BIZ'09 TREND REPORT

Doom and gloom and the inevitable boom

By: Mike Frampton

This is about trends for 2009. And boy, what a trend doom and gloom is! Amazing just how we globally and locally get sucked up into the space of paranoia. And make no mistake the world's economic situation is at risk and is under strain. But having said this, I believe the trend for 2009 should be quite different.

It is amazing how, as a business, and as an industry, we lose the confidence so quickly and so dramatically when bad news globally becomes local. We read about it, we hear about it, watch it on TV, our friends talk about it and inevitably, we, too, believe it.

But now is a time to take stock, to step back, and to plan. To innovate, and to be imaginative, because, after all, now is the time to shift the status quo. These times provide the opportunity to change the way we do business, the way we approach brands, products and all that is required in order to make and sustain their profitability.

See a radical shift

2009 will be a year, I predict, that will see a radical shift in the traditional way that we have played. We will see new agencies being created. Small and niche, distinctive and alternative. We will see agencies emerging and changing, relying more on innovation and motivation and focusing less on multinational fear.

This is a time for dare devils and dreamers, those that swim against the flow and those that have the resolve and energy to believe in their own worth. In these times, not unlike past history, when times are tough, art gets brilliant. Innovation becomes essential. And those that can innovate, and be exceptionally and extraordinarily creative, will always benefit.

> **“ I predict that we will see new shops that come from a sense of survival, and are born from innovation and out of necessity. ”**

These will be young startups that will change our industry in anticipation of the boom, and they will be the first to benefit on the up side, which inevitably comes. These will be the startup agencies that will hurt, disturb and disrupt the traditional mainstream agencies and in turn will be the agencies of a future, either by virtue of being bought and or realigning to the multinational and global powerhouses that have traditionally dominated our industry, over the last 15 years.

Without these upstarts and their collective energy, the existing mega agencies risk all.

One-to-one

My second prediction is that those who will really benefit and get ahead will be those that value and take cognisance of the individual. More and more brands need to communicate on a one-to-one level. No longer is it going to be okay just to mass brand and attack collective target audiences. The people of our world will more and more want communication that is personalised, relevant and provides product and or service that meets the lifestage that they are in. These will not be your traditional advertising agencies or direct response agencies, or, for that matter, any agency that we know and understand today. These will be agencies called MXit it and Facebook, Sony and Nintendo, but more likely something we've yet to hear about, but will be very exciting to our industry, when we do.

2009 will belong to the brave. The risk-takers, the daredevils and dreamers. Those who will change, innovate and fundamentally alter the marketing landscape as we know and understand it today. These are the entrepreneurs, the young, both at heart and in age, who will show us a new path, a new direction and a whole new way to brand growth and communication impact.

This year will see the advent of a completely new client. A client that understand accountability and the need for innovation and all that a cynical, intelligent and educated individual requires and demands of brands. When times are hard, cash-strapped consumers will still spend on brands they love, respect and which deliver. These marketers, I predict, will be the ones that are first to provide the opportunities to the new startups of our industry and or to those agencies that are taking cognisance of the fact that, with doom and gloom, comes responsibility and accountability and a fundamental change in the way our industry operates. These will be the marketers that have the courage and the commitment to build brand growth through trying times. They will also be future leaders of all the globe's major brands. I further predict during this time that the old marketing guard will change, shift or die.

More important than ever

As a consumer, I may be under financial duress, but let me tell you, more than ever, who I am, what I stand for and the brands that I choose to associate myself with are now more important than ever. I don't necessarily just have the cash to spend on any old brand. What I choose to spend on has to be relevant, has to speak my language and above all needs to talk to me. This is a time when brand relevance and association are paramount to the consumer, and I predict the demise of many a brand that doesn't take this into consideration.

The winners of the 2009 battle I predict will be those warriors in the advertising agencies, the marketing and brand departments that take cognisance of the consumer, their individuality and their needs. Times may now be tough, but this is when the battle for brand loyalty is won and lost. The brands that support me (now as a consumer) I will in turn support.

> **“I predict that social values, family values and brand values will be of crucial importance moving forward. A brand's BEE status, a brand's community involvement et cetera will become vital.”**

Price fixing and anti competitive behaviour and the like are not things brands need to be associated with during this time. In fact, quite the opposite. The brands that are perceived to be cutting costs, providing promotions and generally making products more accessible, will be the long term winners come boom time. This is the time for brands to be highly responsible, highly sensitive and more specifically be perceived to be giving back as much as possible to their respective consumers. As an industry, we need to be encouraging our clients' and their respective brands' more and more, to be more and more socially responsible and community relevant.

2009 will be, without doubt, a year for those with courage. With commitment. Bravery. A year for those who resist the temptation to be sucked up into the doom and gloom syndrome, but rather approach our industry from a completely different and distinctive angle. For those who think smartly and succinctly and prepare brands for boom time. Watch this space. It could be great. I predict it will be. For some.

2009 - the rise of creativity

By: Brendan Wade and Stuart Stobbs

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Emergence, convergence - 2009 will be about the rise of creativity and the further South Africanisation of brands and concepts.

1. The rise of the creative studio: the resurgence of the retro concept of the creative studio is seeing the emergence of multi-disciplinary, multimedia studios, capitalising on the strengths of creatives, architects, designers, writers and creative strategists, focusing not just on advertising, but on every point at which customers experience their clients' brands.

2. The emergence of the creative strategist: the roles played by creatives and strategists are moving towards one another. Where, in the past, strategy could be dry, static and linear, by involving creatives in strategy creation, the entire process is made dynamic and far more powerful - and the creative strategist is born.

3. The changing role of creativity: creativity itself is being embraced by the industry as a mode or approach of thinking, rather than just being added to the mix at the point of execution of a concept.

4. Convergence: creative thinkers are coming to the realisation that creativity is not bound by a single profession, and they are turning their minds towards broader creative concepts. Architects, interior designers, marketers, copywriters, graphic designers and a host of other creative disciplines are converging to provide services across the creative industry, which is reaping the benefits of the insights and services provided by this broad range of creative thinkers.

5. New ways of making money: agencies are applying their creative thought processes and strategies to developing new intellectual property, not just for their clients, but themselves as well. They are reshaping all aspects of business, rather than being limited to the marketing arena. By applying creative thinking to their own brands, they are recasting themselves as creative think-tanks, providing a whole new perspective on business and the industry.

6. Brand no longer only represented as a visual medium: there is a growing acknowledgement that a brand is no longer expressed purely in advertising or logo creation, but in the entirety of the customer experience - from staff to headquarters - and creative agencies are providing strategies to support all of these points of interaction.

7. Evolving and embracing digital and technological opportunities: the opportunities that technology affords brand development are being embraced by increasing numbers of companies. Websites are no longer just seen as static promotional vehicles, but as ways to encourage two-way interaction with customers. Email and SMS are seeing increased utilisation as media for brand communication.

8. Change is the only constant: as trite as it is to say it, change is a trend, and it's here to stay. There are myriad new approaches in strategy, technology, media, fashion, concept and delivery, and those agencies that do not innovate are the ones that will fall behind.

9. Further South Africanisation of brands and concepts: this has been developing for many years now, but there is an increased focus on creating powerful South African brands that are promoted using South African stories, concepts and visual expression. The more we participate in a global community, the more we attempt to find ways to make our concepts uniquely South African.

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Production trends for 2009

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Bizcommunity.com recently caught up with Pam Marsh, GM of Refiner Visual Effects, and Gary King, executive producer of Picture Tree, to find out what the trends are in production and post production for 2009.

Marsh's trends:

1. We have done very big visual effects jobs for Africa and Asia - big brands doing big things - however, locally, we have not followed suit.

2. Quick and efficient are time and money - that trend will continue.

3. There is a huge necessity for new talent but our industry is simply not big enough. Talent is going to become a global debt.

4. On that note, there are some hot new young directors coming through but nowhere near as many as there were 15/16 years ago - there is an entrepreneurial lull.

5. In that same vein, I do think we are missing that fire, passion and hunger for filmmaking that we saw a few years back (late '70s/early '80s) - is it about the youthful sense of entitlement?

6. Mobile is a trend that is dying to happen but has still not really taken off or been exploited here.

7. Locally on the commercial front, we are not really seeing anything interesting and different on TV - Vodacom's new blockbusters are fun and KFC continues to astound me with the amount of advertising they do, but other than that, 2008 was a very average year.

8. Internationally and locally, we are in desperate need for content, and more and more people are getting involved in content.

9. Animation is massive: 2D more than 3D - it is cheaper to do a 2D movie over a 3D so there is a swing towards 2D - less refinement is required but the story and script are still paramount.

King's predictions:

1. There is a trend towards more work for African countries.

2. There is a trend towards budgets being reduced or cancelled.

3. Agencies are becoming more dictated to by their clients and creative work then suffers.

4. More work being given to the tried and tested production companies where the clients' money is more secure.

5. The focus of work is more hard-hitting retail, or more and more branding within the commercial.

6. Our invoices getting paid later and later.
7. More and more local content - clients do not want international artistes or voice artistes.
8. Tighter margins.
9. Collaboration - in our case between directors - the performance and tabletop directors shooting only their area of expertise for the same commercial.

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Radio slick and savvy in 2009

By: Tshepiso Seopa

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The emergence of new commercial and community radio stations in the provinces that relied only on public broadcaster stations in the past has meant that old players need to go back to the drawing board in preparation for the new battlefield. Bizcommunity.com recently caught up Mfundo Ntsibande, marketing manager for Ligwalagwala FM, for a bit of introspection and outlook.

There is no doubt that the new entrants are giving the old dogs a run for their money, forcing them to tighten their belts while increasing the levels of competition and a development of new trends in this sphere of broadcasting.

The November 2008 RAMS highlight a decline in listenership, time spent listening and revenue. Could this be time for an innovative approach in surviving the current climate?

According to Ntsibande, the change in trends is a result of listeners having adopted an "appointment listening" approach. They hop from one radio dial to the next because of a specific programming offered by different radio station or a preference of a particular DJ.

> **“ That means that marketers, working on selling this medium of communications, need to be savvy and slick to ensure that their brands stay on top and stands out of the clutter. ”**

"A classic example of a campaign that will always stand out the test of time is the Metro FM 'What makes you black' campaign. It spoke to all race groups but it wasn't about the skin colour [yet] it tapped into the listener's emotional psyche. Needless to say the station has enjoyed a competitive edge in the market as a 'soulful commercial brand'. Metro FM continues to enjoy top spot in the Sunday Times Markinor Survey and commands huge market share," says Ntsibande.

Brand positioning

Ntsibande further says that "having a clearly defined target audience and knowing your listeners' needs and wants will assist in crafting a strong blue print which will influence your content offering and your market positioning.

"DJs are biggest brand ambassadors; they must eat, sleep and live the brand promise. Brands can no longer be segmented by LSM, race, age. As a marketer you have to tap in to the typical listener's 'soul' and be a part of their lifestyle. Providing relevance and being a catalyst in their lives will gain you the competitive edge, helping you communicate with them in the most compelling way," says Ntsibande.

"Gone are the days when radio stations used to do an OB, give away t-shirts and have DJs making noise on stage. Events have become an important communication tool - they provide a platform for the listeners to interact in an informal yet intimate way with the brand. This is where innovation and creativity will be crucial because the potential listener will take the experience back home and will look forward to the next station event."

"702 Walk The Talk is an event owned by the station; it cannot be duplicated by competitors. It has a social message and speaks to listeners' lifestyle. Proof that radio events don't always have to be a wild party. Events can be aligned with the station's programming - CSI programmes - and still be entertaining."

Opportunity

Ntsibande also says that there is no doubt that 2009 will prove a tough year for radio marketers as stations will be cutting down on expenditure as a result of the economic downturn. However, this will present an opportunity for a slick and savvy marketing approach.

"This will be a period where previously ignored stations will be competing aggressively for market share as language will no longer be the unique selling proposition (USP) that positions them. [A] case in point, [the] recently rebranded Ligwalagwala FM and Ukhozi FM offer the same competitive advantage as a commercial radio station. The stations' brand communication, websites, music and experiential events provide listeners who are bilingual an opportunity to engage with the brand.

> **“ [The] key word for 2009 will be return on investment (ROI); marketers must be able to demonstrate how their marketing strategies will contribute to the bottom line.”**

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Higher education trends for 2009

By: Johan Wasserfall

BIZ'09
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What lies ahead for higher education this year? Let's take a closer look.

1. Gets the job: people are understanding that attaining a higher education is what gets the job.

2. Lack of research: people don't research what career and/or course they really want to go into, which wastes time and effort by not informing oneself of their career and/or study choice. Prospective student often know only that they want a degree because you need it to get a job. They know little about what they are interested in or what they have the talent for. This is a trend we are hoping to change in 2009.

3. Demand without financial resources: there is a demand for more and different tertiary education but the financial resources are not increasing in the same proportion.

> **“ Tertiary systems around the world have become less diverse and differentiated in recent decades, studies have shown. And despite a desire among many states to increase diversity within higher education, a combination of “strict and uniform government policies” and the ability of powerful academic communities to defend their norms and values, are largely to blame for growing homogenisation. This is bad news for higher education. - Frans van Vught, education professor of the University of Twente in The Netherlands ”**

4. Study loans: many more people are dependent on study loans as they cannot fork out the total payment of their course(s) at the inception of their studies. This is also true internationally in countries such as the US and the UK

5. Dropout rate: this has escalated alarmingly, with the bulk of those leaving being first-year students.

6. Online: the more respectable online course(s) have become prominent, rather than physical attendance a tertiary institution for the period of study. This is especially true of young school leavers who can't find jobs and have decided to up-skill but can't afford full-time study.

7. More mature: there is a trend for the more mature students to continue their studies after a couple of years of working. By then they are also more likely to know what they want to do. Not enough matriculants follow the internationally popular "gap year" route, which also helps.

8. Shorter, more focused and business-orientated: these kind of courses are becoming more popular. There has been a proliferation of business colleges and lots of advertisements for courses from marketing to business administration.

9. Threats to education systems: armed conflict and HIV/AIDS continue to ravage education systems and to compound existing challenges. Poor health and malnutrition prevent children from attending school and from learning while in school. Education needs a growing economy to provide the necessary revenues and to create jobs. Likewise, a growing economy needs education to provide a skilled labour force and scientific and technological leadership. This forms a closed loop that can only be escaped from by positive intervention at some point in the process.

Below is a list of international education trends found on the UNESCO website (www.unesco.org)

* Access to education: despite significant progress in the last two decades, world-wide about 77 million primary school age children still do not attend school; 44 million of these children are girls. Some 264 million adolescents of secondary school age are not currently enrolled. Over 800 million adolescents and adults lack the literacy which could equip them with the skills needed to work their way out of poverty.

* Equity in education: access to education is particularly constrained for girls and poor or rural children. There is tremendous variation in access between developed and developing countries and this greatly affects the widening digital and knowledge divide.

* Education quality and learning outcomes: the quality of education in poor countries is hamstrung by high pupil/teacher ratios and teachers lacking adequate qualifications.

* Social cohesion and democratic traditions: Education systems are rarely neutral in terms of social cohesion and the building of democratic traditions. They can contribute positively through specific strategies such as peace education, etc. Unequal access to quality education often reflects a national heritage of social inequality and ethnic or religious divisions.

* Financing of education: seven years after the pledge by world leaders that "no country seriously committed to Education for All will be thwarted in its achievement of universal primary education due to a lack of resources" there has been little change. If the goal of universal primary completion is to be achieved by 2015, low income countries would need at least US$3.7 billion a year of support.

* Global competitiveness: what seems to distinguish the well performing countries from the less successful ones is their human capital and their capacity to obtain, apply and generate knowledge. In the successful countries, skills, technology, education and the economy interact in important ways to create a virtuous cycle of productivity each feeding on the other. Tertiary enrollment is 86.9% in Finland, 16.2% in Indonesia, 7.7% in Nigeria, and 0.9% in Mozambique.

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'We are in for a very very tough year...'

By: Virginia Hollis

Well, 2008 certainly didn't end with the traditional BIG Christmas spend that all agencies and media owners have gotten so used to. It ended with a bit of a whimper really... However, I think that most media and agencies had an okay year because the first five to six months were good and then everything fell apart. So what's coming?

I know that a number of people are saying that we will start coming out of this downturn (recession) by the end of the first quarter. I think that this is seriously optimistic, and while I hope they are right, I'm pretty sure that this won't happen. In fact, I don't think you will see a recovery before the end of the year, and this will rather be an upswing because advertisers will spend the budgets they've held back in hope of making up sales over the Christmas period. I think we're going to be in trouble for a lot longer than initially thought!

What's going to happen in 2009? We've already seen a number of rate increases from the print media, ranging from 6 to 12%, which is interesting seeing as we're not seeing increases in client budgets. In fact, I would estimate that possibly 10 - 15% of client will increase maybe 8 - 10%, 40 -50% might increase by 4 - 8%, and the balance (35%) will probably not increase at all; some might even decrease their ATL spend so that that they can do more BTL.

This means that the industry might optimistically see media budgets increase by 5 - 6%! And believe me, this is very optimistic!

So what does this mean?

* Clients could streamline their media selection and only use one or two media types instead of three, or even down to one.
* Ad sizes could shrink, but this is dependent on the creative concept.
* The demand for bigger discounts will certainly come into play
* More added value will be demanded, so that clients can really stretch their budgets.

But how can we ask for bigger discounts and more AV if we're spending less?

Cut, cut, cut

In my mind, which is the best option for clients? I'd recommend cutting down in size (if the concept allows).

Cut your TV and radio spots from 30 sec to 15 or 20 sec; just doing this will save (or add) 20 - 30%.

Cut the newspaper ad from 54/55x10 to a 45x8; you are still page dominant, no other advertiser can be on the page and your cost saving will be 35%.

Just by taking the size down slightly, the saving can be enormous and this is especially important to clients who run high frequency campaigns. So no more 60, 90 or 120 sec commercials - they are a luxury that has become unaffordable.

Let's keep talking about electronic, TV specifically, because the other problem that advertisers face is the PVR. Sure, it's only at the top end of the market, but this is a really important market to a lot of advertisers. Because consumers can fast forward your spots - or skip them completely - this makes TV an even tougher nut to crack. Consequently, commercials aimed at the top end of the market will have to start working on fast forward, which means a whole different creative approach, and/or there will have to be more product integration into shows.

What this means is that we, as an industry, will have to get more creative with what we do with this medium.

Print media are probably the most vulnerable. We've already seen a number of titles close in the last 12 months; this is just going to get worse. We're now seeing media releases talking about retrenchments; this is good and bad. The good is that it allows companies to get rid of 'dead wood', the bad is that it can be extremely disruptive and destabilising to the business as a whole.

Cutting back on staff will certainly not be enough; print is going to have to find other ways to keep overheads down (especially as paper and ink continuously go up), so maybe we will find that the number of pages in our newspapers is reduced and that they can only take a certain amount of advertising.

This already happens with a number of the larger titles in Europe and the US and what it does is forces agencies/clients to book early so that you can secure space. But the discipline that is required is not something I think the SA market is used to: we like to book last minute!

Clean up

Over the next year we're certainly going to see another 'cleaning up' of the outdoor industry. The big guys will buy out the smaller shops, those with decent sites, and there will be a lot of culling of marginal sites.

What's exciting is all the new media opportunities in the out of home space. Just as an example, there is a new medium that gives a whole new meaning to window-shopping! There are so many different forms of experiential marketing and activation marketing that this section of out of home could become its own category soon.

