cont.

4. Accountability becomes the norm

Marketers and agencies no longer have the freedom to spend millions on media without being held accountable.

Measurables are being put in place and 'nice-to-have' activities that do not deliver significant value or return on investment are being removed from plans. While this has already started to become a trend over the past few years, it is set to become the norm for media agencies to be held accountable for their recommendations and have performance-related measurements in place, linked to fees and bonus structures.

5. 360° offerings and media partnerships become the benchmarks

2011 saw many media owners offering multiplatform campaigns and partnering with brands to achieve their objectives, as opposed to simply running ads. 2012 will be the year in which this approach becomes the norm.

There is still a lot of work to be done in perfecting this way of working. However, media owners who are only able to offer a one-dimensional campaign will increasingly be overlooked by marketers and planners who seek more holistic and integrated campaigns across multiple touchpoints.

6. Facebook becomes a marketplace

No longer just a place to 'Like' your friends' pics or discuss weekend plans and the menu for dinner, Facebook is rapidly becoming an online marketplace, allowing users to directly purchase products through specially designed applications.

Woolworths is doing this very well by allowing consumers to browse their catalogues and even buy clothing, without ever leaving the Facebook environment. This brand's understanding of Facebook users' behaviour means that they can communicate, and sell, directly to their target market, without the user having to leave the Facebook comfort zone.

In 2012, more brands will follow suit, and with the increase of Facebook Places – whereby brands can offer special deals based on a user's location – far more monetary interaction is expected to take place on this social platform.

7. Consumers become immersed

Consumers are seeking gratification through multiple screens and touchpoints - all of these point to an overall consumer desire to be fully immersed in entertainment. Much of the talk about entertainment on multiple platforms is about consumers' demand for greater convenience, and that demand is very real.

But consumers are also expressing a demand for greater immersion. Better mobile devices, bigger TVs, 3D movies, Wii players that engage the body - these are all growing in popularity and commanding premium prices.

8. Getting touchy

We're increasingly hearing the equivalent of this observation: "My two-year old went to the TV and was so frustrated that the screen didn't do anything!"

New-generation screens and new-generation people are wired to communicate via touch. Old-generation machines don't work that way. Old-generation people read instruction manuals. New-generation people figure out how to do things through touch.

The gap between our growing expectations that touch is another modality with which we can connect to entertainment (in many games, it's the driving modality), and the lack of ability of some of our devices to connect with us via touch, will drive young consumers crazy. It may also drive technology companies to deliver touch-activated entertainment experiences sooner and cheaper. →



Sadika Fakir & Lerina Bierman cont.

The generation gap around touch technology will persist. Touch is another “language” and, as with any language, the people who will be most fluent in it will be those speaking it from birth.

9. Content is king

Expect to see brands employ skills from content producers and look at new ways to commercialise their own inventory. Younger shoppers value brands such as Nike, Billabong, Smirnoff and Nokia for their emphasis on creating content over simple direct-message marketing.

These companies are all forward-thinking and are using “brand experiences”. They create content online and are allowing the customer to become involved in the marketing, rather than just give them the message directly.

Content and entertainment creation don’t need to cost the world. The scope to have things go viral is huge, and it doesn’t need to have great broadcast quality – it just needs to set the right tone and have the right message.

Brands can’t just measure campaigns in ROI anymore; they need to measure things in return on relationship with consumers. Obviously, generating income and increasing the bottom line remain a focus. However, one can’t simply measure strictly on ROI anymore without realising the greater effect marketing will have on reputation among young people, who are connected with each other and share information constantly.

10. Awesome apps

2012 will mark a major change in the app marketplace, introducing new international players as smartphone penetration increases.

Consumers in developing countries are more likely to not speak English fluently and will want to buy apps in their native language. Translation and localisation will become central to app development teams in the West looking to increase sales by expanding into international markets.

As the mobile application market continues to grow in stature and popularity, it will become imperative for brands to assess their target market and create relevant applications to meet growing demand. Once the basis of the app has been determined, the brand can look to ensure the application helps to drive traffic to the brand’s online social presence.

As the number of social network users continues to grow in tandem with the smartphone and tablet market, brands should look to integrate the two elements in order to extend the user experience and encourage engagement and acquisition.

11. Touchpoints in a consumer journey

More research and analysis will go into understanding the media touchpoints relevant throughout a consumer journey.

12. Introducing the mobile broadcaster

Faster internet download speeds and new technology are making it easier for consumers to access content whenever they want to. New or recent content is stored on media centres/iPads/iPods, downloaded to cellphones, accessed through a DStv Drifta, etc. Viewing no longer has to take place in the home – technology has created a mobile broadcaster and consumer.

Communicating with the connected consumer will remain an exciting challenge in 2012 and is expected to become more prevalent as new technology drives the mobile broadcaster. 📺



Stacey Rumble

An amateur audience



In the last few years we've seen an increase in online consumer conversation as more and more South Africans gain access to the Internet, mostly via mobile. While this increase has been on the cards for some time, this year we're seeing proof of a much larger local online community. 2012 will be the year that industries better grasp how to reach us all.

According to research by Google Mobile in November 2011, SA's population of Internet users stands at 8.7 million people (with desktops) and 14 million (via mobile). This implies SA has a fixed-line penetration rate of 17.20% and a mobile-enabled penetration rate of 27.67%.

If those figures seem high, consider that the cheapest Internet-enabled phones retail for around R300. They're not smartphones; they're basic Nokia or Alcatel models with WAP/GPRS functionality.

From quite the omniscient eye on online consumer conversation here at [BrandsEye](#), I've seen the development of the biggest demographic within SA internet users. If you're looking at running an online campaign or are just looking at online consumers this year, this is who you'll want to be talking to and how some brands already are.

1. The rise of the newbies

Most South Africans are relatively new to the internet and to digital and computers as a whole. However, they're learning to talk online and quite quickly at that. They may come from lower LSM groups and, even though many are already quite proficient on digital, have less education than you'd think.

For these "newbies", Twitter is used as a public chat-system, rather than a platform for content sharing, resulting in their Tweet histories quickly numbering in the thousands. Facebook statuses are also updated often throughout the day and are thought of rather as entries in a public-facing journal.

Social media use is affording newbies more self-confidence with digital. The satisfaction of social narcissism is very addictive to a group who, without digital, has had little opportunity for publicly receiving praise and they are driven to receive more. It's both their crash course and quick entrance into the online community.



@DesirableHITMAN
Tweeter

She deserves a thank you---> RT
@nomvula4 Wow loving the ppl i followed
today...twitter is gonna be interesting.

3 Jan via web

2. Privacy is out - social value is in

This segment is also either unaware of or apathetic to privacy settings. Few Twitter users' tweets are protected and new signups to Facebook's mobisite default to quite basic privacy settings. →



About the author
Stacey Rumble is a reputation analyst at BrandsEye (www.brandseye.com, [@brandseye](https://twitter.com/brandseye)), a market-leading ORM company based in Cape Town and Johannesburg, with clients in 89 countries. With qualifications in international relations, marketing and neuro-linguistic programming, she approaches the world with just the right mix of process, ingenuity and strategy. Stacey is passionate about the capacity of digital space for political and socio-economic change. Email stacey.rumble@brandseye.com; tel +27 (0)21 467 5960; follow [@staceyrumble](https://twitter.com/staceyrumble) on Twitter.



2012 Biz Trends Report

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Stacey Rumble cont.

The newbies are not necessarily concerned with who sees their content. The more people, actually, the better, as they, as with most more-experienced Internet users, are aiming to climb social ladders. The segment also understands the value to influencers of having large followings and aspires similarly.

Since low/absent privacy settings are more accessible to search engines, there is a large pool of branded conversation accessible to those of us who are interested in meta-data. For example, there were 19 million opportunities-to-see online conversation about the #ANC100, which generated an AVE of R4 million.

3. Consumers drive branded conversation

Branded conversations begin to organically appear as the newbies ask their networks for prepaid airtime and start telling people what they're going to do on the weekend.



4. Brand engagement isn't always relevant

Unless they've started directly engaging with brands' social media pages, this group is quite unaware that many brands are listening to what they're saying to them. It's the difference between engaging with [@TelkomKnockout](#) and just tweeting how angry they are that the ref wasn't fair.

This means that brands looking to communicate to this market will need to invest in promoting their Twitter handles and Facebook pages.

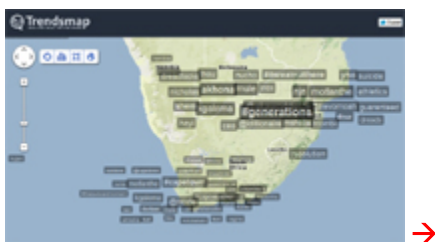


5. Timing is everything

Even without directly mentioning a brand, the top themes in conversation harbour a rich mine for brands to associate with and benefit from windfall conversation. Kulula, Nando's and Savanna are great at turning their sails in time to catch gale-force topics in their infancy and ride, quite cheaply, on organic consumer conversation.

6. Social media is (increasingly) reflecting the real-world

The top themes mentioned the most in newbies' conversations include celebrity news and engagement, the weekend, sporting events and heroes, political news and politicians' behaviour and, particularly, radio and television personalities.



Stacey Rumble cont.

Within those categories, we notice certain brands being mentioned the most, as well: alcohol (particularly beer brands), large concerts (especially the celebrities playing), sports matches (their favourite team), media sources (the strongest brands including Huisgenoot and 5fm DJ Euphonik).

Tabloid magazines have integrated well onto social media because viral media lends to this segment's fascination with fame and scandal. As a result, they attract and manage a large community by sharing very simple but relevant content with them.



7. Keep it simple, stupid

Intensely complex and philosophical strategies won't be necessary to reach this segment. The brands they use need to be able to reach them with their level of content, to be accessible on simple mobile phones and to incentivise them for engaging.

8. The system is in a state of learning

The final and penultimate trend is that digital is in state of constant development, implying a large learning curve for brands looking to reach consumers online. Now that it's finally more commonplace in SA, we've got some experience and the opportunity to reach a large market which hasn't really been reached online until now. 🍷



Steve Cragg

Twelve FMCG social, digital, mobile trends



What does 2012 hold in terms of marketing and advertising in the FMCG sector? It is going to be the year of helping consumers empower themselves through mobile and social media, of turning over cents and creating value, in short, of making peace with technology and its influence on the behaviour of consumers, while taking steps to counter the Great Recession's continued effects.

1. Mobile

Last year 39% of urban South Africans and 27% of rural users were browsing the Internet on their phones. We are a mobile nation and our phones are getting smarter. Trade needs to be organised to manage near field communication for mobile coupons - and fast. Enough spam from group couponing companies! Expect the advent of contextual location-based mobile deals to put the user back in charge.

2. Free access

Expect to start seeing more and freer internet and Wi-Fi coverage in malls and shops to attract shoppers as well as to allow brands to communicate with shoppers in-store, via their mobile devices.

3. Rising video and social communication

Through video ads, videos on YouTube, videos on social media pages, web video will continue to increase in importance for marketers when engaging with consumers via digital - this also holds true for FMCG brands. In the UK, increasing investment in video and social media is credited with helping FMCG brands to shift focus from direct response activity. In the US, marketing spend on digital video increased 42% from 2010 to 2011 and in the UK it grew by 100% over the past year, (in the UK, marketers now spend more online than they do on TV).

In SA, we are seeing increased bandwidth and the rise of tablets facilitating more consumer interaction with video. Expect more webcam shopping experiences and product information videos. Mobile video traffic represented 49.8% of total mobile data traffic at end-2010 and accounted for 52.8% of traffic by end-2011. An expected two-thirds of the world's mobile data traffic will be video, by 2015.

2. More pre-purchase online research

Pre-purchase online and mobile research is something which consumers will be doing more of. Online and web-influenced offline sales are already accounting for 42% of total retail sales in the US (Forrester Research: US Online Retail Forecast, 2009-2014). South Africans are using search tools and social media to do their pre-purchase research online rather than in store and will increasingly be using mobile to quickly do research in-store. Expect more digital sites, platforms and apps with new (social driven) indexes of recommendations, ratings, testimonial, experiences, reviews and rankings to help shoppers buy better and faster.

