

Recession hit your marketing budget? Here's how to do more with less

 By [Shaune Jordaan](#)

25 Sep 2018

Stats SA's recession announcement in early September only served to confirm what we've all known for a long time: The South African economy is struggling. In those circumstances, companies are bound to start looking for places to tighten their belts.



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Marketing will, almost inevitably, be one of the first departments to feel the sting of these cost-cutting exercises. While the wisdom of doing so has been relentlessly debated, marketing heads can at least rest easy in the knowledge that it is possible to do more with less.

With the right digital tools in place, companies can create relevant, people-based marketing that produces actual business results.

The cost of traditional

In its traditional forms, advertising is pretty expensive. Let's say you want to put out a TV ad. If you want something even vaguely watchable, your ad agency is going to charge you a lot of money. After all, they need to pay the conceptual team, the writers, directors, film crew and everyone else involved in bringing the ad to life.

That cost is nothing, however, compared with what you'll be charged to ensure that the ad is seen by prime-time audiences.

The same is true, albeit to lesser degrees, of radio and print ads.

The result? Who knows? You might have a spike in sales immediately after the ad flights, but there'll be very little to tell you that it's as a direct result of the ad.

The ad might be beautifully-crafted and generate a ton of publicity, but unless it results in a demonstrable increase in sales, you've poured money down the drain.

The digital discount

For years, digital has solved at least one of these problems. For the cost of a TV ad, you can produce several YouTube ads (which can incidentally be reused on other platforms, including Facebook and Twitter).

These ads can be more specifically tailored to the different groups of people who use your product or service, increasing your chances of getting direct sales.

Additionally, you can measure when people go directly from the video to your website and buy something, or sign up for your service.

Of course, this kind of measurability is only a part of the story when it comes to assessing how effective a piece of advertising might be.

How, for instance, do you know if someone came to your site a day after seeing that YouTube video, or visited your physical store after seeing a promotional image on Facebook?

As technology improves, that's increasingly possible, allowing you to more easily see what forms of advertising are working and worth spending money on.

The personal touch

Used correctly, technology can also allow companies to combine the data they have on their customers with online data to ensure that people only see messaging that's relevant to them.

Let's say, for instance, that you're looking online for a car. Ordinarily, you'd have adverts following you around for the car you've just looked at from the site you've just visited.

But wouldn't it make more sense to see adverts for your bank's vehicle financing options? Or car insurance options?

Better marketing, lower costs

This kind of people-based advertising not only makes it more likely that you'll achieve results, but it also means it's much easier to know where to put your marketing spend.

It's important to remember that this data-driven advertising doesn't mean sacrificing creativity, far from it. When you're appealing to individuals, there's actually more scope for creativity than when you're trying to appeal to everyone.

In a recession, better campaigns are more important than ever. But that shouldn't mean companies having to blow out the bank.

ABOUT SHAUNE JORDAAN

Shaune Jordaan is the co-founder and chief commercial officer at Hoorah Digital. He is passionate about delivering world class results to brands and building a digital culture that drives change. He is the former co-founder/CEO of an award winning performance digital agency with an extensive global client list. He's worked extensively across the globe, growing digital portfolios and leading digital transformation. He is one of Africa's most experienced digital leaders.

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