

# Scopen 2017 planning, ready to meet top marketing execs

 By Johanna McDowell

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With the first edition of Agency Scope South Africa completed in 2016, Spanish-based independent research company Scopen and the Independent Agency Search & Selection Company (IAS) are well on the way to getting the research required to produce the 2017 edition.



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In highlighting 15 key trends in the South African communication, marketing, procurement and advertising industry, the research comprises a series of analyses from the industry's highest-level decision makers, published exclusively for marketers and marketing agencies.

The marketing professionals involved in the interviews are those who engage on an ongoing basis in the decision-making process for selecting and approving their agencies' work, so Agency Scope gives agencies working with marketers first-hand information about their requirements.

The recruiting of eight researchers with high-level experience in the communications and marketing fields began in May. One will conduct the 40 interviews required in KwaZulu-Natal; three will cover the Western Cape with 80 interviews; and four will be interviewing 150 marketers in Gauteng.

The size of the sample for 2017 has grown from 70 in 2016 to 250, giving an indication of how well received the first South African Scopen's Agency Scope was. The market is more aware of the value the research offers now and the IAS is better equipped to expand its research to include more key figures in the industry.

Researchers require an hour of face-to-face time with the most senior-level marketers in corporate companies and government institutions, who will be rating their agencies across the creative, digital or media sectors. Once these face-to-face interviews are completed, an online survey will be sent to senior individuals employed by agencies – excluding owners and directors – to determine how others see the industry.

At a later stage, another online survey designed specifically for the procurement sector will be sent to the appropriate level of executives within this important area.

As part of a global community of 12 countries, Scopen talks to approximately 3,000 executive marketers. This means that the research has to be conducted by specialists who understand all aspects of the industry and can engage at the highest level.

In publishing the study, meticulous methodology ensures the best possible data and privacy protection. Information privacy is key, and sent in an encrypted format to Spain where it is analysed. The questionnaire is semi-structured, leaving some open-ended questions to enable in-depth opinions from executives.

Last year's trends included important information for agencies dealing with marketers, such as what they feel an idea agency offers, integration of services versus specialisation, procurement's role in the negotiation process and agency stability.

The primary value of Agency Scope South Africa is that it provides agencies working with marketers with first-hand information about the needs of marketers. This helps with new business prospects as well as existing clients. For marketers, the study highlights the best performing agencies in a variety of areas, such as attractiveness, ideal structure, creativity and client satisfaction.

Scopen's president and CEO César Vacchiano said, "The results from this year's study will be presented to the industry in November 2017 and will enable agencies to track the differences in their results from 2016, given that they may have implemented suggested changes as a result of the 2016 study."

Marketing executives, while time-poor, are urged to participate in this valuable exercise in order to facilitate the best possible information regarding industry trends and how best to adapt or create them.

## ABOUT JOHANNA MCDOWELL

MD of the Independent Agency Search and Selection Company (IAS), and partner in Scopen Africa, with a background that includes being on both the agency and the client side of the fence, Johanna McDowell is well-placed to offer commentary on marketing and advertising in the South African and international contexts. She built her career in marketing and advertising since 1974, holding directorship in both SA and British advertising agencies. She was MD of Grey Phillips Advertising in 1988.

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