Everyone talks about online replacing TV and a research company actually said to me that it could see this happening in SA in the next three-to-five years. Well, I did laugh - sorry if I'm offending online people. But, honestly, this is a medium that currently attracts 1% of media spend, whereas TV attracts over 50% (as per AdDynamix) - how is online going to replace TV?

I can understand that online can and will make serious inroads into TV media spend in first world countries, but not here! Not for a very long time... But let's be fair, online has come a long way in SA and it will continue to grow, but slowly.

So 2009 is going to be a very, very tough year. Every single media owner will feel the pinch, as will every agency. Traditional media will command the largest segment of the media pie, at the expense of the smaller media types. It will be a real battle for any new media to come into this market. Advertisers will not take risks in this depressed market; they will want the tried and tested media, where they know that there is no risk of them not being able to prove that they've delivered a cost-effective audience.

> **“ I'm not looking forward to 2009 at all... ”**

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Talking to your target market in 2009

By: Tiffany Markman

To paraphrase the Chinese curse, 2008 was ‘an interesting year’ for business in general and for marketers in particular. We ran the gauntlet of swearwords, from Eskom to sub-prime; from inflation through Zuma to cholera. And then we started using the rudest word of all - the ‘R’ word - due to impact enormously on how smart businesses talk to their target markets in 2009.

Here are nine trends I hope to see unfold in 2009, in terms of shimmying under consumers' radar:

1. Less ‘communicating’; more ‘chatting’: consumers prefer chats to communication. The former sounds easy, natural, relaxed. The latter sounds like hard work. So when you're trying to sell an idea, product or service to a prospect, favour the style of the casual chat over the detailed, lengthy, time-consuming communication.

2. More Obama-isms; less Palin-drones: Think Obama and, regardless of your political orientation, you think ‘eloquence’. You think of engaging speeches, quotable quotes, clever catchphrases. And if you've examined the way Obama speaks, you'll know he uses short sentences. Bold expressions. Brave fragments. And plain, simple, easily understandable language. Palin, on the other hand, is... Palin. And her sound bites are boring. Vague. Ineffectual. Redundant. And sometimes, factually inaccurate.

3. Less impressing; more expressing: in 2009, stay away from the flowery language, big words and complex constructions that have plagued business writing in the ‘Naughties’. Not only are consumers sick of it, they're starting to see through it. Yup, the ‘R’ word is turning people into sceptics. So strive to express, not to impress. Say what you mean in as few words as possible. And when you're finished, stop.

4. More 'Yes, we can'; less 'Sorry, but...': use positive, definite wording instead of negative, indefinite wording. Say Our projects always run smoothly. not Our projects seldom take long. Say We believe in value for money. not We don't believe in high prices. Prospects respond better to positive ideas than to negative ones.

And, in 2009, it's more likely than ever that words like 'don't', 'seldom', 'rarely' or 'stop' will cause unfavourable reactions. Also beware of: 'unfortunately, unable, afraid, mistake, problem, error, failure' - even when the context is positive: 'no problem, make no mistake, I'm afraid...'

5. Less 'we'; more 'you': Research shows that the word people like to hear most is... their own name. No surprises there.

So, use your prospect's name. Use it throughout the text or conversation, not just at the start. And become aware of the number of times you use the word 'you'. The more I talk about 'you', the more interested you are in what I'm selling, because I'm speaking directly to your interests. As a rule, 'you' should occur two to three times more often than 'we', 'I' or your company name.

6. More conversation; less email: we've fallen so deeply into the habit of using email to maintain our relationships that it feels like torture to have to pick up the phone. But actual conversations - remember those? - work better than anything else. For a start, you're not adding to coma-inducing mail volumes (my daily average? 178 emails per day). Second, you can present a more accurate tone. And third, you're more likely to get a 'Yes' - because over the phone, you can often be more engaging.

7. Less junk; more spunk: yes - they're everywhere. But that's no reason to use ugly corporate buzzwords in your writing. They're like suitcases with nothing inside them: heavy, empty and not a whole lot of help.

In 2009, make a habit of cutting words and phrases such as 'the big picture', 'benchmark', 'best practice', 'in the pipeline', 'strategic', 'on the same page', 'go the extra mile', 'at the end of the day', etc. Instead, use different, innovative, stand-out, impactful expressions. You may have to spend a little more time writing, but your prospect will also spend more time reading or listening.

8. More features & benefits: less mission & vision: any product or service offers a plan to fill a need, which is why the average consumer wants to know What's in it for me?, not What's it all about? Prospects don't care if you've been in business 80 years and your CEO was the first golfer in space; they don't even care if you think you offer superb service, integrity and sound product knowledge. They want to know how all of this translates into real, tangible, measurable benefit for them. So this should be your focus.

9. Less text; more white space: the absence of white space on a page means the reader has no 'visual breathing room'. It's also hard to tell where one train of thought ends and another begins. So when a page seems like an unbroken wall of words, skim it for full stops. Find sentences that go on and break them up. The eye resists a crowded-looking page as confusing, so keep it open, balanced and tidy.

What will the youth get up to in 2009?

By: Jason Levin

The traditional media terrain is shifting completely in the Age of the Prosumer. Marketers have a big role to play when it comes to investing in the wellbeing of young South Africa, especially in 2009.

1. X-ray specs: the traditional media terrain shifts completely in the Age of the Prosumer. Teens and young adults consider themselves more than just consumers and they want their chance to produce content and involve themselves in the brand more than ever before. Cadbury P.S's interactive campaign 'Holla Yo Lurv' invited youths to SMS their own Valentine's message to their loved ones - with the chance of it being displayed for all to see on a number of billboards across the country.

Of course, not every interactive campaign is a guaranteed success - the youth's decision to get involved depends on whether the potential brand experience is exciting and relevant to them, otherwise they won't bother getting involved in it at all. After all, the youth have been consuming media their entire lives and have developed advanced filtering and interrogation systems that hone in on what the brand is really about.

2. Brandholism: when it comes to engaging and exciting young South Africa, companies can no longer limit their brands to a specific product category or service. Traditional vertical categories are not important to young urbanites who expect their most beloved brands to cater to their entire lifestyle and provide them with experiences that go beyond the product itself - Coca Cola has led the way in extending youth offerings way beyond that of a cold drink by investing in online media, concerts and community projects.

The youth readily compare brands across categories (cellphones with fashion with trainers), so companies need to understand how their brands perform in a general, rather than specific context. And it's this thinking that makes youth less inclined to open a bank account. Why? Because banks don't measure up to cellphone providers which offer a free DVD player amongst other high-tech gadgets when you sign up for a contract.

3. Human touch: for the last decade, cellphones and other high-tech gadgets have reshaped the way the urban youth connect. It is not surprising that their dependency on tech gadgets to connect with each other has largely alienated them from the intimacy of real human contact.

In the Sunday Times Generation Next 2008 study, face-to-face took the lead as the preferred method of communication between friends and this trend will strengthen in 2009 as the youth demand more human contact and interaction. For example, young adults are increasingly using Facebook as a proactive medium to organise dinner parties and 'real life' get-togethers instead of just 'Facebooking' each other as a way of staying in touch. [You should see how they use Twitter - assistant editor]

4. AdLand: city kids have grown up in a world cluttered with advertising messages and they know that marketers are hankering for their attention, and they are often, but not always, willing to give it. They understand control and how to make 'ad choices'.

In 2009, we see children as young as six, becoming more and more territorial around which parts of their lives they open to advertising and which they do not. Advertisers will need to work within these boundaries and understand where to draw the line and where to back off.

Social networking is one such area. Facebook, MySpace and MXit already have a monopoly and the youth are not looking to expand their loyalty to other sites, particularly ones developed by brands. The cellphone is also considered for-friends-not-advertisers turf, generally.

5. FBI: the quest for knowledge is no longer an arena assigned to nerds but rather an arena where youth vie for attention as they use their knowhow as a powerful tool to leverage social standing and build peer cred. Urban teens, particularly, have a wide range of networking tools at their disposal with which to analyse and document their lives and their world, and so they have become fascinated with the workings of everyone and everything: Google rocks!

6. Cheap: recession-hit South African homes will see teens and young adults becoming more 'careful' when it comes to selecting their brands of choice, particularly when it comes to clothes and fashion. Ultra cheap t-shirts from Ackermans are readily paired off with expensive Guess jeans as a way of making an affordable compromise.

> **“ Young adults are becoming more mindful about researching and comparing the prices of products online to make sure they find out where to get the best bargains and deals. Fortunately, the upside of hard times is that teens are showing signs of becoming more resourceful and entrepreneurial in an effort to subsidise their own spending needs. ”**

7. Fstr >>: slowing down isn't on the youth agenda - even on holiday. 'Hyper-tasking' takes over from multi-tasking as urban youths cram ever-more into the already bursting days. In order to sustain this lifestyle, they are readily consuming more vitamins and energy-boosting products.

But as a result, we also see an upturn in anxiety levels and the pressure to succeed is felt by children as young as six years old because of the high expectations for they have set for themselves to succeed.

8. Get physical: locally, in order to comply with the new ASA-scribed Industry Code regarding the advertising of foodstuffs and beverages to children, brands have to look at new ways to get 12-year-olds and under to embrace physical exercise. The fast food industry has already put plans in motion that will see their brand characters endorsing exercise rather than hamburgers. Teens and young adults are also making more discerning choices around health and healthy products as they slowly move towards a more active lifestyle.

9. Fear factor: most tweens (8-12 year olds) in our country are growing up with a significantly heightened consciousness of safety and security. The Sunday Times Generation Next Study 2008 reported that 88.7% of urban kids fear contracting HIV/Aids and 81.8% of them are scared of being raped. These fears are felt by teens and young adults as well and extend to being hi-jacked, having a smash/grab incident and having crime affecting their families.

The accumulation of all these fears makes South African children highly anxious. And it makes the considerable optimism and excitement they express about hosting the 2010 World Cup even more important as both a nation-building and self-development exercise. All youth, but especially tweens (8 - 12-year-olds) are waiting, and need, to see the greatness that we can, as a country, create. Marketers have a big role to play when it comes to investing in the wellbeing of young South Africa.

Communications to pick up the pace during 2009

By: Keri-Ann Clark

BIZ'09
TREND
REPORT

What's in store for communications in 2009? The publicists at Kezi Communications collectively put together this list of nine trends for a fast-paced, quickly changing world.

1. Regular coverage: clients will care less about the returns or AVE on coverage - they are wanting regular pieces in the media space - not always achievable but always challenging.

2. Clients under pressure: as budgets tighten, clients will be under more pressure to their EXCOs (executive committees) on delivery, which inevitably trickles down to their marketing teams: everyone will want more for less.

3. Budget cuts: PR/publicity/marketing/advertising - WE know it is a necessity but the financial men on EXCOs always look to chop here first. If you are not delivering outstanding results in 2009 on a regular basis, heads will roll... we have seen it already in 2008.

4. Forget timesheets: timesheets will become a thing of the past in 2009 - if we want those retainers paid, throw them away and deliver, deliver, deliver.

5. Strategic PR and publicity: these will become even more vital in 2009 - for example, clients we pitched to in 2007/8 are coming back to us after they went with bigger PR agencies with more impressive credentials. However bigger credentials do not mean bigger results - big budget PR events and becoming a number kill newsworthy opportunities. Clever, newsworthy angles will remain the key to PR success in 2009.

6. Smaller, more niche, more specialised: Kezi ourselves will undergo some reinvention in 2009, our fourth year of business. An incredible growth spurt in 2008 gave us a taste of what it would be like to become one of the giants. We didn't like it. We will do the opposite in 2009: become smaller, more niche, more specialized... is this an industry trend?

7. Unbelievable turnaround times: in line with the more for less, staying small, etc, we believe another trend surfacing is the EXTREMELY fast turn-around time: faster than we have ever experienced. Everyone is stressed and under pressure so when it comes to clients or media deadlines: they want 1200 words and pics in 24 hours - we make it happen. Things are happening so fast that we have already instituted DAILY status meetings instead of our weekly internal meetings - we need to react, prioritise and be proactive.

8. Personal one-on-one relationships with clients: these will become even more key as the pressure mounts - clients do not want to be a number. They want to 'feel the love' as one of our clients tells us! Traditional PR structures and PR teams don't work - smaller, niche hands-on, can-do, just-did teams are necessary.

9. Mobile office: are we going to end up setting up offices in our clients' space? Blackberries and

hotdesking will make us more mobile and effective in 2009.

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Growth of virtual environments expected in 2009

By: Raymond de Villiers

Throughout 2008 the corporate world was exposed to the reality of virtual worlds, which has seen a growing influence on how companies train, market, advertise and communicate. This is a trend that is expected to continue into 2009 as organisations begin to recognise the merits of incorporating gaming into their basket of communication tools.

The trend was largely driven by the rising influence and profile of virtual online worlds, which allow users to create alternate realities such as that offered by Second Life, and in a similar vein the computer game SIMS.

While discussions have revolved around the benefits these environments offer business, there have been as many articles rooted in the experiences of early adopters who critiqued the actual value they managed to extract from these tools. This largely because, from a South African perspective, high data costs and bandwidth constraints led to early adopters experiencing issues unique to the local environment.

Less of an issue

But this limitation is less of an issue and today, nothing stands in the way of organisations joining the virtual revolution.

It is safe to say therefore, that through 2009, we can expect more, rather than less, uptake of the opportunities offered by these environments. There are several reasons for anticipating this, some of which are rooted in the economic experiences of late 2008 and those expected in early 2009, while others are driven by the desire for innovation and competitive advantage endemic within corporate culture.

As a social dynamic, computer gaming is a growing and influential reality. People under 35 grew up in a world influenced and informed by computer gaming rather than traditional board games. If we consider that society has always used games to teach children the skills they need to be successful adults, the role and influence of computer games is going to grow and increase within the corporate world - driven by the fact that an increasing segment of our employee demographic have had their values and worldview influenced by computer gaming.

Growing social effect

> **“ This growing social effect is one of the drivers behind the probable increase in virtual world activity, by the corporate world, through 2009. ”**

For those who have never played a computer game in their lives, virtual worlds look foreign, sinister, scary, and like a waste of valuable corporate resources. However, for those who grew up in a world where they played virtually, their expectation of being able to apply the consequent life lessons will be expressed in their expectations of the work environment. Computer gaming, and the associated virtual worlds, will, as a result, be seen as an increasingly important infrastructural consideration.

The economic meltdown experienced through late 2008 and early 2009 has and will continue to see companies seeking out ways to save money and extract costs out of the business. Appealingly, virtual worlds and business simulations, built using computer gaming technology, offer significant cost savings.

Economies of scale

Virtualising training programmes allows a company to achieve significant economies of scale related to the costs of delivery, but also the costs of supporting the training. As the environments are robust and largely self-contained, less trainee support is required when delivering material. Furthermore, this training can be delivered directly into the person's working environment using existing internal infrastructure.

This means that training can be effectively performed using a 'Just in Time' model - consequently no time is wasted on unnecessary training. Training won't need separate venues booked, and employees dragged away from their work environment for days on end. In the economic climate that will dominate much of 2009, these benefits will add significant value to companies that pursue the path of virtualisation.

Many of the early adopters of this technology applied it in the marketing and advertising sides of their business. One of the lessons learned is that the value of virtual worlds, to the marketer, doesn't lie in the volume of players through a site, but rather in the technology's inherent ability to target advertising at specific demographic segments.

Traditional advertising places collateral into media, and everyone who interacts with that media gets the same generic message. Advertising and marketing in these virtual environments can be connected to login information unique to the player. This will allow for more targeted and effective advertising and marketing. The initial embracing of these environments by the marketing industry will continue, and grow, once marketing executives come to terms with the unique opportunities offered by them.

'School feeds' for 2009

Finally, the lessons of the early adopters that have been publicised in 2008 will serve as 'school fees' for 2009. Companies that engage in the virtual and game-based business simulation areas through 2009 will have adjusted their expectations accordingly. Virtual environments will be used less for marketing and product placement, and more for global project teams and collaboration, along with a healthy dose of training activity.

While activity in generic environments such as Second Life will grow marginally, the real growth will occur in companies investing in the development of their own environments and applications. These environments will mimic their real-life environments and processes so that they are able to use the virtual environment to leverage internal intellectual and human capital in a way that delivers contextually relevant competitive advantage.

> **“ In this space, in 2009, South Africa will still largely be a trend-follower rather than a trendsetter. But, with the rise of local companies building applications specifically for the local market, with its own unique constraints and dynamics, significant local innovation can be expected by the end of 2009. ”**

Creativity more important in tough times

By: Andy Dippenaar

BIZ'09
TREND
REPORT

This year will be about digging deep, not only into our collective pockets, but more importantly into our left brains to find new solutions and better ideas to help us survive - or even thrive - in these tough economic times.

1. The going will stay tough: the pressure is rising everywhere and belts are tightening left, right and centre and it ain't going to turn around quickly. Which means creativity has never been more important.

2. Green is growing: as the symptoms of climate change gradually become more apparent, and as the voice of the world's eco-activists rises in volume, a widening group of people is becoming more aware of the issue and the responsibility they have in combating this global threat. Brands will earn more respect (and in turn, probably more money too) if they too acknowledge the role they have to play and act accordingly.

3. The media marvel: the vast array of media channels and communication options available to marketers will continue to burgeon as we relentlessly try to connect effectively with consumers in new and interesting ways. A new kind of discipline is required, however, if we are to ensure that it is not the brands message that is fragmented. Consistency will be paramount.

4. Rainbow hunting: politics, particularly around the elections, issues related to health, crime and security, inflation and the economy and even regional stability will take a heavy toll; it will be harder and harder for South Africans to retain their famous optimism. Consumers will be irresistibly drawn to brands that offer them a "rainbow after the storm." They will be desperate for good news and a sense of lightness in their lives; marketers sensitive to this will make instant connections.

5. Empower me: despite the challenges of living in these modern times, more and more people are recognising the power they have to shape their own lives. They are desperately in search of ways to take a step upwards - be it within their communities, or in the workplace, for their own benefit and the good of their families. Successful brands will be those that find innovative ways to help consumers empower themselves. This will require thinking way beyond the ordinary but the reward will be enduring as consumers ally themselves with brands that help them along on their journey upwards.

6. Timeless South Africa: across the many diverse audience segments in South Africa there is a common and growing demand on people's time; every available minute will become more and more precious as people become more contactable, as they are bombarded with more information, more entertainment options, more responsibility and so on. Simple, powerful ideas that resonate instantly with consumers will be the order of the day. There just isn't time for the alternative.

7. **Coal and gold:** even though consumers are under increasing financial pressure, they still demand to be treated with respect, want as good as they can get for themselves and their families and still pursue the best quality their diminishing resources can buy. Even if all they can afford is a lump of coal, they need it to feel like gold. Marketers should be wary of devaluing their brands in these tough times. The challenge is retain equity, find ways to enhance perceptions of quality, and pay greater attention to craft, polish and nuance in communication, for these are the cornerstones in creating an image of worth and value.

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A more 'bullish' view for 2009

By: Ken Varejes

Overall, I'm very bullish about this year. I predict the first few months of 2009 will determine how long the economic crisis will last and how we move forward.

1. **Traditional media trends:** most marketers and industry players I've interacted with over the past few months believe that the tough economic climate we're experiencing is not going to last beyond 2009, and I agree with these sentiments. The truth is that if you cut your adspend in the tough times, you're going lose market share.

Right now, traditional media is being hit hard and all media owners are affected. As just two examples, print is feeling it hard and ADEX shows that TV is taking a knock. However, it shouldn't just be about price for the advertiser, it's about being in the right space and getting the most impact for your brand.

