

Digital proof's in the technical PPC pie for TMI

 By Leigh Andrews

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TMI usually stands for 'too much information'. But for The Media Image, the digital agency for which TMI is an acronym, the quantity and quality of info they shared proved just right at the recent IAB Bookmarks Awards.

With TMI's strong focus on paid search, SEO, display, content, design and social media disciplines, it's little wonder the digital agency shone at last month's IAB Bookmark Awards, with a Bronze Craft Award for Paid Search Marketing in the tough casino PPC vertical for Coral's 'make every click count' campaign – clicks cost R2,400 upwards there –as well as a coveted golden Pixel for their search brand protection for client Neilson.



The Media Image team

TMI's director Peter Brooke-Sumner let us in on the extreme planning and technical PPC skills behind these winning entries...

"We entered the best paid search campaign category with two entries that we felt demonstrated above-normal knowledge of how to optimise and use third-party technology tools like the full DoubleClick technology stack and other competitor tools to enhance the results for our clients. The real hard work was in achieving the results. We always want our entries to show how much technical insight went into executing the campaigns for our clients, as this knowledge and execution within the agency is the real winner. We often have very technical entries, so it is hard work to get all of it onto one page for the awards entry. The team worked very hard to do this and it took some creative thinking to also include data and graphs, says Brooke-Sumner.

The local digital agency-client relationship

Brooke-Sumner says it's important to always keep learning and training, as there are always new tools, techniques and products. Being aware of these and testing them will ensure that not only your agency adopts new ideas and techniques but that you are also passing on these skills to your clients. This knowledge sharing ensures digital growth both in agencies and on client side.

He adds that trust plays a huge role between an agency and a client and being honest, open and completely transparent go a long way to ensure trust. At TMI they strive to be seen as part of their clients' extended team, rather than having a traditional agency-client relationship, which is often driven by remuneration.

“Some clients are sceptical about PPC and SEO agencies, partially due to past incompetence through poor results or extremely high or misleading fee structures”, explains Brooke-Sumner. Unfortunately, clients also believe that they know exactly how PPC, SEO or display channels should be managed or optimised and often push this onto their agencies rather than working together to achieve set goals and KPIs.



Brooke-Sumner

Brooke-Sumner adds that some local clients believe that if another agency offers the same services cheaper, that's a good enough reason to move agencies rather than to look at the results and relationship they currently have and measure the intrinsic value, not only based on price but also on results, innovation, product offering and relationships. Skilled digital marketing experts and agencies are scarce in South Africa so work with them, listen to their advice, support their decisions and grow with them.

Drumming up digital knowledge

And while South Africa is often a few years behind the scale and size of other digital markets, Brooke-Sumner says we generally have access to the same tools and technologies as any other market, so knowledge is the true key to digital growth in SA. This means that traditional agencies should be engaging with specialist digital experts and agencies, and ensure they are involved with media strategies from the start in order to provide digital results rather than executions that are amazing but not using the full scope and scale of what can be achieved. It's not pie-in-the sky: There are already Africa-produced digital products that are innovative and world leading, such as M-Pesa, which has Kenyan origins.

According to Brooke-Sumner: “I believe certain clients and agencies are still afraid of digital and often revert to traditional marketing channels such as billboards or print purely due to how vast and complex digital can appear. However, digital adoption is scaling fast! We will see a tipping point where media budgets start growing substantially towards digital. Digital is not going away. Channels and adoption are growing significantly and it is only going to get bigger.”

Consider yourself warned, especially as TMI itself looks to expand its own service offering rapidly. It'll do so by offering digital media buying solutions for any client as well as end-to-end tracking technology that's producing world-class programmatic buying results. It's linked with accurate tracking across all digital channels and mapping live results, KPIs and ROI across multiple digital channels, even traditional media – it truly is the digital future.

Visit their [website](#) for more and keep an eye on their [Twitter feed](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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