3. Online grocery shopping boom

The app economy (driven by smartphones and tablets) is familiarising a great number of people with digital commerce. Expect that newfound confidence to spill over into other digital commerce. In 2011, the local →



About the author
Steve Cragg is CEO of the Buchanan Group Africa, India & Middle East, which developed and launched HomeTesterClub.com for the group in South Africa, India and Australia. After working in the Australian office for several years, Cragg returned to SA and set up the African office. Prior experience includes roles as marketing manager at Unilever SA and ad agency executive for Singleton Ogilvy in Australia. Contact Steve on tel +27 (0)21 424 2310 or via email.



Steve Cragg cont.

industry expected 40% growth year on year. In addition, the longer people have experience with digital environments, the more comfortable they get with the idea of electronic commerce. By 2015, the number of South Africans online with more than five years of internet experience will top 6.8 million.

4. Healthier choices

More consumers are turning towards healthier and organic food items and digital will play a role in helping them research and ultimately source these food products. Healthier lifestyles goes beyond food to reconnecting with communities of interest - and digital will play its role as the platform of choice here - but will also help facilitate real life meetings and get-togethers for members of these digital communities.

5. QR codes

The jury will be out on QR codes during 2012; however, the rise in smartphone usage will no doubt drive them into the mainstream and beyond geeks and early adopters. Expect to see marketers place QR codes across media, thus integrating mobile with the rest of their marketing activities. To help speed up adoption marketers should include QR code usage instructions in their communication and ensure that the content it links to be on par with consumer expectations. This will be the year of the first TV scanned QR code - true instant integration.

6. More digital coupons and loyalty efforts

A tough economy and multiple pre-purchase price comparisons both link to the continued rise of digital coupons. 2012 will see even more consumers embed digital couponing as a way of life, as grocery stores expand programs to enable consumers to more easily download and print or use their smartphones to take advantage of specials. Loyalty programmes will also continue to expand with the major manufacturers joining the major retailers and launching their own loyalty cards in a bid to grow market share in a tough economic cycle. Do not be surprised to see leading manufacturers create alternative direct channels (think Amway for staples) to fight the surge of retail outlets' DOB (distributor's own brands).

7. Social media needs to move beyond 'like'

Social media's honeymoon may soon be over, as marketing clients will also increasingly focus on Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI) for their social media marketing investment. FMCG marketers will be more focussed on measuring the offline sales impact of their social marketing strategies. 'Likes' just will not cut it.

8. TVCs get shorter

The cost of major local TV production will keep rising, as the global demand for SA work becomes less and less affordable - thanks to a strong rand and a poor Europe. Couple this with the on-going inflationary cost of TV airtime and we will see a record number of inventory being taken up via local adaptation of global ads and flighted as 20-sec TVC spots.

9. Affordable production alternatives

All this will help facilitate the advent of multi-media creative production hubs producing massive quantities of affordable 'bite-size' online/mobile video content. Providing clients with content that is created, tailored and customised to the right digital environment - be that social, mobile, web, online shopping. Given the above, expect the likes of China and India to make a move into commercial content production in SA.

10. Offline word of mouth marketing returns

Yes that's right - it will be a year for brands to get back to the power of good old fashioned word of mouth, between two or more human beings, in real life, without any use of technology. Throw a product sample in the mix and brands will find they may just have the year's promotional Molotov cocktail. 🍷



Sue Disler

Will someone (Eskom, maybe) please pull the plug?



That was my first reaction when Bizcommunity's editor Simone Puterman requested an article predicting 12 trends for 2012. A "trend" is defined as "a general tendency, movement, or direction". In my honest opinion, what most people will be purporting as trend is merely (if you analyse it properly), new and improved technology and ideas.

And its these innovations that can be harnessed to facilitate the human trend to explore, consume, entertain, educate, have opinion, make money, con others, share or not etc.

Can't decide? Ask a friend...

The state of digital right now reminds me of my very first trip to New York in the late '80s, where I offered to cook for my friend in lieu of payment for accommodation (upper east side with concierge, no less) and being confronted by an American-style supermarket... not easy to find in the Big Apple, but I did.

So there I was, trying to find the ingredients to make my famous chicken dish (sadly, I can't remember what it was - age, I fear), and almost in tears for nearly an hour looking at the myriad chicken types on offer. I had absolutely no clue as to what to buy...

Now, you have to remember this was way BG (Before Google) and, had I had access to it then, I would have found this purchase far easier*. Eventually I called my friend from a payphone (this event predated cellphones, I'm afraid), and yes, dinner was delicious!

Well, some might prefer to have only one kind of chicken; fortunately for us, in today's world, we all have one amazing thing that helps us navigate through life and that's choice. And choice nowadays is often disguised by something most of us can't live without: the internet. Some of us even substitute it for a friend.

2. Nice friends I have :)

Out of 500 000 apps in the App(le) store, how did you (and I) download Angry Birds? Well, I saw people writing/raving about the phenomenon on numerous sites, Twitter and Facebook feeds; then, spurred on by its marketing and PR drive and the excuse that I need to experience the phenomena as I work in digital, I eventually went to the store, saw the five-star rating and promptly downloaded it!

Yup, I got addicted and even sought out the other "recommended" additions (Seasons and Rio), plus paid 99c for the Eagle when frustrated. Me and countless others, making them millions!

How do we actually choose? Is it because they have top apps so nicely displayed on the front page? We have become lethargic by relying on data engines to recommend what's best for us and it's how we land up purchasing and consuming content that's not always relevant to us in the long run.

As marketers, we have come to rely on engines to sell our wares - DATA (in all forms) is key to navigating this digital world. →



About the author

Sue Disler has over 20 years experience in advertising and marketing as a designer, art director and strategist - the last 15 largely dedicated to a fast-moving cyber train! Currently, she is head of digital at [New Media Publishing](#). Email her at sue.disler@newmediapub.co.za, follow [@suediz](#) on Twitter or find out more on [Linkedin](#).



Sue Disler cont.

(Target) Market towns

I overheard a conversation the other day around Facebook: something about people being irritated by the fact that brands and advertisers had taken over their private space. Apart from the fact that they can choose how private their lives are on Facebook, don't you find it strange that we now have a problem around this?

Since ancient times, the method of being where the people are to sell your wares has been practiced: towns have been built around markets. This kind of business sense is inherent in all of us.

So why are people suddenly so concerned? Is this not the way the world works? Or is it that technology has brought the world that much closer and, collectively, we have changed our view so radically that we are now seeing a behaviour change?

Which brings me to...

...bringing in the clouds

Again, not a new notion. The 'cloud' has existed since computers were invented and information could be stored in one place. Communities such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Flickr etc have been clouds for years.

With Apple introducing iCloud and ISPs offering cloud services, our privacy issues, both for consumers and brands, flare up again. One wonders whether this will prompt us to develop a new kind of NDA**?

Finding Nemo

Economic predictions for this year are bleak, so while mobile is the medium most of us still need to crack... think before you leap into blowing the client's budget developing one app for every device. Rather find a clever solution that interrogates the content to ultimately save you time, embarrassment and, most of all, make the client king.

Traversing these waters will make you have to choose discernment over gluttony. And if you cannot, simply pull the plug! 📡



Our consumers'
MAR will create a
level of bosmosis
that'll change
marketing as
we know it.*



BBM. Facebook. Blogging. 10 years ago, these words were Greek to you too. But today they're part of our lives. At Vizeum we're always a step ahead of the rest, working with cutting-edge ideas that will become the everyday words of tomorrow. A new-generation media agency, Vizeum uses forward-thinking creativity to connect you with your customers in a way that'll grow your brand beyond expectation.

* **MAR** abbreviation. Mobile Application Reliance.

bosmosis /boz-moh-sis/ noun def: the process of gradual or unconscious absorption and assimilation of a brand into one's life.

Vizeum's recent accolades:

MOST Awards – Media Agency of the year 2010

AdReview Small Media Agency of the year 2011

Roger Garlick Grand Prix for Cell C PhotoCode Joint Winner 2011

Website www.vizeum.com | **Facebook**

Vizeum

Start from a different place

Tanya Schreuder & Richard Procter

Convergence and content are key themes



Fact: consumers hold the upper hand in how we advertise. They are the ones who are more empowered, are demanding more and are less loyal. Never before has advertising been so interesting and exciting what, with tried-and-tested traditional formulas constantly being challenged.

Challenge: get to know your consumer! These are the people who can now truly participate with our brands. This is thanks to technology which has played a huge role in how we work, play, shop and live our lives. Consumers are now our "brand transmitters and storytellers".

What does this mean for media? Three things:

Consumers will discover and embrace new and multiple ways to engage with brands, and each other.

New media is on the rise - more to come and more different types of new media in their way.

Digital is for EVERYONE

2012 will see various trends being built upon where there is a convergence of media platforms, a need to share information in real time and a demand for cross-platform content and messaging that can simultaneously reach numerous audiences. Some of the trends are explained in more detail below.

1. Media socialisation

Social media has been the buzz over the last few years; we're now witnessing the socialisation of media. Content continues to bring people together, offering opportunities to connect and share experiences.

We still love to talk about TV, while increasingly tools such as Twitter are helping to facilitate deeper content experiences in real time, especially with these networks being accessible on mobile phones. TV shows and radio shows (eg Idols) regularly appear in Twitter's top trending topics, and pages for TV shows are the second most 'liked' on Facebook as a genre, after films.

Therefore, an integrated content and social strategy can deepen the real-time experience, while also provides opportunities for extended narratives through socialisation. Try to make all aspects of communication 'spreadable' - use buttons to allow people to embed or share easily, and set up official accounts on social networks. Remember, sharing is caring!

2. Channel blurring

Media channels are colliding in a positive way. Television and social networking; out-of-home (OOH) and mobile; print and tablets - the innovations are happening at the edges of these channels. Through this collision, deep consumer experiences are being created. New media opportunities will engage in new and compelling ways.

Mobile apps and gadgets allow people to catch up with content on the move (egm the DStv Drifta), content from TV shows such as American Idol regularly dominate YouTube's 'most viewed' charts and digitisation of the OOH space will help the broadcast of real-time content while commuting. →



About the author

In 2007, business partners Tanya Schreuder and Richard Procter joined the Aegis Media (www.aegismedia.co.za) network to bring global strategic media-planning and -buying Vizeum brand (www.vizeum.com) to South Africa. These days the agency bills just under R800 million and partners blue-chip clients such as Cell C, Santam, BMW, MWeb and Coronation. Tel +27 (0)21 526 6353 or +27 (0)11 513 3575; email tanya.schreuder@vizeum.com or richard.procter@vizeum.com.



Tanya Schreuder & Richard Procter cont.

Brands need to think in terms of multiple media. Even if an idea starts on TV, how could it work online, on mobile, in OOH, in press, and on the radio? What unique features could those channels contribute to your campaign?

3. Fluid content

We are living in a world of convergence and are at a point where content can truly flow across any time, any place and any device. This convergence is becoming more seamless - consumers expect a seamless content experience across devices. The cloud and enhanced devices are helping to facilitate this.

It is vital that brands use consistent branding and messaging across different platforms while playing to the strengths and differences in demographics of the different platforms.

4. TV revitalised

TV has learned to live with the web better than a lot of other media. A show such as Idols actively relies on the internet to let people see clips of the highlights between episodes, and programme makers have acknowledged YouTube's part in making stars of people such as Susan Boyle and Die Antwoord.

TV technology is also developing, with HD and 3D. Average sizes of screens for the main TV in the house are rising, meaning that TV (with DVDs, Blu-ray etc [and wifi-enabled Blu-ray players/internet-enabled TVs allowing access to the internet - managing ed]) is now a much richer experience than before.

The rising number of channels means that there is more clutter. To achieve standout, more brands are using sponsorship and product placement to integrate more closely into the programming, rather than between the programmes.

TV is still powerful, and should remain a key element of campaigns. Think about how TV works with other media (eg, driving search and social media) and also sponsorship and content-creation opportunities.

5. Shallower and deeper

The spectrum of engagement is changing; we can be passive (mass media); we can collaborate (segmented approach); we can create (experiential platforms).