> **"I predict that besides the motor vehicle, banking and property sectors, we can see the same adspend in the first few months of 2009, with marketers not cutting back."**

2. **Below-the-line and out of home:** above-the-line and below-the-line concepts are gone. Advertisers spend money according to what works for them; it's as simple as that. I believe that ad agencies haven't given out of home concepts the attention it deserves, as they continue to focus more on traditional media. Over time, the agencies that realise the true value of out of home and pay more creative attention to these media, will come out the winners.

3. **Online and mobile media trends:** mobile will continue to grow in leaps and bounds over 2009 but there are still big issues with this medium. For instance, advertisers need to consider whether

they'll be irritating the person they're dealing with by sending continuous advertising messages which may result in consumers having negative feelings towards the brand.

Having said that, I do believe that mobile will become far more sophisticated and more developed in the years ahead, especially as people are trading up their phones for more advanced versions. Internet access is coming off a small base but this medium is becoming more and more popular and, within time, I see huge possibilities online, especially combined with mobile as the Internet becomes cheaper and cheaper. There are massive opportunities, down the line, for both these media among all markets, especially the youth.

4. Working smarter not harder: we should all be working harder right now, but I do think this is going to be a prominent theme during 2009. Marketers, advertisers, media owners and agencies are going to need to be more aggressive this year, working smarter to stay in the market and hold prominent position.

I also think that we need to spend more time educating our sales people:

* Who is our targeted client wish list?
* Who are the clients we want to reach?
* Where are we going
* How do we get there?

“ We need clearer deliverables to assist the sales people to stay on course. ”

5. Guerrilla marketing: guerrilla marketing will always be around but especially in 2009 as people are forced to think even more out of the box. With events such as the Confederation Cup and the British and Irish Lions tour making its mark this year, companies can show their mettle through really clever marketing, while being careful to remain within the confines of the law.

6. **2009 is full of possibilities:** successful players in 2009 will be those who continue to innovate, especially in spaces that are considered non-traditional. Media owners need to attract more attention during this coming year and provide brands with innovative solutions to ensure maintained or growing market share. Shorter campaigns are another area where brands can make big impact by allowing advertisers to be more tactical, react quicker and defy conformity - use 2009 as the year to get noticed!

7. **Staff retention:** the economic risk we're in now just means that we have the opportunity to be more entrepreneurial when it comes to minimising risk and maximising staff retention. There's no doubt there will be some cutbacks in business - we've seen this prominently in the print and agency environment - but companies can focus on staff retention now by thinking out of the box more than ever. We must question what other revenue streams we can focus on to keep key staff. I believe we will weather the storm with minimum losses.

8. Getting back to basics: this year will see many companies reverting back to the ABCs of business. We need to be prudent in deciphering the ‘nice to haves’ versus the ‘need to haves’. This means looking at your bottom line with a stronger and tougher eye without sacrificing share of voice or long-term profitability. Be more hungry and more determined than ever to succeed, which means putting in extra hours to get the results you want.

9. Outdoor regulations and the alcohol advertising ban: I don't believe the alcohol ban will come into effect over 2009; the industry will fight the cause aggressively because we want freedom of expression. I also don't understand why the Minister of Transport is taking on an area which should be handled by the Minister of Health.

This year, I think that outdoor is going to be more in the spotlight as we thrash these issues around. Our government needs to be more realistic; what is next on the ‘things to be banned’ list? Will toy advertising be banned because small pieces might be swallowed and therefore harmful to children or will it be fast food because junk food makes people fat?

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The year of cloud computing and Twitter

By: Colin Daniels

This year in South Africa, broadband will become affordable to the man on the street; there'll be more print media cutbacks and closures yet new startups and product innovation; the rise of ultra-portable PCs, netbooks and cloud computing; eBooks and electronic paper will start to mature; and Twitter will becomes a household name...

1. Broadband becomes affordable to the man on the street: most commentators agree that 2009 will finally be the year that patient South Africans are rewarded with fast, affordable broadband Internet access. A number of factors such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup, competition amongst service providers, and the completion of the new optical fibre submarine communications cable (SEACOM), will provide South Africans with Telkom-free international bandwidth. The significance of this for the country can't be overstated.

2. Dramatic increase in online ad spend: thanks to 2010, now just around the corner, and with the South African Internet population reaching a tipping point, online will be allocated a much bigger slice of the ad spend pie, which currently sits at a little over 1%. Perhaps the real catalyst for increased online ad spend comes ironically as a result of leaner marketing budgets, which will require a stronger focus on ROI and measurability - something online delivers comparatively well.

3. More print media cutbacks and closures: the writing was on the wall for print media ever since the Internet became a mass medium and some blundering fool clicked on the first banner ad. The year ahead is most likely a gloomy one for print media executives, both locally and abroad, who spend a disproportionate amount of their time nowadays reshuffling the deckchairs on the Titanic. Not only can we expect more layoffs and cutbacks, but a number of well-known titles will decide to take the walk of shame and switch to publishing online exclusively and follow in the steps of early bell-weathers such as PC Magazine.

4. Explosion of the mobile web and iPhone application development: the massive potential of the mobile medium, especially in Africa, has been discussed ad nauseam over the last couple of years but thanks to the introduction of incredibly smart touchscreen devices, such as the Apple iPhone in South Africa and looming competition from other big players such as Google's Android, Blackberry's Storm, and Nokia's N97, we are likely to see an explosion of mobile web usage and exciting new applications which will change the way people interact with their mobile devices.

5. New startups and product innovation: cheaper, more ubiquitous broadband and 2010 mean that there will be a host of opportunities on offer for entrepreneurs, as well as big business, to get involved in launching new products and services aimed at tourists and South Africans. On a side note, the global economic downturn will result in more people with time on their hands and this could very well lead to the next 'big thing'. Believe it or not, Motorola, HP, and Intel were all started during an economic downturn (read here for more on this).

6. Rise of ultra-portable PCs and netbooks: at first,

critics poopooed the idea as being nothing more than an over-hyped children's toy, but over the past year the market has really warmed up to ultra cheap and portable devices such as the Asus Eee and Acer Aspire One.

Due to their disposable price tag and impressive list of features (new models come standard with 3G built in) they are the perfect companion for executives tired of lugging 4kg monsters around from one meeting to the next and they also function as pretty good entry-level machines for low-income households.

7. Cloud computing: with a constantly improving Internet infrastructure that spans all corners of the globe and the fact that every device from a mobile phone to a gaming console now comes fitted with an ethernet or wireless connection, it's very likely that 2009 will be a defining year for “cloud computing”.

For those of you that haven't heard this term before, it applies when software is treated as a service and information is stored permanently on centrally located servers for convenience and peace of mind. Google might've helped popularise this paradigm with services such as Google Docs but Microsoft, desperate to reposition itself in a turbulent market, recently announced plans to release a new cloud operating system called Azure, so expect to hear a lot more about cloud computing and how you as an individual or a company can take advantage of it in the coming months.

8. eBooks and electronic paper start to mature: We might not see the Amazon Kindle in South Africa anytime soon, but the popularity and global appetite for electronic books has unquestionably grown in leaps in bounds since Amazon launched the device in the US just over a year ago.

Besides Amazon, there is a growing list of online retailers that sell eBooks and there are rumours that local stores will soon follow suit. Competition from other eBook device manufacturers such as Sony is increasing and electronic paper (e-paper) technology is dropping in price all the time, so we will most certainly see eBooks become popular in South Africa even without Amazon's support.

9. Twitter becomes a household name: the popular micro-blogging platform that was a virtual unknown a little over a year ago is set for prime time in South Africa in 2009, where it will be used

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The year that digital marketing comes of age

By: Walter Pike

Trends in marketing in 2009 will be driven by the worldwide economic crunch, technology and the election campaign of Barack Obama to become the president of the United States of America - and not only because of the political impact of that but because it provides a dramatic example of how a no-hoper, a junior senator, can make it to the White House using modern marketing methods.

As always in tough economic times, marketing budgets will be under pressure as business focuses on the most effective use of its resources. Although marketers often throw up their arms in frustration, this is no wonder as we find traditional marketing approaches to be less and less effective. Less effective because customers have greater access to information, the opinions of their peers and experts available on millions of blogs, social networking sites and Internet searches and don't have to rely on marketing collateral.

In spite of some conventional South African wisdom writing off the Internet as a peripheral medium, the importance of the Internet will grow. South Africa has already more than 4.5 million Internet users and is also standing on the brink of an Internet explosion as access to Internet bandwidth suddenly increases and broadband becomes the standard. This starts with the coming on-stream of the first of a number of new undersea cables and the expected reduction in the cost of bandwidth.

> **“ Extremely significant will be the realisation of the importance of mobile connections to the Internet, with services such as MXit, which has millions of users, being recognised as a main stream communications medium. ”**

Marketers, faced with greater pressure for accountability and effectiveness and being shown the how, are likely to turn more and more to exploring and using digital methods which are measurable and there will be a growth in mobile for 2009.

New approach to branding

Smart marketers are starting to realise that top-down branding is a phase that is passing on; the importance of brands has not declined but the shift from brand management towards brand collaboration and stewardship has commenced. This is being driven by the shift of the power in the transaction to the customer, because customers have greater access to information, the opinions of their peers and experts.

Marketers around the world will be considering the amazing and radical campaign that resulted in the election of Democratic Party no-hoper, Barack Obama, to the White House. The campaign turned traditional branding and marketing on its head and is forcing a complete rethink of traditional approaches.

Brands as movements

The Barack Obama “Yes we can” rallying cry is a wonderful example of how a brand can be generated as a movement of the people. It's a word-of-mouth marketing approach that started with the people - bottom up, not top down - supported by the networking infrastructure provided by social networking, and cemented using traditional media to reinforce instead of to launch and introduce the brand.

Word-of-mouth marketing has always been regarded as the most powerful but also the least practical of all marketing approaches. However, the most important conversation in the market has always been and always will be that between your current customer and your prospective customer. Social networks such as Facebook (with well over 30% in the over-30 bracket) and MXit lead the way. The emergence of a new style of hyper local networking sites, such as the Word Of Mouth Forum (WOMF) (www.womf.com) network being rolled out in South Africa, will facilitate the growth of this approach.

Mobile marketing

Mobile connectivity is already significant in South Africa, as is the number of WAP-enabled phones. I see marketers starting to tap into this medium very much more aggressively as the realisation hits home. This should mean more than mobile interactivity at the lower end of the market but potentially with location-sensitive communication becoming more mainstream and map interface applications such as The Grid (www.thegrid.co.za) starting to attract interest amongst early adopters.

Mobile marketers will be more likely to move from thinking in terms of normal interruption advertising to useful applications which will create engagement.

Attitudes changing

Advertising agencies and marketers who have been viewing digital as a peripheral media type will start realising that it is not a passing phase, and really not just another medium, that it requires a brand new look at marketing. To quote Media Mogul Rupert Murdock:

> **“ To find something comparable, you have to go back 500 years to the printing press, the birth of mass media - which, incidentally, is what really destroyed the old world of kings and aristocracies. ”**

Technology is shifting power away from the editors, the publishers, the establishment, the media elite. Now it's the people who are taking control.

With this realisation will come the need for people with the skills to be able to deal with digital. **The next question is: where these people are coming from?**

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Combining desire with virtue - key branding trend for 2009

By: Mathew Weiss

BIZ'09 TREND REPORT

Type the word ‘environment’ into Google and you get 376 million results. Going green is hot right now, and there are plenty of Hollywood celebrities who will testify to this. Where celebrities go, the adoring public usually follow and brand owners are waking up to the fact that being green is not only fashionable, but can be a powerful brand differentiator, too, when product attributes are quickly copied by competitors.

Going green is only part of the story. It is one consequence of a global mass movement towards ‘doing good’. For a whole host of reasons, of which global warming is just one driver, consumers increasingly want their brands to be one of the good guys and are choosing accordingly. This rise in mass-market ethical consumption represents both challenges and opportunities for brands.

Ethical buying by the majority is a different beast to that of traditional ethical purchasing. Until recently we divided between those of us who loved to shop, to consume (the majority) and those of us who cared about the world at large, beyond material goods (the few). An ethical purchase meant standing by your convictions, even if it meant sacrificing style, comfort or performance - all while paying a premium to do so.

Offer goodness

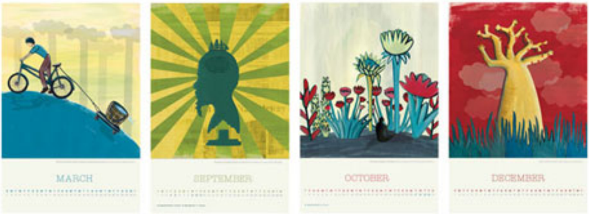
Mass market consumers, on the other hand, still love shopping for their favourite brands, but they now expect these brands to offer goodness in an accessible way, without compromise and without sacrifice. This is the change we are seeing - rather than the absolutes of traditional ethical or non-ethical purchases it's now about being virtuous.

> **“ Ethical brands define themselves by their goodness, whereas the new breed of virtuous brands incorporates virtue with other qualities. Virtue allows consumers and brands to do their bit without having to squash their desires and radically alter behaviour. This means we don't have to be perfect to be good, which is basically more realistic and attainable. ”**

Combine virtue with desire

Brands that will be successful in this eco-environment are the ones who help us combine virtue with desire.

For example, our design of the Spier calendar is a subtle and beautiful way to highlight how Spier endeavours to improve the environment, as well as the lives of the people who form its greater community. Each month one particular aspect of these social and environmental upliftment programmes is highlighted and beautifully illustrated on recycled paper.



The areas covered include, but are not limited to, their cheetah outreach program; its financial support of children's education; its water and waste recycling programmes; and its support of small businesses. The idea was to give Spier the opportunity to showcase its considerable social and environmental investment in a way that people would find beautiful and non-intrusive.

Charity

Another relevant path to virtue in South Africa is charity. It's been a part of good corporate citizenship for years but only recently is it becoming central to market differentiation. The answer lies in bringing together both the desire and the virtue in a way that stays true to the brand while driving home a strong social message.

An example of getting it right is Cell C's “Hola 7” initiative, which used the iconic youth role model Zola as a figure head for the development of community spirit, making sense of mobile telephony's role in helping people get in touch. It shows how a brand can use desire to sell product and make a measurable social difference in an appropriate way to target the lower end of the market.

Another benefit of targeting products at this end of the market, with this kind of brand strategy, is simply offering people more and better choices. It is empowering for consumers to be given the choice between products that simply meet their individual needs and those, which in addition also contribute to the good of their communities. They may even be prepared to pay a small premium to achieve this.

In the ensuing race to demonstrate ethical credentials, many brands will feel unsure about putting their heads above the parapet in case they are shot down. But don't be scared, instead be vigilant in the area you choose and a simple message of 'we're doing our bit or doing our best to' can be enough. After all, it's what most of us are doing.

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Convergence is overrated

By: Graham Willcock

There is one indicator/trend that will trump all others in 2009 - and I suspect for quite some time thereafter as well. Vision and values, or V2 as we call it at RadMark, is going to define the nature of business relationships - be they definitional stakeholders such as customers, employees, investors and competitors or instrumental stakeholders such NGOs, special interest groups, Government or the media as a whole.

The financial crisis of 2008 has placed V2 squarely at the centre of intelligent commercial thought and as a business goes about developing its storyline so those that can clearly articulate their vision and values will take the advantage.

As for nine industry trends in 2009, these would be my guess:

1. **An emphasis on vision and values (V2):** as the market contracts and business is forced to adapt, so too will there be a greater emphasis on vision and values. V2 will either enable the partnership between a company and its strategic partners or bring about its dissolution.

2. Developing the storyline: leadership in tough times requires a storyline suitable for the audience - as the storyline is developed, so the appeal to investors and advertisers will grow.

3. **The use of price promotion to manage a contracting market:** panic-discounting belies the insecurities of the discounter - price promotion linked to the value proposition will be the way to ride out the commercial storm and those able to do it in a manner that combines empathy for the customer, with commercial savvy, will prevail.

4. **The value of cash:** managing cash flow in a downturn and a prudent approach to protecting cash reserves will ensure that a company remains pointed in the right direction with a focus on the horizon - the tail of the storm is out there; the trick is to stay afloat long enough to see it.

5. Investment in research: there is no better time to invest in research - it's the smartest way to develop the storyline and to provide insights into a brand and its audience whatever the type of media consumption.

6. Investment in personal development: the tougher the market the easier it is to hide - this is a really good time to take that course or finish that degree. Personal development makes it easier to stay productive and gives you enough confidence to sustain visibility - regardless of how often you hear the word no.

7. Maximising the opportunity presented by the 2009 General Elections: the General Election presents an opportunity for all media types - those that have been working on developing relationships over the past couple of years will see a better share of that opportunity than those who have been waiting for it to fall into their laps.

8. Preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup: like any good football match, 2010 is going to have its share of thrills and spills for media in SA - innovation will be the key, as will an ability to leverage value within ASA and 2010 LOC guidelines. If you want to spot the trend, check out what the hawkers are doing at each major intersection.

9. Playing in the media convergence space: Still the most overrated media space of all, a willingness to play in the convergence area goes only so far as the development of core competencies - by that I mean the ability to ask the right questions, whether you understand the answers or not.

Around the world, enthusiasm over mobile media has cooled considerably - SA is one of the only countries in the world still willing to be seduced by those pundits desperate to be accredited with spotting 'the next best thing'. At best, mobile and digital media will continue to play second fiddle to those traditional media types that can show an ability to at least 'maintain a signal' in developing a relationship with their audience.

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Nine trends to anticipate in 2009

By: Rose Setshoge

The previous year was both thrilling and challenging for many marketers, due to various breakthroughs. Some were brave enough to try some new strategies, simultaneously learning about the alterations happening within the marketplace, while others remained in their comfort zones without taking any risks. Here are some developments to anticipate in the year 2009.

Marketing has become a two-way contact where feedback is key, otherwise it is impossible to measure; gone are the days when decision-makers did not have an influence or a say on the products or services they consumed.

Below are some of the developments to anticipate in the year 2009.

1. Online advertising: this medium has shown a remarkable growth due to its consumption escalation within South Africa, which is a positive sign indeed. Although many still do not have access to computers; however advanced cellphones will become a podium for social networking space that media planners are now recognising.

2. Word-of-mouth: this tool has been untapped for many centuries. It is a less-costly method of penetrating the markets' headspace and conversation. Eighty percent of the market is more likely to consume a brand that a friend has recommended than pay attention to a product message through advertising. To achieve this, a marketer will have to build and maintain a relationship with a number of consumers and capture their loyalty.

3. Blogging: another online tool endorsed by the above marketing means, which allows for product criticism and essentially a dialogue between a consumer and a marketer. This mechanism ensures a transparent relationship with a consumer and improves existing communication.

4. Segmentation models: Living Standard Measurements (LSM) have become complex to use efficiently as the market has drastically transformed and are usually not used in a comprehensive way. These segmentation models have incorporated many demographic factors and relevant psychographic manner to match the market.

5. Qualitative research: Indeed, quantitative research helps and is needed; however it does not provide recent insight as consumers change their minds rapidly. Many of the findings are provided within a period of six months to a year, which is a lengthy period. Although qualitative is a costly method, many are prepared to learn more about who they appeal to.

6. Corporate social investment (CSI): This initiative assists with brand recognition and has the potential to emotionally appeal to the market.

7. Digizines (digital magazines): technology advances speedily and the industry needs to be on the guard. Many media owners have launched magazines online and newspapers have created an opportunity to access news as well, which is not necessarily negative. However, a crucial question: "Is this not replacing traditional media within the affluent market?"

