

The role of marketers in a data-driven world

 By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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Popimedia's CMO2020 initiative was launched in an effort to determine if local chief marketing officers (CMOs) are prepared enough to respond to a paradigm shift that threatens their relevance, as technology and data-driven sales initiatives grow in prominence. On Tuesday, 9 May (in Johannesburg) and on Friday, 12 May (in Cape Town) this shift and the new role of the CMO in the age of data were discussed.



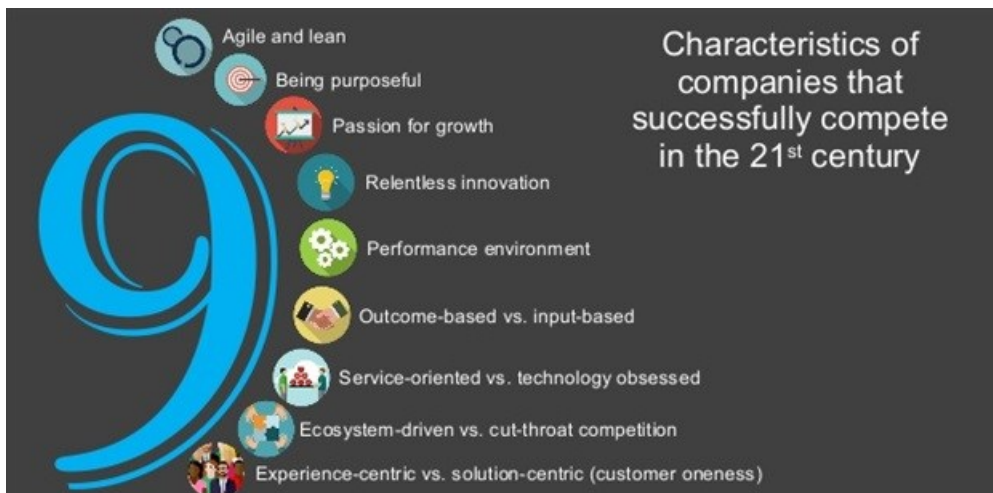
Popimedia launches CMO2020 initiative

6 Apr 2017



Television personality, Jeremy Maggs hosted the event and panel discussion that pitted CMOs against CIOs. Speakers at the Cape Town event that I attended, included Maritza Curry (BI manager at Woolworths ITS), and Steven Raucher, co-founder of Rapid Deploy. On the CMO versus CIO panel, Ben Wagner (head of Native VML Cape Town) was joined by Professor Geoff Bick (professor of Marketing at UCT Graduate School of Business) and Greg Erasmus (regional executive Cornastone Telecommunications).

Curry was up first and offered an insightful talk about how business intelligence (BI) and analytics can really play a vital role in allowing businesses to react faster to threats or prospects by giving users quick access to relevant information. She said the shift is not so much in the function of BI in the digital era, but rather in how companies do BI, and that there needs to be a shared vision between the BI team and business through a co-created BI strategy that addresses BI capability and needs at an enterprise level. "BI and analytics in the digital era will require a shift for many corporate or traditional IT BI teams away from centralised control to co-creation with business because information produced by the BI function will only be relevant if it is aligned to business strategy."



Slide listing characteristics of companies successfully competing in a data-driven world ©Maritza Curry [Slideshare page](#)

The pace of business change

Next up was the panel discussion with Wagner, Bick and Erasmus, all offering their views on what is needed to make sure CMOs stay relevant entering 2020. The panel came to the conclusion that collaboration is vital and that marketers need to understand all aspects of the business, and engage with all of these different sections to generate value.

Raucher ended the discussion with a talk introducing his company, <https://rapiddeploy.com/>, a computer aided dispatch platform, and chatted to us about how RapidDeploy uses technology to save lives on a daily basis. Leading up to 2020, he said it's important to use technology to drive your business. "If you're not using tech to drive insights and business, you're on the back foot from the start," he said.

Speaking at the Johannesburg event, Hans Zachar, MD Technology Strategy of Accenture, said that if you look at what a CMO has to think about in the future, it is very important that the CMOs recognise that businesses are changing. "We used to talk about the pace of technology change, now we talk about the pace of business change, where customers and people start becoming the centre of the CMO and the organisation's agenda." He said that CMOs need to partner with their fellow C-suite executives and that the role of the CMO is becoming even more important at the C-suite in being able to sense disruption, innovation in the market and to help organisations craft their journey into that new world.

In the end, it boils down to the CMO and CIO coming together and developing strategies that drive the marketing process to grow their businesses performance and to offer positive results heading into the future.

For more information on future events, visit the Popimedia [webpage](#) or visit their [Facebook page](#).

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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