

Marketing works. Work it.

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Why doesn't marketing sit with the grown-ups around the boardroom table?



Opening speaker - Andy Rice

Brand strategist and advertising commentator, Andy Rice, who is the opening speaker at the Nedbank IMC Conference 2020, says that for too long marketing hasn't been seen as an integral part of business. "Companies have tended to be operations, logistics or finance centric with very few putting their brand first. It takes a real visionary and entrepreneurial spirit to lead a company that is brand centric, meaning they genuinely put the brand first from day one," says Andy.

Also presenting at the conference, Mathe Okaba, CEO for the Association for Communication and Advertising, feels that marketing has also been seen as a cost centre by the business for eons. "Marketers weren't validating the profession by indicating their business acumen and agility. CEO's want to see marketing's impact on the bottom line. Marketers need to demonstrate to them that marketing delivers," says Mathe.

So just how do marketers prove to their CEO's that putting the brand first is profitable?

"Take a brand-centric international example like Apple; they're a company that values their brand, which is all about unleashing personal potential and enabling communication, before gigabytes and gigahertz. They put their marketing at the centre of what they do, and this gives them a competitive edge," says Andy.

"Having a genuine brand purpose will pay off. An example closer to home would be Dove. They changed their focus years ago to a company that was all about redefining beauty for real women. There was a clear sense of what they stood for and their market share shows that if you put marketing at the centre of an organisation, you will see a return," says Andy.

Mathe adds, "Imagine a world where the production line is over stimulated, but no one knows about the brilliant product being produced. You'll have a pile of stock, wasted resources and absolutely no awareness. Marketing is an important lever that pushes the stock off the shelves and brings money in."

“A marketing strategy driven by your brand’s purpose should be the first item on the board meeting agenda. At the Nedbank IMC 2020, happening on 19 March at The Galleria in Sandton, our line-up of 20 top speakers will be showing that marketing works. If you work it,” adds Dale Hefer, CEO of the IMC.

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