8. Products that consider the environment: an increased number of consumers prefer "green" goods, hence organisations should pay attention to the environment.

9. Corporate brand marketing: employer brandingassists organisations in being recognised within both local and international locations.

The market has an influence in the forever-changing industry and communication tools. Although online media is not currently dominating the advertising spend or budget, as some point it will as technology plays an even more important role in consumers' lives.

Elections will add impetus to events industry in 2009

By: Brian Kennedy

BIZ'09
TREND
REPORT

The exhibitions and events industry is leading from the front in the communications mix as a multibillion rand industry and this trend will further accelerate in 2009.

We have experienced exponential growth in all five of our activation companies - exhibitions, events, audiovisual, electrical and hiring - and the successes experienced in 2008 have laid the foundation for our customers to further increase their investments next year in one-on-one customer relationship opportunities, for which our industry is an enabler.

The Nedbank Golf Challenge is just one example, where we have installed marquees where thousands of business people will meet to engage with their customers and where results can be measured immediately.

Involvement of global players

Our industry will continue to attract event investors. By way of example, we have just signed a consortium partnership with the French company GL events; a company with revenues of more than R7 billion and which manages 28 venues around the world. Having been instrumental for the infrastructure and management of cricket, soccer and rugby world cups, Olympic Games and the Euro Cup 2008, global players such as GL events will become more involved with big events in South Africa.

> **“New exhibitions, events and conferences for 2009 are announced at regular intervals and, as in other sectors and industries, this will further challenge the local supply chain, especially when it comes to resources.”**

The shortage of professional workers stretches throughout all occupations, from designers and project managers to shop fitters and account management staff. Learning institutes cannot produce qualified staff fast enough and the entry of international companies will further impact on the situation. Poaching is likely to increase and a natural development from this will be financial packages that may erode margins and lead to cost escalations, which may see some companies passing this onto their customers or they may have to close their doors.

Concerned

I am concerned about the trend of "word-of-mouth" briefings as a consequence of customer workloads, multitasking and tighter deadlines. Users of exhibitions and events, as well as organisers and suppliers, will have less quality time to plan their requirements for a professional appearance. The number of shows and events are disproportionate to the availability of professional facilities, and this will further impact on the time constraints to install infrastructure between shows that are staged back-to-back at the same venues.

> **“2009 will be especially exciting as suppliers of infrastructure will have the opportunity to become**

> **involved in the national elections, from the rallies leading up to the elections to the actual date when millions will be casting their votes. The Confederations Cup will also afford business opportunities. ”**

As corporate business and tourism advance, the good news about South Africa as a destination is that the number of visitors to exhibitions and events will increase, which will place additional demands on venue owners to improve on facilities management and the caliber of staff. At a recent event at a well-known venue, which was attended by more than 700 employees from a corporate company, untrained workers were hired to attend to guests as waiters. It is doubtful that the company in question will use the venue again and the venue management has acted irresponsibly towards the rest of the industry.

Collective effort

To survive the market demands of 2009 will require a collective effort from all players. We have to move up a few notches in quality, innovation, infrastructure, project management and add more detail to the total scope of delivery. SA's exhibitions and events industry is now participating on a global scale - whether locally or elsewhere - and we have to ensure that we perform according to international standards so as to avoid being branded second best.

We are all members of a broad-based communication industry and I can predict that executives in the various sectors such as advertising, public relations, exhibitions, events and related marketing services will start to collaborate with a business purpose. Although our services

Special events to spur outdoor advertising in 2009

By: Richard Bode

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Outdoor advertising should still see positive growth in 2009, along with multi-messaging, a more tactical use, improved research and planning tools, LSM integration and integrated campaigns - all spurred on by the increase in special events.

1. Growth of digital outdoor: this will increase the opportunities of multi-messaging as part of the outdoor landscape. The extent of the growth could, however, possibly be slower than anticipated, due to the economic climate.

2. Rediscovery: advertisers will "re-discover" outdoor advertising as a very effective communication platform. The amount of time spent outdoors, especially in increasing traffic congestion, offers a very good opportunity to advertisers to entertain, inform and drive consumer behaviour.

3. Tactical use of outdoor advertising: more advertisers are using outdoor tactically to communicate specific elements of an overall campaign message, as well as targeting specific locations as a landmark positions.

4. Better research and planning tools: specifically for the outdoor industry, these will provide industry-accepted justification for the outdoor media investment.

5. Change in the outdoor landscape: due to changing legislation and by-laws that govern outdoor advertising, the number of new site locations and the size of these will be severely affected. This will see an increased use of street furniture.

6. Increase in special events: 2009 will see many special events, including the National Elections, the Confederations Cup and the buildup to 2010. These high profile events will influence how advertisers use the outdoor platform. There will also be more public campaigns ahead of the national and local elections.

7. LSM integration: with the further integration of traditional LSM 8 -10 outdoor formats into LSM 6-8 areas, what you have come to expect in Sandton you will now also see in Soweto.

8. Integrated campaigns: the use of outdoor formats to compliment other digital formats. Outdoor re-enforces mobile phone marketing, radio and television.

9. Domination by stronger brands: stronger brands will continue to invest in and dominate affordable outdoor formats.

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Changing shopper habits in 2009

By: Louise Boxall-Davie

JWT South Africa, and its global network of trend spotters in more than 200 countries, foresees that the economy, technology and social marketing will recur as major themes throughout 200

We will see more consumer-coping strategies to deal with the downturn. People are increasingly savouring brand and life experiences, rather than just blindly buying and spending. Many will also evaluate their career decisions, as increasing numbers of jobs are in peril or already lost.

Authenticity will become paramount for brands as they look to regain credibility and trust. People are thinking less about "me" and more about what "we" can do collectively, to address the challenges of modern society. Furthermore, technological advancements are catapulting the mobile phone to the prime position of what we call the "everything hub".

While these trends are not directly media, marketing or advertising industry trends, they do offer some insights into what may happen in 2009 in our industry.

Shopper habits change

As South Africans feel the pinch of the economic downturn, they are likely to change the way they shop. This could see them trading down in some categories as they search for value, and moving into new categories as they look for ways to enjoy small pleasures and affordable rewards. Good news for both house brands and take-home ice cream manufacturers.

We have all heard the numbers: 70% of decisions are made at the shop shelf. Increasingly, SA marketers are considering, if not embracing, shopper marketing. This will see 2009 having an additional focus on the shopper - as opposed to the consumer - by many local marketers as they work harder and harder to drive sales in tough economic times.

This trend will manifest in a shift in budgets towards visibility and other in-store activities, as well as a quest to understand the shopper better. Shopper marketing activities will be accompanied by "good, old-fashioned" value offers a la Woolworths' "Feed a family of four for under R100" or promotions with instant prizes, eg Willards' airtime promotion.

> **“ In fact, for some categories, incentives to purchase will become table stakes as retailers and marketers jostle for their share of the shopper's wallet. ”**

By the end of 2009, our industry could look and behave quite differently. The inevitable retrenchments from agencies, media houses and related businesses, together with clients' ever-pressing needs for big ideas and effective and measurable solutions, will affect the way we do business.

Smaller, leaner teams will collaborate with a host of partners - some traditional and others unexpected. WPP's Team Chemistry is an example of the latter. A WPP initiative, driven by JWT and WPP healthcare partner agencies, recently pitched for, and won, a significant portion of Johnson & Johnson's global business.

'Garage agencies'

Similarly, in 2009, we are likely to see a mushrooming of smaller, faster, cheaper "garage agencies" as people leave formal employment to live their own dream. Many of these SMEs offer a specialist, not a full-service, offering. Of course, client has the challenge of dealing with a number of agencies, each a specialist in their own field, including the cost of coordination and loss of economies of scale. However, increasingly, in the search for "bang for buck", clients may be less concerned where the idea comes from, and more concerned with the quality and "bigness" of the idea and its potential for success.

The challenge for larger more-established agencies in 2009 is to play to their strengths while recognising and taking advantage of emergent business models and opportunities for collaboration with new partners.

> **“ From an ad spend perspective, 2009 will be filled with challenges and more of the same. Traditional media spend will not be replaced by alternative media, but there will be a shift towards digital, in-store and direct marketing. ”**

However, will 2009 be the year that mobile marketing is truly seen as an equal partner in the mix? Will the ubiquitous "Please Call Me" advertising and Vodacom's Ads Me receive the accolades they deserve, or will marketers continue to talk about 70% mobile phone penetration (another 70% statistic - interesting), and attend conferences on the future of mobile marketing but fail to do anything to leverage this exciting but challenging channel?

South Africans are one of the most generous nations, giving significant amounts of time and money to those less fortunate than themselves. This generosity of spirit is well-expressed in MTN's recent campaign "Give Summer Love". We can expect to see more of this kind of work in 2009 as clients and agencies recognise that consumers, especially in tough times, are more likely to choose brands that do good things than brands that don't. South African consumers will be looking for brands that offer genuine, authentic promises. Window-dressing or superficial attempts to win the hearts of consumers will not cut it.

Finally, brands that embrace technology in a relevant way, engage in social marketing and remain true to their core brand promise are more likely to overcome the challenges that 2009 will bring.

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Nine trends for 2009 for a world in flux

By: Dion Chang

Just in case you've not heard it enough already, 2009 will be all about collaboration, social networks and the rise of the individual, not to mention location-based services, sustainability, changing value systems and spirituality.

1. Collaboration: the economic meltdown in 2008 has already proved to be the perfect incubator for this trend. Shrinking budgets and non-existent cash flows have forced people - and businesses - to form mutually beneficial relationships to weather the recession. Cross-branding became the buzzword in terms of marketing in 2008, but a jittery global economy has ensured that this trend is now viewed as a sensible opportunity, if not a necessity.

The airline industry, which has suffered sharp declines in passenger and cargo volumes (US$4bn losses in the first three quarters of 2008), is calling it "industry consolidation". British Airways is currently in merger talks with Quantas, while continuing similar talks with Iberia, who in turn are in talking to American Airlines about a transatlantic alliance.

On the home front, many cash strapped families have already started collaborating by sharing homes or pooling resources. Extended families and single, or newly divorced, parents are living together to cut costs and assist with parenting children.

> **"This trend echoes concepts such as the open source software movement in the IT industry, where sharing and collaborating is seen as a new way forward, rather than the traditional notion of territorial ownership, which today looks rather outdated and limiting."**

2. SNS as a mobilising force: social network services such as MySpace, Facebook and Twitter are forging connections between people like never before. We are moving through the "honeymoon phase" of new media and we are beginning to grasp the true potential of this level of inter-connectivity. Individuals can discuss any topic that appeals to them, no matter how diverse their interests, with like-minded others. Out there, there is a group for everyone, and a forum for any discussion.

The scope of conversations that exist today is absolutely mind-boggling, ranging from anything as obscure as the toxic value of concentrated pine tree sap, to the comparative study of 1970's Nintendo consoles. On the one hand, there is this "nichification", and on the other hand, popular groups are gaining ground and actually becoming a force to be reckoned with.

Take for example the recent challenge put to Coca-Cola by someone with a big idea. (Remembering that Coca-Cola is a huge multinational corporation, so why would it listen to a single voice out there?)

But what Simon Berry (the big idea guy) did was start a Facebook group called "Let's talk to Coca-Cola about saving the world's children" and invited all his friends to join, who in turn invited all their friends and so on. The idea was to use Coca Cola's existing, and extensive, distribution lines to send out oral rehydration salts and other medicines, to the poorest parts of Africa, by dedicating one compartment in every 10 to saving a child's life.

How could Coca Cola possibly say no? So, what transpired was ColaLife - a website dedicated to expanding the Facebook group and encouraging suggestions as well as hands on involvement from members of the community.

> **“ In 2009 we will see the power of social network services increasing as people begin to realise that together, they can have a powerful positive impact. ”**

3. Geomapping: virtually tagging our world. Google searching has revolutionised the way we interact with information. Filtered and optomised searches have made the access of information fast and easy. With the advent of Google Maps and mobile GPS technology, we are witnessing an all-new hybrid form of search that is 100% customizable, from mood to taste to hotel preference.

IFeelLondon, IFeelNewYork and IFeelToronto offer location-based searches according to the mood of the traveler. The best activities for someone feeling hung over would be vastly different from someone who was feeling energetic. Mood-based searches offer a more personal, curated experience of a city than any handbook available on the market could, satisfying a broader need for people to enjoy more personalised experiences.

Similarly, SeeYourHotel is a search by location service that allows users to view actual pictures of the hotel rooms and the surrounding area, as well as read reviews by previous guests (innkeepers take note: treat every guest as if they have come to do a review for the New York Times). EatBite, currently available in New York only, allows restaurant goers to search by location, price range, nearest landmark and food type - the ultimate customisable search. In that case, I would like to eat a pizza for no more than US$15 as close as possible to the Empire State building...

4. Closed system design: we need a new way of living, it's clear. The old way simply does not work anymore. Waste continues to pile up in landfills, as the machines - that changed the world in the industrial revolution - continue to pour out wasteful, toxic products. The entire system needs to be rethought.

There is a solution, back at the drawing board.

William McDonough, long time eco-activist and architect, proposes remaking the way we make things entirely. McDonough and his partner, chemical engineer Michael Braungart, have developed a process of industrial design that effectively cuts waste out completely. The Cradle-to-Cradle system, or C2C (as opposed to the cradle-to-grave system) takes a biomimetic approach, which takes into account human industry and ecological processes. In this model, all raw materials are seen as nutrients, and just as in the life cycle of a plant, which dies and decomposes to become food for the next plants, all parts of the whole can be broken down and recycled into new parts.

In 2009, re-commerce will play a more significant role in small businesses, with more entrepreneurs beginning to realise the commercial value of recycling. Large corporate companies, mostly looking for ways to minimise waste and improve public opinion, will continue finding better ways of waste management.

McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry has worked on major projects for global companies such as Nike, Ford and Gap, as well as implemented several projects for the Chinese government. If they are listening, shouldn't we?

5. The rise of the individual: there has been a strong backlash to the ubiquitous and the mass-commoditised, especially in mature consumer markets worldwide. People increasingly want to feel special, not part of a blanket target market that falls into a certain demographic. People are no longer a demographic; they are individuals, with individual tastes and specific preferences.

Whatever your industry, in order to reach them, you need to offer them increasingly personalised products or customised services, tailor-made to their needs.

Companies such as Nike have realised this, offering truly bespoke, DIY (design-it-yourself) sneakers, and so have remained one step ahead, even in the face of potentially back-breaking child labour allegations in the late '90s. Nike's earnings have increased from US$6.4 billion in 1996 (when the accusations where first made), to US$17 billion in 2007, so it must be doing something right.

The notion of "make something and then we'll sell it" is increasingly giving way to "let them design it and we'll produce it for them", offering people the choice that they have become accustomed to in other areas of their lives.

Self-expression is also a key factor to the individualistic paradigm, which signals a strong contrast to anti-globalisation and a shift away from the mass-marketed, cookie-cutter mentality that came with it. Increasingly, people will find more creative ways of expressing their individuality, especially when they are feeling particularly squeezed for cash.

6. The consumer revolution: the rise of the individual is also ensuring that there's a remarkable revolution underway. Consumers have evolved - rather quickly we might add - from passive consumers, to what Flux likes to call, "active aggressive" consumers, and the inspiration for this revolution is coming from the unlikeliest of sources.

Two seemingly opposing trends - the eco movement and interactive technology - are coming together to produce a very vocal and demanding consumer, and one that is difficult to categorise. The Internet and satellite TV have provided "armchair wisdom" for the global populace, while the blogsphere has provided a quick and effective outlet to vent their frustrations or displeasure. Add to that mix, growing awareness (or guilt) of environmental issues and you get a socially aware, part-time eco warrior with access to global communication.

It's a retailer's worst nightmare. These new consumers now demand not only brand participation but also bespoke services and complete corporate transparency. If you are able to personalise anything from your bed linen to your breakfast muesli online, why (they ask) are you not able to do the same in the offline world? This is known as the "change gap": the delay between advancing technologies and the corporate response to catching up with the changes that those technologies bring.

> **“ For retailers and corporate companies a good place to start would be to simply switch from a “here's my product, buy it” approach, to a “thank you so much for choosing my product”, because consumers do have alternative choices - plenty of them. ”**

7. Cottage garden envy: it's either a knock-on effect of the economic slump, or pressure from the green movement, but whichever way you look at it, everyone is discovering the horticulturalist within, and growing their own vegetables. The novices dabble with herbs, but the seasoned vegetable growers can tell you when it's suitable to plant pak choi and where to place the asparagus. The really trendy ones are embracing cottage gardens (where vegetables are planted in amongst flowers) as opposed to kitchen gardens (where you have a separate vegetable patch).

Either way, less disposable income will mean that, when having a dinner party, it will be quite acceptable for dinner guests to "bring a dish" - in fact, having discovered their horticultural talents, your guests will only be too happy to show off their sustainability skills.

Flux predicts that homegrown vegetables will become the status symbols - hence, cottage garden envy for those late trend adopters. Imported, out-of-season vegetables will become, quite literally, so very last season.

8. Changing value systems: a recent issue of Fortune magazine posed a question that is sure to strike fear in the hearts of any luxury brand company. It asked, "Even after the global economy stabilizes, will anyone want [US]$2000 handbags, or [US]$5000 watches? Or is there a risk that 'luxury' will go the same way of yuppies and become a fad that many would prefer to forget?"

CEO of Yves Saint Laurent - Valerie Hermann - calls the current retail situation as "a crisis of values"... and Flux agrees. In the past year, consumer perception and mindset has changed radically. The era of bling, disposable fashion and conspicuous consumption has made way for cradle-to-cradle design systems, recycling and timeless (read not wasteful) design. This shift has made people redefine the concept of luxury: it is no longer something material, but rather an experience: preferably shared, and ideally with your nearest and dearest.

Corporate companies are also feeling the mood swing. Bill Gates set the ball rolling with his campaign for "creative capitalism": an attempt to stretch the reach of market forces so that more companies can benefit from doing work that makes more people better off. And the revolution has already started. If companies have spare cash to enter into sponsorship agreements, they now insist that it is linked to some form of CSI. It's no longer about simply slapping a logo onto everything. It's business with a heart.

Who knew big business had one?

9. Micro-blogging meets meditation: these days it seems more and more difficult to keep up with the constant flood of emails and SMSs and while we struggle to clear our in-boxes - and manage our second lives - there is a growing need to anchor one's self before being completely swept away by technology.

Virtual life, for many of us, has permeated through all the porous boundaries of our lives - online is the first place we look for anything, be it directions, telephone numbers or product information. When we get home, we switch on the television and zone out after a hard day's work; some of us even game.

These days we engage more with the screens (cellphone, computer, television) in front of us, than the people around us. But in the distance, subtle calls echo for a more holistic approach to life, as we sense the need to nourish our emotional and physical selves in an increasingly virtual reality. A gym session to alleviate stress no longer helps very much. Mindful practices such as meditation and yoga have become increasingly accepted as essential parts of our daily lives, and ancient traditional religions and religious practices such as Kabbalah have taken root in mainstream consciousness. These practices offer a sense of being connected to something more than just the Internet, as people strive to find more meaning in an increasingly disembodied world.

In 2009, people are looking for solid grounding amidst the torrential downpour of information in our virtual world.

Cinema advertising a positive choice in 2009

By: Karen Bailey

BIZ'09 TREND REPORT

The old adage, "cinema is known to boom amid the gloom", has never been more true and South Africa is no exception. The advent of new and engaging cinema innovations will ensure the medium continues to provide advertisers with opportunities to cost effectively reach their target market in a focused, uncluttered environment.

