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Journal of the African Marketing Confederation

Issue 1 2022

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‘New normal’ brings a world of renewed marketing promise

GOOD DAY AMC COLLEAGUES! I FOUND THIS issue of *Strategic Marketing for Africa* riveting and I hope you will too. Of particular interest is the Cover Story on page 8, which gives a coherent and well-stated view of the potentially very positive impact of the African Continental Free Trade Area on marketing professionals across the continent. Exciting times ahead!

Another extremely readable article that stands out for me is the discussion on page 46 around Marketing to Children and the ethical responsibilities we all bear. This has long been a serious talking point and deserves our attention, especially as the impact of social media continues to hijack our children’s lives.

The Dark Marketing article on page 48 really gets you thinking about the future that we, as marketers, are moving towards, given the movement to more stringent privacy laws and the imminent phasing out of third-party cookies. Have we had too easy access to consumer data for too long? How do we strategise our consumer communications going forward?

A special request, please look on the opposite page for details of our inaugural ‘must attend’ AMC Masterclass in May. Save the date – more details to follow.

Finally, I hope you are as pleased as I am that life appears to be slowly (very slowly) returning to normal – a very new normal it is, but one we can better live with than that of the past two years.

Please join me in enjoying this superb issue as we hurtle forward to an exciting post-pandemic future.

Helen McIntee
BA MBA (Wits) CM (SA)
President: African Marketing Confederation

La « nouvelle normalité » apporte un monde de promesse marketing renouvelé

BONJOUR COLLÈGUES DE L’AMC! J’ai trouvé ce numéro de *Marketing stratégique pour l’Afrique* passionnant et j’espère que vous le trouverez aussi. L’article de couverture de la page 8 est particulièrement intéressant, car il donne une vision cohérente et bien présentée de l’impact potentiellement très positif de l’Accord de libre-échange continental africain sur les professionnels du marketing à travers le continent. Des temps passionnants à venir!

Un autre article extrêmement lisible qui se distingue pour moi est la discussion de la page 46 autour le marketing pour les enfants et les responsabilités éthiques que nous portons tous. Cela a longtemps été un sujet de discussion sérieux qui mérite notre attention, d’autant plus que l’impact des médias sociaux continue de détourner la vie de nos enfants.

L’article sur le Dark Marketing (page 48) vous fait vraiment réfléchir à l’avenir vers lequel nous dirigeons en tant que spécialistes du marketing, compte tenu de l’évolution vers des lois plus strictes en matière de protection de la vie privée et de l’élimination imminente des cookies tiers. Avons-nous eu un accès trop facile aux données des consommateurs pendant trop longtemps? Comment pouvons-nous élaborer une stratégie pour nos communications avec les consommateurs à l’avenir?

Une demande spéciale, veuillez consulter la page ci-contre pour plus de détails sur notre première Masterclass AMC «incontournable» en mai. Réservez la date - plus de détails à suivre.

Enfin, j’espère que vous êtes aussi heureux que moi que la vie semble revenir lentement (très lentement) à la normale – une toute nouvelle normalité, mais avec laquelle nous pouvons mieux vivre que celle des deux dernières années.

Veuillez-vous joindre à moi pour profiter de ce superbe numéro alors que nous nous précipitons vers un avenir post-pandémique passionnant.

Helen McIntee
BA MBA (Wits) CM (SA)
Présidente de: African Marketing Confederation

A can-do spirit will change the narrative

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Institute of Marketing & Management, Mauritius

Institute of Marketing Management, South Africa

Zambia Institute of Marketing

Marketers Association of Zimbabwe

WELCOME TO THE FIRST issue of *Strategic Marketing for Africa* for 2022! We have kicked off the year sensing a new spirit of post-Covid optimism and positivity on the continent – something which AMC President, Helen McIntee, has also alluded to in her column, where she applauds the fact that life is returning to (new) normal.

A can-do spirit of positivity is vital to all of our African economies. Especially given that, when our continent is viewed by people elsewhere, it is still a negative perception that often dominates.

Our article on Public Relations Trends (see pg 28) notes that the recent ‘*Business in Africa Narrative Report*’ – released by the NPO Africa No Filter – found the keywords, stories, frames and narratives associated with business on the continent continue to be dangerously distorted. So, it is up to us as marketers and communications professionals living on the continent to work at changing this storyline.

GREAT OPTIMISM IN RETAIL

It was with much satisfaction that I attended the *Retail in Africa* webinar in mid-February (see our article on pg 42) and found the themes to be overwhelmingly upbeat! Attendees heard that North Africa and East Africa are leading a post-Covid economic rebound and expect to be back at pre-pandemic levels this year.

Similarly, poverty levels are decreasing and per capita incomes rising across Africa. These factors, along with trends such as urbanisation, mean the outlook for retail growth and modernisation on the continent are very promising. Investment in the sector by retail chains, including foreign multinationals, is also on the up.

And in Kenya, for example, retail experts are seeing a rising level of market sophistication. There is, we heard, greater market maturity and more finesse – which equates to more ‘retail theatre’, better shopping experiences, increased brand visibility and shoppers spending more time in stores. Good news indeed!

TRADE AGREEMENTS TAKE TIME

The possibilities raised by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement are also cause for optimism, as the interviewees for our cover story (see pg 8) confirmed. Certainly, progress has been slow at times – partly due to the challenges of Covid. But nay-sayers would do well to note that the much-vaunted European Union took decades (it was conceptualised in the 1950s) to reach its current level. Rome, the proverb tells us, was not built in a day. Neither are successful trade agreements.

WE’RE YOUR MOUTHPIECE

In closing, a reminder that this is your magazine as an African Marketing Confederation member. We are always keen to showcase what our member countries are doing to advance the profession in their respective locations. So talk to us if you have news, or article ideas, to share.