We are consuming more media; we are multitasking; we are multiscreening. However, we also have appointments to view TV and are interacting with content in new ways. Much of our media experience is now deeper than ever before. The challenge is to identify these moments and understand how they impact on consumption of media.

Brands need to seek out programmes or environments that will offer people deeper and broader opportunities to engage. Create campaigns that go beyond just advertising to link deeper into the content, eg, through sponsorship. →

6. Continuous

Our lifestyles have accelerated; digital technology fuels this - we can consume and connect constantly. We are always on and now the big consumer desire is to find ways to switch off (no doubt there is a device or app to help us do this!).

Brands must recognise this always-on lifestyle and identify how they can fit into this continuous consumer mindset. It's no longer enough to do two big campaigns a year, with nothing in between. Brands need to have a constant presence, through new channels and interactivity. Brands also need to communicate through themes and strategies that will allow lots of different executions and variations. Importantly, these must be customised for channels where the brand lives. →



Tanya Schreuder & Richard Procter cont.

7. Play

The world is becoming more playful. This is shown from the success of video games, and online and mobile games, including games in social networks.

More brands are trying to make games part of their strategy, both as content, and as a medium to advertise in. Eg, Microsoft lets advertisers put ads into Xbox online games, based on the titles and demographics of the games.

Social gaming is another growing area, with games such as Farmville attracting millions of players in social networks.

Brands need to develop a strategy for getting involved in games, where it is appropriate for the audience. Think about how the brand can be more like a game, with rewards, different levels of engagement, and a sense of fun [but what about those of us who aren't into game-playing much? We do exist - managing ed].

8. Experiential

Brands are trying to create experiences for consumers so that they can get the feel of a brand more easily. The alcohol category has done this for years, but new examples include the pop-up store, which is smaller and more mobile so your brand can engage in different spaces.

Brands need to think of ways of creating experiences around them; pop-up stores and cafés are just one of many ways of letting hard-core fans or potential fans get closer to the brand.

9. Hyper-local

Hyper-local generally refers to very local activity, or stories that would only be of interest to local people. It's been seen in the emergence of very local blogs and websites (some of which only cover one postal code area). Marketers are also making activity more local, eg, local sponsorships or initiatives in local communities.

Brands need to think globally, act locally ('glocal'). Try to get involved in local communities or movements in areas that are strong for the brand, with localised ranges and events.

10. Bespoke

There are more ways to personalise media experiences. We create our schedules, which device we choose to pull media, who we will share it with, the type of personal media we create, what we search for and who we trust. Broadcast still plays a huge role but our personal footprint over media consumption is increasing.

One recent example is the [Flipboard app](#) for the iPad and now iPhone. Flipboard turns online content such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and newsfeeds into something that looks like an online magazine, sucking links and photos into the interface. Flipboard is an entirely personalised experience, defined by the user.

Brands need to make content and messages personalisable, as well as shareable. Make sure that it works with cloud applications, and also across multiple platforms -eg Apple and different mobile operating systems (Android, Blackberry).

These media themes look at the changing behaviour of consumers, and with the South African market being so diverse, the impact of technology across all groups will vary.

However, mobile penetration and technology are a reality in our market and the impact of new media within our market is something we cannot shy away from. 📱



Terry Levin

My hem, your hem, mayhem!



Looking for trends to follow in 2012? Why not just invent one and then get as many people as possible to subscribe to it via as many media and devious means as you can dream up to get it trending? Voila, instant trend! Call it Like-ness... or the year of rampant individualism.

1. Like-ness

Personal charm is a highly covetable asset in any company or individual with aspirations to trendsetting. This can be seen by the amount of people constantly feeling the need to gauge whether they are liked or not. See also humour, positivity, helpfulness, humility, style...

2. Pop-up trends

Evidence that any trend can be made up on the spot comes in the form of a recent newsletter from Topshop.com. According to it, Surf Luxe - featuring so unlikely a selection of sorbet and metallic outfits that not even Nostradamus could have foretold - is a current fashion trend.

3. My hem, your hem, mayhem!

In the light of the above, if you were thinking that hibiscus meets baroque, tie-dye and hanky-hems stalked by wild animal prints, acid brights and gold detailing were cool - you are spot on with current trends. If not well, you may as well just invent your own.

4. Re-search

Got an idea to sell? The world is your oyster in this and forthcoming years. With online shopping figures set to double, the global creative economy is about to erupt. New research from GroupM Search reveals 86% of buyers who purchase in brick-and-mortar stores inform their purchase decision with generic online searches beforehand and that the web now influences more than US\$1 trillion of in-store sales.

There's never been a better time to simultaneously get your in-store, e-commerce and SEO strat scenarios buttoned down.

5. Re-fresh

Yes, I know it's comfy, but teensy, imperceptible, incremental changes are so last year. Sweep the slate clean, fire yourself, dig deep, as this is a year to take the competitors by the WOW, by WOM (word of mouth), by whatever means you can wangle.

6. Revival of the fittest

Lots of the best stuff from decades past will be reworked by savvy designers this year in a new and dazzling 2012 fashion - expect cool city-styled beach buggies, detailing borrowed from classic cars [as an antidote to us all driving around in bread bins forever more], vintage tech and other surprises from yesteryears. →



About the author

Terry Levin is the custodian of Off the Shelf Marketing (www.offtheshelf.co.za), whose mission is the development of new global African empires via the creation of iconic Pan-African product and brand development solutions. Terry is a regular contributor of events coverage and opinion to Bizcommunity.com, as well as being Biz brand mother and designer. Email her at terry@offtheshelf.co.za and follow her on Twitter at [@terrylevin](https://twitter.com/terrylevin).



Terry Levin cont.

7. Branding

Branding too will get back to its roots, with [ok, I'm really going out on a limb here] real branding irons coming into play as an alternative to traditional body art - embossed heat-your-meat skin statements and perhaps even tribal scarification techniques [may also be available in self-adhesive formats].

8. Newbism

In art and décor, the trend for extreme pixellation and oddly scaled geometric forms will go more mainstream. Also expect the best of nature - bugs, feathers, shells in all their iridescent, opalescent, metallic and glittery glory - to appear where least expected: on cars, carpets, phones, tattoos, velskoen etc etc You have been warned.

9. Purism

The antidote to the above is the most severe purism: a gazillion ways with white, which as apolitically incorrect as it sounds, will be the new black. It's the detox, the antidote to everything that's gaudy and gauche - perhaps as close to a real trend as you will find in 2012.

10. Oranje blanje blou

Cobalt could be the new yellow - for accent colours in décor, architecture and furnishings - and thanks G-d for that, I love yellow more than anybody, but enough is enough. Also the orange shades that were de rigeur for trendy start-ups in the '90s - Bandwidth Barn, 20/20, Orange Telecom etc - will be making a comeback. Any shade of green is acceptable anywhere, but not so big in fashion, due to its tendency to make one look like an elf out of the school play.

11. Twiends

Aligning yourself with good causes, caring, being genuinely nice, altruistic, upbeat and encouraging are the ingredients that go into being well-liked in companies, people and brands. Initiatives that evoke some emotive response, that break through indifference, are the ones that will see you through the warming and the warmongering in years to come. It's a no brainer, really.

12. Aquarius: are we nearly there yet?

This small business about the [Mayan prediction](#) of the world ending this year has rekindled the kind of esoteric musings not seen since the 1960s' drug-induced haze. With much reference to the dawning of the [Age of Aquarius](#) and stuff. Astrologically, the term refers to what is known as the [Procession of the Equinoxes](#) - massive great 26 000 year cycles, ensuring that even the cleverest astrologers are unsure whether the Age of Aquarius has actually started yet.

Some are of the opinion that it already did with the [discovery of the planet Uranus](#) in 1781, others that it might start any time soon. In all likelihood, it is too early in the 2160-year cycle of the earth's axial wobble for us to have the necessary perspective, and those much vaunted shifts towards enlightenment and more humanitarian values said to be associated with the Age of Aquarius will evolve gradually over the forthcoming centuries - enjoy the ride.

13. Year of the Dragon

Monday, 23 January 2012, was the start of the [new Chinese year](#). This one is associated with a black water dragon and we may well heed the symbolism, which according to soothsayers, could herald floods, while boding well financially for Asia but not so good for poor ol' beleaguered Europe. ❄️



Thomas Kolster

Out with fear, in with hope



Despite a dire economic outlook for the world economy, I'm looking forward to 2012; it's going to be an exciting and positive year. Countries and companies alike might panic and turn their backs on sustainability, asking with a tremble in their voices: Is the well-being of people and planet really a luxury we can afford in these tough times?

The financial markets will most likely keep behaving like a teenage girl with nuclear-grade mood swings, regardless of reality. The markets are just oh-so-sensitive and yester-minutes green tech boom doesn't feel as right when oil and gas prices are low. But, there are reasons to be optimistic.

You simply need to reframe your perspective. During the Great Depression, former American president Franklin D Roosevelt said the famous words, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." These words brought hope to the American people and were the beginning of reform and economic stabilisation.

On the streets of our world capitals and outside the stock markets, I see proud citizens and consumers who aren't afraid; who dare to ask big, bold questions. From the Arab Spring to Occupy Wall Street and White Ribbons in Russia, there is force behind a movement that challenges the status quo, that dares to dream big even as the economy shrinks.

Here is a lesson to be learned. I'm certain that if your company pursues a positive, world-bettering strategy and asks big, impossible questions with great conviction - the economy is not the limit; it's your imagination. I see 12 trends offering exciting opportunities for businesses in the year to come - and if you dare to ask the right questions, a positive answer awaits!

1. Sustainability is here to stay

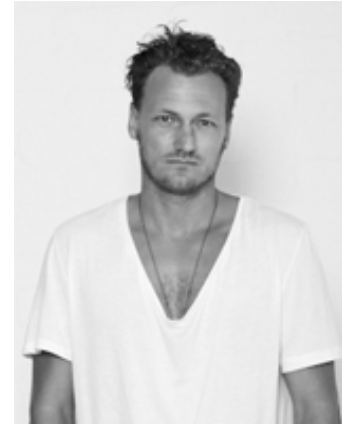
Sustainability is mainstream. This is maybe best illustrated by the Toyota Prius and its continuous appearance in one too many Hollywood movies, even mainstream romantic comedies such as No Strings Attached with Natalie Portman and Ashton Kutcher where the Prius takes home the laughs as the ticket to get laid the carbon-friendly way.

Recent numbers from NMI's LOHAS Consumer Trends Database 2011 and a 2011 Sustainability Survey from Ogilvy Earth Cape Town respectively confirm that consumers in all shades of green, from dark to light, now make up about 80% of the American market, as well as an estimated 91% of South Africans who want big brands to keep them up to date with the positive contributions they are making to society.

Consumers in general are looking for brands that can reflect their values; whether it is being greener, more responsible or healthier - and they are increasingly determined to vote with their wallet when shopping. What is your response?

2. Survival of the greenest

In the old marketing landscape, it was about being bigger, better and cheaper. But in 2012, if you can't tell your customers what you want to do for them and the planet, you might be wasting your breath. This is best →



About the author

Thomas Kolster - who is currently visiting South Africa from Copenhagen, Denmark - is a Danish advertising consultant, speaker and author of an upcoming book about communication's pivotal role in the worldwide responsible revolution, *The Bible of Goodvertising*, from Thames & Hudson. He lectures about how to move from commitments to powerful, engaging communication that changes the world for the better. Follow [@dogoodvertising](#) and [@thomaskolster](#) on Twitter or read more about him at thomaskolster.com.



Thomas Kolster cont.

illustrated by the continuous fight to claim the greenest throne between arch-rivals Unilever and Procter & Gamble, and the same goes for Coca-Cola and Pepsi which, among other things, are battling to develop the greenest possible bottle. In Denmark, where I am from, it's become a hygiene factor for some product categories such as milk and coffee to be organic or fair-trade - at little or no extra cost.

3. Together, we can go further

In recent years, brands have forged strong collaborations, not only with consumers and NGOs but also with their competitors. This is a trend that will be continuing.