As was recently noted in the Wall Street Journal, "During five out of the last seven recessions in America, the box office has boomed. Especially when gas prices started skyrocketing early this year and 'stay-cations' were suddenly all the rage, people still had to find opportunities to get out of the house for a few hours. Apparently, some stay-cations might actually cause 'cabin fever'."

New and alternative ad opportunities

The big screen format and entertaining world of cinema will continue to excite clients into 2009 with ongoing new and alternative advertising opportunities, such as Smell Campaigns, 3D movies and various versions of cinema gaming and interactivity such as 'advergames'.

Marketers are looking for media choices that work even harder than before. On-screen digital advertising is a highly cost-effective option for advertisers looking to maintain an impactful presence among their target market and I believe this trend will continue strongly through 2009. With a crisp image and 5.1 Dolby surround sound, digital advertising is the obvious choice for brands needing to downscale their investment in other more expensive visual media and still maintain top-of-mind awareness.

> **“ From our perspective over 2008, we saw more advertisers using cinema more frequently for multiple screenings, and we expect this trend to continue for the course of 2009. ”**

Cinema has proven its value and efficiency as a sustainable medium and many advertisers are taking advantage of the off-screen options that cinema has to offer. Used in tandem with in-house promotions, cinema can literally double or triple the impact a brand can have on moviegoers.

Draw consumers into cinema

Attendances for 2008 ended on a high with movies such as Quantum of Solace, Mr Bones 2 and Madagascar 2 proving popular choices for both advertisers and cinema-goers. I believe that 2009 is going to be another strong movie year in terms of attendances and ad-revenue; titles such as Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince; Transformers 2, Ice Age 3, and Angels and Demons will continue to draw consumers into cinema.

So, while clients will continue to evaluate their communication needs and look at all platforms more carefully, and even though cinema is a small piece of the pie, the medium is undisputedly one of the better performing available to advertisers under these trying conditions.

ROI and accountability - major themes for 2009

By: Francesco Mariola

BIZ'09
TREND
REPORT

"Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted. The trouble is, I don't know which half." So said Lord Leverhulme. This statement no longer holds true, but as we head into 2009, we need to look at the lack of return on investment (ROI), accountability and the way forward.

Until now, advertisers have only been able to take their communication budgets up to an implementation phase with the tools available to them. From there on in, there is no measure against actual sales which could account for the ROI and effectiveness of their choices, or the impact of other variables. The ideal solution would be to isolate and determine which campaign components or media were the most, or least, effective.

Scientific methodology

Any advertiser will tell you that they want channels and platforms which deliver the best results for their business. Of course they do. The big question is how? I believe the answer has to be a scientific methodology which inputs the activated communication strategies and tracks individual media platforms back to actual sales data. It's the only way to provide tangible accountability and defined ROI.

Any major retailer will reflect very different sales data on different products in different locations, for example, Sandton as opposed to Springs or Daveyton. How does an FMCG brand manager know why his product is outselling in one area, and not moving in another? He doesn't. This inevitably means that more of the advertising budget will be thrown behind the brand as a whole, in the hope that sales will improve.

> **“ In terms of new media, advertisers and marketers are unsure as to how a new platform will positively affect sales, resulting in a lot of guess work in post-campaign analysis. Valuable budget is often wasted because marketers are not aware of where the saturation point for every advertised product is. ”**

Save a lot of money

There comes a time when, no matter how much advertising budget is spent on any particular brand, product or service, the sales or transactions for that brand will level out - the saturation point. Using a carefully calculated method of tracking where the money is spent and drilling down to sales results of products, region and category, marketers can save a lot of money and identify specific geographical areas and product categories which require more, or less, media spend.

Forecasting of stock has in the past proved to be extremely difficult for retailers as each media campaign may deliver very different results. A lack of accurate forecasting will have a negative effect on production, logistics, finance, sales and marketing.

The other advantage to scientifically calculating ROI is the ability to track competitive activity especially in the retail sector, quantify the rand value of the product you're selling, and provide an accurate gauge for how much of your advertising spend is really being wasted.

While I believe that 2009 is going to be tougher with several account moves, budget cuts and more pressure on marketers and brand managers to ensure their product or service retains its share of voice with less spend, accountability should be one less thing to worry about.

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2009 will see more advertisers in shopping centres

By: Darren Katz

The shopping centre space in 2009 continues to be a hub of activity for consumers of all ages, races and social backgrounds. While in the past few years, the average time spent in a mall has been around three hours, research and recent refurbishments around major centres are indicating that consumers are spending more time and advertisers are getting more bang for their buck.

We've seen the strip mall format's popularity increasing in certain areas but it's still the traditional anything-you-want-in-one-place shopping mall which remains king for those wanting to top-up the empty cupboards, grab a meal and have hours of entertainment at the same time. Advertisers are not getting great value in strip malls because a consumer will generally only go into one retail outlet with a defined shopping list in mind - they get in, buy what they need and get out.

Completely different picture

For advertisers which are in the shopping centre space, it's a completely different picture. If your campaign is correctly packaged, a brand will dominate a certain area or space with no competitor brands in the immediate vicinity.

We see a great deal of advertisers in the cosmetic, cellular, vehicles and consumable markets repeatedly advertising in malls because they're getting a solid return on investment. What is interesting to note is that financial clients are moving more of their spend into the mall and we foresee more of this trend moving into 2009.

> “ Shopping behaviour is also changing as we see more and more digital formats making its way into malls, aiding the consumer in having a stress free a shopping trip as possible. ”

For example, Primall recently launched its Touch Screen Directories into high-end areas, complete with movie clips and animation. These are 46-inch portrait-positioned, full LCD high definition plasma screen TVs which allow consumers to search for a store, product or brand name and be easily directed to that point.

The Touch Screen Directories have been very well-received as consumers are able to directly interact with retailers to get more product information or even book a test drive with a vehicle manufacturer - the 'one stop shop' is taking on a whole new meaning!

Video wall

More innovation heading our way in 2009 is a Sony Video Wall concept which we'll be rolling out, as well as a dedicated Activation division, to really engage consumers and allow advertisers to fully dominate a key area in any specific mall/s. These will allow for advertisers to run a dedicated geographic campaign or target its market nationally during a campaign drive.

We saw it in the latter half of 2008, and throughout 2009, foot count will continue to increase in malls across the country and there seems to be no slowing down as many new centres continue to be built and existing centres are receiving upgrades and facelifts. In Gauteng, Eastgate, Hyde Park and Sandton City are malls currently undergoing major refurbishments, with Norwood Mall, Balfour Park and Cavendish already sporting a new look.

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eMarketing in 2009: exciting times, surprises predicted

By: Rob Stokes

BIZ'09
TREND
REPORT

In such turbulent times, who would dare make a prediction on what the future holds? Interestingly, I find a great deal of similarities between the world today and the world we faced in 2001 with the dotcom bubble burst.

Thankfully, Quirk made it through that experience and it stands us in good stead for the tricky times we face in 2009. While I can't see a major tech bubble to burst today, we are certainly in for some exciting times and no doubt a few surprises.

Here are my predictions for the eMarketing industry in 2009. Let's hope they're not all wrong.

1. Growth of online budget as a proportion of overall marketing budget: this is already happening, but I think 2009 will see the biggest leap in this trend to date in SA as the online share is still tiny. Times are tough, and online marketing is cost effective and measurable. 2009 will be the year eMarketing really comes of age in SA.

2. Industry consolidation: as a result of the above, there will be more industry consolidation. This will not only be in the pure digital agency space. The traditional agencies will start buying web shops in the hope to remain competitive and keep a larger share of the budget. Hopefully with this we will see better, and more, on- and offline synergy in campaigns. I think this is the real marketing sweet spot at the moment.

3. Growth of online video: with the (hopeful) introduction of better, cheaper bandwidth [the Seacom cable coming later this year], online video will explode in SA. More people will start watching and those who are already watching will watch more of it. Marketers will want to be in that space and with that will come more viral videos, branded entertainment and video display advertising.

Video is interesting because it's the first place where the digital and traditional agencies will really collide. Everyone knows who makes the TV ads; everyone knows who does the search engine magic: where does online video sit? I say with the eMarketing agencies.

4. Mapping: As digital maps of SA improve, particularly on mobile devices, we will see consumers using them more. Mobile and local search marketing will become very important to many marketers.

5. A focus on function over form (conversion/usability): traditionally SA web developers and online marketers have been far more focused on look and feel over usability and conversion. As budgets tighten and marketers become savvier, they will realise that these elements are far more important for online success. We will see an increasing focus on web analytics driving website and campaign performance. Together with this, digital awards will move towards recognising campaign effectiveness rather than pure creativity.

6. Online reputation management (ORM): as the online consumer voice grows ever stronger, online reputation monitoring and management will move from a strategic nice-to-have, to a business critical must have. I think the QVC saga has underlined that even traditional businesses are not immune to reputation problems and if you don't have a plan in place before the problems start, they have the potential to seriously impact any business.

7. Increasing usage of MMORPGs: Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games are not a new trend. The likes of World of Warcraft and Second Life have been around for a while. However, in SA, the use of these platforms has been very limited due to our current bandwidth constraints.

While I'm not touting the growth of Second Life (personally I can't really see the point in it), I think the use of these platforms as a whole in SA will grow once our broadband access and cost improves.

The main impact this has on marketers is the rise of in game advertising - already an enormous industry globally and yet still infant in SA. Expect this to be firmly on the eMarketer's radar in 2009.

8. The rise of distributed social networks: The social network will increasingly become a commodity and with it will go Facebook's market value. If Google takes Open Social and Friend Connect where it wants to, then the web could become a truly social platform.

This has many implications for eMarketers, but whether they can do it or not is a different story. I figure if Google can add a social layer to Gmail (ie you can see your friends' friends) before Facebook adds a Gmail beating messaging application, it will win. A very interesting tussle awaits us!

I thought you might enjoy this cartoon:

NOISE TO SIGNAL
Rob Cottingham · socialsignal.com/n2s

The rivalry between Facebook Connect and Google Friend Connect took a surprising turn today...

All that said, if Twitter launches a "connect" service, the game will become even more interesting. The ambient awareness of Twitter sets it apart from most social networks, and it's my belief that the trend is moving in this direction...

9. 2009 is the year of mobile (again!): Haha, sorry I couldn't resist that one. I think it goes without saying that the use of mobile and more importantly the consumer's mobile sophistication will continue to grow.

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How the digital landscape will shape marketing in 2009

By: Stafford Masie

A new year is here and stretching before us are 12 months of great possibility and opportunity. No-one could have predicted the innovation and evolution that we saw around the Internet during 2008. Likewise, making predictions for 2009 is nearly impossible. So instead of trying to make precise predictions about our incredibly dynamic industry, I've listed my top nine trends to watch during the coming year.

1. Betting on online: As this consumer shift happens, more businesses will look to retain their previously offline customers and reach this bigger market. Businesses both large and small will turn to search marketing to drive new traffic to their websites, as online advertising becomes the lifeblood of those trying to get ahead in the digital economy.

2. Offline events will drive online search: advertisers will take advantage of the direct link between offline events and the subsequent surge in online search. People immediately search the Internet for news, insights and video relating to major offline events. From sport to politics and natural disasters, offline events provide savvy and fast-acting advertisers the opportunity to make the most out of rising online search activity surrounding each event.

The reverse is also true: online search drives offline events, in the form of purchasing. Recent research by TNS in SA has shown that 34% of products are researched online but purchased offline. If customers can't find you online to make an evaluation, then you're missing a third of the market straight away. Become findable on the Internet and make online evaluation easy for your customers.

3. **Data beats opinion:** every day, hundreds of millions of people search on Google, so we can see trends emerge in real time. Access to search trend information is available to everyone though Google Insights for Search and Google Trends, and this year we expect to see an increase in the use of search trend data in how online marketing campaigns are structured.

This new level of insight into what the hottest online searches are will empower advertisers to move away from relative guess work and use hard data to inform their advertising decisions.

4. **Improve, improve, improve your website:** more and more web users are starting to make use of the readily available free and easy-to-use tools to improve the usability and functionality of their websites. You can use advanced tools to turn your website into a more effective sales tool by understanding how visitors use your website, where they land on your site, where they came from and what they expect to see when they get there.

For example, Google Analytics allows you to track user browsing behaviour on your site (for example, which pages they visit, what point they leave the site, how much time they spend) and Google Website Optimizer can suggest ways to improve the layout and format of your website to make it more user-friendly.

5. **Video will take centre stage:** online video viewing has become huge. For example, YouTube's unique users numbers have grown 50% year on year and it has over 200 million unique users globally a month (source: Nielsen Online 2008).

While online video's growth last year was astronomical, 2009 will see not only a continued growth, but an explosion in innovative uses of video within marketing campaigns. Online video testimonials, channel competitions, and online viral videos have arrived, so we're excited to see what additional new uses marketers will develop this year.

6. **Go big, go mobile:** More than 80% of Google's mobile search queries come from outside the US, and SA has shown dramatic growth in mobile search traffic. More people do business on their mobile phones than on their laptops because mobile search gives users instant, contextually relevant access to information anytime, anywhere.

SA's mobile penetration massively exceeds the broadband penetration, and even with the expected rise in broadband access in 2009, it isn't going to catch mobile just yet. So, it is important for SA advertisers to think mobile as they head into the new year.

7. The world will be watching: 2010 may be the year of the World Cup, but 2009 is the year when the world will do its research and planning.

We have already started to see an increase in the number of searches for and about SA from around the globe. The volume of search queries is going to grow exponentially as the world gears up for our sporting spectacle. Millions and millions of international consumers will be searching for information on SA, and local businesses will take advantage of the online opportunities available to market their products and services.

Savvy companies which are already up to speed on the opportunity presented by the World Cup won't be alone for long as more and more companies and industries move in the same direction.

8. **The Internet is social:** people are fascinated by other people and the Internet has brought

unprecedented access to other communities in multiple geographies, languages and time zones. The social Internet will become more of a feature of marketing campaigns, not just a destination. Video sharing sites, blogs, and the plethora of social networks are providing inovative marketers the opportunity to converse with customers and users.

The social media landscape will continue to evolve at a break-neck pace and many companies will launch marketing campaigns within the social media space to take advantage of the massive power of social networks. From the video of an aspiring rock band on YouTube, to on-the-ground footage of the turmoil in Kenya; from one person's political Twitter stream, to a sophisticated multi-party political blog portal, the Internet is providing greater transparency into what is happening in the world, and in the process widening our perspective.

9. Cloud computing is in your future: While the early days of the web were largely dominated by search, today we're also moving into a phase which focuses on making people more connected. Today, 'cloud computing' is making it much easier to get things done.

Cloud computing moves all of our computer-based activities - searching, emailing, watching videos, creating documents, and more - to a virtual space referred to as 'the cloud'. By keeping and accessing the information that's important to us online, or in the cloud, we're bringing an unprecedented level of flexibility and accessibility to our lives.

Take email - as Gmail is online, you can access it from wherever you might be, on whatever device you might be using. As long as you are connected to the Internet, you are connected to your email, documents, videos, etc. Cloud computing also means you can collaborate and share information in real-time with others in a way that hasn't been possible with traditional computing.

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Communication trends to be mindful of in 2009

By: Catherine Luckhoff

Filter failure, ultra-niching, mobile strategies and your Ps and Qs are all things you should be mindful of in 2009. If, however, you too are suffering from information overload despite it only being January, read on.

1. Filtering: the issue of information overload has long been debated and the use of tools and applications such as RSS readers, Friendfeed, Google desktop and even Twitter, are fast increasing.

We all have trusted filters; be it our friends, a particular newspaper we read or radio station we listen to, or the trusted opinion of an industry leader. With the increased volume of information we consume daily, knowing and understanding how people filter information will be what sets brands and products apart in 2009.

As Clay Shirky so succinctly said at a Web 2.0 Expo in September 2008: "It's not information overload. It's filter failure."

2. Ultra niching: people want what they want when they want it.

The rise of free niche publications such as GetIt and BPM magazine may largely be attributed to two things:
* The free model works
* The content is focused, relevant and appeals to a niche market

Gone are the days of mass marketing. With ultra-niched content, the perceived personal value to readers/listeners is higher than articles in mainstream publications that write content with a mass audience in mind. Slinging mud at the wall and waiting to see what sticks no longer appeals to advertisers when targeted advertising campaigns both on (read more on Adgator) and offline are possible.

3. Mobile: integrating a mobile strategy into your marketing and communication campaigns in 2009 will be a given. And it's not about translating the web or television to fit the mobile screen. It's about creating sustainable content (no more burping frogs, please) that transcends cultural and language barriers, engages the user in a unique experience that s/he can relate to and internalise, and which should ultimately lead to behaviour modification.

Tools such as Semacodes (a form of 2D barcoding also known as matrix codes or QR codes which are all the rage in Japan) will facilitate this integration. "Technically, a semacode is an optical barcode that contains a URL Internet address. Practically speaking, it's a system that allows you to build applications that connect the real world with the virtual. A user can scan a semacode tag and then with a single click connect to the web page or other internet resource right on their portable camera phone."

It's the perfect example of on- and offline integration using the mobile phone as the portal through which to achieve this. Click here, here and here to read more about the Sunday Times campaign that was launched in late 2007.

Another mobile trend emerging from the East is the creation of mobisodes. A recent campaign powered by Mobfest, Novel Idea, is an excellent example of on-demand content. In Japan, half of the top selling books are written on mobile phones, and according to a recent article by Matthew Buckland, mobile surpasses the traditional web in South Africa.

It is no secret that South Africa has very competitive data rates and as mobile penetration figures in Africa continue to rise, we simply cannot ignore the fact that the term mobile strategy will become as passé by end 2009 as web 2.0 was in 2008.

4. Triple play: online, offline and mobile - three inseparable terms that will shape the future of all marketing, advertising and communication campaigns. If you still think integration is a nice to have, you're in for a big surprise.

5. Community managers: new jobs with fancy titles are a dime a dozen, but if there is one that will stand out in 2009, it's the role of community manager. Jon M Bishop said it best in his recent article Your customer has evolved into a community. Have you joined?: "Basically, a community manager is a friendly, chatty person that is highly clued up on all things social and online and is well-wired into all communities and channels that may be talking about their brands and are usually the first point of contact for the community. So essentially positioning themselves as the online brand custodian."

6. Measurement: I don't believe in AVE value and I definitely don't believe in multiplying the advertising value by a PR credibility factor of 3+. The way we measure both on and offline campaigns from a communication and social media perspective has been a bone of contention for some time with no definitive answer or tool that satisfies the industry's needs.

How, for example, does one measure the value of keeping negative press coverage out of the media (eg minimising the negative publicity around an oil tanker spill) or the power of word of mouth and the role that both personal and social media networks play in the overall success of campaigns?

Most clients demand to know the ROI for campaigns and although tools such as BrandsEye, that offer ORM, or the Canadian MRP model that incorporates factors such as tone (negative, positive or neutral) currently offer excellent measurement solutions within their realms, there simply isn't a holistic measurement tool for online, offline and mobile combined - a tool which is desperately needed.

That said, according to MediaPhilosopher.com, a standardised metric tool for social media specifically is simply not possible. "Social Media measurement is like gourmet cooking because the social web produces a vast and growing array of metrics that can be gathered and combined in various ways to extract meaning, insight, and measure the effectiveness of one's investments & efforts."

