

Digital mall activations access 'always on' consumers

 By [Travis Brown](#)

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Gone are the days when mall activations featured pretty girls handing out coffee. These days we're conceptualising and executing 360-degree, fully integrated campaigns that also often utilise the expertise of our sister businesses, providing clients with a fully integrated offering.

But it's not like we're blazing a trail - the time for that has past. Now it's about meeting the needs of consumers and these days, they are extremely 'tech hungry'. As a result, 60% to 70% of our activations now feature Facebook and Twitter elements.

This is because activations need a digital element to reach critical mass, whether it's QR codes, sms or social media. For example, a Facebook or Twitter feed could feature a consumer standing with a celebrity guest and this is then posted on to a brand's Facebook page.

Excellent rate of conversion

Looking specifically at post-PC hardware like a smartphone or an iPad, a key benefit is that they're modern looking and add a technological edginess to activations, in comparison to a normal touchscreen unit. They also allow a client to feature a full product showcase without having to display all the relevant items in the limited space available in a mall.

The backup of a real time sales tool also means that it can be used to subsidise brand ambassadors' knowledge because even with extensive training, it's very difficult to anticipate every question that a consumer may ask.

Another benefit of the use of this 3G or wi-fi enabled 'live' technology in activations is its ability to generate real-time sales leads by sending these directly to the car dealership. Alternatively, prospective buyers can book a test drive while they're still at the promo court and email brochures directly to interested consumers.

Our clients can also track how many leads have been generated and instantly tally up those figures. They have an immediate database that they can segment and target accordingly for instantaneous follow up. There is also the option to engage customers in a quick, easy and fun survey resulting in detailed demographic stats.

This type of technology can also localise sales follow ups to make sure they're relevant to a particular customer. So a prospective customer may be on a business trip or on holiday in Cape Town for example but they'll be 'connected' with a car dealer near their home in Johannesburg. In that way we're able to provide a national footprint for a promotion but a localised follow up, allowing for personalisation.

Real life results

A recent example of the success of this type of approach is a countrywide, six-month campaign we ran for Jaguar and the new Range Rover Evogue that created a combined result of more than 1700 sales leads. These actionable leads were generated through one-on-one engagement between prospective buyers and our trained promoters.

With coding created by Cyberkinetics; six iPads were made available at the stands - four contained in-depth information on the specifications, features, colour options, availability, pricing and picture gallery of the vehicles - and two were used by the brand ambassadors to generate sales leads.

By utilising iPads, we were immediately able to email interested consumers the relevant brochures, book a test drive on the spot or arrange for a dealer in their area to contact them. We were also able to split content on either the Land Rover or Jaguar brands if anyone wanted to look at vehicle specs etc.

Futurewatch

In terms of key trends to watch out for in this space, technology is developing so rapidly that products like interactive tables, flooring and glass bar counters and 3D smart screens are no longer the stuff of science fiction movies - they're available now!

Another key trend that's on the horizon is Augmented Reality (AR) where people engage with brands in an AR setting or with a hologram. It's a technology-driven way for consumers to get up close and personal with the brand and complement and extend its presence.

We've already utilised a branded holographic box in Johannesburg's Westgate Mall in a campaign that will run for the next six months. This is one of the first times we've used a holographic display but it will definitely grow as the technology becomes more accepted and widely known.

ABOUT TRAVIS BROWN

Travis Brown is GM at Mall Active and is responsible for the overall strategy and operations of the Mall Fusion and Mall Active businesses which both fall under the Primedia Unlimited banner. Travis has close on two decades of design, strategy, account management, and account direction experience. Contact details: email travisb@mallactive.co.za | tel 011 561 6333

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