In an interview I did with Nike's global head of corporate social responsibility, Hannah Jones, she cleverly emphasised the importance of collaboration, "...There is a time for competition, but when it comes to sustainability we see no conflict. These issues are far bigger than Nike. It will take the entire industry to render this current model of reliance on natural resources obsolete." In 2011, I also saw how Vestas, the wind energy company, launched a label, WindMade, stating the amount of wind energy used to produce a specific product. The label was shared with the rest of the industry, giving more attention to wind energy than any one player could have done alone.

4. This is not only about the planet; it's about humans, too

2011 really showed some widespread improvements in human rights around the world, especially in the Middle East. And even though most companies still feel at odds with the subject, I'm sure that this will be an area more and more companies will be trying to catch up on, from the ugly face of child labour to gender equality in their work force.

5. You can't hide your missteps

As so many cases have shown in 2011, from governments to corporations -there is no longer anywhere to hide your missteps. A growing online population can more easily share the good and bad about companies and products and this can quickly turn into a screaming kettle of consumer pressure. People want to be in the know and this is healthy for the marketplace, let alone democracy. Let that be a lesson for the elected leaders of South Africa and a full stop to the 'Secrecy Bill'.

6. Think sustainable and social innovation

Yes, even though it's become a buzzword like the halcyon days of The Web, where the magic words 'Internet Startup' could get any investors' dollars out of their pockets, social and sustainable innovation are about to get sexier in 2012.

Just recently Adidas, under its Reebok brand, reaffirmed its commitment to make a US\$1-dollar shoe for the rural Indian market - both supporting local jobs and making footwear available for the poorest.

There's no better way to prove your commitment to a better world than to launch world-bettering products and services - and may I add, if your current market is slowing down, maybe it's time to look for a new one?

7. The more you give, the more you get

Brands keep queuing up to show a little care towards causes, consumers, but also each other. Last year, Chevrolet in Columbia funded an education initiative towards mostly uneducated taxi drivers; VW South Africa shared their ad space with local NGOs, supporting Volkswagen's BlueMotion technology product claim. After building the greenest data centre in the world, Facebook shared its learnings with its competitors. For free.

It's all about giving a little back. In fact: self-sacrificing is self-serving. At the end of the day, the more you give, the more you get back. →



Thomas Kolster cont.

8. Power to the people

Social media will continue to drive change, as Nestlé felt when it encountered pressure to stop using palm oil or as Volkswagen Europe felt when more than half a million people encouraged change in a Greenpeace campaign, which encouraged Volkswagen to turn away from the Dark Side due to its opposition to key environmental laws (a biting reference to its new Passat ad).

Smart marketers have changed practices, such as Pepsi with its Refresh project - collaborating with consumers for greater good. It's not about technology; it's about powering human change.

9. Go for anything with R

There's more to mindful consumption than generic recycling campaigns and in 2012 "R" will stand for even more: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair and Reimagine, to name a few.

Last year the outdoor clothing company Patagonia (known for its environmental commitments and, in some respects, one of the most radically environmental mainstream clothing brands), launched a Common Threads Initiative in order for its customers to get the longest possible life out of their products, before the final option: Recycling.

It also asked consumers in a print campaign from late 2011 to think twice before buying any of its products. A headline in one ad read: "Don't buy this jacket."

How far can you take the letter R in 2012?

10. Always look on the bright side

In a world full of depressing economic foresights and a global climate problem that has run amok, consumers don't need fear-mongering, but rather friendly backing, encouragement and support. Already in 2011, signs of a more positive angle were showing; maybe the most high-profile effort was Coca-Cola's Happiness initiative; aimed at promoting a positive view of life.

If the world is about to end, why do anything? It's about bringing consumers along for the ride, showing them the roadmap and encouraging them to take the steps so they feel they are making a difference (together with your brand). It's time to see some positive encouragement!

11. Don't be afraid of Green Washing; be afraid of Green Nothing

In 2012, once again we will hear the rabid cries of green washing from a wolf pack of climate saints, but don't let them scare you away from beginning a sustainable journey.

My best advice to you is being honest in your approach and, if you fail, at least you tried and can learn from your mistakes. The worst you can do is not green washing, it's green nothing.

12. Stand out

No other industries come close to the car industry when it comes to creative advertising initiatives to green their houses. Yes, there's more of a point to prove in the category as green messages (and actions) become a hygiene factor, but your average brand also needs to sharpen up.

In 2012, as the competition for a voice in the responsible market place becomes more fierce, creativity is the single biggest differentiator.

Sadly enough, NGOs especially are faced with more challenges to have their causes recognised and fundraise for their efforts, perhaps due to an explosion in their numbers in recent years. →



Thomas Kolster cont.

13. You can do it!

In 2012, we need positive change that expands beyond short-term wins, but offers a long-term solution. In this new year, I'll wish that more brands and more agencies would realise that the old communication models need a freshening and that there's a better way to engage people than talking about being bigger, better and stronger.

The recipe is simple: Show genuine interest in people's lives and their concerns - and ask what you can do to make a difference, even if it at first sounds impossible. Why else should people care about you, if you don't show them that you care?

That's what sustainability is all about - securing a world that's not only better for you and your family, but better for all of us. 🍷



Thomas Oosthuizen

Marketers must cut costs yet drive growth



2012 will be tough. Business will need to control costs and grow, despite global turmoil and low economic growth. Here are twelve questions marketers need to ask themselves this year.

Growth is the job of marketing - so our challenge as marketers will be significant.

Within difficult circumstances, we all tend to have knee-jerk reactions. Avoid that by doing your homework well before you act. Challenging times do not have margins for wastage - whatever you do must work and set the foundation for the future.

Be smarter than rivals

To me, this means we need to be smarter than our rivals. Having worked on many brands over the years, I have little doubt many marketers spend too much money on marketing. If you do your homework better, you can do better with less, without any loss of results. Conversely, some spend so little that they do not give their brand a fair chance. The truth lies somewhere in the middle.

Always remember, brand leaders spend more when times are tough, and the marketing literature have many examples of how such brands gain significant advantage during such times. Not all can spend more though, so you need to spend smarter.

In brand management, marketers manage two things: the value of our brands, and the costs associated with it. Whatever we do needs to create value, and we need to do it as cost-effectively as possible. If you leverage these two factors better than any rival, you will win.

In 2012, as a marketer, you will need to:

1. Know your brand status - and move from there

If you know where you are and where you want to go, it is easy to plan how to get there. If you do not know, actions are anecdotal. Ask questions such as:

- Why are you growing, not growing or declining? Are you losing customers - and why?
- Do you know what your customers want and need?
- Do you know your competitors?
- Do you know how customers view your brand today? Does your brand have a distinctive point-of-difference?
- Have customers tried your brand before, and if so, why do they not support it now ("does it deliver what it promises")?
- Is the market stagnant or in decline? What is the trend in your market share - in volume and value, and why is that?
- What brands are gaining advantage - and why? →



About the author

Thomas Oosthuizen is a marketing and brand strategist (www.drthomasbrand.co.za) who focuses on helping clients achieve greater marketing and brand success by spending less, for which he has devised his own methodologies. He has consulted widely to major companies across Africa and the Middle East and holds a doctorate in marketing communications. Email him at thomas@drthomasbrand.co.za, read his blog at brand-blog.drthomasbrand.co.za, follow [@drthomasbrand](https://twitter.com/drthomasbrand) and connect on [Linkedln](https://www.linkedin.com/in/thomasoosthuizen).



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Thomas Oosthuizen cont.

- Can you redefine the market to attract more customers?
- Who are the most likely customers you will attract and are they the ones you want?
- What value can you add to your brand that will make customers "like it better" (even pay more for it)?

Added together, *what will give your brand the maximum opportunity to grow customer value, hence revenue growth and profit margin?* This is even more important when the market is tough, as the last thing you need is to lose good customers.

2. Be clear on your objectives

What do you want to achieve?

- It can only be two things: to retain - and gain - customers and to increase the value of your brand to them, hence retain your margin, hopefully even increase that.
- If you want to retain customers, you need to deliver the product and service quality your customers require and keep your brand current.
- Customers must know what they get for what they pay.

3. Differentiation is key

Why must customers deal with your brand rather than competitors? This does not come easy, but forms the foundation of brand value: how do you satisfy customer needs uniquely? Do customers know that? Apple is not Apple for nothing.

4. Identify easy wins

It is always easier to gain customers who are similar to the ones you already have. It is also easier to leverage your existing customer network for growth. Do not try and target over-saturated markets unless you have a significant competitive advantage, as you will waste a lot of money for little return. Aim for what is achievable with what you have.

- Today, networks are easier to leverage with social media. Much of this takes time but costs little real money.

5. Be clear on your strategy

Depending upon the position of your brand, make sure you approach the market right. Being a brand leader requires a different approach from being a number two or smaller brand. As a rule of thumb, the smaller, the more differentiated and/or "niched" you need to be. The larger, the more generic you can be.

6. Be clear on your positioning

Does your positioning communicate what sets your brand apart? Many brands do not have a clear positioning. If you do not know, how must consumers know?

7. This is not the time for esoteric advertising

Yet, whatever communications you do, it must be impactful enough to break through the competitive barrier: that will buy better "bang for your buck". But the creative must be relevant to your brand strategy and positioning. I believe in the principle that creative idea must tie brand and message together in a unique way. →



Thomas Oosthuizen cont.

8. Align your marketing actions to your objectives:

If you want to acquire new customers, use wide-reach media types. If you need to retain, use direct-media types to talk to customers. Separate these objectives and determine actions based upon that.

- Marketing activities must never become regimented. The fact that you did something before does not make it right.
- Remember that social media are about networks - they are not "hard-sell" tools. Consumers do not use social media for your benefit - they do it for themselves and for their friends. Putting your brand website onto Facebook undermines the very principle of social media. Posting staff comments disguised as customers is obvious. Yet an astonishing number of companies do exactly that!
- Delivering bad service while trying to talk to customers through social media can even destroy your company. It is like your bank manager sending you a Christmas card but refusing you a loan. Social media is about engagement on issues that matter to people and those they care about.
- Always remember, if your brand does not deliver the quality consumers expect, or it is not available where consumers want to buy it, first fix these. An airline can market as much as it likes but it first needs access to aircraft, staff and routes. Know what matters to your market.

9. Do less, not more

This remains the most frequently made mistake in marketing. Rather do a few things well, with the right critical mass, measure them and progress accordingly. Ask yourself often, "Does this activity contribute to my business objectives?" Know what works and know why. You will be amazed how often there will not be a clear answer - then just cut.

10. Integrate activities

From advertising, to social media, to retail store activation. Make activities visible at every consumer touch-point. Connect classic media with actions that make consumers buy, such as experiential marketing, social media and sales activation at retail level. This also means making sure staff deliver upon the brand positioning. The line between marketing, sales, the trade and operations needs to be very "thin" to be efficient today. In weak economic times, you will need to work even harder at this.

11. Measure

Invest in what works and then do it again. And again.

- Any CEO will invest in something that clearly works. Today we have a far greater opportunity to prove results with social media. But have a "results" consciousness at all times.

12. Review and adjust as required

No plan is ever stagnant, but only adapt tactically within a strategic framework. Strategic brand management requires time and consistency. Be careful of getting scared and reacting - it is like advertising in supplements: it gobbles up budgets and most likely is only read by competitors! I am a great believer in knowing where you are by doing your homework well, defining where you want to go and putting the steps in place to do that.

Consistent pattern

Ultimately, that means knowing how to add greater consumer value to your brand, yet doing that in the most differentiated and cost-effective way. Then measuring it. In the very least, it will establish a consistent pattern for brand management you can pursue for years to come.

Let us take 2012 on - it is always great to have to think harder again; it keeps us on our toes. 🍀



Tiffany Markman

Twelve words we'll see more in 2012



Wait. That's a bit of a fib. Sorry. Every year, my Biz Trends contribution is a wish list of stuff I'd like to see happen in marketing, communication or writing. I'm often right. But this year I want to be right.

So this article is actually about '10 phrases we'll see more in 2012 and 8 phrases I hope we'll see less because they're absolutely awful.'