Also remember that this publication is not your only source of marketing news and information. Our AMC website is updated daily with interesting marketing snippets and content from around the world. You can find us here: <https://africanmarketingconfederation.org/news-articles/>

Mike Simpson
Editor

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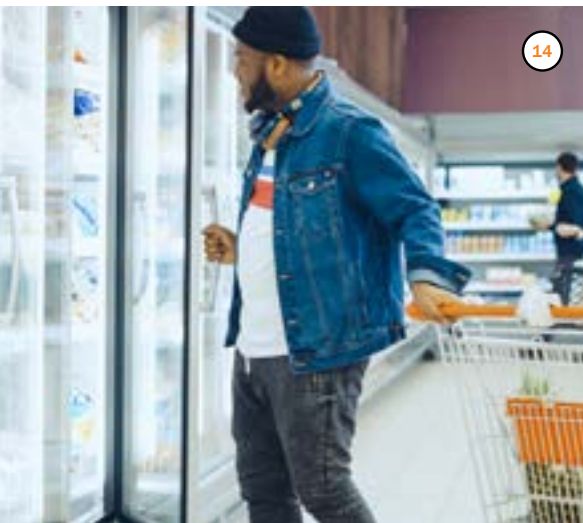
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NEXT ISSUE:

- The mysterious Metaverse comes to Africa
- Understanding Africa's Gen Z consumers
- The science of Guerrilla Marketing
- Pitfalls of a Freemium brand strategy



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Introducing the African Marketing Confederation

THE AFRICAN MARKETING Confederation is the ground-breaking pan-African body of marketing professionals spearheading the ongoing development of the highest possible standards of marketing across Africa.

Founded in 2011, the AMC is a collaboration between the various national marketing bodies and associations to exchange expertise and information, as well as to promote the marketing profession as a whole.

By unifying the bodies in the various countries, the AMC is positioned to

exchange expertise and information, provide intellectual capital and to ensure that the continent has a platform for like-minded marketing professionals at the highest level. The AMC aims to grow and support Leaders in Marketing in Africa, through this platform.

The AMC founding members are also fully committed to observing each country's unique and varying cultures, languages, standards of education and levels of development which require home-grown marketing approaches designed and nurtured by Africans themselves.

THE MOROCCAN ASSOCIATION OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Moroccan Association of Marketing and Communications (AMMC) was created in late 2013 as a dedicated platform to the country's marketing and communication communities – including managers, directors and officers from large, medium and small companies operating in the private and public sectors. AMMC members contribute to strategic thinking related to topics and themes of common interest and organise networking and experience-sharing events. AMMC's vision is to become the Moroccan reference for marketing and communication. Its defined mission is to promote the marketing and communication professions, to develop the skills and knowledge of professionals and to participate actively in the economic welfare of Morocco. <https://www.facebook.com/AMMC.Maroc/>



CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF MARKETING, GHANA

The Chartered Institute of Marketing, Ghana (CIMG) was founded in July 1981 with the vision to be the voice of marketing practice in Ghana under the Professional Bodies Registration Act 1973 (NRCD143). The Institute aims at seeing organizations (both private and public) embrace the marketing concept, and be marketing oriented in their operations. In 2020, the CIMG received a Presidential Charter by the passage of the CIMG Act 2020 (Act 1021) with the main objects to set standards for the practice of marketing and to regulate the practice of the marketing profession in the country. [Visit Website](#)



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MARKETING OF NIGERIA

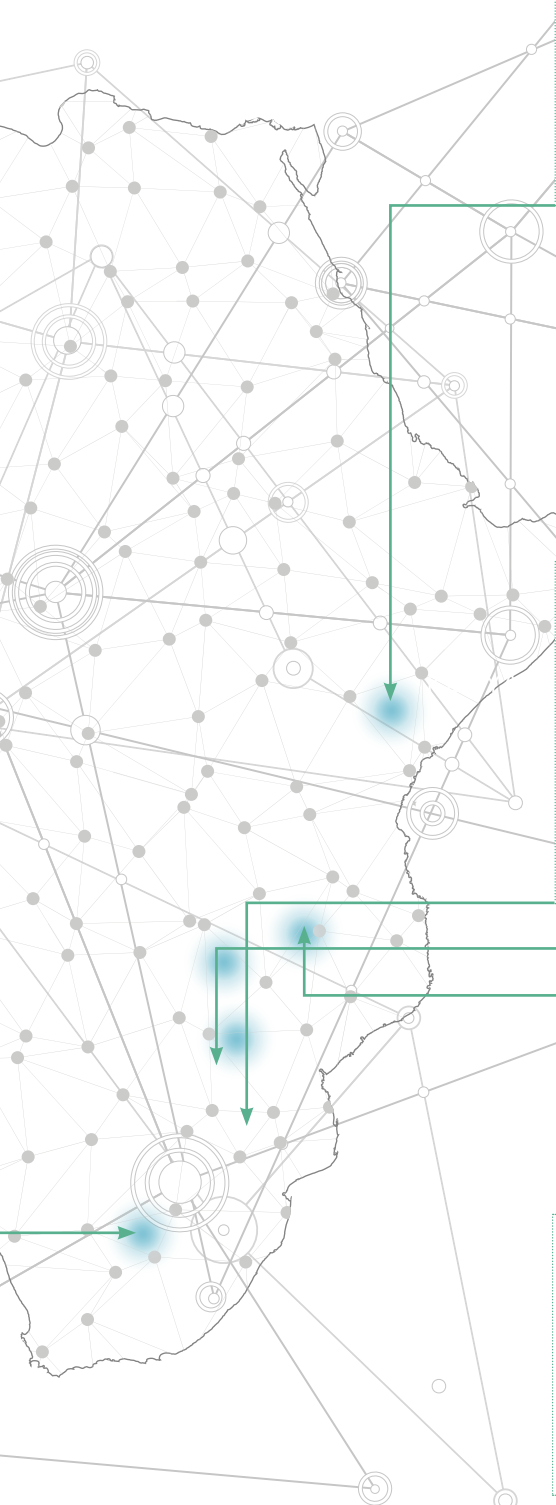
The National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria is the body of professionals engaged in marketing and related fields as marketing practitioners: sales and marketing directors, commercial directors, customers' managers, media planners, channel developers, creative directors, value builders, brand directors, corporate and institutional governors, transformers, communication experts, general manager and chief executives. [Visit Website](#)



IMM INSTITUTE

The IMM Institute has for decades been the pre-eminent marketing institution in Southern Africa. It is reinvigorating the brand through the launch of a wide range of value-added products and services for marketing professionals that are members of the IMM Institute in either an INDIVIDUAL or CORPORATE capacity. Together with its partners in the African Marketing Confederation (AMC), the IMM intends to build the largest network of marketing professionals in Africa.





MARKETING SOCIETY OF KENYA

The Marketing Society of Kenya started as the Advertising Society of Kenya in 1962. It became the Marketing Society of Kenya in 1968. The first chairperson was Nigel Crouch, the then MD of Cadbury Schweppes. The Society's main objectives are to develop, acknowledge and practice the profession of marketing, to provide services to members, and to offer a platform for self-regulation for practicing marketers.

