

The king is dead, long live the king!

By  Chris Brewer

20 Mar 2017

Well, the AMPS funeral is over and several concerned bodies are making progress on instituting something with which to replace it.

The Marketing Association of South Africa (MA(SA)), The Advertising Media Forum (AMF) and the Association for Communication and Advertising (ACA), have been encouraging the industry to cooperate with them in putting together a new marketing research currency to replace the now-discontinued All Media and Products Survey (AMPS).



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The general consensus is that we need a single-source survey to replace AMPS and one which is independent. Or, in other words: not controlled by a group of media owners.

Personally, I think this is admirable and I hope that the industry gets the funds together because the current research being released to the industry is very much designed for the media owners and not for the rest of the industry. This is hardly surprising, after all, if you are paying for something, you are only going to pay for what you need, and the rest of the industry needs to either find another way forward or live with what they get.

I personally think that in the next two to three years we will have pretty much what we had before SAARF was unbundled – but at twice the cost and the data will be collected by several bodies instead of one (which will become a bit of a

concatenation headache on its own, I would think).

I guess you could call that the price of progress. We used to have a model that was envied by the world, and we sadly have moved to a model that's just ho-hum – now we're the same as the rest of the world. On the plus side, some egos were scrubbed and polished up along the way.

I will also be very interested to see how the new surveys currently being released by the media owner bodies match up to this new survey. That in itself could cause quite an interesting bun fight in the industry, especially if this survey's results differ greatly from the data released by the media owner bodies – which is what usually happens when goalposts are shifted a bit.

Any queries about the new data released have been squashed very quickly by any means possible and the general line of "Everything is stable, everything is finally correct and everything is better", along with the constant slating of SAARF's data, tends to make me feel that the people shouting how great everything is now, don't quite believe their own message. Perhaps they do 'protesteth' a little too much sometimes.

The sad reality is the days of having independent, affordable research for the entire industry – controlled by the entire industry – is something of the past, I'm sorry to say.

Sometimes progress is essential and there are casualties – I suppose that's normal – and we will, I'm sure, claw our way back to where we were, but I wonder at what cost?

By the way, the Broadcast Research Council will be hosting the "re-launch of BRC TAMS" in early April. Let me know if you need any more info: chris@brewers.co.za.

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ABOUT CHRIS BREWER

Having joined the ad industry in London, Chris Brewer spent most of his career in media analysis and planning - but has performed just about every advertising task from Creative to Research. He's an honorary lifetime member of the Advertising Media Association and regularly advises agencies and clients regarding their media plan costs and strategies. He is also often asked to talk at industry functions. Email: chris@brewers.co.za. Twitter: [@brewersapps](https://twitter.com/brewersapps). Read his blog: www.brewersdroop.co.za

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