THE GOOD

1. Why 2. Because

People like reasons. It makes them feel safe. Using explanation in writing also helps to focus the writer's mind on the benefits, not the features, of what they're selling. And writing with 'because' at the forefront translates into better lead conversion, says the research. So I predict that in 2012 more communication will acknowledge - and answer - the audience's unasked questions (usually Why? Or Why should I?).

3. You/Your

Readers are becoming heartily sick of hearing how fabulous a company or product is, how long it's been around and how many fans or Likes it has. They're not interested in its qualities or traits. They want to know what's ultimately in it for the consumer.

The words "we" and "us" are offputting. So I predict that more writers will favour the words "you" and "your" in their marketing, and structure messages around ways in which the company or brand can assist the audience, not the other way round.

4. Authentic 5. Genuine 6. Real

In 2012 we'll see more references to products, services and companies being or offering things that are 'authentic'. We'll also see more transparent communication coming from real people, not from company spin doctors or strategic comms gurus.

Why? For two reasons:

1. The consumer public is growing increasingly skeptical of cheap imitations. Of rubbish that doesn't last. We're also getting syrupey about the past (à la retro swing, old-style root beer, artisan bread, real parquet and vintage purses).
2. The marketplace tends to bustle more happily when the person who profits most from the apples is also the person chatting to customers about the apples. I predict fewer 'pro'/'corporate' social media accounts and more humans.

7. Collaboration 8. Joint ventures 9. Shared projects

In my perfect world, where authentic and direct communication are possible, there'll be more reference to 'collaboration', 'joint ventures', 'shared projects', etc, than to 'synergies' and 'overlaps'. There'll be more real teamwork, less vague partnerships. →



About the author
Tiffany Markman (www.tiffanymarkman.co.za) is a highly opinionated freelance copywriter, copy editor and writing trainer who has worked for over 180 clients in South Africa and across the world. She is an EMPOWERDEX-certified EME who hates misplaced apostrophes and dangling modifiers but loves pizza and pina colodas. Reach her anytime via email tiffany@tiffanymarkman.co.za, follow [@tiffanymarkman](https://twitter.com/tiffanymarkman) on Twitter and sign up for her [newsletter](#).



Tiffany Markman cont.

As an aside, I despise the word "synergy". If Synergy were a person he'd be that shady, oily guy you know (the one who once tried to sell you pyramid scheme time-share or washing powder) who regularly refers you to his mates because 'there are superb synergies between you guys' - and unsubtly requests 'a piece of the fat'.

10. SEO

The fact that so many people remain baffled by this acronym baffles me. (I mentioned this in last year's Trends piece, predicting a hard marketing year for those unwilling to explore SEO. Well, it was a hard marketing year. So I got that bit right.)

We live, work, play, socialise, information-gather and shop online, and an optimised website is everything - even if the client is selling her brand or herself. In 2012, more people, even those outside of the digital arena, will be talking about SEO - and as a result, more explanations of SEO will be necessary (I draw my clients little pictures).

THE BAD & THE UGLY

1. Tweetering 2. Twitting 3. Twittering

I am going to sound like a snobby cow when I say this (and who am I to shirk my responsibilities*?), but there are loads of people aboard the Twitter bandwagon who should have stayed on Facebook and MySpace, where it's... um... safer.

These are the folk who call it 'tweetering', 'twitting' or 'twittering', and who describe their lunch, post one-word 'replies' without hashtags - so you don't know what they're talking about - and unfollow you if you don't immediately follow back.

Now Twitter may look like a democracy, where every voice is equal. But it isn't. By and large, it's an intellectual dictatorship spearheaded by digital illuminati (of whom I'm nowhere near cutting-edge enough to be one). I'm hoping the lingo comes right.

4. DVD's (and any other plural forms that are created using the apostrophe)

5. Plural's 6. TV's 7. BMW's

Just so we're clear, apostrophes indicate that words have been shortened or contracted (cannot -> can't) or that something belongs to someone (Tiffany's article). They aren't used to make plurals. You can't do this: Plural's. TV's. BMW's.

In my training courses I hammer this home loudly, repeatedly and unapologetically. Luckily, because more people are guilty of this sin than I can possibly hope to reach through training, so do many others - like The Oatmeal. If there's a God (and I think there is, for those who care), 2012 will yield fewer misplaced apostrophes.

8. Dear Beloved

Argh. This, and similar spambotty salutations, makes my toes itch. Do you know how hard it is to reach your toes when you're sitting at your desk, wearing shoes? God, The Oatmeal, anyone who can: Please make 2012 the year of less foreign-bride spam, fewer pleas for assistance from the secret daughters of rich African dictators and more real lottery emails - because I can't possibly win the UK lotto again. 🍀



Toby Shapshak

Reviewing 2012 tech trends



There is universal agreement that this is likely to be the year of the cloud, the mobile, Africa's emergence as a new economic region, the year of the tablet and the app economy too. Here are 12 tech trends for 2012.

1. Africa rising

Africa is the fastest-growing telecoms market in the world, second in overall subscriber numbers only to Asia with 649-million connections. The GSM Association, an industry body, said Africa's subscribers would hit 735-million by the end of 2012. Subscribers have been growing at nearly 20% a year over the past five years, according to its Africa Mobile Observatory 2011 report. Africa will also see one fifth of its internet traffic being accessed over cellular networks by 2015, much higher than the global average of 3%, according to researchers Informa Telecoms & Media.

Additionally global mobile data traffic is predicted to grow 10-fold between 2011 and 2016, mainly driven by video, say Ericsson, the largest maker of telecoms equipment. "Mobile broadband subscriptions grew by 60% in one year and are expected to grow from 900-million in 2011 to almost 5-billion in 2016," according to Ericsson's Traffic and Market Data report, released in November.

2. Cloudy with a chance of music

You can bet on the cloud taking the lead in trends this year. It has become, as Steve Jobs, envisaged, the centre of our digital with devices on the periphery.

Although internet-based storage and processing - the "cloud" - has been around for years, all the ingredients are finally in place, especially in broadband-starved South Africa. Fast wireless broadband, increasingly powerful devices (especially) smartphones and both getting cheaper.

There are now offerings from all the big players, including Google, Amazon and Microsoft, with Apple's iCloud completing the line-up - as well as nimbler companies like Dropbox and Box.net.

Meanwhile, Google, Amazon and Apple have taken the next step of let you store your music in the clouds, synchronizing the songs you want to your devices, or phone.

Meanwhile, little Swedish Spotify launched in the US with its little social media partner (Facebook) and is the poster child for streaming music. Spotify is a paradigm shift in thinking about music, as much as ownership. We have owned music, now Spotify lets us rent it, sometimes for nothing and it works.

Cloud-based storage is as significant a leap, even if we have been slowly emerging ourselves into it - much like inching into those cold Atlantic seas that all Vaalies do in Cape Town in December.

South Africans will adopt this trend too, as soon as broadband access gets (even) cheaper, with the arrival of new undersea cables in the next 18 months. Who cares what device you have - you just want your email, and data and Twitter obviously. →



About the author

Toby Shapshak is editor of *Stuff* magazine; and a columnist for *The Times* newspaper. He also presents [Biz Takeouts](#), the Bizcommunity Marketing & Media radio show aired every Wednesday evening 6pm-7pm (101.9 Chai FM in Johannesburg or via live audio-streaming on [2OceansVibe](#)) and then available in podcast format. Email Toby at toby@mavenmedia.co.za or follow him on Twitter at [@shapshak](#).



2012 Biz Trends Report

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Toby Shapshak cont.

3. Facebook hits a billion

Facebook, the internet's intranet, will hit 1-billion users this year, having reached 800-million in 2011. Rumours of a Facebook phone pop up every year, but it's a moot topic as an estimated 300-million users access the social website from their phones anyway.

4. Goodbye PC, hello smartphone

Smartphones, which outsold PCs for the first time last year, will get cheaper and more powerful. However, the battery life will not get any better. Sorry. So buy a booster pack, car charger or both.

On the devices side, this will be Android's year, by sheer force of numbers. Google says daily activations of its smartphone operating system reached 700 000 in December.

If you are not familiar with Android's habit of naming versions of its operating system after desserts, Ice Cream Sandwich is sure to make you. Android is like Windows for smartphones, given away free by Google to phone makers. Ice Cream already runs on the Samsung Galaxy Nexus.

Cashless + mobile wallets

This year is expected to be the year near-field communication takes off. NFC is a cashless payment system already widely used in access cards for trains and undergrounds, including the Gautrain. Now it is in new smartphones and various pilots projects are running in South Africa.

Mobile wallets will become more bountiful and cashless trials are running across South Africa.

Mobile payments are set to surge, especially in Africa, where Kenya's M-PESA is the gold standard but hasn't translated its success into South Africa just yet.

Watch MXit, the free messaging platform that was bought last year by World of Avatar and is being revamped and rewritten. Its 20-million users and potential are still undervalued.

Talking to your phone, and other natural user interfaces

Apple - with its single annual upgrade of a single model, which still captures two thirds of the smartphone market profit - continues to hold the high ground with the iPhone 4S. Its voice assistant Siri represents a bold step towards the much better suited voice input into a cellphone with its limited keyboard. Google Voice Search, being run by a South African, is also developing well.

Expect to see other natural user interfaces too. This is a fancy term to describe using our voices or bodies as input devices, instead of keyboards or mice. Nintendo popularised it with their Wii remote; now Microsoft and Sony have brought out their own equivalents. Microsoft's Kinect holds significant promise for a range of things - not just gaming, but everything from smart houses to controlling computers - and we will see clever examples of this in 2012.

Nokia and Microsoft aim to bounce back

Nokia, still the largest seller of cellphones and Microsoft, still unable to reproduce its desktop computer dominance in the mobile space, will be hoping their unexpected alliance bears fruit with the Lumia Windows Phone.

Microsoft's Windows 8 is due out this year, integrating desktop and tablet operating systems into one and represents the biggest push from the world's biggest software maker into the new cloud-based world. →



Toby Shapshak cont.

Steve Ballmer, its boisterous but unloved CEO, has already had to deal with rumours late last year that he'd be replaced by his retired predecessor Bill Gates - after Microsoft's share price has hovered, mostly unchanged, around \$30 for the past decade, despite making buckets of money.

Whither BlackBerry?

Research In Motion (RIM), whose BlackBerry phones are booming in emerging markets but plummeting in developed ones, face a black year. Last year revenue declined by 70% and share price by 76%, putting the maker of the original email cellphone in dire straits. Expect something significant in the next few months, not ruling out a buyout.

The two Ss

Samsung, fresh from selling 300-million phones for the first time last year, will aim to take Nokia's pole position in the cellphone industry. Meanwhile, the other big S, Sony - after a miserable year in 2011 that included hacking, tsunami-related setbacks and more record losses - had a bright point with its 1-billion Euro (R10.9-billion) buyout of Ericsson from its 10-year Sony Ericsson cellphone venture. However, it needs a hit this year.

Ultrabooks

Intel would like it to be the year of the ultrabook, a new fancy name for smaller, thinner laptops. The name is trademarked by the largest chipmaker and to qualify these ultraportable laptops must have five hours of battery life, a solid-state hard drive and weigh very little. Similar to the MacBook Air, but running Windows, these light devices are great for mobile workers or people who just want a lighter, but no less powerful, laptop.

Tablets

Once again there is will be a rush of enthusiasm for tablets, as they look to be the replacement to other computer formats. Outside of the iPad, which holds two thirds of market share, the Android tablets failed to make any significant impact. This year, by sheer force of numbers Android tablets are expected to make a difference - especially because Google chairman Eric Schmidt said in late December that the search giant would make its own tablet "of the highest quality" in the next six months. Having bought Motorola, this will be interesting.

The one Android tablet that appears to have broken from the masses is Amazon's Kindle Fire. Although the video streaming service does not work in South Africa, like Apple it is the only other tablet tied to a media store. It is a good device but stunted without the video. The Kindle reader itself though is a winner. I just got the new entry-level model and love it.

What's Apple up to?