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THE ZAMBIA INSTITUTE OF MARKETING

The Zambia Institute of Marketing is a membership organisation regulating the practice of marketing in Zambia as provided for in the Zambia Institute of Marketing Act No. 14 of 2003. The Institute is affiliated to the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry. The broad operating moralities of the Institute include: apolitical stance; impartiality and common good; capacity building; networking; and effective communication.

[Visit Website](#)



MARKETERS ASSOCIATION OF ZIMBABWE

The Marketers Association of Zimbabwe was launched in 2007 with a vision to be a leading body of marketing professionals promoting professionalism of the highest standards and establishing channels of career development for the benefit of organisations and the economy at large.

[Visit Website](#)



INSTITUTE OF MARKETING IN MALAWI

Institute of Marketing in Malawi (IMM) was formed in 2020 after transitioning from what was CIM Malawi Members Group which was formed in 2010. IMM is committed to ensuring that interests and needs of its members and stakeholders are understood and catered for throughout the organisation and the wider industry. Currently, IMM is the largest community of professional marketers in Malawi involved in several marketing activities such as networking of marketers in Malawi, organizing marketing events and training courses, setting best marketing practice standards in Malawi, promoting professional development of Marketers, study and education guidance to marketing students among others. IMM has become the face of Marketing in Malawi with the organization now referred to as the benchmark of marketing standards in the country.



INSTITUTE OF MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT, MAURITIUS

Established in 1991, the Institute of Marketing & Management is the leading professional marketing education and training institution of Mauritius.

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AfCFTA: A breakthrough helping hand for Africa's marketers?

What is the African Continental Free Trade Area and how can it unite marketers and better link consumerism with economic development on the continent? **Fiona Zerbst** explains.



NEGOTIATIONS SPANNING AT least half a decade led to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement being signed on 21 March 2018. The aim of this historic agreement? To create the largest free-trade area in the world by connecting close to 1.3-billion people in 54 countries across Africa (only Eritrea has neglected to sign the agreement).

The AfCFTA came into effect on 1 January 2021, making widespread regional collaboration among African marketers a distinct possibility. AfCFTA Secretary General, Wamkele Mene, has repeatedly pointed out that the agreement can provide just the post-pandemic stimulus needed to boost African economies – but it may be some time before this becomes a reality.

The much-vaunted agreement is expected to bring about a single market for made-in-Africa goods and services, do away with uneven tariffs, and eliminate **non-tariff-related hiccups** that range from customs delays and bureaucracy to a lack of infrastructure and hidden taxes.

“We’re not going to get another opportunity to integrate; this is our last opportunity,” Mene stated at **African press conferences and global trade events**. “There is not a single African country that can work alone to trade its way out of poverty.”

OVERCOMING TEETHING TROUBLES

A unified market of 1.3-billion people with a combined GDP of US\$3-trillion holds out the promise of enormous growth, but not every African country is ready to trade just yet. Only three nations – Ghana, South Africa and Egypt – had put the required customs infrastructure in place for trading to begin last January. Even then, trade did not proceed smoothly.

Francis Holly Adzah, Director of International Business Development at Kasapreko, a Ghanaian drinks manufacturer and producer that had agreed to experimental shipments to ‘test the waters’ in the new AfCFTA

climate, said exporting to South Africa did not go according to plan. Instead, Kasapreko’s alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, including its flagship product Alomo Bitters, got stuck at the point of entry.

“Not all customs officials were at their post due to the pandemic, but those who were there told us the policy hadn’t yet been ratified in South Africa,” Adzah explains. “There were costly delays as we tried to work out how to get our air-freighted goods out. It was a tedious process.”

Early teething troubles are to be expected, even in those countries with fit-for-purpose border and custom facilities, as tariff negotiations continue.



Teething problems are to be expected

However, at the time of writing – February 2022 – protocols to allow widespread trade were 88% complete, according to National Coordinator of the AfCFTA National Office, Dr Fareed Arthur. Of the 44 countries required to submit their tariffs schedule, only 29 have done so – but these countries can now enter into bilateral trade agreements.

ADVANTAGES OF THE AFCFTA

According to Dr John Mapulanga, a member of the Zambia Institute of Marketing, the AfCFTA could provide a uniquely African solution to an African problem.

“How do we explain the fact that our continent, which is endowed with natural resources, has no capacity to process those resources for value addition, preferring to export raw materials whose value is then determined by world markets?” he enquires. “And how is it that our continent, which is one of the richest in the world in terms of natural resources, leads all the others in terms of its poverty index?”

Luté Lungu Mwelo, Registrar and CEO at the Zambia Institute of

Marketing, agrees with Mapulanga that a free trade area could change the narrative for Africa.

“Other areas in the world have formed synergies between regional countries, and the exchange of knowledge and information has been critical. But we need to get to a point where each African country appreciates its resources and knows what it is bringing to the table,” she points out.

She says the responsibility ultimately lies with African governments because it is policymakers who define how African countries do business and relate to their neighbours in the Southern African Development Community and the African Union.

An obvious challenge is that of dumping, which involves selling goods on to other countries below their normal value. This can harm domestic markets. Mwelo points out that Zambian consumers think foreign products and services are of superior quality, which will make it difficult for Zambian marketers to compete in an expanded market.

“We need to bring about a mindset shift and partner strategically with other African businesses while continuing to put Zambia on a pedestal,” Mwelo says, pointing out that tourism marketers often struggle to outcompete Zimbabwe and even South Africa, which advertises the fact that Victoria Falls is a short two-hour flight from Johannesburg.

“These regional partnerships should benefit both parties on a 50-50 basis, not disadvantage the local marketer yet benefit the one coming in from elsewhere,” she says, adding that Zambia is looking for a share of the proverbial cake rather than just crumbs.

The good news is that the AfCFTA promotes anti-dumping measures and cooperation when it comes to trade remedy (TR) investigations, but only Egypt and South Africa currently take TR seriously. This needs to change.

THE WORLD BANK WEIGHS IN

Key findings from a **World Bank Report**



on the AfCFTA show that the agreement has the potential to lift 30-million Africans out of poverty and boost the incomes of nearly 68-million others – that is, those who survive on less than US\$5.50 per day. But its success, according to the report, will rest largely on the policy reforms and trade facilitation measures implemented in tandem with the agreement itself.

