

Innovation and collaboration

By [Bridget von Holdt](#)

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The industry is in an age where migration into the digital space is imperative, and the strong, inventive, pioneering and innovative players will ensure the longest longevity in the market.



1. Rise of audio visual media

Video will be the big thing this year. People use videos more to showcase their products and reach their audience and be more engaging on every level, whether it is from an internal or external level or social media. The following year will be characterised by growing media interaction through the use of audio visuals because a picture tells a thousand words. In addition, a contributing factor to this phenomenon is social media where people do not read the full story anymore. Individuals are consuming news and information in shorter sound bites.

2. More outsourcing expected

As companies brace themselves for more uncertainty in terms of growth, maintaining lower costs will be evident through outsourcing of various services due to budget constraints. External outsourcing will still be happening because most companies do not want to carry the cost of employing people because it is still cheaper to outsource than to employ someone on a permanent basis.

3. Collaborative convergence

As we move in to 2016, the industry will see a lot more convergence with increased activity taking place between advertising, digital and marketing. Companies in these industries are working together at a greater level which is a good thing because many key messages are distorted as a result of people operating in silos.

4. New market development

As the local market gets increasingly saturated, more PR activity is happening outside of South Africa as businesses are looking at new markets in order to grow and develop. Also, the big international firms have established footholds in SA by purchasing various agencies in the hopes of using these as a gateway to the rest of Africa. Additionally, with sub-Saharan Africa being one of the fastest growing regions economically and the last frontiers of unhinged growth, many operators are looking into this space in order to increase market share.

5. Expansion of industry knowledge

As a result of the weakening rand, many new opportunities are opening up in PR and people can expand on industry knowledge and the sectors they operate in. There is a lot more new talent in the market than before which is a direct result of the companies downsizing in order to weather the storm. During this time, companies' budgets will be squeezed and will remain tight while the core focus will be on maintaining the need to maintain market share, as well as build their brands and uphold their reputations in industries which they operate in.

6. Greater innovation

Besides exploring new markets, times of economic crisis are always an opportunity to do things differently. It is in times of recession when innovation becomes great and we will see new exciting campaigns... (and) innovation.

ABOUT BRIDGET VON HOLDT

Bridget von Holdt is the Business Director at BCW Africa. Bridget's experience in public relations spans over 30 years and is a registered APR. A revered name in South African Public Relations and communication circles and a recipient of the PRISM Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018, Bridget is known for her vision to see beyond the conventional in the communication industry.

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