Apple will continue to flourish in the tablet segment it created and still dominates. In addition, yes, there is always "another one coming," as I am so often asked. Nothing but rumours currently, the iPad 3 is expected to be launched in March, following previous release schedules. No, I don't know what features it will have exactly, but every new model of every new device always has these: faster processor, better screen, and bigger camera. And more fans. And it's usually thinner. And lighter. And yes, you'll want one.

While we're on mythical Apple products, the rumour mills have been churning about an entry into the TV market since the late Steve Jobs said "I've finally cracked it!" in his biography. He was talking about the television interface and everyone assumes it's the Siri voice-recognising assistant. Instead of using a remote control, it will be an upgrade to the age-old habit of talking to your TV - except conceivably the TV will now respond when you say "show the latest episode of Dexter" or "find me a decent game of rugby".

Nevertheless, we do know, this is year of the cloud, of mobile, of Africa rising. 🍌



Travis Spence

Brand purpose to take lead in brand strategy



A critical juncture in brand marketing has arrived. It is led by the internet and the technology changes this brings, along with consumers - who, as we all know, have changed forever.

Brands can no longer rely solely on gaining consumers at pre-purchase with TV commercials and POS promotions to guarantee success. Products and brands aren't differentiated merely on functional or even emotional propositions anymore, and, as proven, if customer opinions decline, you can shout all you want with your advertising and sponsorships: no one will buy.

Authentic brand value

We are moving into the era of calculated, monitored and measured authentic brand value... delivered by positive brand experiences or brand engagements in both the online and offline environments, where advertising and PR just merely amplify these experiences.

Consumers are looking to brands that add real tangible value to their lives; clients are looking to us (as their agencies) to deliver real money-making value to their marketing strategies and their business as a whole (internally and externally); and employees are looking to us to deliver real motivations to their role within that organisation and the brand/s it serves.

The brand now needs not only to represent its product but the people behind the product and why they do what they do for that product's success.

Driving factors

The factors driving this desire for value are numerous and varied, depending on who you are talking to and too lengthy to go into here, so I have tried to narrow it down to what I think are the main influences driving the value era:

- 1. Rising expectations:** The global recession and its aftermath have destroyed people's trust in companies and brands to the core. Consumers are wiser and will continue to rise up against the unethical or the undoing of corporate greed.
- 2. The rise of Gen Y and Gen Z:** These generations are the future markets. They are optimistic, entrepreneurial and are the most socially connected generation ever. They bring a new mind-set. They want to do well by 'doing good' and see themselves with a mandate to affect positive social change.
- 3. Competitive and government pressures:** Legal requirements and competitive pressures are forcing businesses to disclose everything, from carbon footprint to labour practices. Governments, increasingly in emerging markets such as South Africa, are relying on business and brands to deliver the social and economic good that they can't or won't deliver.
- 4. The race for resources:** We all know that we are facing looming shortages of various crucial resources but demand for them continues to increase exponentially. Businesses and brands, therefore, have a moral responsibility to ensure the sustainability of these resources for future generations.
- 5. Connected conversations:** Social media has fundamentally changed the way we communicate and engage. Consumers are talking to each other before talking to the brand, and trusting total strangers. Friendtelligence is driving choice; brands, therefore have to drive positive talkability, both in the online and offline world (equally well), to have any chance of success. →



About the author
Travis Spence is senior strategist at Hello World Agency (www.helloworldagency.com), a full-service strategic creative ideas agency. A Vega honours graduate, Travis joined the agency in 2006 and has worked on a diverse portfolio of brands. Travis is adamant that his job is to make the creative team look good and therefore champions the well-thoughtout, insightful brief. Email him at travis@helloworldagency.com, follow [@trspence](https://twitter.com/trspence) on Twitter and connect on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/trspence).



Travis Spence cont.

Marketers are asking

Critically, brands have moved towards trying to own more formalised, value-adding brand communities. In a marketing world, where content, digital assets, brand activations and share of voice (online and offline) is now the norm, marketers are asking themselves:

- How do they give their brand the competitive buzz?
- Where do they start?
- What should they be focusing on - is it digital, is it social media?
- Where does advertising fit into this new world?
- Is my brand CI still relevant to all my markets?
- How do I measure this, and
- How do I get the power of communities (starting internally) to rally positive conversations around my brand?

While we can go into a diatribe about each of the factors and questions mentioned above, I believe a solution exists for marketers and should be the starting point for every single brand. The answer is brand purpose.

Powerfully defined

Brand purpose has been powerfully defined as the company's definitive position it is trying to make in the world. It is based on what a company believes in and what difference it can make in the lives of the people it is trying to serve. A lot of companies know what they do and how they do it, but not many know why they do it. The why is what will differentiate you from the competition and result in a sustainable advantage. It's the answers that marketers need to know to enable them to build platforms on which to attract sustainable value-adding brand communities.

It's no surprise that sector leading brands all have a clearly defined purpose on which to build value-adding brand communities:

- Ritz Carlton: ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen
- Apple: to become the brand that is indispensable to anyone willing to develop his/her mind-power
- Pritt: to bond parents, teachers and children through character-building creativity
- Nike: to bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world
- Help employees and shareholders understand

The importance of building a brand on purpose, rather than on a promise or a proposition, is not just to help your audience understand what the brand stands for, but perhaps more critical to help employees and shareholders understand "why we are here" and to signify their intrinsic value to the organisation and its reputation as a brand...

Once they understand this, they can deliver (with confidence) the optimum brand experience that delivers brand value.

In summary, brand purpose is a very important trend we see not only for 2012 but well into the future. Not only will consumers win in the long term but the world will benefit, too. Therefore, brand purpose and the process of getting it right should be on the agenda for every organisation and led by the top but built bottom-up. 🍌



Vanessa Clark

The way to customers' hearts is through their phones



Never before have people had such a love affair with a communications medium as they have with their mobile phones. Now, marketers aren't communicating with consumers via an impersonal one-way device; rather, they are communicating with them through a device people happily carry around 24/7. Here are my top 12 trends for the mobile world in 2012.

1. The battle for customers goes mobile

The battle for ultimate access to the end-user is going to be slugged out in the mobile space, and this year it looks like the top contenders are the mobile operators, the handset manufacturers and FNB. There's no real sign of retailers or content producers entering the fray as yet. Late entrants will be caught short when they realise the role mobile phones will play in allowing people to pay for goods and services.

2. Mobile fragmentation is here to stay

Feature phones vs smartphones vs tablets; Apple vs Android vs BlackBerry; native applications vs HTML5 - if anything, mobile fragmentation is going to increase over the course of 2012.

Companies will need to start looking past the hype, understand which devices their customers are using for which purpose, and then be incredibly savvy about how they roll out mobile services. A corollary of this is that customers are going to start choosing mobile devices based on what they want to do with them, rather than other imperatives.

3. Location, location, location

Location-based services are going to become far more mainstream in 2012, similar to how Twitter crossed over last year. This will be helped by forward-thinking brands realising the power of speaking to people according to where they are currently located.

And this, I suspect, is where the issue of privacy is going to come to a head, with consumers being more mindful of the information they share, and brands and companies needing to respect privacy preferences or destroying their relationship with the customer.

4. Mobile safety and security become a priority for users

Safety and security mechanisms tend to lag fast-paced technology changes, but 2012 is the year when individuals, parents and companies are going to have to sit up and take notice of the potential safety and security risks their mobile device opens them up to, and start doing something about them.

5. People start clawing back some control over their mobile devices

Walking around with an always-on digital communications device has heaps of benefits. Take a look at the massive growth of mobile uptake and mobile data use: people like being connected and having the convenience of all the clever applications out there. But we might also have spawned a monster and have become slaves to the blinking light and incoming alert notification. →



About the author
Vanessa Clark divides her time between heading up marketing at Mobiflock (www.mobiflock.com) and freelance copywriting and journalism at Twokats Communications (www.twokats.com). She was a London-based tech journalist in the last century. Contact her via vanessa.clark@mobiflock.com, skype van_clark, connect on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and follow [@vanclark](#) on Twitter.



Vanessa Clark cont.

This year people start claiming back control over the mobile information flooding into their lives.

6. Education goes mobile

Unfortunately, it's going to take a bit longer than just this year, but mobile devices are going to revolutionise education and become a staple in most classrooms and university lecture theatres. The potential is mind-boggling, from accessing world-class thinkers, to sharing local research, to collaborating with students around the world.

7. Google rules supreme

The holy trinity of Google, Google+ and Android has the potential to be the most disruptive influence in the mobile social space, perhaps even toppling Facebook - which is also fast becoming a mobile company - from its throne. Google took the first step in this direction at the start of the year by integrating Google+ into its search results.

8. One device to rule them all

If you think you can't live without your smartphone today, wait until it starts talking to all the other devices you own. This year we're going to see smartphones starting to integrate with and control all the other electronic equipment in your life, from kettles and toasters, to hot water geysers, to home security, to cars - to pretty much anything with an on-off switch.

9. Employers to embrace the consumerisation of IT

Employers have to work out a way to manage the mobile devices both entering the workplace and accessing corporate networks. BYOD - or bring your own device - is fast becoming the norm, and this is changing the relationship employees have with their IT equipment.

A top-down approach, where an employee is handed a laptop and a cellphone and asked to sign up to the company's terms and conditions, is no longer going to work.

10. Enterprise mobile apps to come into their own

Forward-thinking companies are going to realise that they can learn a lot from how their employees are using their mobile devices for productivity, communication, entertainment and gaming. This is going to stimulate a vibrant enterprise application environment, changing the way businesses operate forever.

11. Mobile data use is going to skyrocket

Already, Vodacom has reported that smartphone data use is growing at a far faster trajectory than that of 3G dongles. We already saw mobile data prices fall dramatically in 2011, and this trend should continue into 2012.

12. Mobile cloud

With mobile data becoming more affordable and faster, accessing cloud services over a mobile device is going to become increasingly feasible, further extending the capabilities of an already very smart device. In Africa, specifically, this is going to be a game changer, with the mobile-only generation having access to cloud services previously only available over fixed lines. 📶



Walter Pike

Whoosh! The year in which nothing happens



Time magazine named the protester as its 2011 man of the year. The protester using the power he/she obtained from a new media landscape in social-media-enabled grass roots protest movements.

These protests starting in a remote village in Tunisia, where a fruit seller set himself alight, and spread through the entire region in a phenomena known as the Arab Spring. It didn't stop there in; countless small protests, it morphed into the highly successful anti-rape slutwalk movement, the Occupy movement and from there onto the streets in Russia.

Power of connections

These movements have a number of characteristics: they are spontaneous, they are leaderless and they use the power of connections enabled by the internet to spread their ideas. It's also important to notice that they are not only a first-world phenomena.

The clues to the future of marketing are to be found in these movements. Marketing is, after all, a way to spread ideas. The idea that one brand is better than another, the way to spread the idea that you should be at this event this weekend, a way to spread the idea that you should be buying this brand. I am not going to forecast for 2012 that marketers in South Africa will pick up on this because very few will but it is the trend to watch for 2012.

Things will stay the same

In 2012, things will stay the same. Everyone still believes that marketing has not changed and that social is a channel. Yes they are starting to understand how important channel is but they have not and will not grasp just how much it has changed their world.

Marketers will still run smart digital enabled campaigns and will run online competitions and digital promotions on Twitter and Facebook and think that they are running social media campaigns. They will still try to manage their online reputation as they manage their PR.

Some very few - those with insightful leaders - will take stock and in the Arab Spring they will understand a new way that ideas spread; they will think of how one person starting a protest petition against bad service or as a protest against a dictator could be used as an opportunity for their business.

Stop using

They will stop using legacy-marketing thinking and stop using old-school measurements. They will understand that digital is not social and that, whereas you can use social for promotions and to talk at people, that most people won't want to be friends with most brands, and that it really doesn't matter at all how many fans you have; the number is meaningless because you are still thinking of an audience and, even though they are your fans, they are highly likely to never ever come to your page again after your recruitment campaign. →



About the author

Walter Pike (@walterpike), the founder of PiKE | New Marketing (www.pike.co.za), consults to agencies and brands in learning how to build brands and businesses in the connected world. He founded and runs the Digital Academy (www.digitalacademy.co.za) to equip people to be successful in this world.



