

Share of pocket: brand adaption for the mass market



By [Estee Cockcroft](#), issued by [Boomtown](#)

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During a recent brand emersion exercise, I spoke to a highly articulated, entrepreneurial, tavern owner in one of the local townships. Wearing a page boy hat, denim shirt and slick leather shoes he looked wildly out of place on a dilapidated wooden bench in the dirt street outside his establishment. We chatted about his customers, and the one thing he mentioned that stood out to me was this: "They live in their pockets. Every single one of them, every day. What they have in their pockets is what they have that day. No more."

It sounds fairly simple. We, marketers, get this. Sure, we say, bracketing them into an LSM group in our minds, they are financially stretched-we understand. But do we? Do we know how to innovate our products? How our messaging has to be tweaked to build brand loyalty with this mass market? And do we have any idea what the collective buying power of all those pockets might mean for fast-moving consumer goods?

According to [trendwatching.com](#) Africa is changing. While westernisation dominated the 90s, today the African millennial wants local products by local companies. An excellent example of this is the new range of dolls launched by Malaville Toys. Retailing at R300, each doll has an African name, a natural hairstyle and clothes that hint at her heritage. Another for-locals-by-locals brand is MoFaya Energy Drink. Launched in 2014 by South African recording artist and entrepreneur, DJ Sbu, MoFaya energy drink has gone from strength to strength with over 37,000 cases sold in South Africa and distribution locked down in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.



When launching new products, the model is easy to apply, but when a product has been in the marketplace for a while and needs to adapt, strategic input becomes imperative. This is where insight-led innovation makes certain brands stand out from their competitors. Ricoffy recently launched a 3-in-1 single-use sachet. A combination of instant coffee, sugar and Cremora gives commuting LSM 4-6 consumers an on-the-go hot drink by just adding water. It also fits the pocket change budget that our mass market operates on daily.



The international TV commercial with the local hip-black-guy voice dubbed over images of someone who is clearly not him, in a location that is obviously foreign, is just not good enough any longer (and never really was). The market can spot a wannabe from a mile away. International brands need to localise their product, their messaging and even their cause.

Consider what Coca-Cola achieved when it rolled out the World of We-campaign in the Middle-East. Arab youth are often misunderstood and seen as a lazy, spoilt and self-absorbed generation. Coca-Cola developed a platform for them to disprove their haters by posting contents of themselves improving their communities. The initiative, rolled-out over seven countries in 52 cities, has proven that when international brands empower locals to solve real issues in their society, brand loyalty is an organic result. This ties in with Richard Branson's sentiment around the companies of the future: "In the modern world, there will be no profit without a well-defined purpose."



Back in Sub-Saharan Africa, platforms for consumer education and trial are crucial for brands to succeed. P&G understood this well when they introduced disposable nappies in Nigeria. Their mobile-health-clinic program connected with over 100,000 mother and baby pairs in more than 50 towns across the country. They offered free baby care, hygiene

information and health check-ups and simultaneously launched a smaller 10-in-a-pack product to fit the pocket.



In a recent focus group for Comfitex with LSM 3-5 teenage girls, I wasn't surprised when participants all pulled smartphones from their pockets, but what did surprise me was when one 15-year-old showed me she has an app that tracks her ovulation on her phone. Here I was considering media channels such as taxi branding and rank activations, not anticipating how tech savvy these consumers are. 54% of urban South-Africans say that they have accessed the internet in the last month, this is on par with urban China and Brazil. As marketers, we need to understand how they use devices and where to find opportunities for brands connect with these consumers.



Over the next 15 years, nearly three-quarters of the world's GDP growth will continue to come from emerging-market countries. The International Monetary Fund projects that Africa will be the world's second-fastest-growing region in the period to 2020. With this in mind, it'll be the brands that strategically align their products to suit the consumer, develop campaigns that uplift and empower societies and do face-to-face engagement to uncover insights, that'll gain a share of pocket in the foreseeable future.

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