7. **Anti-advertising as a form of advertising:** campaigns such as one that Doritos just launched are excellent examples of how using anti-advertising as a form of advertising will rock 2009.

8. **Collaboration:** siloed thinking is fast becoming a thing of the past and as more and more agencies cotton on to this fact, powerful collaborations between non-competing yet complimentary brands will emerge, with amazing results.

9. **Back to basics:** the fundamentals will always hold true. But as a reminder, when communicating in 2009, remember:

* Be transparent.
* Content should entertain, inform, educate and involve the audience.
* Don't underestimate your reader/listener/viewer.
* In a crisis, tell all and tell fast.
* Plan. Nothing beats a good strategy with a solid implementation plan.
* If you don't know, ask.
* Put back what you take out.
* Remember your Ps and Qs.

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The evolution of the radio station

By: Alan Khan

What's on the cards for radio this year? It's all about keeping up with the times - multimedia, digital media skills, mobile, user-generated content (UGC), the demands of the youth market, collaborative partnerships, general elections and supporting the newly formed Radio Advertising Bureau.

1. More South African radio stations will start evolving into multimedia companies.

2. UGC will start having a bigger impact on air, online and on mobile. Our listeners and consumers will become the stars of the future!!!

3. Broadcasters will start investing more time, money and effort in better understanding and researching the consumer and trade markets' multimedia needs and interests. We also need to keep an eye on the younger teen market as their consumer habits become integral to our future strategies and content plans.

4. New radio stars will have less of a reliance on the voice and the music knowledge, as the shift towards multimedia ability and digital media skills will demand that on air talent must have broader talents.

5. Content is STILL king! We will need to offer relevant content on our platforms to attract the consumer in a fast-changing world that thrives on immediacy and interactivity, all the while ensuring that we can extract revenue from our multimedia offerings to help sustain our platforms.

6. Radio broadcasters will be working closer with agencies and creatives to improve the standard, creativity and innovation of radio advertising.

7. An increased number of traditional radio campaigns will include a greater multimedia focus as clients will want to squeeze maximum value on their investment and improve the measurability of success.

8. Broadcasters will offer free Apple iPhone Apps as the handset further sweeps the world and our country in 2009. Watch out for the Google phone too - as it will be another tool that consumers will use to access our content and touch the digital world.

9. The Internet and digital life will not be an extinction level event for radio stations, provided that broadcasters invest in recruiting, training and developing staff to embrace the digital media opportunities.

10. The Radio Advertising Bureau (RAB) will make its first concrete impression and start influencing decisions in favour of radio but the RAB will need consistent and comprehensive support from the radio industry.

11. In the short term, radio station websites will have to box clever as political parties, wanting to advertise ahead of the general elections, will also be looking at their online space to compliment their on-air campaigns and careful decisions will need to be made as we weigh up commercial gain against content and consumer relevance.

12. We will be another year closer to digital radio broadcasting but don't hold your breath!!! There's a while to go yet before the infrastructure is ready to handle the conversion to a digital signal for South African radio stations...

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The mobile media landscape in 2009 - a forecast

By: Rick Joubert

With the large developed economies likely to remain in deep recession during 2009 and with a significant slowdown in South African economic growth, it seems likely that overall ad spend growth in SA will be nowhere near the usual double digit media inflation numbers we're so used to seeing - and that, of course, will also impact upon mobile advertising. However, mobile advertising revenues will continue to grow faster than any other traditional or new media channel and during 2009 will overtake investment in online advertising.

Slowdown in experimental spend

Although there will be a slowdown in experimental spend in mobile advertising from brands which have not yet fully understood the medium and are unwilling to take risks in a tough economic environment, the measurability and adaptability of the medium will ensure significantly increased mobile budgets for brands who have seen solid and sustained ROIs over multiple campaigns being achieved both in the direct response and pure brand advertising space.

Among brands which will not put any significant budget into mobile advertising in 2009, a very large percentage will still discover the power of integrating mobile into much of their traditional above-the-line advertising as a response and engagement channel - mainly using SMS but increasingly also the mobile web for mass market digital interactivity with customers.

Advertising agencies really started putting some serious effort into understanding mobile through late 2008 and I predict that before the end of 2009, at least 30% of established media and full service agencies would have developed a dedicated mobile planning and execution capacity.

Major upsurge

I saw a major upsurge late 2008 in the attendance by agency people at events and conferences related to mobile, as well as a significant number of requests for presentations and workshops, often involving almost the entire agency.

At Vodacom we have also seen the percentage of mobile media spend sourced from agencies (versus brands direct) go from less than 20% one year ago to over 60% currently.

The financial services and mobile (handset and content) brands will continue to dominate the mobile advertising spend charts, although there will be significant growth in the investment in mobile by the retail, consumer goods and automotive industries.

> **“ We will also see the emergence of three entirely new large scale purchasers of mobile media during 2009: political parties, Government and the small business long tail. ”**

* Political parties, inspired by Barack Obama's incredibly successful use of new media, will invest significant sums in mobile (I have my doubts as to the quality of the execution based on lack of local experience) leading up to the South African general elections.
* Progressive and efficient government departments will also realise the unprecedented power of mobile as a medium to both deliver a government message as well as interact with a very large percentage of the population.
* The small business "long tail" opportunity for localised mobile advertising will start to be unlocked because of the emergence during 2009 of at the very least city-level targeting for most mobile advertising offerings - by end 2010, suburb-level targeting will be common place.

Play for ownership

I also expect a handful of large brands to make a play for ownership of a mobile utility, mobile application or mobile content piece during 2009 - especially in the mobile social media space.

Look out for brand sponsored instant messenger (IM) services, social networking applications, location-based services, mobile tickers and mobile content.

By the end of 2009 there will be more than twelve million unique users of the mobile web (WAP or WEB access on a handset) - that is likely to be at least twice as many as the PC web. I have previously estimated that there were about 9.5M unique users of WAP in South Africa in September 2008.

> **“ Finally, I expect the mobile phone to finally start living up to its promise as a wallet, ticketing and vouchering channel during 2009. ”**

Although there is effectively already a large volume of m-commerce, it is largely confined to the purchase of mobile content items using network based charging like premium SMS. Good work done during 2008 by banks like FNB with the Cell Pay Point product and startups like SWAP Mobile and the probable local launch during 2009 of m-commerce services similar to, for example, Vodafone's Kenyan operator Safiricom's mPesa, combined with the coming to market of infrastructure projects such as Gautrain and others, should start seeing the mobile phone emerge as a more general purpose payment and commercial fulfillment channel - and that is good news for marketers.

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2009 budget cuts a challenge for event managers

By: Karen Ashwin

The current decline in the global economic system is now filtering through to all industry sectors, including marketing and event management. Marketing budgets have been cut back substantially for 2009 and though the number of events will not decrease, the budget spend per event will lessen. This will be a challenge for all event managers and an opportunity for the most skilled to demonstrate their enhanced creativity.

Those with knowhow will offer clients the highest quality service with innovation in the manner that events are executed, as well as providing more bang for their buck. Existing customers will be the key focus for 2009 and the marketing approach will be horizontal, as opposed to vertical. Companies will offer their existing customers more product choices and will mine their network, rather than trying to recruit new customers.

Focused marketing

With this focused marketing approach, events will be used extensively to create the right experience for the right people, with clever links between the brand and event. Events will be smaller with emphasis on inviting only the target audience, allowing the client to engage directly with them. The database, providing detailed insight into this audience, will be used to create a successfully customised occasion.

The reasons for hosting an event will predominantly be networking and generating sales leads. These aims will best be achieved by quickly and cleverly immersing the target audience in a multisensory experience. Sit-down three course meals are out as people don't have the time or inclination to sit and make small talk for hours at a big table filled with strangers. The time spent at an event will be a maximum of three hours and cocktail events, which allow for efficient networking, will go down exceptionally well.

Most aspects of events will be streamlined and simplified. To save money, invitations will be sent out electronically, cutting printing and courier costs, and gifts will be left off budgets altogether as they're good to have but not a necessity. Food choices will be up-market snacks and canapés served on the move, while jazz trios and DJs will entertain the crowd.

> **“ There'll be far less over-the-top spending on expensive large-scale productions with their staging and technical requirements, costumes, rehearsal time, dancers and vocalists. Décor will remain simple and elegant. ”**

Video

Videos will be the big communication tool at events. To save time and money, videos will be produced in such a way that the material can be re-edited without giving the impression it's been rehashed. As an added value service, event companies will get production houses to invest in a terabyte hard drive to archive material that belongs solely to the customer.

Though virtual and digital platforms will be used as an add-on to event marketing, the opportunity to connect with an audience in person is irreplaceable. As more and more people seek real three-dimensional experiences rather than the two-dimensional flatness of our virtual lives, event marketing will be used to meet the need for genuine and engaging experiences that are high impact and multisensory. And taking into account our current economic context, a memorable all-encompassing brand experience that immerses the consumer is more valuable than ever.

Since companies simply can't afford not to engage their most valuable asset, their employees, there will be a greater emphasis on retaining and training internal staff. Companies will go less for traditional team-building such as raft building and obstacle courses and the focus instead will be on training staff and sharing knowledge at a dedicated event in a creative and interactive way.

Global trend

In line with the global trend, the event marketplace will move towards greater environmental consciousness as companies begin to demand "eco" from event managers. Smart marketers will embrace the notions of sustainability and going green.

2009 is poised to be an exciting year with the Confederation Cup and World Cup approaching. Though it's also sure to be filled with its challenges, event marketers who adapt to current demands and trends will be add value to brands and deliver service that is not only consistently professional but is truly innovative.

New Year's resolutions of a marketing entrepreneur

By: Jo Duxbury

While industry experts are writing thoughtful articles on their predictions for 2009, my crystal ball is more decorative than functional. Considering the surprises the world threw at us in 2008, I'm substituting predictions with resolutions to help my businesses - and me - thrive this year.

Three years ago I shed my suit, resigned from an ad agency and started my own 'marketing matchmaker' business, www.freelancentral.co.za. It's been scary, exhilarating, fun, challenging, exhausting, thrilling, frustrating, rewarding - but never boring. It's also completely unpredictable.

But then, so is the world these days. Who would have thought a year ago that we'd be in a global recession (most of us were more preoccupied with load-shedding schedules); that America would be ushering in a president who epitomises hope and change for so many; and that the Proteas would thump the Aussies down under in such convincing style?

So here are my resolutions for the New Year:

1. I will not wake up and find it's already October. I will set goals and work towards them. Someone gave me a bookmark when I was about 12 years old on which was written: "Only as high as you reach can you grow". More recently, one of my mentors drummed into me that 'what gets measured gets done'. Enough procrastinating: time to make lists, crunch numbers and make things happen.

2. I will do a regular client audit. I will continue to assess whether my clients are worth keeping. Those who are high maintenance, low value or whose work isn't aligned with my vision and strategy will be reviewed and, if necessary, dismissed gently.

3. I will be proactive about learning and growing my businesses. Growth is only possible through stretching, challenges and perhaps a bit of a push. There's a lot I still don't know about business and, being a bit of a nerd, I love learning. I will seek courses, programmes and mentors. And while selling a share of 'my baby' scares me, I've realised that a smaller share of a larger business can be better than stunting growth by holding on too tightly. So I will be looking for investment and/or funding as well as support and training.

4. **I will only participate in projects that I am interested in. It's tempting to say 'yes' to everything but spreading myself too thin is a risk.**
I will make strategic decisions about what to get involved with this year based on my passions and the people I'll be working with. Ten percent of my time will be allocated to pro bono work and I'll try to stick to that. Last year I spent more time on unpaid work than on generating revenue. Not a luxury I can afford - yet.

5. I will collaborate (carefully). Two highlights of 2008 for me were forming a loose collective with three other freelance writers/editors; and collaborating to run the first two Flying Solo 'unconferences'. These, and other collaborations, taught me a great deal and I hugely enjoyed the senses of camaraderie and fun that came with it. I also learnt to choose my collab-colleagues carefully and ensure that our values and expectations are properly aligned and agreed up front.

6. I will automate or outsource as much as I can. My time is limited and as I become more involved in a range of projects, I need to spend my time on the things I do best and in the areas that I can make the most useful contribution. These don't include a lot of my day-to-day admin, filing and my taxes. I'm very particular so this is going to be a tough one, but it needs to happen.

7. I will limit negative news. Without burying my head in the sand, I will control what news I receive, through reputable local and international online resources. Jim Carrey was recently quoted as saying, "…if you watch the news, that's not the world; that's a condensed version of everything negative that's happening." I will not believe everything I hear either, particularly stories of doom and gloom. I will stay positive and firm in my belief that tough times can be the most exciting - and that necessity fosters creativity and ideas.

8. I will stop propagating information overload. I will only issue press releases, articles and post or comment on blogs if I have something of value to say; if I've given them proper thought. Before every tweet, I will ask myself: "Will anyone really care about this? Really?" I will not create content because I feel I have to; instead I'd rather wait until I have a useful contribution to make. I will use social media sites for their intended purposes. For me that means Facebook = social; LinkedIn = business.

9. I will stop being overwhelmed by information overload. I will be ruthless in pruning my RSS feeds and the list of those I follow on Twitter.

I will no longer feel guilty that I have not read TechCrunch's 30+ daily posts or feel obliged to subscribe to people's streams just because they follow me. I unplugged for a week over New Year and d'you know what? The world didn't stop. Anything that is really important will reach me; the rest is just noise.

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Instant reward, absolute transparency...

By: Gordon Patterson

BIZ'09 TREND REPORT

Rather than life getting simpler, it's really becoming more complicated and people seem to be getting older younger and then younger older! Looking back, it's simple to see why trend predictions are often off track or, worse, grossly misleading.

We've seen huge upheavals in all areas of life, business, culture, sport, economy and obviously in media. It seems we're surrounded by contractions such as the world getting smaller and us wanting more out of it. As much as we'd like to believe that change is evolutionary, if we stop and take a moment to look around, today's reality suggests that the perception of evolution is really driven by consistent revolution!

1. Time, the scarcest commodity: we live in an era where time is becoming and will continue to be the scarcest commodity and, as such, communication and media platforms that do not provide value and relevance will simply be ignored. Consumers have learnt to multitask in order to obtain more - more information, more entertainment, more reward and more stimulation. It's not uncommon to see the youth 'texting' while listening to the radio/iPod, watching television or even having a conversation.

2. Instant reward/recognition/results - and absolute transparency: consumers, marketers and advertisers will want everything now! Change will be rapid and trends will be more influenced by where we're going rather than where we've come from. Research will need to be both flexible and frequent, focusing on facts.

As media professionals, we're all investing in understanding the future and, as I read somewhere, 'the genius of investing is recognising the direction of a trend and not just catching the highs and lows'. In the years ahead we will have both extremes.

3. Mass to me to we (social networking and content is king): Mass media have since the beginning of time relied on their ability to reach large numbers of potential consumers with a single message. The bigger the coverage the more powerful the medium, the more income generated. Shifting consumer needs, new technology and fierce competition are forcing mass media to deliver to the individual. Television is particularly affected by this trend as we hve seen the movement from terrestrial to satellite to VOD to IPTV gaining momentum.

4. Living out of home rather than at home: people are spending more time out of home than ever before. The mobility of media and out of home media will grow in relevance as at home media consumption of all media declines.

5. Primetime is my time: technological advances will allow consumers to define what and when they want to watch. While PVR technology has so far been limited to affluent market segments, the potential of memory storage capacity in the soon-to-be-released digital to analogue decoders for the mass market cannot be understated. Several television sets currently offer this feature as a standard. The ability to delay view will, if made available in the analogue decoders, make prime-time my time.

6. Exposure to engagement (permission-based marketing): exposing the message to the correct people at the correct time is no longer enough as people these days simply tune out clutter. Motivating response requires the target consumer to respond and engage with the communication in some way. This increases the responsibility of both the creative and media professional to leverage the media platform in a way that offers engagement. Once engagement has been achieved, permission-based marking initiatives can follow with instant gratification/reward being a key consumer incentive.

7. Prosumers rather than consumers - the power of one: gone are the days where marketers dictate product personality and character. With growing connectivity within reach of many consumers around the world, we are seeing consumers playing a greater role in defining product positioning and appeal. A few years ago one consumer could only influence their immediate family, friends and colleagues. Today that same consumer can reach millions of people through numerous digital platforms. Their experience with the brand (both positive and negative) can spread rapidly. The marketing community has picked up on this and in an effort to tap into this trend has explored the viral benefits of CGM (consumer-generated messaging) initiatives.

8. Growing relevance of DR theory: media fragmentation and the growing ability for consumers to avoid advertising/promotional messaging means that continuity is a key success factor. Cost of customer/relationship acquisition will become a hot topic in measuring the effectiveness of campaigns and will drive advertising rates. Already some advertisers have formulated rate cards based on fixed customer acquisition costs.

9. Globalisation (brands without borders): the world will truly continue to become the consumer's 'corner café' and most brands are either global citizens or defined by global citizens. The marketing challenge to think global but act local has never been more important or as complicated. Where contradictions in brand personality/positioning exist between markets, the disconnect will create consumer confusion.

10. Liquid content (info/entertainment access on multiple platforms): content without borders! With the advent of the mobile age consumers want access to information or entertainment on whatever mobile devise they have. Already we see that cellular phones have become calculators, diaries, radios, televisions and game consoles.

Media platforms are experimenting with this concept and several print groups are already shifting focus to becoming digital multi-facetted entities with brands on several platforms. It's becoming hard to define even the media platforms. What for example is a newspaper and what makes it different from a magazine? And what is television, a screen in the lounge, my computer in the office or an electronic billboard? I guess the real question is, "Does it matter?"

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Sea change for SA Internet in 2009

By: Arthur Goldstuck

BIZ'09
TREND
REPORT

Thanks to the pressure of preparation for 2010 and the Seacom undersea cable, the South African Internet and digital marketing, advertising and media industries should undergo a sea change this year.

1. 2010, 2010, 2010: everything in telecoms will have the shadow of 2010 hanging over it, so that decisions taken in 2009 will be geared towards demand in 2010, with many providers facing the dilemma of how to use their infrastructure or services fully once the world cup is over and everyone has gone home.

2. President takes telecoms seriously: the new president appoints a Minister of Communications who has the trust of the industry to deliver on the pressing needs of telecoms in South Africa, and the Government's own telecoms undersea cable gets a serious re-think.

3. Huge increase in Internet services: entrepreneurs climb in, career reboots and all, to take advantage of licensing liberalisation and the coming undersea cable.

4. Online advertising growth: this brings new players to online media scene and the strong showing of online advertising revenue persuades many publications that have been sitting on the sidelines to venture online, joined by online media startups.

5. Boom and bust: for small companies in Internet, mobile and new media services. As a flood of start-ups

and established businesses position themselves for the new Internet boom, many are unsustainable, and go out of business or are gobbled up by the more sustainable businesses.

6. Streets continue to be dug up: both in preparation for 2010 and due to licensing liberalisation, which allows any network owner to lay down their own infrastructure, urban streets will remain a lunar landscape of craters, grooves, ditches and potholes.

7. Digital migration deadline extended: as the first set-top boxes for converting signals from digital to analogue roll off the assembly lines, the sheer scale of getting these to 6.5 million people (aside from 1 million who already have other set-top boxes) in two years becomes obvious, and the deadline for migration to digital terrestrial television is extended beyond November 2011.

8. Schools start connecting: the Gauteng schools project begins to redress the failures of the previous rollout as more and more schools are connected, and Telkom is forced by Government and public pressure to put in place the e-rate (half-price for schools) that Government has mandated but Telkom has never implemented.

