

Technology has levelled the playing field

By [Bogosi Mntshengwa](#)

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In today's world; there needs to be something deeper and probably less tangible that influences people's behaviour, attitude, decisions and most importantly; builds loyalty.

In a world of fast-paced iterations, augmentations and 'the things that do this or that'; the tangibles don't build long-term relationships because there's always something better, faster, and cheaper, delivered more conveniently out there.

Relationships

This is the one thing that seems to have blended into the walls of our boardrooms as a consequence of social media, the internet and technology having landed at the centre of the tables in the very same boardrooms. Most of the brand building and marketing efforts seem to be driven to steal people's temporary attention. The need to be liked, shared, commented on or to trend comes at a cost. Like a bottomless pit, this need to be *temporarily* liked, shared or commented about can never be filled. It's like an addiction... it can never be satisfied.

People are constantly looking for their next fix, that content that will make them relevant, make them smile, that thing that gives them social currency; in this realm, do you have the endurance and money to keep up? Few companies or brands can confidently say 'Yes'.



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People seek what they need or want, and most times, your brand is not on that list.

With everyone and every brand exposed to the same quality of innovations and resources; how do you stand out?

Well, it turns out that every single one of us; every person, brand or organisation can stand out. How? Well...

What do you as a brand believe in? What's your purpose? Differentiation starts from the inside; underpinned by your identity. Anything external, like technology, the internet and social media, for example, need not form the core of who you are and why you exist; instead, they should enhance who and what you believe in and are trying to achieve.

Everyone is exposed to the same trends and markets; but trends and technological innovations will only bring you temporary awareness, not loyalty.

Instead of waiting for the next Pokemon Go craze; go crazy on what makes you different and work on it in order to deliver differentiated customer value that's not fleeting and not easy to copy.

At a human level; we form relationships with people who we perceive to know; and if we like what we know, a bond forms. This is no different to brand building. Do people know who you are and what you stand for?

Technology is not the thing that makes you 'you', because everyone has access to it. What makes you 'you' is what no-one else has; your brand identity. From this level playing field, brand identity and purpose are what should lead your brand.

ABOUT BOGOSI MOTSHEGWA

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