Offering guidance to policymakers, the report states that while a continent-wide market can be created with the lowest possible trade costs, critical legislation and astute regulations will be needed to promote the free flow of goods, create competitive business environments, and attract the foreign direct investment needed to raise productivity and innovation at domestic companies.

According to Jeffrey Arthur, Kasapreko’s International Business Development Executive, “There is really no downside to the AfCFTA for marketers if everything is functional.

We’ll be selling to people across the continent, rather than being limited to 35-million individuals in Ghana.

“When you look at the duties on alcohol in East and North African countries, you’ll see that they are too high – the AfCFTA will provide tax relief for us. We want to distribute an affordable, quality product, but if we have to charge US\$40 per bottle in Ethiopia, the product is no longer affordable, which goes against the principle of our company.”



Agreements must cut through the red tape

With a US\$450-billion in potential income gains at stake, Kasapreko and other companies are counting on the ability of the AfCFTA to cut through red tape, simplify customs procedures and reduce costs.

THE CURRENCY QUESTION

Despite a situation where not each signatory country has been at the same stage of readiness at any given date, Mene says that any lag between ratification and effective participation should not be considered a “cog in the wheel”.

Citing the example of an EU common market, which was conceptualised in 1950 and had nations like Bulgaria and Romania join only in 2007, he has challenged negative media coverage by saying: “Tell me where every country in a trade agreement is ready at the same time; where every country is ready on day one?”

With Phase I (protocols on trade in goods and services), Phase II (intellectual property rights, investment and competition policy) and Phase III negotiations (e-commerce) going ahead fairly seamlessly, it would be difficult to argue against the impressive pace set by the AfCFTA. Next, however, is



◀ Left: Promoting the free flow of goods is a key tenet of the agreement. This is Port Louis harbour in Mauritius. The island nation is an AfCFTA signatory. Above: ▲ Ugandan small businesses are among those hoping to benefit from the ability to market more easily across borders

the need to tackle the issue of **multi-currency convertibility**.

“There are 42 currencies in Africa. We want to make sure a trader in Ghana can transfer a Ghanaian cedi to a counterpart in Kenya for Kenyan shillings,” is Mene’s take on the coordination work that has transpired between the AfCFTA Secretariat and the African Export and Import Bank (Afreximbank).

The latter is a pan-African multilateral financial institution, tasked with implementing the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS). Of interest is the extensive revenue Afreximbank hopes to inject into PAPSS – a sum of at least US\$3-billion.

According to the publication **Forbes Africa**, “Whether it’s a hard-working migrant remitting funds home to his family or a trader making a cross-border payment,” sending money across Africa was costly and slow before PAPSS. “It is set to save the continent up to US\$5-billion annually, which is the

amount currency convertibility costs in Africa,” advises Benedict Oramah, the Afreximbank President.

The PAPSS will allow for quick cross-border payments, reducing the reliance on and delays inherent in using the US dollar or UK pound. This follows a successful trial in the West African Monetary Zone of Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Guinea.

DRIVING INNOVATION AND VALUE

Despite a slow start, in which Nigerian authorities expressed concern about how free trade may ease the way for smugglers, Sidney Ogodo, Registrar at the National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria, says the consensus in his country is that “AfCFTA is the next best thing that will happen to the economy of Africa”.

He cites the fact that having access to a captive market of over a billion consumers will change the game for the continent.

“Yes, the AU must ensure all perceived bottlenecks of a unified custom tariff are resolved, but when that happens you will have a more or less level playing field,” he argues. “This will breed innovation and drive value to consumers.”

As mentioned by Mene, an issue Ogodo foresees is how consensus will be reached on the monetary unit of exchange. “Once this is harmonised, things will forge ahead. Nigeria is raring to go,” Ogodo asserts.

Professor Anayo Nkamnebe, from the Department of Marketing at Nnamdi Azikiwe University in the Nigerian city of Awka, and his colleague Ogochukwu Nkamnebe, a lecturer in the Department of Economics, agree that AfCFTA promises huge potential for African nations’ economies to expand their scale and wealth.

“By extension, AfCFTA offers enormous opportunities for the marketing system of Africa to



◀ Successful implementation of the agreement will generate much-needed supply chain efficiencies

flourish more than ever before. As a result, marketers – as the exchange system’s driver – stand to experience unprecedented growth,” they say.

“More Nigerian firms will embark on an African internationalisation strategy, which will pave the way for multinational operations. The gains of such expansion for the Nigerian marketer in the emerging dispensation would be unprecedented.”

But the pair warn that, as Africa’s largest economy, Nigeria stands to gain or lose the most from the agreement, depending on the country’s policy response. The nation’s marketing community, they believe, should play a key role in “promoting pragmatic ease of doing business”.

“Otherwise, better prepared African nations and foreign competitors working through their African surrogates will creep in, scramble and partition the most extensive African market.”

However, Nigeria still has to overcome the fact that there is currently low **public awareness** of the existence of AfCFTA. A survey of Nigerian businesses conducted by the Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa

(CSEA) reveals that more than 60% of Nigerian companies are still unaware of the trade agreement.

An increased level of awareness would, of course, lead to a higher volume of goods and services companies taking advantage of AfCFTA – but a certain volume of trading activity would be required to reduce overall costs.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS, FORGING PARTNERSHIPS

Both the Minister of Trade and Industry in South Africa, Ebrahim Patel, and senior advisors at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have referred to AfCFTA as a **game changer for the continent**; yet concerns have been raised about how to facilitate “free movement of people, right to work across borders and [the] removal of invisible barriers”.

Mapulanga adds that marketing will be instrumental in the fostering, transfer, exchange and movement of goods and services into the trade area – and that the industry is set to play a vital role in establishing revenue options.

“This sector will spur the economy into motion and will provide steady and stable

economic conditions. The customer, who remains a critical player in the marketing equation, will soon learn the value of products and their intended usage, creating a win-win situation across value chains,” he advises.

In essence, Mapulanga envisions that the success of the AfCFTA will depend on aggressive marketing strategies and impactful engagement from member countries, due consideration of supply chains in marketing campaigns, and the forging of relationships among influencers, purchasers and consumers across Africa. ■

Additional reporting by Mike Simpson

Fiona Zerbst has worked as a journalist and editor for more than 20 years. She writes primarily about business and finance, and has worked for publications and clients in South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Nigeria, Canada, Finland and the UK.

Editor’s Note: Due to space constraints, the author’s reference list has been removed, but is available on request from the Editor.