Walter Pike cont.

Almost no one will admit that they no longer control their brands; almost everyone will continue to manage their brands - instead of curating them. Almost everyone will manage their online reputation with lessons that they learned from their university text books written in a different era.

The big billing winners this year will be those agencies who can, for the moment, run campaigns on social media, in digital, without taking their clients onward to understanding social networks and how ideas spread in the this world.

Go get yourself up to speed

My advice to everyone reading this is go get yourself up to speed: start questioning all your beliefs about how marketing works and build yourself a new marketing and advertising paradigm . Make sure that, when I write my next article in this series, I can admit exactly how wrong I was in this! 🍷



Warren Moss

Email marketing trends shaping the year



Despite what the doomsday predictions say, email will not become irrelevant due to the rise of social media. As one of the most cost-effective and efficient eMarketing service offerings, email marketing is expected to continue to be a crucial part of the digital marketing mix in 2012. Here are six trends that are expected to further strengthen the case for email-based marketing.

1. Building sales, and relationships

Social media plays an important role in building brand loyalty and rapport, but lacks some of the key strengths that have established email as the go-to tool if you want to drive sales.

There is an ever-increasing awareness in developed markets that email marketing can seal the deal, and substantially so. Data from these markets show that users, who have received email communications about a brand or product, tend to spend more than consumers targeted through other digital channels.

In addition to being the backbone of successful organisations' direct sales campaigns, email marketing has the added advantage of being able to funnel users back to social media platforms. This cross-pollination of communications is further enhanced by, for example, the tendency for users to subscribe to a brand's newsletter from its Facebook Fan page.

Such is the power of the relationship between social media and email marketing that a [trends survey by StrongMail](#) (2MB pdf) shows that 68% of business executives worldwide plan to integrate their social media marketing efforts with email this year.

I predict that these lines are likely to become further blurred, particularly once you throw mobile messaging into the mix, and that more marketers and agencies will have to develop new terms to define these services. A couple of terms are already floating around: from "digital communications services", "digital direct marketing" and, a personal favourite, "digital messaging".

2. A trusted medium

The symbiotic nature between the online experience and email is further demonstrated by the massive increase in 'triggered emails' or notifications that are driven by online interactions. Consider the role of 'welcome' mailers when someone signs up for a service, a notification of a friend's birthday, or when someone updates their shopping cart or status. The list is endless.

These types of interactions rely on and support emails' considerable trust factor, and research has shown that these types of mails have some of the highest open-rates because customers expect them, as the notification is relevant to their actions. I believe more marketers will be paying closer attention to these "no-brainer" mails, which at first appear to be a hygiene factor, but may actually be an extremely powerful conduit. Expect a number of innovative marketers to leverage these types of mails to greater benefit. →



About the author

Warren Moss is the founder of Demographica

(www.demographica.co.za),

South Africa's largest digital

email advertising company. He

has a profound understanding of

email and direct marketing, sales

and social media, and how

businesses can benefit from

these. Warren divides his time

between running his company,

consulting, teaching, and

speaking at events all over South

Africa. Contact him on tel +27

(0)11 447 7373, email

warren@demographica.co.za

and follow [@warrenmoss](https://twitter.com/warrenmoss)

on Twitter.



Warren Moss cont.

3. Not only social media is mobile

The role of mobile devices in South Africa may still be the dominant communication and connection tools, but the trend in more developed markets is toward a more platform-independent approach. This is in response to consumers becoming more device-indifferent, leading marketers to rely more on communication channels that span devices. Email fits this bill perfectly, as users are increasingly able to access their email on a smartphone, tablet, laptop, PC, and even remotely, such as at an Internet café.

I therefore expect email marketers to be dedicating a lot more energy to creating new email formats better suited to today's touchscreen generation, and email designers will most probably start adopting responsive design techniques in greater numbers.

4. Not stuck in one-way traffic

Social media has not only popularised two-way conversations with brands that had previously been able to hide behind call centres and bureaucratic red tape, it has created the expectation of real-time communication. Email enables this type of conversation, but requires clear and open return paths to email and mobile marketing messages.

I expect the use of 'no-reply' email addresses to wane as users expect to be able to talk back to advertisers, and brands that ignore those incoming messages do so at their peril [I'm currently trying to talk back to a brand on BBM, but it seems to be one-way communication only and it's annoying me immensely; this same brand doesn't respond to me on Twitter either... - managing ed]

5. Know your users

A distinct advantage is that email marketing has the ability to leverage improvements in database technology and segmentation to target users more accurately by demographic and user preferences. Customers are also more attuned to choosing the types of messages they receive on various platforms.

This means that marketers will quickly be turning to profiling their base and even straight out asking their recipients what they're into and what kind of communication they will not be averse to receiving. This approach will increasingly become part of marketers' toolset to increase conversions and avoid messages being relegated to the junk mail folder.

Following this, personalised email newsletters and content will become pivotal to successful brand campaigns. Doing so to best effect will lead to a greater reliance on data and reporting, such as users' purchase history, website activity and CRM data. For this reason, I believe that 2012 will see many more on-the-fly deals created on a per-user basis, which will be concluded through email to close the sale.

6. Fun, but effective

The final trend I expect to see taking shape this year is [gamification \(Wikipedia\)](#) creeping into email and mobile marketing. This powerful mechanism has shown the ability to improve loyalty and interaction, and email and mobile marketing are stand-alone channels that can be effectively leveraged to this purpose, rather than simply acting as a notification for them. 🎲



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Willem van der Merwe

Mobile commerce and digital education lead the way in 2012



We have entered an era in modern communication where just understanding how a channel works is not enough to achieve success as a brand. The proliferation of screens and devices have resulted in a world where traditional and digital channels are so irrevocably linked that marketers will need to shift thinking from a focus on specific channels to a more sophisticated understanding of customers and their habits than ever before.

Here are some trends to watch out for in 2012:

Mobile commerce

With the increase of advanced phones entering the market consumers are increasingly making purchases via these devices. With the rise of mobile search, there will be an increased focus on a seamless mobile purchasing experience that can take place while the consumer is on the move. A big trend that seems to be on the rise is that of cell phone banking and e-wallets, thus having the facility to make transfers and pay for goods on the go. Social network shopping will become more popular with direct click-throughs from Facebook and even Twitter.

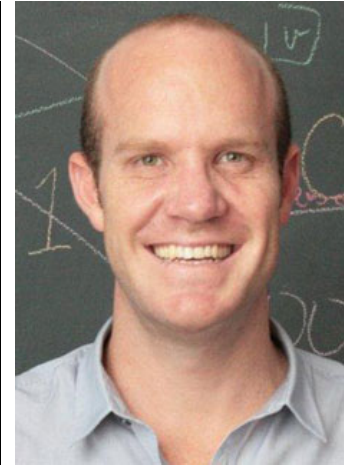
Where transactions take place, risks of misuse of stolen cell phones will come into play, therefore a focus within the IT security sector will be secure transactions within banking and e-tail.

The rise of digital education

The demand for education is increasing across the world - particularly in Africa and other emerging markets. At the same time technology is resulting in a world where information and opinions are easily distributed across the world. Video and podcasts will provide an effective way for students to access information from some of the top institutions in the world. YouTube will soon launch an education service which will provide schools with access to over 450, 000 educational videos.

Google Hangouts will become an effective way to conduct virtual seminars on subjects. Brands could start building positive relationships with consumers in developing markets by getting involved and sponsoring these Hangouts or education platforms.

Education is not necessarily limited to schools and universities, for example, Aegis Media launched its Thought Leadership Digibates in 2011 and podcasts of the discussions and debates are providing key insights to the media marketing sector in Africa. Through various online radio and streaming platforms, podcasted open discussions will become a key career learning tool in many sectors. ■■■



About the author

Willem van der Merwe is the Managing Director of TriggerIsobar South Africa. After starting his career in Media Sales in the UK, he returned to South Africa to join Media24 where he worked as a Senior Account Executive for three years. He soon became Online Sales Manager for the Female Interest titles where he pioneered integrated campaign solutions across all publisher platforms. When the world of publishing became too restrictive he moved to Digital Fire, an E-mail marketing company, where he started and headed up a 360 digital division offering social media, search and other services. In 2011 he joined TriggerIsobar (www.isobar.co.za) and soon became the Managing Director for this leading national full service digital agency. He has a Bachelor in Laws from the University of Stellenbosch.



William Smook

Degrees of separation, stupidity and success in social media



The Mayans prophesied long ago that 2012 will see social media playing a crucial role in business communication. Why is it then, that this exciting communications channel sees otherwise good, beloved brands making avoidable mistakes? Here are a few trends, suggestions and case studies that should help you work both hard and smart in the coming months.

1. Credentials will be disposable

Let's start with [Woolworths'](#) frankly cack-handed response to allegations that it had stolen a concept for soft-drinks from [Frankie's](#), a small operation in KwaZulu-Natal. Woolworths blundered, firstly by [not responding to the initial reaction](#) across social media platforms, and crucially by declining to be interviewed on the matter.

Perhaps Woolworths had good reason for not using the platform of [Bruce Whitfield's World At Six](#) to state its case. Perhaps it simply hoped to remain impassive long enough for social media acolytes to go on holiday.

Whatever its reasoning, its initial refusal to engage with the public and the media and the issue fuelled the perception that this is a David-and-Goliath issue, and that Woolworths is as imperious and high-handed with media - both social and mainstream - as it's perceived to have been with Frankie's. It also ensured that there'll be interest in the issue when it's taken to the [Advertising Standards Authority](#), which reopened last week.

Woolworths can be faulted, firstly for not recognising the potential for damage and providing with a quick, pithy, reasoned response for social media, and secondly for underestimating the empathy for the underdog in that sphere, as manifested in a [Facebook petition](#) against them. Woolworths' initial reaction seemed to consist of sticking its fingers in its ears and going "LA-LA-LA-LA-CAN'T HEAR-YOU!" So its belated blaming of their suppliers seemed disingenuous.

Social media is often about perception-equals-reality snap-judgments, so a lesson: make your first reaction count. Many communicators err with the wrong reaction too soon or the right reaction too late. Woolworths seems to have achieved the worst of both worlds. It's a popular and aspirational brand, which has touted its integrity long and loud. This crisis called into that integrity directly into question.

Is the David-and-Goliath angle that important? Twitter was alive with people saying they planned to support Frankie's as a matter of principle, and Business Day reported that the company did [better than usual over the festive season](#).

2. Don't make your reaction the story

The rapidity with which issues blow up in social media can trigger overreaction, which can lead to instant reputational harm. It needn't.

An example in the UK is coverage of Virgin Media's electronic programme guide, which [Bowdlerised inoffensive words](#), protecting viewers on breakfast TV from such filth as Alfred Hitchc**k, musician Jarvis C**ker, author Charles D***ens and famed soccer team A***nal. →



About the author
William Smook is a senior consultant at Meropa Communications (www.meropa.co.za) in Cape Town. He's worked as a journalist, internationally syndicated health writer and editor. He moved into public relations in 2005, has worked on sustainability and social development campaigns, and doesn't surf nearly enough. Contact William on tel +27 (0)21 683 6464, email williams@meropa.co.za, Skype [william.smook](#) and follow [@williamsinct](#) on Twitter.



William Smook cont.

The Guardian website reported: "A Virgin Media spokesperson said: 'Over the weekend a temporarily over-zealous profanity checker took offence at certain programme titles. The altered titles have been swiftly analysed and we're fixing any remaining glitches.'"

A wordier, more visibly embarrassed response, perhaps awash with three-letter acronyms and blamestorming about software would have kept the issue alive, turning the blushes into a story in itself. In this instance anyway, a brief, canny, response helped move the issue down the media agenda.

In other words, let's all have a laugh and then move on.

3. Content will STILL be king

Good content will still drive traffic and justify investment, but whether it's internal or outsourced, originality will be key. Newsfeeds provide basic information, but the stuff people want will differentiate you. So don't shout about your content if you're offering the same as everyone else, but do bang on about it if you have something that's worthwhile.

