

Digital marketing needs to be noticed by business

South Africans are becoming more tech-savvy, as more of them use mobile phones than any other single media (29 million against 28 million using radio, 27 million watching TV and 6 million using personal computers). PwC predicts that consumer spending on internet access could reach R59.6bn a year by 2017, up from R19.8bn last year.



Image via [123RF](#)

For business, the question that arises is, "Are we adjusting quick enough to reach the right customers?" Integral to any businesses' efforts to communicate with potential customers is the ill-defined concept of marketing. In the words of Rowan Atkinson, famous for his role as Mr. Bean, "Marketing is what gets you noticed."

However, with digital technology expanding its reach across South Africa (and Africa) traditional marketing as we know it - eg advertising, public relations, direct promotions etc - often does not achieve, on its own, the results that businesses need.

According to Deloitte's top eight business trends of 2015, Chief Marketing Officers and Chief Information Officers are expected to invest in technology for marketing automation, next-generation omni-channel approaches, content development, customer analytics and commerce initiatives.

This means that companies are expected to gear themselves to market to the growing number of customers online. According to Bradley Elliott, MD of digital agency, Platinum Seed, the trend of digital marketing has already begun with an influx of requests for digital marketing strategies and campaign proposals coming through from both global companies targeting local customers and South Africa companies.

Digital marketing questions

Elliott suggests that when considering a digital marketing strategy companies reflect on the following questions:

- (i) How much insight do you have about the customers you are targeting? (This includes preferences, behaviour, issues customers face, strengths of competitors (not only in terms of their business but their marketing strategies as well),
- (ii) What are your company's objectives?
- (iii) Why is digital marketing the right choice for you?

- (iv) How can marketing use technology to add value to your customers' lives? Like any marketing strategy, understanding your audience and what you expect to achieve from it is half the battle won.

"There are challenges with digital marketing as with any aspect of business. The biggest challenge being the fast-paced nature in which technology is changing. Whether it is social media, leveraging technology for a company campaign or developing a mobile app to support company sales - the world of digital is changing rapidly. For instance with social media, initially companies had Facebook and Twitter to choose from, now we have Instagram, Pinterest, and Snapchat. The modes to communicate with/market to your audience include a wide range of options, although this should not intimidate a business owner. It is the responsibility of the experts you work with to advise you accordingly, but the fact remains ignoring

digital marketing will be at your peril."

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