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Study tracks the values that are driving Africa's consumers

New research shows that a winning approach for connecting with African consumers requires a combination of local awareness, cause orientation and global alignment. By **Cara Bouwer**.

FOR ALMOST A DECADE global market research firm Ipsos has been tracking global trends, looking for shifts and signs that can help marketers, leaders and strategists anticipate the evolution of personal values.

What makes the latest iteration of the Ipsos Global Trends Study so significant is the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic globally and in Africa, as well as the first-time inclusion of Kenya and Nigeria in the analysis, which was published in late January 2022.

› *Nigeria and Kenya included in study*

Kenya and Nigeria join South Africa, which has been part of the Global Trends Study since 2013, to add an important African flavour to the insights. In total, 25 countries were included in the global study that gauged public opinion, attitudes and values.

While many of the shifts in thinking, and the responses to a changing world, were applicable across the globe, others highlighted why brands and business should approach their engagement with African consumers with a keen sense of cultural awareness and modernism.

During a webinar entitled *Aftershocks and Continuity* – which analysed the

African portion of the study – Ipsos' global CEO, Ben Page, outlined some of the major themes impacting public attitudes and values.

MAJOR THEMES IMPACTING WORLDWIDE PUBLIC VALUES

The past two years of battling a global pandemic have seen a deterioration in the way social media companies are viewed (84% of respondents believe they have too much power), but also seen a growing acceptance that in a rapidly digitising world it is almost inevitable that online privacy will become a thing of the past, Page said.

In addition, while recent events have unleashed new geopolitical tensions – just consider tensions involving China and the conflict in Eastern Europe – many of the pre-Covid trends are still very much in evidence, he noted.

Page singled out climate change and the environment as an important theme carried over from 2019. Across the 25 markets, 63% of respondents highlighted the importance of companies doing what they can to reduce environmental harm, with the likes of Colombians (82%) and Brazilians (78%) highlighting efforts to mitigate climate change as an imperative.

There is another level to this trend when read in conjunction with the growing tendency of respondents to align their personal values to their buying decisions.

As the Ipsos research noted: "Seven in 10 [people] across the 25 markets agree that they tend to buy brands that reflect their personal values (70%)." Nigeria top-scored at 91% when it came to the importance of societal values like morality, hospitality, spirituality and respect for elders, compared with Kenya (85%) and South Africa (81%).

Enock Wandera, Ipsos Chief Client Officer for Kenya, explained: "In Africa, and mostly in the developing world... consumers are telling us that they buy brands that reflect their personal values. So, whatever we chose to express in our brand values and our brand purpose needs to connect and align with these uniquely African values." For many around this world this means factoring in evolving views on the impact of climate change.

› *Business expected to help solve issues*

This trend demands particular focus from business leaders operating in the African context, said Wandera. It puts the onus on businesses and business leaders – and not just politicians – to try to solve some of the pressing issues impacting African societies, including expansive issues such as climate change and the fight against poverty.



The belief that business leaders have a responsibility to speak out on social and political issues was equally high across the three African countries polled. Nigeria again recorded the highest percentage of those who held this view (87%), with Kenya and South Africa at 84%.

African respondents were pragmatic about the need for businesses to be profitable, even during a global pandemic. Although this was prefaced with the view that organisations should also support good causes in the community.

“If you look at Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria, over three-quarters of consumers are saying that ‘yes you can support a good cause and also make money’,” said Wandera.

From a branding perspective, this means that brands can potentially augment their marketing messages by “talking about what we are doing in the community in terms of supporting. But

the cause that [businesses] pick needs to align very well with the purpose and personal values at an individual level”, Wandera noted.

➤
***Population trends
are very favourable***

**THE STRONG YOUTH DIVIDEND
WILL BENEFIT THE CONTINENT**

Other strong global themes included growing inequality and accelerated digitalisation – including in Africa. Population was another noteworthy macro trend and one in which Africa stood apart from the rest of the world in terms of the continent’s demographic and youth dividend.

“We know that Nigeria will have more people in it than America or Europe in a few short years, and that in itself drives massive amounts of change,” highlighted Page.

What this young population demands of brands operating on the African continent is to embrace agility and modernity. Africans – especially young Africans – love to try new things and strive to keep up with the times, explained Mari Harris, Ipsos Knowledge Director for sub-Saharan Africa.

South Africans were only behind India in this regard, with 63% of respondents observing that they were ‘first among my friends to try out new things’. Kenya came in at 57% and Nigeria at 55%.

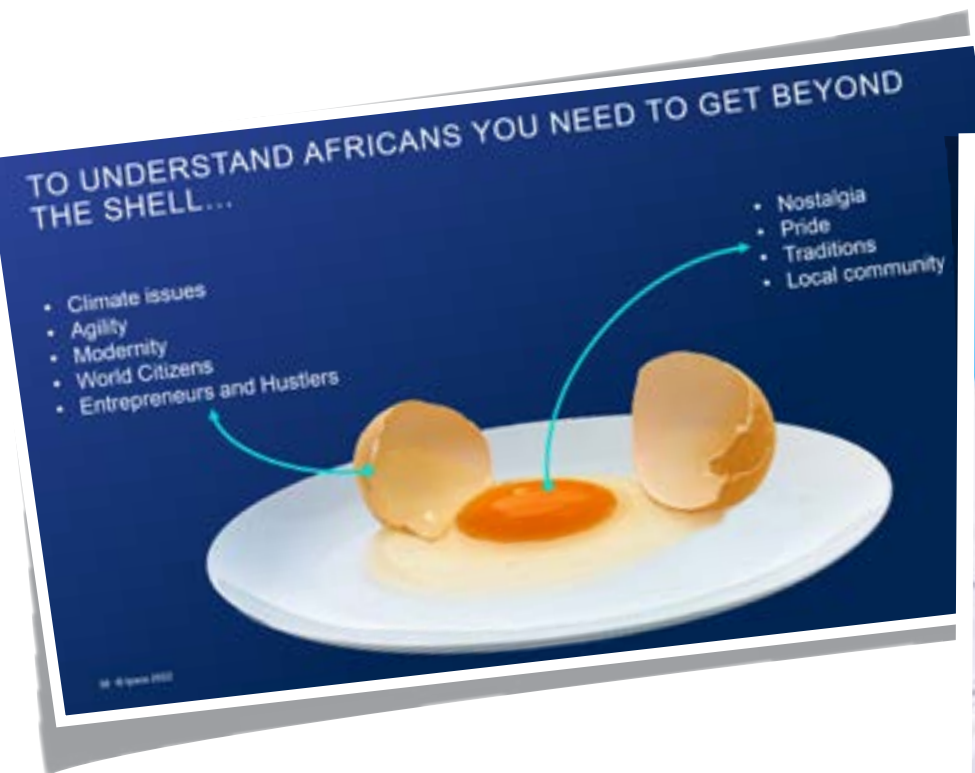
Certainly, like young people the world over, youthful Africans have an eye for international trends. What proved interesting was that African respondents as a whole showed a positive attitude towards globalisation, which was at odds with the more negative views held in more developed countries.