I follow [The Daily Maverick \(@dailymaverick\)](#) on Twitter because I like most of their writers: I think Ivo Vegter's ([@IvoVegter](#)) contrarian, free-market views are sometimes overstated simply because he likes a good tiff - he suggests [scrapping CITES](#), for example. But I'll put up with them because I think he often gets things right, and I enjoy the insights of Stephen Grootes ([@StephenGrootes](#)), Kevin Bloom ([@KevBloom](#)), Siphon Hlongwane ([@comradesiphon](#)) and others on the site.

4. Let journalism, not hype, drive content

Unless it's that circle of hell that follows the cult of celebrity, social media is as allergic to hyperbole as any other communication channel. [Kardashian VPL \(visible panty-lines\)](#) aside, business content should read like journalism, not infomercials. Exclude anything you wouldn't expect to read in a sober news report.

So if, for instance, your client insists on being referred to as "The leading airline/pharmaceutical manufacturer/steel manufacturer," you as the communications professional or brand custodian need the confidence to assert that such overstatement is ill-advised.

The social media environment smells hype at a great distance, and also quickly tires of verbiage such as "[going forward](#)" or "currently" or the perennially pointless "exclusive" or "executive" - if a word doesn't add value, cut it.

The beauty of social media is that it's far harder to write well while keeping it short, so investing in writing skills will pay off.

As a rule, if the journalist's not going to use a phrase in his or her story, or if the curmudgeonly sub-editor will edit it out, why use it at all? By all means, include the phrase in your notes-to-editors section, but don't expect it to be used in the news report, and don't alienate the newsroom by trying to shoehorn it in.

Similarly, all your comms should by now be compatible with social media. Get the basics right:

- Make sure your press releases' headlines are tweetable or watch them sink without trace
- Tweet stats and facts
- Leave space in your Tweets for retweeters' comments, and so on.

Anyone in your comms team should be able to communicate key messages in 140 characters or less - make it a deliverable and make tautology a hanging offence. →



William Smook cont.

Above all, don't waste the media's time. In [Forbes Magazine](#), Robert Wynne wrote: "Everybody hates writing press releases. They're usually dull, self-serving, full of insider speak, silly acronyms and when the news is really important, it leaks well in advance of the official document."

If that describes your releases, it's time to outlaw them for a month. A four-week break from the standard media statement will force you and your team to communicate directly and resourcefully. Ignore the squeals and try it.

5. The effective CEO will demand integration social media in communications strategy

The lingering mind-set that communication is something done by the CEO's PA, "the girls in marketing" or the perennially juniorised folk who don't fit into the organisation's admin, manufacturing or sales divisions is archaic. An effective communications chief should report directly to the CEO and should be able to align every aspect of communication: SEO, and so on.

This also dictates that you hire skills, not just an interest: The [Dilbert cartoon](#) that shows a "social media expert" as someone who gets paid to Facebook all day pokes fun at the skills required to work in social media. In short, hire a communications professional and up-skill social network skills where required, rather than vice versa. Similarly...

6. Plan for social media threat in your communication strategy

A statement of the obvious, but one clearly not done by some of the brands discussed here. Examine the viable threats to your reputation and compile an array of reactive statements, prepared for use on Twitter, Facebook and so on. This material should have your brand's key messages woven in and be ready for use with the most basic alteration in details.

Few brands will get it as wrong as Durex South Africa did with its [offensive and sexist Tweets](#), now filed firmly under "[What were they thinking?](#)" Your social media team and PR team need to meet regularly and ensure they're on-message. Presumably Durex could have avoided embarrassment in this way.

Err to the side of caution when being flippant: If your Twitter followers value your advice on trends in the derivatives market, they may be irked if you pepper it with chatter about your progress on Foursquare.

7. Build windmills in the calm

Last year Nando's drew some comment and criticism for withdrawing its superb "[Last Dictator Standing](#)" ad from TV (not the Internet). I'm not privy to the internal debate on the issue, but Nando's really had little choice: if ill had befallen any employees around that time, Nando's could've been accused of jeopardising their safety.

But the brand came out well in the issue because it communicates with its market constantly, not just when there's reputational risk. Nando's was able to hold the moral high ground by withdrawing the ad, yet have it retain talkability by going viral on YouTube. The only losers here were perhaps a few media buyers and Zanu-PF supporters - and a chicken or two.

8. Choose your fights

Opposition leader Helen Zille received a tweet from @uiopll, who threatened to shoot her in the head, eat her "brian" and rape her family. She [responded drily](#): "Good morning to you too", perhaps following the old saw of not arguing with a fool lest people fail to be able to tell the difference.

So far, so prudent. But she then mistepped on the issue of racism in Cape Town. Arguably you have to work quite hard to look sillier than Lindiwe Suttle once the spittle started flying, but Zille's reaction of "complete nonsense" to the on-going debate raised by Suttle about why blacks still feel socially excluded in [Cape Town seems to have achieved that](#)). →



William Smook cont.

9. Stick to the basics:

One reason that otherwise seasoned communicators get it wrong on social media could be that they're intimidated by how quickly an issue can trend. And yes, if Facebook is to be believed, all its users are just [3.74 degrees](#) away from each other, as opposed to the six degrees separating Kevin Bacon and the rest of Hollywood.

But the trick is to stick to the fundamentals of communication:

- Work out what you want to say
- Who you want to say it to, and
- How you want to reach them.

Identifying your audience, message and channel seems almost ludicrously simple, but no good comms plan can be built without it.

Importantly, it'll help you stay on message when others in the social media space are beguiled by the breathless immediacy of the medium.

A brand may spend millions on say, sports sponsorship, yet be miserly on its PR budget. In 2012, that's wrong-headed, to use a polite term. Invest in communication that drives business growth, not just visibility. The Mayans said so. 🍷

Louise Marsland & Simone Puterman

In case the world doesn't end...



While the theme song for the Year 2012 will undoubtedly be "It's the end of the world as we know it..." by R.E.M., and we'll be bored with all the End-of-the-World theme parties and raves and launches by March already... in case the world doesn't end, here're some essential trends and stuff you need to know for the year ahead.

We will know far too much about: Doomsday cults, the Mayans, ancient calendars and civilisations, the History Channel, aliens, meteors which may hit earth and other potential disasters.

We will be sick of: Jokes about the end of the world, predictions about the date the world will end, crazies who predict the end of the world.

How to be a fashionista: Black will be the political fashion statement de jour as fights against the POIB and increasing clampdown on media freedoms in South Africa intensify, and media and civil society mobilise more stakeholders.

Food of choice: Many of our political leaders will be forced to eat humble pie as the media step up campaigns to expose corruption among those seeking to gag the media. They will, of course, deny they have ever eaten humble pie and refuse to comment, instead banning the ingredients for humble pie deep in some legislation.

Parody accounts on Twitter: The number of distinctly South African parody twitter accounts will continue to grow - from [@Jan_v_Riebeeck](#) and [SABCtoo](#) to [@MnrCD](#) and [@MevSUIT](#) (yes, the creatives have woken up to the potential of Twitter and arrived en-masse, finally).

Social media memes: The return of... Star Wars. Last year Volkswagen did "[The Force](#)"; this year, it's "[The Bark Side](#)" and "[The Dog Strikes Back](#)" - but nothing beats the sheer awesomeness of "[Cello Wars](#)" by The Piano Guys, a small piano store in Utah.

Sent from my: ...iPhone/Blackberry/iPad/whatever at the bottom of emails will become ubiquitous as the [always-on](#) culture takes over our lives and makes us wish we were [OTG](#) and [wonder where our lives have gone](#).

Pop culture: The popularity of Abba will never, ever, wane.

Next big movie/TV trend: Zombies are going to be big.

Please don't mention: The Kardashian divorce, butt, implants, babies, boyfriend, billions or anything! What an appalling waste of space they are.

Emails editors delete: 'Save the Date' - with no indication of client, venue, importance, etc.

Clients to be deleted from the editor's Christmas Card list: Those who intimidate our journalists and salespeople by refusing to advertise until editorial is guaranteed. →



About the authors
Louise Marsland is editor-in-chief and brand strategist of [AdVantage](#) magazine. Email louise@advantagemagazine.co.za, read her [blog on Bizcommunity](#) and follow her and [AdVantage](#) on Twitter at [@Louise_Marsland](#) and [@advantagemag](#).

Simone Puterman is managing editor of [Bizcommunity.com](#) and specifically looks after the flagship [Marketing & Media South Africa](#) portal. Follow [@SimoneBiz](#) on Twitter. To submit press releases and contributor pieces, see [How to contribute to Bizcommunity, from op-ed pieces to news](#) and [submit news](#).



Louise Marsland & Simone Puterman cont.

PRs to be deleted from our databases: Those trying to bribe us with separate offers of extra 'freelance work'.

Worst insult hurled at editor: Every one of the thousands of useless spam emails with press releases about everything except media, marketing or advertising.

Most baffling movie combo: 2011 had *Cowboys and Aliens*. What's next? *The Kardashians take Jersey Shore - Revenge of the Orange People?* (Told you zombies would be big...)

Most famous sprog in 2012: Jay-Z and Beyonce's baby. We had thought of some names for the music stars' baby in the true Seff Effrican tradition of combining names... Jayonce, Zbey, Jaybe, Beyoz... before they announced Blue Ivy.

People to watch in 2012: [Nikki Cockcroft](#), heading up Woolworths digital strategy rollout; [Jacques du Preez](#) of Provantage, which has dominated the transit and commuter media market; [Abey Mokgwatsane](#), new CEO of Ogilvy SA; [Rob Stokes](#), CEO of Quirk, one of SA's most prolific and successful digital agencies; [Andy Davis](#) from Mahala; [Alan Knott-Craig Jnr](#) shaking things up at MXit; FoxP2's Justin Gomes; [Pete Case](#) of Gloo and [Adrian Hewlett](#) of Habari Media, both of whom have big announcements coming; [Tanja Lategan](#) and what she does with 365 Digital and Primedia Online; [Chris Botha](#), who has apparently been doing some tough talking to The MediaShop staff; [Rich Mulholland](#), the Missing Link's maverick whose talks on his new book on legacy are making sense on the industry circuit; [Andrew Brand](#) from Ninety9Cents; [Yusuf Abramjee](#), Primedia COO and Lead SA CEO; [Angela Quintal](#), who has taken over the reins of *The Witness* newspaper as editor; [Sbu Mpungose](#), new *Cosmopolitan* editor; The new Marketing Association of SA (MASA) GM, [Sarel du Plessis](#), who has his job cut out for him to continue trying to make the industry's marketing body relevant; and whomever the new [Loeries CEO](#) is - it's a helluva job, requires big balls and tons of personality, as well as fundraising ability.

Brands to watch in 2012: Kagiso with its 'Beyond FM' expansion strategy; the big agencies whose big brand clients have gone out to pitch, from Jupiter Joburg and Cape Town to Ogilvy and TBWA\Hunt\Lascaris; it will be interesting to see what Woolworths does in-house from now on, where Edgars goes and what happens to the Cell C business.

Let's also hope that brands are braver in 2012 with their campaigns and budgets, given that things are expected to start improving globally with the recession towards the end of 2012, finally. Loeries was a fantastic event this year, but the work was creatively muted.

Media to watch in 2012:

- John Brown is the new custom publishing force in the market to watch, having picked up big brands such as Edgars and Discovery last year.
- Despite several magazine closures already announced (Top Billing, Cleo, Psychologies, etc, in 2011), which sadly will probably also not be the last in the recession-hit media industry as consolidation of resources continues, there are some recent and some new magazine and newspaper launches to watch in 2012 as change brings innovation: *Rolling Stone* magazine; *NewsNow* from Media24; *Grazia*, international weekly fashion and news magazine, also Media24; City Press 'i' magazine from New Media; iPad-only daily publication iMaverick; Scoop! the new English Sunday tabloid; and The New Age, of course, which is surprising the media industry with more robust political reporting than initially expected.

Keep on shuffling...

This piece has been adapted from the [January 2012](#) issue of AdVantage magazine. 🍷





Credits

As always, our heartfelt thanks
to all our contributors
for their time & thoughtful leadership

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Allison Cooper Angelique Meyer Athalie Brett
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