

Covid-19 thrusts animation into the spotlight

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COVID-19 has been fatal for some businesses. But as countries and industries re-establish their roots, re-engage with customers, and adapt their business to fire up revenue and move from rescue to reach a new normal, the marketing landscape and business mindset have changed too. Dual moving targets.



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In fact, Sasfin and sme.africa's recent survey illustrated that even 73% of SMEs believed they wouldn't survive lockdown but in a second survey four months later that number reduced to 49% who felt their business had been severely impacted, a significant reduction. The reason is adaptation and the hunger to survive.

Businesses, large and small, have moved more online whether that is through e-commerce, e-learning or e-meeting, bringing new entrants into industries and new disruptors. In turn, this has brought a volume of work to marketing agencies, and one particular industry has benefited: Animation.



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Video in pole position

Video already sits comfortably in pole position in the marketing suite. According to Wordstream, 59% of executives say they would rather watch a video than text, and 92% of users watching video on mobile will share it with others. It is estimated that, by 2020, over 80% of all content consumed will be video and moving images, which includes 2D and 3D animation, virtual reality and augmented reality.

But, for months, when brands needed to stay top of mind, their video teams could not shoot on location, while 2D and 3D animators could work remotely. Advertising animation was shoved into the spotlight and is expected to grow significantly, given the population of the animation industry expecting to grow 4.7% globally over the next five years.



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Brands need to tell stories. Humans are online more, and there is a flood of perpetual content that we are receiving. To hold our attention, the medium needs to be interesting, and share a message that connects or explains something concisely. Corporates and medium-size businesses would often shoot a promo video to explain their latest developments or news. But Covid-19 crushed that.

Animation, a WFH industry

Animation is very much a Work From Home (WFH) industry so those who were working in studios could transition to work remotely quickly - everything has always happened digitally anyway. Marketing consistently has to maintain momentum - it's imperative to maintain connection, engagement and frequency - and it's clear that video has been restricted, which has given animation a greater share of the spotlight. For this reason, the industry is seeing the request for animations flood in.

Award-winning agencies like 3rdfloor, Lung and Jones&co have reported a significant increase in requests for quotations and more output over the last few months.

There's no secret animation does explanation very well. Increasingly, in a frenetic world, it is hard to seize and retain attention, and the unique combination of characterisation, motion, music and voice draws us in and keeps us watching. When the narrative is clear and deliberate about what a customer needs to do next, it turns the animation into a powerful sales tool.



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That's something agencies and corporate clients really appreciate. Animation agencies have seen an increase in requests to change corporate profiles into animations and bring old-school PowerPoint presentations and infographics to life as moving images. 3rdfloor, as an example, is now producing for clients in Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, UK, and the US due to their always-on, remote working ability.

Agencies have been placed under great pressure to help their clients adapt to the new normal and return revenue to the old normal. Marketing and branding now require expert assistance into well-crafted storytelling and sales drivers, and Covid-19 has given many of them a new tool to work with.

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