However, for many Africans this embracing of global trends and





➤ Africans – especially young Africans – love to try new things and strive to keep up with the times



➤ Enock Wandera, Ipsos Chief Client Officer for Kenya



offerings was also at odds with their strong desire to support their home country by buying local products and services. Kenya and South Africa both scored highly at 82%, with Nigeria lower in the rankings at 67%.

POSITIVE VIEW OF THE FUTURE

Overall, the survey revealed a positive view of the future from the three African countries. As Wandera noted: “Africans, in particular, are more likely to say that all medical conditions will be curable ... [while] trust in science, despite the number of anti-vaxxers on social media, has also gone on rising during the pandemic.”

On the other end of the spectrum, however, were deeply conservative and traditional views and values around issues such as gender roles, identification and sexual orientation, many of which were contrary to those held in developed nations.

The rising intolerance of immigrants was one such issue. In this respect, 81% of South Africans held the view that ‘there are too many immigrants in my country’, followed by 78% of Kenyans and 74% of Nigerians. Harris explained that this sentiment was being jumped on by some politicians and their supporters, and should be watched closely.

➤ *Global sensibilities and some very clear African sentiments*

But, broadly speaking, respondents from the continent tended to show a combination of global sensibilities and very clear African sentiments and beliefs.

When it comes to issues like modernity, climate considerations and the rise of entrepreneurs,

Africans have much in common with the rest of the world, said Harris. But make no mistake, at the core is a consumer motivated by nostalgia, pride, tradition and a deep sense of local community.

“Africa has fascinating and varied people and customs, histories and opinions ... I am actually doing Africa a disservice to only be talking about Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa,” concluded Harris.

Fortunately, Ipsos has given an undertaking to continue improving its African coverage, so there may be more on African insights and values in future reports.

Cara Boucher is a Johannesburg-based writer, journalist and editor. Her words appear in media articles around the world, in business case studies, insight reports and corporate copywriting. She is also an experienced ghost writer. @caraboucher

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How African coffee producers embrace e-commerce to attract Chinese consumers

Both Rwanda and Ethiopia have been using the on-ground knowledge of their diplomatic missions in China for innovative coffee-marketing campaigns.

COFFEE IS A MONEY SPINNER for many African countries, with the number of nations who are involved in its production and export numbering upwards of 30. Some are major players – such as Ethiopia, which is one of the ‘big five’ global producers – while others include the likes of Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Congo and Madagascar.

Worldwide, more than 70 countries produce coffee, meaning competition is intense and coffee marketers need to be on top of their game.

Recently, both Ethiopia and Rwanda enrolled members of their respective diplomatic missions as temporary coffee marketers to help them tap into new customers in China and increase their exports to the Asian nation. China is Africa’s biggest trading partner and traded goods worth more than US\$250-billion with the continent in 2020, according to Chinese customs statistics.

The country’s booming e-commerce market – it has around a billion internet users and massive online marketplaces such as Alibaba – provided a perfect platform for Rwanda’s Ambassador to China, James Kimonyo, to engage in some innovative marketing on behalf of the east-central African nation.

› While many African countries produce coffee for export, worldwide competition is intense and clever marketing is required

› Rwanda’s Ambassador to China, James Kimonyo (right) on his way to personally deliver an order of Rwandan coffee to a Chinese online shopper. He is accompanied by a worker from JD.com



According to a report published in Rwanda's *New Times* newspaper, Kimonyo surprised many people when he cycled to the home of a Chinese consumer who had ordered Rwandan coffee online from JD.com, a popular e-commerce site.

Dressed in the outfit of a JD.com delivery person – and accompanied by real delivery personnel from the company, as well as local media – he thanked the client for supporting the Rwandan coffee industry and presented her with a certificate of appreciation.

"This is just one of the ways that the Rwandan Embassy in China is attempting to get the attention of the Chinese consumers, in a country that boasts a very competitive e-commerce industry and a massive digital economy," the *New Times* noted in its article.

➤ Marketing here must be mobile

In an interview with the publication, Ambassador Kimonyo explained the strategy. "We have to depart from the conventional way of marketing our products. The Chinese citizens are so fixated on their phones. More than 1-billion people are using their mobile phones to buy, sell and perform other transactions," he said.

"If you do marketing in the usual way, it is not going to work. That is why livestreaming and the use of online platforms are becoming extremely important for anyone who would want to market here."

This was not the first time that the Rwandan Embassy in China has been involved in such an initiative.

It has in the past sold coffee and chilli from Rwanda on livestream auctions via e-commerce platforms such as Alibaba, Tmall and JD.com. In one such case, 1.5 tonnes of roasted coffee beans sold out within a minute on Alibaba.

"When we started doing live streaming, people paid a lot of attention. They actually contact us and ask how they can get our products," Kimonyo told the *New Times*.

Future collaborations are also planned with Douyin, the local version of the TikTok short-form video platform, which was founded in China.

The ambassador is bullish about the Rwandan strategy in China. "The impact is tremendous and we are excited. We need to look at how we can mobilise and bring more products to the Chinese market, as well as reducing the distortions in the middle," he said.

ETHIOPIA HAS ITS OWN COFFEE-MARKETING STRATEGY

Not to be outdone in the African coffee-marketing stakes, Ethiopia has also been active in China through its diplomatic mission.

According to a report in the online publication *Quartz Africa*, Ethiopia's ambassador to China, Teshome Toga Chanaka, participated in a livestream event with top Chinese influencer Li Jiaqi, also known as Lipstick King, on e-commerce retailer Alibaba's e-shopping platform, Tmall.

The aim was to launch the Arada Coffee brand and it turned out to be a remarkably successful promotion as 11 000 packets were sold out in seconds. "Pleasantly surprised that more than 11 000 bags (500gm) of Ethiopian Coffee in stock were sold in 5 seconds in Shanghai in a live-streaming online event where the most influencer promoter #Li Jiaqi and I promoted #Ethiopian Coffee," Chanaka said in a post-event Tweet.

