

# Technology is changing how people shop

Primedia Unlimited mall division media product manager, Gia Conte-Patel, talks to Bizcommunity.com about the growing and innovative media category, mall media, where 36% of all mall consumer spend is attributed to in-mall advertising.



Gia Conte-Patel

**Q: How does mall media compare with other media types?**

**A:** Mall media drives brand salience and has the ability to influence shoppers' purchase decisions during the path to purchase. It could be a trigger or reminder to make a planned purchase, stimulate an unplanned purchase or switch brand allegiance from one store/brand to another.

After conducting a study with GIBS, it was evident that 36% of spend in malls is attributed to in-mall media.

With mall media there is a greater chance of conversion, because the communication is contextually relevant, reaches shoppers when they are receptive and in buying mode and are in close proximity/easily accessible to the point of conversion.

Another advantage of mall media is that it's a pristine environment to place a brand, for any brand that has an aspirational quality, investing in mall media enhances brand associations. Malls are usually very clean.

**Q: What is the big innovation we will see next in shopper marketing?**

**A:** Location based advertising using beacons and in-mall coupon distribution, be it through ibeacons, similar technology or digital units. Bridging the gap between traditional out of home (OOH) and mobile is the [next big thing](#).

**Q: How does the use of multimedia differentiate a brand?**

**A:** If you're referring to the use of multimedia in the shopping centre environment, it can only benefit the brand. Malls are very busy areas - relying on store signage and windows aren't always enough. In our GIBS research, one of the key take outs was that brands that invested in several touch points in the mall, i.e. windows, in-mall OOH, activations, etc., had the highest impact.

**Q: What is the fundamental change in shopper marketing today?**

**A:** It's no longer about expecting the shopper to come to you, because as a brand you've created demand. Shoppers are becoming more and more empowered and their opinions and experiences matter. Building products and services without insight into shopper needs and desires just isn't going to cut it. Social media demands that brands pay attention.

**Q: What is the biggest trend that will change the retail sector by 2020/2025?**

**A:** Customised push notifications based on a shopper's preferences, interactive and shoppable storefronts.

**Q: What are the qualities/innovations that customers are demanding from brands?**

**A:** Convenience by bringing online and bricks and mortar experiences together. The internet of things, as well as the proliferation of smart phones, is changing how people behave and how they shop. We need to be aware of how technology is impacting our shoppers. There is a lag between the early adopters overseas and the early adopters in SA which provides us with a window into the future. The challenge is to implement it in a way that is relevant to the South African market.

Our approach is to put the South African shopper in the centre of all product development. We're in a unique position to get this right as we also provide the marketing for many of the centres that we sell media in.

This provides us with the shopper insights we need to develop future media products that will make shopping better. When looking at where to start, we consider whether it benefits the SA shopper. If the answer is an immediate yes then it's a good point of departure.

Big data is also a huge opportunity. I'm hoping to see some real advances in shopper analytics in the near future.

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