

# Eight things to consider when plotting your 2015 digital marketing strategy

 By [David Alves](#)

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As consumers feel the Christmas pinch, so marketers begin their planning for 2015. In-depth reviews of what worked and what didn't commence and agencies wrack their fatigued brains for new and inspiring ways to reach their audiences in the year to come. Without boring you with predictions for 2015, here are a few suggestions to consider when plotting out the year ahead.

## **Brands as publishers**

Going beyond being useful, brands will have to move from being humorous, relevant and witty to being publishers of content that customers will actually thank them for. This might seem like a strange aspect to focus on, but content marketing is becoming a defining advantage for some winning brands in this realm. Customers aren't easily fooled or satiated by light-weight commentary.

## **Immersion over integration**

To integrate is not enough anymore. A niche platform focus is being trumped by the need to create a common brand experience across all platforms, both on and offline. Customers have become more demanding than ever before and are consuming information across platforms, apps and devices with vigour.

Brands need to have answers wherever buyers are looking, and if they don't, they may need to refocus and listen harder to the now mobilised consumer.

## **Media and amplification**

From AB testing to paid funnel strategies - where does the real battle lie? I believe that it happens in the conversations between status meetings. Questions like; "Is there a way we can shift bigger budget to paid mobile on Facebook? And "Where are we with Twitter Cards?" If you're in digital, you would be aware that the media shift is happening, but without data-centric motivation, will it happen in your (agency) lifetime?

Test, report, analyse, optimise and then learn to motivate for more in a way that provides your client with tools for them to motivate further. Equip your client with the best knowledge possible to make better decisions about their business.

## **Segmentation vs. Fragmentation**

Why do we continue to bow to an old measurement of segmentation when we all know that our audience is now more fragmented than ever before? Digital, social and CRM have given us the tools to understand who our brand's customers are now more than ever before. Maybe it's time we went back to basics, resourced in the right areas and re-evaluated the way we speak to specific audiences to maximise our client's message.

## **Social CRM and the art of personalisation**

Without having to play 'the herder', brands and marketers need to look internally at their loyalty programmes, existing databases, partners and look to improve their messaging by understanding their customers better. From automation to direct response feedback, brands need to begin developing a more customised user experience for each and every person in the purchase lifecycle.

## Storytelling on steroids

A word easily thrown around in 2014 - the concept of storytelling needs to evolve. From simply telling the story, to making it interactive and visual. Inspire emotions and go beyond getting noticed to having your message amplified to communities greater than before.

## Upping the eComm ante

2015 will be the year where brands begin to start understanding their customer user experience better than ever. Tracking customer acquisition and personalising that experience every step of the way will be the goal for eComm orientated brands. The seamless experience both on desktop and mobile needs to be a focus point for brands looking to retain and churn in the purchase cycle.

## On the periphery but not secondary

There are many aspects not mentioned in the above that should be cited as additional areas of focus for marketers. Firstly, Africa vs South Africa: In a fragmented environment such as marketing to a pan-African region, local context and subtext is everything.

Wearables: In an age where the race is on for the newest piece of technology, marketers need to focus on what the majority of users will continue to have for a very long time to come, a personal phone instead of the new piece of wearable tech.

Data: Where marketers need to focus their efforts is in mobile, instead of web. In the next year, marketers will be privy to more mobile-centric data than ever before. It's time they used it.

## ABOUT DAVID ALVES

Digital Head at Net#work BBDO

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