9. Fibre-to-the-home emerges on the agenda: fibre-to-the-home (FTTH), which provides high-capacity Internet connectivity to residential and small business users, begins to appear on business plans for the next generation of startups or business development units. FTTH allows the kind of data speeds and capacity that enable users to view high-definition video directly off the Internet, but the level of bandwidth required will not be available for another five years, and the business models will only mature 10 years from now, but everyone wants to be the next Internet Solutions, and get in a decade before the market wakes up to the potential.

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Reg Lascaris: 'It's going to be a topsy-turvy year'

By: Reg Lascaris

BIZ'09
TREND
REPORT

While it's going to be a topsy-turvy year, one thing will not change, and that is the age-old advice to young entrants to marketing and advertising eager to do ground-breaking work and forever change the industry landscape... creativity is king.

Here are my predictions for the South African advertising industry in 2009:

1. Non-traditional take-off...: in a tough year, the focus will fall on maximum effectiveness at low cost. Prejudice against non-traditional media will evaporate. Data will be mined and targets refined. Non-traditional formats, including SMS and Applets, will muscle into the media mix as never before.

2. **Diaspora to pour back...:** boom conditions are at an end overseas. Talented South Africans with enhanced skills and wonderful breadth of experience will be affected by the shakeout. Some will ship out, coming home to SA. They are young, brave and schooled in global practice - a catalyst for exciting chemistry inside our agencies.

3. **Rip up the rate card...:** expect a year of negotiation on everything and anything, including rates, added value offerings, terms and conditions, you name it. Wheedling and dealing will replace wheeling and dealing.

4. **Tie up those package deals...:** the downturn will see an upturn in the buy-one, get-one-free proposition. We've already seen the Hummer offer of a free Harley with every purchase. Watch out for lots of cooperative activity, bundled offers and novel deals.

5. **Red is the new black...: just ask Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers. Red (as in red ink) will be the colour of 2009 for many businesses, including some in our industry. In tough times, sardonic humour strikes a chord.**
 It's started already; we're starting to hear jokes about the financial services industry and rating agencies. Copy that speaks to the prevailing mood and raises a wry smile will get great noting.

6. **Cheap is the new affordable...:** forget old coyness about never proclaiming cheapness. When consumers are counting every cent, weasel words such as 'affordable' and 'price competitive' don't cut to the chase like plain old-fashioned 'cheap'. If you have a price advantage, 'cheap' is going to be a very desirable position.

7. **There's no business like new business...:** but what new business categories will be in most demand? After all, there are only so many auctioneers to go round. In a year of trading down, strong discount brands like TOP bottle stores and Cash Converters will do well; so will every brand with the savvy to use the downturn to build market position. A little extra spending (if it's smart spending) will go a long way in 2009.

8. **Local to get vocal...:** the local is lekker proposition will be strongly communicated and resonate with consumers that will stay close to home. Local travel, local food, local wines and local alternatives to just about anything will do well. If you've been waiting for the chance to put Mielietuin on the map, this is your time. (Yes, the place really does exist.)

9. **Politics to the rescue...:** in a commercial sense, that is. Election advertising will give a much-needed boost to the media, advertising agencies and the printing industry.

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2009's PR demons

By: Marcus Brewster

A brave new world or 'the more things change, the more they stay the same'? As the public relations industry moves into a new year, the temptation to offer predictions is gratuitous without an appreciation of the carryover of legacy issues from the year before. I would venture that the PR industry will be wrestling with the following demons for the next 12 months.

1. Skills shortage: Most certainly not unique to the PR profession, the absence of a talent pool in South Africa is a common complaint across the industry. The redoubtable Viv Gordon has a theory that it's about emigration. Not that we've lost a generation of PR professionals who've recently settled in foreign climes but that the problem was seeded in the first resettlement wave of 1994.

It's the then generation of white-collar parents who left in the 1990s who were the kind of families who sat around the dinner table and had vigorous debates on current affairs and the evening news. Those bright, well-informed kids who should all be coming into entry-level positions in agencies are starting at entry level positions in San Diego and Sydney.

2. Newsroom shrinkage: The current round of staff cuts in newsrooms nationwide is a 'tsunamic' second swell after the first wave of 'juniorfication' a few years back. For those too young to remember, the transformation in media houses to ensure racial representivity led to an imbalance - a lacuna if you will - of senior editorial skills: copy writing, proofing, subbing, etc. This created a gap which PR firms were well-placed to plug - supplying print ready copy and pictorial material to shore up their lack of internal journalistic resource.

Now we are seeing the phenomenon again through the advent of budget-related staff cuts. If less journalists are left behind to still produce the same amount of copy and to fill the same amount of pages, it stands to reason that superior and seasoned publicists will be well-positioned to step into the breach to assist media owners to fill their pages.

3. The Dark Side: Where does an unemployed journalist go? To the dark side, of course! The dark side is the colloquial term for the trans-boundary phenomenon when a former journalist joins a PR consultancy.

We can expect to see several such appointments in the first half of 2009, specifically in those larger PR firms where superior delivery and growth is still hard-wired into their DNA. When God closes a door, he opens a window and the current job-uncertainty troubles in newsrooms across the land may be a blessing for the PR industry.

In light of the skills shortage mentioned above, talent that can write, has a sense of urgency forged in deadline-driven newsrooms, has an eye for story and a nose for news and has a network of media contacts makes for a dream media liaison candidate.

4. Technology adoption: If Moore's law posits that a processor halves in size every two years, you can extrapolate what the pace of technological innovation is. And how it upends every piece of received wisdom we operate with on how, for instance, a newspaper is produced or indeed, how news is channeled to the public.

When I came into the PR industry in the 1980s, the PR icons were middle-aged ladies who lunched with editors. That was how PR was practiced - and why the midday trade in elegant restaurants flourished.

> **“ The continuing evolution and adoption of new technologies, combined with all of the factors listed, continues to shake up the salt cellar that's called Best**

Practice. ”

5. Social Media: Allied to technological adoption, social media can be singled out for special attention in that it speaks to the heart of the definition of PR - communication with stakeholders - and offers new means to that end.

It's clear that the top-down approach of a previous generation, where access to one editor untapped the publication of a key story which then "reached" an audience of stakeholders equivalent to that publications circulation and/or readership, has been superceded. With the egalitarian leveling of news production as everyone blogs, twitters and smses themselves to distraction, the top-down shower approach (one nozzle produces many drops of water) has been replaced by the bath overflowing (everything pouring at you simultaneously at a knee-level standard of critical faculty).

Naturally this phenomenon of citizen journalism creates risk at the reputation management and public affairs level of the communications paradigm. Interestingly, it also gives greater career gravitas to young people starting out in the industry because it's a mode of communication that they are extremely familiar with and can work with. Only the larger agencies with staff complements that cut across the decades will have the right personnel to deliver on the promise of social media.

In closing, I've always maintained that PR is a recession-proof industry. When times are good, clients increase their marketing spend and PR shares in the rising tide that floats all boats. When times are tight and marketing spend gets slashed, many clients look at their reduced budgets and realise that most of the above-the-line disciplines are no longer affordable and, because reach and frequency can no longer be delivered, therefore ineffective.

By the same token, PR costs come off a very low base and it's therefore possible to get PR - effective, results-driven PR - during a recession at a retainer level which an ad agency would not be able to work for.

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2009: the year of publishing dangerously

By: Ray Hartley

Let's start with the big thing that is not going to change: the thirst for news - hard news, breaking news. News is alive and well. What is changing is how people would like to receive their news.

Our world is becoming more complicated and interlinked than ever before. China's appetite for steel is affecting the price of oranges and the failure of US mortgages is changing the price of petrol for the better.

We live in a world where knowledge is no longer a luxury. It is not possible to muddle your way through life ignorant of global politics or the domestic economy. Decisions about investment, about education, about health and about employment require an ever-greater understanding of political and social dynamics. The stakes are high and they will get higher as the global economic squeeze continues.

> **“ The catchphrase of the day is “platform agnostic”. People want news and they want to decide when and how they get it. There is a generation that will remain loyal to print, but there is a new generation that has no such loyalty. ”**

Media companies should continue the fight to turn this new generation into newspaper readers, but they should prepare for the fact that they will only partially succeed.

Newspapers will remain strong in a country where the roll-out of the Internet remains restricted by outrageous prices set by a protected government monopoly. But there are signs that new media channels will grow in the New Year when new capacity is released. In the words of The Times tech columnist, Toby Shapshak:

* The big news in 2009 will be the mid-year launch of the second undersea cable, which will link southern and eastern Africa with India and Europe. Called Seacom, it's the first real competition to the existing Sat-3 cable that is part-owned and mostly controlled by Telkom.
* To remain competitive, Telkom will have to lower its wholesale prices significantly, and the cost of broadband should drop to the levels seen in developed countries, where always-on, superfast, unlimited broadband makes so many of the disruptive technologies and web-based services truly worthwhile.
* Telecoms companies tend to drop their prices just before competition arrives, in a bid to hold onto customers. From March 2009 I think we'll see a radical decrease in Telkom's prices, creating a ripple effect across the broadband industry.

So the Internet could see quite dramatic growth in 2009. The organisations that will be best positioned to take advantage of this are those that have integrated news, photographic and web operations. Even online, content is king and the content skills still reside with traditional print journalists.

They bring an incredible power, credibility and immediacy to the web that cannot be reproduced by shovelling wire copy into templates as some are doing.

I predict that many newspapers will follow the example set by The Times and try to re-engineer their operations to integrate the Internet with print for this very reason. What is a little alarming is the eagerness of some to retrench print skills in order to expand their online presence. They could be losing the very content skills that the web so desperately needs.

Our website has grown while others are suffering precisely because we offer the best content and we present it in video, audio, slideshows and, let's not forget, in properly edited words.

> **“ But even as newspaper companies play catch up and SA's bandwidth grows apace, something else dramatic will happen in 2009: The arrival of the cellphone as a proper carrier of news, sport and business. ”**

The Times has already launched South Africa's most advanced mobile platform (http://m.thetimes.co.za) which streams pictures, podcasts and video to phones. Growth has been impressive, but it will really take off as cellphone browsing capacity improves with the rollout of new generation handsets that have larger screens and better downloading capacity.

South Africa's 2009 election is going to have a new media dimension that has never been seen in this country and the mobile phone, with its vast penetration of all income groups, will be the tool that parties use to raise funds, mobilise voters and arrange meetings.

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Big challenges facing marketers in 2009

By: Chris Moerdyk

Never before, in the history of South Africa, have its marketers faced quite so many daunting challenges and those that will come through the economic downturn successfully will be those who understand that calculated risk is an integral and necessary part of business today.

While the old-fashioned tactic of battening down the hatches and waiting for the storm to pass will result in abject failure.

The first big challenge marketers face will be to decide just when to start taking web-based consumer forums and mobile social networks seriously. By mid-2009 a new undersea cable is expected to make Internet access faster, more accessible and ultimately cheaper for many South Africans. Which in turn will give impetus to the already growing phenomenon of consumers complaining, criticising and generating false perceptions in web-based social networks. My advice would be to start taking this seriously now.

Tell ten others

Not all that long ago, customer service specialists used to warn businesses that every time a customer went away unhappy, that customer would tell 10 other people who would tell another 10 and in no time a couple of hundred consumers would be walking away from a brand.

Nowadays with FaceBook, Twitter and a rapidly growing number of social network forums, that single unhappy person has the capacity to instantly vent his or her frustration via cellphone and within minutes has told not 10 but hundreds of others about the offending product, service, brand or business. And the more instant the less chance anger has of dissipating. This is what makes the phenomenon a brand killer.

And, as Johnson & Johnson found out to its horror in the US late last year, more and more journalists and radio talk show presenters are finding themselves part of myriad social networks, with the result that the mass media picks up the momentum.

Blogging

Right now, some companies are trying to solve this problem by employing bloggers, but while this offers a solution in principle, unless that blogger is a seasoned marketer as well, this could result in causing more harm than good. I have been involved in several of these new approaches to monitoring and neutralising web and social media-based customer complaint forums and the successful solution is a lot more complex than one can imagine.

> **“ The next big challenge marketers face is just how to manage to do a bigger job on less money as marketing**

> **budgets are cut back. Most companies will just hack budgets - not only marketing but all then others as well - as they always do when the economy turns down. ”**

What markets need to do is not just cut every aspect of their marketing across the board but to have the courage to do an objective audit on what worked in the past and what didn't and then just cut back on the non-performing elements of their overall marketing. And this is where calculated risk comes in again because, with an almost completely new situation facing us, it is always a gamble to decide whether things that worked in the past will work again in the future.

Getting attention

Then, a challenge that has been with marketers for some years now will intensify in 2009. And that is just how to get the attention of the consumer. It used to be said that advertisers had two seconds to get the consumer's attention. That number has now reduced to less than a second. With consumers having far wider choice these days in terms of mass media and leisure time activities and with information on demand becoming more and more of a reality, it is becoming increasingly difficult to get someone's attention via the mass media. In terms of the youth market, it is almost impossible because growing numbers simply don't consume mass media in any shape or form anymore. But, the challenge is not only about getting attention, it is also about holding attention and managing it.

Another challenge marketers face is the ratio between brand-building and flogging products or services. It is always tempting during economic downturns to put branding on the back burner and simply put every marketing resources into moving products or service. But, given that branding is key to aspiration or to put it more bluntly, consumer trust, one cannot just put it on the back burner.

Mass media

Hopefully, 2009 will be the year in which the mass media realises that advertising is quickly moving beyond just flogging advertisements, radio spots or TV airtime and has already entered the realms of media having to work with advertisers in terms of constructing promotional packages that not only get the attention of consumers but manage that attention as well.

But, the biggest challenge of all for marketers will be to go back to the basics - something that many brand managers, marketing directors, ad agencies, PR companies and the like have forgotten in their obsession with simply coming up with a "big idea".

Real marketing can be pretty boring because, as one of SA's greatest marketers, the late Colin Adcock, once said, "it is nothing more than a checklist" ensuring that every element of the marketing mix is working in unison. Adcock claimed that if this checklist were applied properly and logically, a marketing project will either not get off the ground or if it does, it will succeed. Funnily enough, the kind of logic that accountants seem to understand far better than marketers.

Half of it works

Which creates yet another challenge for 2009 and that is for marketers to insist that on everything they do has an element of measurement built in. The days of "half my advertising works but I don't know which half" are long gone.

> **“ Marketing is an expensive exercise and particularly in this day and age, no-one can be cavalier with it to the extent of simply giving something a try to see what happens. ”**

The marketing industry itself, and particularly its advertising component, need to redouble efforts during 2009 to try and elevate marketing to the position of being a reliable business tool and its advertising component to something more than a lot of people perceive it to be - just some sort of trivial pursuit designed to get those who practice it into Porsches.

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A 2009 wishlist for African business objectives

By: Terry Levin

Products and services that are meaningful, authentic and feelgood act as antidotes to recession and digital overkill, hence 2009 is the time for essential model shifts necessitated by global financial, humanitarian and health issues.

There can be no happy customers without a happy workforce, so employers will be in a position of strength if they ensure that they are able to attract and nurture staff. Pruning, paring, prioritising will ensure cream rises to the top in every facet of business; new voices will emerge out of the hierarchies due to personal broadcast opportunities.

More of a wishlist than a trend forcast, 2009 African business objectives should look something like this:

1. The creation of a new style of FMCG and other brands will succeed in the creation of new African empires that will ensure today's global brands become so 20th century.

2. Based on its scarce resources, the necessity for Africa to develop new sustainable models will become its globally competitive advantage.

3. Brand owners and major players in the packaging industry will take advantage of South Africa's considerable creative, design and natural resources in order to invest in integral sustainability solutions that will ensure packaging does not get discarded but will be reused, retained or remodelled into something of after-use value.

4. More products will be taken out of plastic and glass and put into cardboard containers, innovative and mould-breaking new dies and engineering for these will also be developed. The plastic and glass packaging vehicle that survive will need to be of lasting or iconic value.

5. Local industry will be boosted by taxing imported products and brands with a high carbon footprint and incentivising the manufacture, purchase and export of globally desirable locally and regionally made products.

6. South Africa will start developing a Pan-African mentality and using African suppliers as preferred partners for raw materials and manufacturing in order to boost the economies of our neighbours - and stake our claim in Africa before the Chinese have commandeered all the continent's markets and resources.

7. The global cosmetics and pharmaceuticals sectors will be transformed via this new African ethos.

8. We will start to see SA branding itself proudly on the front of the pack instead of the back via new African product development, iconography and thinking.

9. Designers and brand owners who have a vision, belief and passion for what the new commercial African environment could look like will be the leading players in their categories within the next 5-10 years.

10. Due to its mass distribution and material nature, with the right thinking, after-use packaging has the potential to play a huge role in educational and creative play items.

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Trends 2009 - focus on the 'upside'

By: Emmet O'Hanlon

BIZ'09 TREND REPORT

After the extended honeymoon period from 1994 - 2005 or thereabouts, when the country was 'alive with possibility', we have been eased back down to earth. It is difficult to say exactly what 2009 will bring to the advertising industry. Will the slowdown evaporate in the same way that high petrol prices and inflation are seeming to? Or is there still more pain and uncertainty to battle through before we can catch the wave of 2010? My feeling is that there will be a bit of both.

Here are my predictions for 2009:

1. Survival of the fittest: Agencies will experience a shakeout and those that allowed relationships to wither or have not based their offer on sound thinking and inspired creative will be affected. They will reduce in size or disappear altogether as clients take this last opportunity to streamline operations before getting locked on target for 2010.

2. Running to stand still: Any agency worth its salt will have a presentation entitled 'recession - an opportunity to grow market share', which it should have already pitched to any of its major clients which are wavering about how much to spend in 2009. As always, the future lies with agencies who take the initiative, rather than sitting around with their mouths ajar, waiting for budgets to be set and briefs to come through.

3. More product, less brand: Brand communication won't disappear but we are likely to see an increase in briefs to push products, offers or specific aspects of

service. There will be a shift towards selling tangible elements of the brand in question, rather than its values or ethos.

4. Less risks, more of what i know: Return on investment will become more important than ever as budgets shrink and accountability becomes more important. Brands will fall back on tried and tested approaches rather than take risks. If approaches such as direct response, coupons and competitions are potentially relevant to the business problem, they will be considered much more seriously.

5. Tell people we're better than ‘own label’: There will be concern about consumers trading down to cheaper, more affordable alternatives in most categories - especially FMCG. Briefs will start coming through to tell consumers what great value for money we are. This is fine, once we talk up the benefits and quality of our offer, rather than simply saying that we are ‘cheap’. If we panic and take this route, the short term sales gained will be paid for over the long term in erosion of brand equity.

6. We're all in this together: Some brands will hook into the famous South African ability to laugh at the situation in trying times and display optimism or ‘devil may care' attitudes in the face of adversity. The fact that the slowdown in SA is due to distant forces leaves us with no immediate villain to blame, rather a creating a spirit of being all in it together.

7. We're there for you in trying times: While some brands may be flippant about the current climate, most will want to appear to be there for consumers while things are tough. Brash confidence is out for the time being and empathy is in. Several banks in the UK have been forced to change their sparky, upbeat campaigns to avoid their branches being set alight by bitter consumers - Halifax's singing bank manager is no more...

