

Digital delight as Internet grows, but wait a minute!



By [Bylssa Sikiti da Silva](#)

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The global Internet market is growing continuously and at a fast pace, generating more websites, more users and ad spaces, more ad impressions and shifting more money from print to online, Adtech head of global CRM Suhela Gremmel declared yesterday, Tuesday, 16 November 2010, in Johannesburg. Frankfurt-based Gremmel was speaking at the 2010 Bookmarks Workshop in Craighall Park.



Gremmel, who also said the Internet explosion is producing a wider smartphone distribution and more bandwidth, revealed that South Africa's Internet usage has grown by 120.8% in the past 10 years, while UK, US and Germany's growth rate stands at 234%, 151.6% and 170.8% in the same period, respectively.

Long way to go for SA

However, while the Internet revolution has engendered a digital delight in the west, with some countries' digital marketing revenues surprisingly overtaking traditional marketing revenues, SA still has some long way to go in terms of taking full advantage of the online 'miracle'.

Unpacking her 'International Publisher Trends' presentation, Gremmel said: "When I started in this market, everything was simple."

From the initial itinerary consisting of advertisers (first source) to the agency to the sales network via the ad servers and finally to the publishers and the audience, life has become more challenging and complicated, as the product now has to go through a complex landscape of technological channels, according to Gremmel's theory.

Four trends

"There are now more and more market players and technologies," Gremmel said, adding that communication and data transfer is now done through open interfaces, which she named as the first trend.

Due to the complexity of the current market situation, Gremmel called for standardisation - the second trend - a process she described as the 'only way to more reliability, transparency and technological progress' in the online business.

Standardisation improves quality assurance, helps with the easy handling of ad formats and consistent counting methods through all channels.

As regards to the third trend, new measurements, she said: "Don't focus on the count," citing brand engagement, visibility control, interaction rate, and duration and playback time of video (ads) as components of new measurements.

Targeting

"Targeting is the fourth trend, which is the process whereby content will follow the ads," she said.

"Data is key for decisions to display the right ad to the user. Data is also key to optimise content for the user. Why don't we combine both worlds? Targeting drives content, and [one should] implement user-specific content and ads based on advanced targeting criteria."

And lastly, Gremmel said data is king. "Sophisticated, quality data provides efficient conversion of available data into useful information. It explores the interrelationship of data through an interactive multi-dimensional model, and it improves business performance to support better business decision-making."

Headquartered in Germany and a wholly-owned subsidiary of AOL, Adtech is a sponsor of the 2010 Bookmarks Workshop, alongside Facebook and BBC. The workshops (the Cape Town leg takes place today, Wednesday 17 November) are hosted by the Digital Media and Marketing Association (DMMA).

New investment model

Earlier on, Chris Colborn, chief experience officer of R/GA and a repeat international judge for the Bookmarks, lectured about the new investment model, which consists, among others, of reimagining brands, redesigning teams and re-architecting the process.

Colborn pointed out that the 2010 business model became more complicated and complex, compared to past models, as collaboration in the industry has increased, there's been more data visualisation, strategy has become more complicated, there's been a huge shift from media neutrality to context, and efficient production has become more global - a process culminating to accountable results.

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Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

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