

# Which will cost more - research or no research?

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With an increased range of disciplines for marketers to take into account, knowing which research firms have the experience you need is vital for getting it right the first time.



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In the age of adaptive marketing that enables marketers to personalise not only their messaging but also the precise products and services to be delivered to potential customers, how do you decide what kind of research you need to do before determining the nature of a best-fit campaign?

It all comes down to what you need to know and what your business goals are. Obviously, engaging a research specialist is key – but which one has the experience specific to your client's needs?

The IAS was recently contracted to work with a large organisation with a variety of research needs. An audit of all the research companies in South Africa, benchmarked against their international counterparts, was required to ensure the client was able to select from the top researchers, and invest in data that would pay dividends.

## Areas of review

To ensure the client was delivered all the information required to choose the most effective research firm timeously and within budget, IAS research had to examine each contender's overall experience, then that which was most important to our client.

This included the role of research for more advanced marketing purposes; how the research would be of value immediately and within the next few years; what the researchers would supply in terms of data that could be documented to show previous and potential trends; and an indication of pricing structures for deliverables.

Having dug deep into the research industry in South Africa, along with insights into the international market, the IAS has positioned itself to offer recommendations on all aspects of research, and introduce the right companies for marketers needing the most valuable research per project.

In an economy that requires every cent to be spent wisely, marketers understand the importance of research – and the IAS understands the importance of getting the right partnership from the start.

As we move forward in a market that demands a new way of seeing things, I believe research will be a strong driver of overall marketing performance across campaigns of all types and sizes. The key to getting the most out of your research lies in the investment you make, not just financially but skilfully.

Trends for the new year may be difficult to predict from the platform on which we stand right now, but time and money spent on proper, in-depth research has never yet cost a marketer what no research has.

## 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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