8. Just show me the green shoots: It's not all bad. South Africans want to consume. They only need the smallest of hints that things are coming right (and access to credit) to get out there and begin spending again. All of the signs are in place for this to start happening during the course of the year. Inflation is no longer the inexorable force it was, petrol is getting cheaper, interest rates increasingly look set to fall

9. The ‘year to go' bounce: South Africans' pride in their country and appreciation of the opportunity to be showcased on the world stage should give rise to a bounce around June time, when we have only a year to go until 2010. This will be tinged with panic as the doom mongers point out that various stadia are only half built and Zakumi has somehow been copyrighted by a shwarma vendor in East London. You can choose which path you take here. Personally, I'm going to focus on the upside!

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Online consumer trends for 2009

By: Tim Shier

BIZ'09
TREND
REPORT

Never before has the consumer had so much power to influence corporate change. While this trend in itself isn't new and was discussed in great detail in the Cluetrain Maninfesto in 1999, as well as in 2006's Wikinomics, there is a great deal of significant to this power shift - as I'll share with you as I predict some online consumer trends for 2009.

Since the birth of the four Ps (product, placement, price, promotion), marketers have been scrambling to maximise profit while still fulfilling client needs.

But, in today's climate, the rules have changed. Consumers have access to an abundance of information (about you and your competitors). Furthermore, the highly connected instant gratification systems which exist because of the Internet ensure that each and every consumer has a network of trusted referrers from which purchasing experience is drawn and who help them make decisions. As a consequence, companies need to be far more careful in how they engage with their consumers and how the market need it met.

1. Consumers are out - partners are in: By the definition of the word itself, a consumer is an individual who uses a particular product or service which a company provides. It's a one directional relationship - the companies creates the product/service and the consumer uses the end product, nothing more. Clean and Simple.

Now consumers want something more - they want the opportunity to collaborate, evolve and fine-tune the products/services to their specific needs. As this trend increases, they will move from the realm of traditional consumers to collaborative partners. As such, there exists a fantastic opportunity (as Obama did through his my Obama campaign) to elevate the status of your consumers to partners and empower them to become full stakeholders in the product offering.

2. If it's free, I'll have a double: No matter what you offering and how amazing or fresh the idea is, somebody else is already doing it and no doubt doing it better and for cheaper.

Furthermore, with areas of business going online and with the decreasing cost of the three online staples (processing power, bandwidth and storage), it is becoming far more viable to run services at no charge to consumers and to find some other model to make it financially viable. Chris Anderson, editor of Wired, has presented four fascinating models (the notion of free) which I highly recommend reading up on.

The point is, consumers are able to find a cost-effective (read: free) solution for almost any need they have and unless it's something they really need, there is no chance they will pay a cent for it. It is therefore vital that your offering either fulfils some particular need or that you are being remarkable as Seth Godin (the definitive expert on marketing in the 21st century) puts it.

3. Service expectation: With the dramatic increase of free online tools such as Google Docs, Reader, Analytics etc. the expectation of consumers, in terms of quality of services, is increasing and fast. Just because it's free doesn't mean the service has to be well... crap. Take for example the uprising in resistance to the look and feel of Facebook last year - 2.7million Facebook users promptly stood up and rebelled in the form of a Facebook group.

“ If consumers aren't happy with the service offering,

the barriers to leaving are almost non-existent and as a consequence they will change providers at the drop of a hat. ”

4. **Information overload, filter malfunction:** As the volume of content online increases, everybody is left feeling quite overwhelmed. This is resulting in people putting up increased barriers to reduce distractions. Advert blindness is a well documented consequence, but in today's rapidly evolving information-driven world, it's getting far worse. Web content now has just 11 seconds to grab the attention of its users and to prove itself as valuable (TravelMole). Users are increasingly using crowdsourced consumer measures (such as Digg or Wikipedia), as well as network referrals, as a means of determining what is actually relevant to them.

It is therefore becoming vital to ensure that your content is good enough to get through the various consumer filters and receive their attention. Also, as the volume of content increases, consumers are looking to get more for less, so if you can say something in one sentence, do so. Reams of content take too long to read and nobody has the time.

5. **Anti-trust:** Yes, yes - it's nothing new but it's just gotten far worse. Last year, the Edelman Trust Barometer was released (for the fourth year) and the results were astounding. "People like me" have become the most respected spokespeople - that's ahead of any other form of company communications, including those from the CEO. This displays an increasing distrust in companies. In today's highly competitive environment ethical considerations are, unfortunately, often the last thing on the agenda. Thankfully companies are made up of individuals who are "like me". It's therefore a matter of refocusing how companies are communicating and replacing non-personal communication with direct one-to-one communication.

The other alternative is to apply "trend one" and empower your consumers to become the mouthpiece of your company. Provided the old school approach of "we are a non-personal company communicating to our non-personal consumers" is consciously steered away from, higher trust and engagement can be expected.

6. **What's in it for me?**

As a company, the notion of return on investment is something which is at the forefront of all activity. It is also important for consumers now days as they are doing their best to make the most of their time. Companies now need to compete for consumers' attention in a vast sea of distractions. As a consequence, consumers are much more conscious of what they will be getting out of a particular activity, be it financial, emotional, social etc. There must now be an instant gratification within your site, service or product to each and every action.

Companies can no longer think of just the financial elements and need to actively work to reduce the time required to achieve particular client payoffs while increasing the non-financial value exchanges which take place.

7. **You are the perceived:** As mentioned above, consumers have a higher access to information about you than ever before. As a consequence they have no need for your traditional company-centric communication as there is a veritable sea of 3rd party testimony to assist them in making decisions about your brand.

As the market continues to become saturated, the opportunity to differentiate oneself is becoming obsolete. Instead, companies are increasingly relying on their reputation as their identifying factor. Take the age-old example of Dell Hell or the more recent examples of SAASucks and QVC vs. Blogger for more insight into how reputation is becoming a central element to any brand's success.

8. **Engage me!:**

If you've paid careful attention to all of the above trends, you will have seen that they all point in one direction. Consumers want to be engaged. Companies can no longer expect consumers to come to them - the power system just isn't the same. Instead, companies need to map conversations which are taking place around the Internet (online reputation management [ORM]) and engage with these individuals (as individuals - not as a company) within their personal spaces. This will drive word of mouth and provide other consumers with accurate 3rd party testimony which, as I have shown, is increasingly the only trustworthy source of content.

9. The counter trend:

In response to the overarching consumer trend of "Please engage with me", there will be a counter trend. For every action there is a reaction and with trends it's no different.

Some will embrace this new world while others will look to evade it or quite simply rebel against it. Over 2009, the concept of "personal spaces" will become obsolete as companies and individuals will be clamouring to engage with their market within their blogs and other social spaces.

As a consequence, portions of the market will shy away from such exposure and small walled communities will once again be created. While it may not be a mainline trend, it will certainly exist and breaking into these communities will become the new challenge of the years to come.

To me 2009 will be defined by the battle between privacy and engagement. Everybody will be choosing their comfort level and as their trust/distrust for the Internet changes, so too will their willingness to engage.

The year ahead will certainly be a fascinating time for consumers around the world. Finally, me and you - we - have the power to demand (en mass) certain minimums from our suppliers and with it the levelling of the ground for equality.

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Online predictions for the New Year

By: Matthew Buckland

We may be in the throes of a global financial crisis, but that doesn't mean we won't see innovation on the web. In fact, leading trend analysis blog Read Write Web reminds us of the old cliché that "tech innovation thrives in times of recession". Tight economic conditions incubate intense creative and lateral thought, because a person's very survival is at stake. And the stakes are high.

There just isn't money to throw around and a cushion to fall back on. It perhaps explains why innovation in the online space often emanates from shoe-string garage operations, as opposed to many big, cash-flush corporates such as Microsoft. Also, think of all those unemployed people forced into entrepreneurship... we'll be seeing a whole new generation of web entrepreneurs borne out of this recession.

It's going to be a wild 2009, and here are some key trends to watch out for:

1. Publishing and e-commerce sites as social networks: All major sites will have social network layers allowing users to connect to each other, facilitating peer recommendation of content and sharing of content. The New York Times is leading the way with its recently launched

TimesPeople which does just this. Viral functionality such as "Send to a friend/email a friend" will make way for more sophisticated sharing that involve mining email contact lists. The stark differences between a social network and a publishing/media site will diminish over the years, as publishers wake up and encourage their readers to connect and share — much like social networks.

2. Niche social networks: Expect a raft of niche social networks and exclusive networks to launch. The thing about Facebook is there is no privacy — people will want privacy, intimacy and specialisation in some cases (for example, a person joining a social network focused on a medical condition). There will be some big launches, too: Apple will launch a social network, akin to Facebook, but initially mobile driven from the iPhone. With its scalability issues under control, Twitter will jack up its rather thin offering, with an improved user interface and more social networking features.

3. Applications continue moving online: 2009 may be a seminal year for this trend and it will be catalyst for full-out warfare between Google and Microsoft. We've seen how Google launched Google docs, an online version of Microsoft Word and Excel. It was a direct lunge at Microsoft's jugular. Microsoft, which is like a dangerous mangy dog, will respond by launching its own online versions of Word, Excel and Powerpoint to take Google head-on. Microsoft may go a step further and turn Outlook into an online social network, arguably where email and contacts are headed anyway. Google will retaliate by announcing an online operating system, rivalling Windows, linked to a new GooglePC, a strike at the very heart of Microsoft. This may actually be an extension of Android, its Mobile OS, which it will extend to other digital devices — not just the mobile phone. We may see activity happening the other way too, with Facebook launching a browser.

4. Explosion of mobile content and advertising (and other digital devices): It's become passé to talk about the exponential growth of the mobile web, because it's just so damn obvious. Early trends are telling a story of unbelievable growth, showing previous estimates to be too conservative — an unusual thing for the hype-prone online sector. Indications are that in South Africa, the mobile web - still in its infancy — is already double the size of that of the traditional web in terms of readers. It's not going to be just about cellphones, however; we'll see more digital devices come online too, including digital cameras, car radios and even microwaves.

5. Multimedia content and advertising: As broadband marches on, so interactive video advertising will increasingly become key.

It's surprising how many traditional publishers and advertising agencies have not got to grips with multimedia advertising as an offering. There is just nothing like an assault on all senses for advertisers to get the message across. It beats a banner ad.

6. Targeted/profile-based advertising: Inspired by Google's Adsense, which is by far the most superior advertising model ever created, online media will get its act together and deliver advertising and content that is targeted. Targeted advertising means relevant advertising, which is infinitely more useful to the user and advertiser. We'll see another big player launch an online advertising network, perhaps even a consortium of online publishers tired of splitting ad revenue with Google. Microsoft will extend its own Adwords model and finally launch a self-service Adsense rival, which is currently under trial.

7. Personalised content: As the web continues to pile up with masses of content and the user is overwhelmed, publishers will look at ways of delivering only content that is relevant, based on a user's surfing habits, profile and demographic information and peer recommendations. This will trump privacy concerns, as it will be such a useful and necessary thing.

8. Blogging as social networks: Blog dashboards will include contacts and people to market/ share content. Social networks will upgrade their blog abilities. Blogs don't social network very well, and social networks don't blog very well. We'll see a coming together of these two types of social media. The chief innovator here will be Wordpress.

9. Monetising international traffic: This will be the year that major publications wake up and realise that the Internet is an international medium. Borders and regions are relevant to a print publication delivered in a truck, but not the Internet. Media owners will look at their highly fragmented international audiences and look at new ways of monetising their international traffic, apart from just slapping on Google Adsense.

10. Better and more inclusive application of "user generated content": Publishers will develop a more sophisticated understanding of content generated by users (UGC). They will understand that their user base is varied and contains different types of users, with different abilities. They will identify experts in their community and interact with them differently.

11. Computer-generated content (CGC) via semantic tag structures: these will play a key role in helping us organize and categorise content on the web. They will help aggregators and filters organise and process information, making sure only high quality, influential and relevant stuff is seen.

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Nine mega branding opportunities of 2009

By: Naseem Javed

Here is a look at the opportunities on offer in 2009... There will be prospects for new brands, for quality to shine, and a great deal more.

The daily cinema living

The hunger for moving pictures, like a global conspiracy or an underground movement, has almost killed the flat and still imagery. Every marketing or propaganda message has to move in dimensions or it will be considered boring or dead. This change has already made a very positive impact on screen-based mediums, form hand held devices, wall-size TVs to building size electronic billboards. The streets and shopping malls will eventually look like the insides of cinemas. As long as these new mediums can project and show things live and in colour the world will keep on moving. The entire interiors, shops, corridors and walls, hallways, buildings and ceilings would be nothing but screens and moving images. The dramatic reductions of the cost for projection, availability of dynamic animated contents will keep customers enticed and ring the cash registers. The more available surface the better, tackle the new shape and style of imagery, create new business models and watch the show.

The real-time-societies

> **“ Think, feel, produce and deliver in real time. The financial meltdown has once again proven that no one wants yesterday's numbers but all in real time. ”**

For the global audience, there is a constant need to monitor the news and see the portfolio swings in real time. The recession has become depression and depression has turned into compression of data into online streams of global news delivered via new medium. Some 100 major newspapers in the West are on sale now and majority may not make it. A quick jump from newspaper-to-web-portal is one of the last ways to survive. Keep away from old medium and embrace new cyber-opportunities, study the trends and create new services, use global standards and global branding quality even for the smallest venture, like a fire you could be on top, just ignite the ideas.

The new office-less offices

The traditional millions of offices around the world are slowly turning into invisible office less teams showing off their magic measured in clicks and instant revenue streaming for their relative projects. The beanbag offices of the hippy past are now empty. Office buildings slowly becoming flee markets, people prefer tom be on the move, the 9-5 has been dead for a while. Customers do not want pay extra for expensive offices and art-deco uncomfortable furniture. Discover hassle free mobile working models and fill the special HR needs based on these changes

The no-logo branding

Just ask 10 people on your floor if they can recall the logos of any thing major created in the last 10 years. 99% of the logos of today simply evaporate as now it is more to do will name-calling or name-typing and not logo-scanning or logo screaming. Can you recall the logo of YouTube or Facebook? The logo masters should channel their energies on much broader graphical services and forget about global logo identities, use logo as a playmate like Google changes it daily. The free logo contests via net are becoming very popular among businesses when a single online appeal on a portal or blog gets hundreds of submissions from all over the world and some even better than what Madison Avenue currently produces. Some contests are even asking the entire image and advertising campaign, with copy, theme and the works. Invent large-scale free contests for right customers, award new talents and all at no costs. Ride the new shifts of the industry.

The new agencies

> **“ Methodologies to create instant surplus cash for clients will be the real measurement and critical test for advertising and branding agencies. ”**

These agencies will be expected to deliver a finished building and not just a conceptual drawing. The old fashioned model of 1000 offices worldwide offering 1000 similar services to the same client will be forced to attempt a globally-dedicated-single-client-agency-model. Graphic and slogan based branding will defuse into same-day-quick-printing-services. Study the click society and rediscover real marketing power, become a leaders under new ROI models.

The new infantries

Websites will be totally re-invented; Brand mangers will be reshuffled and Brands will be dry-cleaned, the message re-distilled and finally end-users once again respected. India will become a hot spot, with a million plus technology experts, an infantry with English fluency and free spirited creative and entrepreneurial mind on hand it would acquire the centrality toward a global ad and design center. Discover Hinglish. The Eastern model is very dynamic and there are far too many new services yet to be created for the entire Asian market.

The new cyberspace

Focusing on global image and cyber-branding trends, the option to purchase exclusive global rights to a name of your choice, now available in May 2009 from ICANN for an $185,000 fee on a first-come-non-refundable basis is a mega revolution. The price per name is high, but nothing compared to all the other traditional costs that companies pay to create a global imagery or millions fighting trademark and domain battles to secure a global position. It is the best new way to build global brands and hold cyber domination. This revolution may also be the greatest salvation for the entire advertising, branding and PR industry worldwide. The new debates over popular name targets as listed by ABC Namebank are becoming hot marketing topics. So embrace the facts, approach it correctly and lead the charge.

The new image shift

The sudden worldwide disappearance of major brands and industrial icons will not only fuel the new creation of branding and imaging in Asia but dramatically increase the level of confidence necessary to take charge of the refined science of global image building strategies, once only reserved for the West. The global landscape of world-class brand name identity holders will change. Asia will lead and it is time to study the region and plant new ideas. Monumental sea changes on HR training and internal placement issues are pending. Capture the essence and expand.

The new innovative nations

Nations with enforced education on the pragmatic side of life will have a chance to shine, people with new skills will have the new jobs and employers with global vision will lead for the new world, while the rest will stay very dry in very harsh surrounding. Global recession will force innovative thinking all around and to the farthest corners while ecommerce will get even more popular, deeper and powerful. Image and a new advance level of brand image marketing will become increasingly more important. Despite all the problems, there will be resilience and human skills will sparkle, brighter new ideas will emerge while the world is somewhat more open and wisely offers a mirror to each nation to correct itself. Change fast but stay on course, adopt world-class rules but stay very frugal and only go for the best in everything. The world overall has turned into a massive junk and therefore the true quality will always shine. So know the difference and make the difference, transform and become an agent of change.

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Print media's 2009 jitters

By: Issa Sikiti da Silva

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Battered and squeezed by falling circulation, soaring input costs and dipping advertising revenues and the side-effects of the global financial meltdown, which will lead to mass retrenchments, the South African print media enters the year 2009 like a wounded lion, looking to revise its hunting strategy, nurse its wounds and recover from a miserable 2008.

"There is no doubt that 2008 [was] a difficult year for the print industry as a whole. Even those categories that have reflected growth in circulation have not been able to avoid spiralling input costs," Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) VP Gordon Patterson told Bizcommunity.com.

Patterson pointed out that while it is true that consumers are cutting back on spending as the crisis worsens, circulation declines should not only be ascribed to consumer activity, but must be seen in perspective.

Prepare to cut costs

As magazines and newspapers prepare to cut costs by reducing marketing budgets and retrenching journalists, subeditors, photographers and graphic designers and other workers, Patterson said that publishers have started focusing on growing core circulation and restricting it in order to protect profits.

"The growing input cost pressures have resulted in many titles reducing their print runs and thus reducing distribution to those outlets that are economically viable," he stated.

> **“ From an industry perspective, this year the composition of title circulation will become more important than merely the total. ”**

"Circulation as a currency will become more critical as the industry realises that we plan on readership but buy circulation. The cost-saving initiatives implemented by publishers will have improved title efficiency, which over the next 12 months will make a more meaningful contribution to the bottom line."

Furthermore, Patterson is hoping to see more responsible use of third party bulk initiatives to add value to third parties but at the same time gain title trial.

He explained: "Currently, this form of circulation is often viewed as a soft way to boost overall circulation performance. PMIE (print media in education) circulation fulfills a critical role in developing the next generation of readers, but there are unsubstantiated suspicions that this could be abused to again boost total circulations. Hopefully this is not the case.

“Signs of a slowdown”

"The custom magazine category now has a total circulation larger than consumer magazines, but has shown signs of a slowdown. In a similar vein, the growth in free magazine circulation has slowed."

In this digital era when print advertising has lost its sparkle, print media outlets are flexing their muscles by throwing their weight behind online advertising.

But, with SA's online advertising still in its infancy and representing just a small fraction of the R20 billion industry and the World Bank predicting a gloomy year for SA, many observers believe that the struggle is set to continue and victory might prove elusive.

Nevertheless, other players remain optimistic. Patterson said: "As far as rationalisation is concerned, we know that one of the main print organisations has publicly stated that their future is in digital media, which makes the future for this publisher a self-fulfilling prophecy. Over time this will happen."

However, when all strategies fail, there will be no choice but to close shop as others did in 2008 and what Patterson predicted. "There is no doubt that more titles will close down in 2009 - even with two major sporting events on the horizon," he concluded.