

Consumers are multi-channelling, and multi-listening

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Understanding the consumer has become a rather important discussion in boardrooms across the globe and right here in South Africa.



Locally we rely mainly on qualitative research to help us make the technical and crucial decisions that support advertiser strategies and brand presence or engagement.

We dig deep into various media tools and research, and apply layers of information that will help us build a case that "resonates" and "relates" to the consumer and through this insight, hopefully make brands relevant in a particular audience environment. In the radio advertising space we have become so involved in the fact that digital media is booming & people are multi-channelling or multi-screening that we see other radio stations as competitors rather than part of the radio offering.

In essence as media owners we are competing for share of mind in the consumer headspace and if we apply general knowledge and logic, it's easy to see that we have forgotten what radio is all about and that each station does in fact have a unique offering. Be it the presenters, the language, the presentation style etc, the audience demand from each station will always be different due to the nature and behaviour of people.

What do listeners want?

In order to keep radio alive and correctly analyse the effects of radio advertising on the consumer, we need to firstly understand the consumer demand from each radio station and then their total demand from radio. This will help us put the radio engagement as a total product offering in perspective and then perhaps we can start to segment consumer needs by radio station, not just demographics.

I am assuming through general knowledge and understanding of the radio industry, that there is in fact a large "silent majority" of radio brands in South Africa that do not shout harder or louder in terms of their successes etc. hence leaving a gap in the market that allows the competition to tap into. So this "competition" is sometimes related to poor marketing and reputation management rather than the audience size and demographics. In addition, with the radio category itself growing and enhancing the digital boom, media within the category should be more concerned about the growth of their specific genre, their implementation, and consumer value proposition.

Don't overlook the 'opportunity'

Radio media owners spend a large proportion of time trying to configure the consumer media mix which is excellent in the growth of the medium along with new media; however, by looking outside the category completely, you may overlook the

opportunity. My suggestion would be that we start enhancing this "multi-listener" and embracing the fact that this person does consume other radio channels and through this insight, develop a plan to engage with him/her not exclusively, but rather more regularly and for longer. After all the efficacy in an advert relies mainly in recall and a consumer can only recall an ad if they were paying attention.

To pay attention, consumers should not be tuning in and out but rather be listening for a set period of time. Having said this, it is important to place your radio brand among the competition, time your reach, and then through the timing, talk about "your" place in the radio media mix, and then the multi-media mix.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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