Among the organisers of the livestream event was the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. A UN press release quotes commission executive, Vera Songwe, as saying: "This trade initiative aims to ensure that Africa can bring back the balance of trade.

"We are delighted to work with the Government of Ethiopia on this real



▲ Ethiopia's Ambassador, Teshome Toga Chanaka, participating in a livestream event with Chinese influencer Li Jiaqi

opportunity, to see how this partnership will continue to improve the livelihoods of citizens in Ethiopia, by offering an interoperable platform for trade."

Added Ethiopia's Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, Gebremeskel Chala: "This launch demonstrates the benefits that not only Ethiopia, but Africa, can reap in harnessing digitalization."

The launch also set in motion a community project on Tmall Global whereby, for each bag of coffee sold in China, a special donation is made to purchase school supplies for Ethiopian primary school students. ■

Ghana's maiden professional marketing **qualification** exam results released

CIMG's National President expresses delight at the overall performance of candidates in ground-breaking examinations that were written in December.

THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE of Marketing, Ghana (CIMG) recently announced results of the Institute's maiden professional marketing qualification (PMQ) examinations.

Altogether, 91 candidates from two of the existing 10 Accredited Study Centres (ASCs) wrote the examinations during the December 2021 exam window. The two centres are the Ghana School of Marketing and the University of Professional Studies, Accra.

In April last year, the CIMG unveiled Ghana's first Professional Marketing Qualifications at a ceremony held at the auditorium of the University of Professional Studies, Accra campus.

In his opening remarks at a media briefing organised by the CIMG to announce the results, the National President, Dr Daniel Kasser Tee, expressed his delight at the general performance of candidates, indicating that the Institute had recorded highly impressive average pass rates in eight out of the 11 modules written in the December 2021 exams.

➤ Highly impressive average pass rates

Dr Kasser Tee said: "From the 11 courses mounted, a high pass rate was achieved in eight, while low pass rates were realised in the other three. We have noticed, with some disappointment, that the poor-performing areas were at the foundation stage, affecting mainly Fundamentals of Marketing and Buyer Behaviour at the entry level (Pathway 1) with an average pass rate of a mere 16%.

"Performance in Sales and Sales Management, also a foundation stage course at Pathway 3, was equally relatively bad, with only a 22% pass rate.

PERFORMANCES IN EIGHT COURSES WERE IMPRESSIVE

"With the exception of these, performances for the remaining eight courses were very impressive, considering that this was the maiden exams with no past questions and no

chief examiners report, among other things. The average pass rate of these eight courses was a remarkable 82% – comprising one paper at Pathway 2, three papers at Pathway 3 and four papers at Pathway 5."

He further indicated that CIMG's standards and expectations from the ASCs will continue to be under constant scrutiny as part of the Institute's periodic audit and assessment of centres. This, he indicated, serves as a signal to all ASCs to examine the level of preparedness of prospective students for the foundation courses before enrolment, as such candidates form the bedrock upon which excellent professional marketers will be developed.

"We will continuously engage all centres to collectively agree on measures to fine-tune the mode of delivery and the calibre of tutors selected for these programmes", emphasised Dr Kasser Tee.

The Consulting Director of Education, Mr Adam Sulley, reiterated that despite the success of the exams, the prospects for further improvement are good for the next batch of candidates. He made this statement in response to a question on targets for future examinations.

"The good thing that has happened with CIMG and [the] Professional Marketing Qualifications is that this is the first time a professional body has engaged effectively both traditional and technical universities in terms of partnering with us to deliver our professional programmes," he said. ■

➤ Dr Daniel Kasser Tee, National President of the CIMG



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Finding **certainty** in uncertain times through media measurement

Media research is integral to media planning and buying, advertising strategy and marketing in general. **Dr Sifiso Falala**, President of PAMRO, reports on key African trends.



THE PAN AFRICAN MEDIA Research Organisation (PAMRO) is an Africa-wide member-based organisation aimed at promoting co-operation and uniformity in elevating the quality of research throughout the continent.

Through its annual conference, it attracts some of the foremost researchers and speakers from throughout the world. Its last two conferences – in 2020 and 2021 –

were held virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This article specifically looks at the 2021 conference, which was themed *'Finding certainty in uncertain times through measurement'*.

Attendees were introduced to the main thrust of the book *'The Upside of Down'*, published in 2020 by African-based business journalist and broadcaster, Bruce Whitfield. It was presented by none other than the author himself, setting the stage for exploring the silver lining in every cloud. Indeed, this keynote address punctuated the attitude with which PAMRO hoped conference attendees would approach the Covid-enforced adjustments to their business-as-usual environment.

Importantly, *'The Up Side of Down'* does what any good research should do, which is to steer a path between subjective and objective decision making. Researchers would be interested to read in the book just how widely skewed by insufficient data, sentiment often is – to such an extent that it should perhaps not be trusted blindly.

PAMRO regards measurement as being central to business decisions. Decisions made in the absence of accurate measurement are, by definition, subjective and therefore potentially detrimental to consumers, business and investors. Relative to advertising and public relations, media research budgets are small.

In future, this trend is likely to change as the unpredictability of markets and the changing norms are likely to divert more budgets towards data and insights. Unlike the 2020 conference, which made reference to a 'return to normal' and the 'new normal', the more creative sense during the 2021 conference was that perhaps 'normal' was, after all, not so normal anymore!

The reset of mindsets and practices introduced by the Covid-19 pandemic effectively threw the world of insights and decision making into a tailspin. Accordingly, the 2021 conference

sought to empower researchers and decision makers with tools for navigating the emerging new world.

Data is by nature highly sensitive. As the conference was able to show, even the planned power shutdowns (also known as load shedding) by South Africa's electricity utility (Eskom) had a profound effect on media consumption patterns. This in an environment where groups of viewers around one screen were already making way for more personalised content and individualised viewing experiences.

While predominantly made up of researchers who are trained in mathematical and/or psychological fields, the 2021 conference also delved briefly into the esoteric, the predictive power of instinct, religion, and the ability to make associative forecasts based on past experience. After all, the conference was taking place in an over-the-top world that also needed over-the-top imagination to complement traditional research methodologies!

