

Personalisation takes centre stage

By [Monique Claassen](#), issued by [Kantar](#)

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In 2017, successful marketers will innovate to build better brand experiences and connected consumer journeys that are less intrusive, and they will focus on developing engaging content that resonates with consumers across channels and platforms. This will drive hyper personalised marketing planning, and channel neutrality, customised messaging and brand experience will be in the spotlight this year.

Channel neutrality



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In an effort to connect with consumers on a personal meaningful level, the marketing conversation in 2017 will evolve from “How much should we be spending on different channels?” to “Which channels deliver the best impact on my brand?”

As the focus moves to the role of the channel in building meaningful brand impact (and driving sales), the idea of channel reach and message frequency will become secondary.

Traditional media metrics such as channel reach and frequency will continue to have a place in media planning; however budget allocations across touch points are likely to evolve even further and incorporate additional success indicators around return on investment from a brand perspective. In an effort to drive brand impact through personalised targeting, it is expected that companies will invest more in understanding multiple data sources and

integrated insights to fuel channel neutral planning.

Initiatives like [m]PLATFORM by GroupM, described as “an advanced technology suite of flexible media planning applications, data analytics and digital services”, will become the bedrock of media planning in 2017. This idea of delivering completely integrated media planning where brand impact takes centre stage will force the hand of brands and agencies which have not yet adopted a fully integrated marketing approach (with consumers at the core), to put channel neutrality at the heart of all campaigns.

Customised messaging

Not only will media budget allocation evolve further in 2017, in an effort to curb declining ad receptivity, advertising message content will become more focused on delivering brand engagement in a meaningful way.

Analysis by the Mobile Marketing Association of the all global award winning mobile campaigns of 2016 highlighted that these campaigns had one thing in common, they all focused on a deepened sense of consumer engagement. Whilst building awareness remains a pre-requisite for success, the best campaigns were more likely to go beyond saliency and build loyalty.

However there is also a cautionary warning in the findings, where it is reported that technologies which were once considered highly innovative, interaction now appears expected and therefore less of a differentiator. Campaigns which enable a form of personalisation are those which stood out.

2017 will see a heightened experimentation with new technologies to tailor mass market messaging into more personalised content and an increase in the use of consumer insight research to track brand engagement.

Platforms which allow an immersive consumer experience, such as augmented reality, virtual reality and 360° video, will be

core in marketing plans for brands in the year ahead. It is anticipated that marketing budgets will have fixed line item around experimentation and the most successful marketers will be those who continuously learn from the findings, adapt new approaches and optimise message content to maximise brand impact.



Image by 123RF

Brand experience

Despite more personalised content and targeting, consumers will have greater expectations around a seamless brand experience.

The most successful brands in 2017 will integrate consumer journeys across owned, earned and paid media touchpoints and communicate with them from a central view point.

As marketers embrace a more holistic view of the individual consumer, advertising messaging will become more synergistic across all touchpoints to ensure consistency of campaign targeting and maximum brand impact. This will also mean fewer, more targeted and relevant messages across campaigns, and brands which embrace this philosophy are likely to gain positive momentum in the battle against driving engagement, despite the increased trend of ad blocking and ad avoidance amongst consumers.

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Monique Claassen heads up the Media and Digital practice for Kantar Millward Brown South Africa, working with many of the world's most prominent brands to optimise their media and digital return on investments. With over 14 years of experience in media and digital marketing, strategy and research, her in-depth understanding of the different roles media channels play and how to utilise each channel in optimising brand growth enables her to offer expert advice to clients in how best to deploy media budgets across online and offline.

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