

# Youth marketing - five hot tips

With social media, a plethora of competing brands, active but short attention spans and finding common ground with a tech- and brand-savvy market makes appealing to the youth of South Africa a tough task. However, if you get it right, it can yield results for years to come.



Khethi Ngwenya, owner and Managing Director of SchoolMedia, an in-school media placement and advertising company, says, "It is always important that you are clear about the product or the service that is being marketed - it needs to stand out."

He explains that the youth are attracted by topics that are current, but it is important to use the following top five tips to really grapple with and discover the potential of the market:

## Top tips

### 1. Ensure that the youth is targeted in a responsible and ethical way

Too often, brands target the youth market but have no concern for the impact that they have. It is common practice that brands will arrange activations and marketing with a school principal with no long-term benefit to the school or learners involved. This is why at SchoolMedia we ensure that all campaigns are beneficial to the learners. A percentage of the income will also go back into developing the school concerned. SchoolMedia's partner, the National Association of School Governing Bodies, regulates this and assesses if a campaign is appropriate for the learners and has a benefit to the learners or the schools.

### 2. Ensure that the message and the tone of the campaign interests and engages the youth

The youth needs to be excited about a campaign for it to have any form of impact. Many campaigns targeted at the general market use a lot of facts and heavy text. This is not going to engage the youth. They are more attracted to graphics and want to be pulled into a display or a visual element. Use current topics and messaging when targeting the youth to ensure they engage with the campaign.

### 3. The youth market has a short attention span so messaging needs to be very clear

In between television, social media, school work and socialising, the youth don't have very much free time, which results in short attention spans. One minute a debate over what colour a dress is can be the most talked about and popular topic in a teen's world and a day later they have moved onto the next viral campaign or video. When marketing to this demographic you have to be sure the message is clear and has maximum impact the first time round as you are competing with many other messages and mediums.

### 4. You need to speak the language of the youth so that your message is not missed

Language and communication is changing all the time in the youth market, with different colloquial terms used on a daily bases. Again, with social media, this changes very quickly and marketers have to ensure that they keep up with the times and the colloquialism of the day. It can change from one viral campaign or video to the next. You need to find a way to keep messaging fresh and relevant.

### 5. There is more focus on instant gratification within the youth market

The youth of today want instant gratification. They expect everything to happen absolutely immediately so there is no point trying to sell them a 10 year investment plan. The trick is to get the message across but to ensure that they will get at least some immediate benefit or satisfaction.

Khethi says that utilising these tips can help create memorable campaigns. He uses the example of the Cremora advert, which he heard before he turned seven-years-old. Today he is 24-years-old and still relies on Cremora as a credible brand due to the "it's not inside, it's on top" catch-phrase.

"Brands should always remember, when targeting this market, that they will be creating impact throughout these children's lives, right up until they possibly retire."

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