Coincidentally, this was also the first conference where different research platforms were used within the same study – specifically including bot-enabled data collection, processing and reporting. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning are now firmly a part of the consumer experience and, with this, the ability for discrete data collation and analysis has increased. It was clear that real-time data was now no longer an option, but a necessity.

GREATER USE OF DISCRETE AND BOT-ENABLED TOOLS

One of the more commonplace associations with the pandemic will, no doubt, be the principle of social distancing and the mental phobia of being in close proximity to others. Discrete and bot-enabled tools are an efficient way of making up for gaps in media-research data, incurred through limitations on the kind of face-to-face interactive conversations that were possible for researchers before Covid's arrival in 2020.

A point made at this conference was that data choreography and integration, more than collection and reporting, were destined to become more important going forward.

As the research currency consists of interactions or conversational transactions between audiences and researchers, it was interesting that the conference delved into monetary interactions, peer-to-peer technology and specifically crypto currencies – which were seen as having the capacity to radically impact e-commerce in Africa.

The conference attendees heard that, while the uptake was still embryonic, mobile money transfer services such as M-Pesa, EcoCash, GCash and Tigo Pesa showed that Africa's youth were leading the way towards a future in which digital currencies could facilitate Africa's transactional capacity and speed. With over 500-million youth, Africa was on the verge of using technology as a lever for unprecedented growth, delegates were told.

As with past conferences, the impact of the pandemic on segmentation approaches was also examined, with a special focus on the future of community media in the face of the changing media spectrum.

The entire definition of what constituted a community was changing, and whether communities were getting more niched or amorphous in character was important to understand within the realm of a more fluid market dynamic, speakers said. In this regard, it was interesting to note that research digital anthropologists were on hand to help decode consumer outlook.

CONSUMER SOCIETIES FORMING BEYOND GEOGRAPHIC BORDERS

This sea of change was inevitable even prior to 2020, with markets forming and consumer societies emerging beyond geographic boundaries. Generational marketing was therefore a subject that deserved closer examination, given that the onset of the pandemic had itself possibly created

➤ **Groups of viewers around a single screen are making way for more individualised viewing experiences**



behavioural cults and subgroups.

Brands were competing for attention more aggressively on social media, where influencers had a significant role to play, delegates noted.

Planning advertising and promotional campaigns was in the present business climate important, but these needed to be more dynamic and take into account advertising value equivalence, brand awareness, brand equity and performance of different types of media. In order to succeed, brands needed to generate sufficient levels of attention, interest and desire to purchase.

All of the foregoing were impacted upon by changing media trends, which were showing strong growth in the spheres of podcasts and video-content streaming. Consequently, measurement of the online consumption of both static and motion (video) content needed to be sharpened.

In conclusion, the 2021 PAMRO conference reiterated the need for updates on all of these topics, including the emergence of lifestyle and behavioural market segments. Studies

of a tracking nature are critically important when it comes to reinforcing early and developing insights.

PAMRO as an organisation is a strong supporter of innovation and the use of hybrid methodologies. While research panels have always had a place in research, their importance is likely to increase in future, while the manner in which they are assembled and managed is set to change, with technology as the main change agent.

The 2022 conference will be held in Kigali, Rwanda in August. The entire business community is invited to attend. Details will be made available on the PAMRO website: <http://pamro.org/>.

Dr Sifiso Falala is President of the Pan African Media Research Organisation (PAMRO) and Chief Executive at Plus 94 Research. He co-founded Plus 94 Research in 1998 with his partner Tirhani Mabunda. A key pillar to its foundation was the vision to challenge existing benchmarks and set new knowledge frontiers for the research industry.

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PLATINUM MEMBERS



How Covid has shaped a new PR reality in Africa

PR practitioners must do away with an outdated one-size-fits-all approach when working within a continent as dynamic and culturally diverse as Africa. By **Candice Burgess-Look**.



› The PR industry is filling gaps that media houses struggle to fill themselves



➤ *Africa's diversity requires a highly targeted PR plan*

TRADITIONALLY, PUBLIC relations has followed a fairly formulaic structure. PR practitioners were tasked with crafting a compelling press release, pitching the press release to a list of key media, and following up with said media until they secured their client coverage.

To keep things interesting, every so often they'd plan a launch event or function to drum up extra media interest.

While these PR tactics still have a place today, the advent of digital technologies, exacerbated by the pandemic, has changed the role of the communications practitioner in the most profound way. They are no longer just an intermediary between the client and the media; instead, they are now expected to be written, visual and audio-content creators.

Given the shrinking and under-resourced media landscape across Africa, it's the natural evolution of the public relations industry to step in and fill the gaps that media outlets struggle to fill themselves.

However, to do so successfully, PR leaders need to do away with the outdated one-size-fits-all approach, especially when working within a continent as dynamic and culturally diverse as Africa.

Below are four trends we are seeing shaping PR in Africa, all driven by the shift toward a more holistic PR model in a post-Covid world.

THE RISE OF OWNED MEDIA

Owned media refers to platforms that are owned or managed by a company themselves, such as their website, blog posts, podcasts, social media accounts and newsletters. Unlike media publicity, the company has complete control over what content is published, which is advantageous in the age of fake news.

Since growing access to digital technologies now gives African brands the opportunity to interact with their target audience in real time, it has become a convenient and relatively

inexpensive way to ensure their content is placed directly in front of their audience. Covid-19 has made the business environment hyper-competitive, so companies are eager to know that they are speaking directly to their customer with their PR efforts.

Having the benefit of being able to craft very targeted content means that owned media platforms are fast gaining recognition as prime lead generators. For example, company blogs are said to drive up to 55% more visitors to a company's website, according to marketing software product developer Hubspot, with some even going on to earn influential status.

For instance, in 2021 the Kenyan-based corporate learning organisation, African Management Institute, was listed as a top 20 business blog to follow by Feedspot, the website content-reading platform. And when the African Blog Awards came on the scene, First National Bank in SA received recognition as a leading finance blog.

What this tells us is that, for the PR professional, it's no longer just about writing a standard press release and hoping that it will stick. To meet client expectations today, PRs' need to know how to capture a brand's tone of voice across various owned-media platforms and create quality content that speaks directly to an audience.

HAIL THE HYBRID MODEL

For several reasons, effective modern public relations strategies are those that are not just hinged on pure editorial or publicity. Gone are the days when media placement and PR AVE (advertising value equivalent) figures on a spreadsheet would impress a client alone. As the pan-African economy enters Covid-19 recovery, companies want to see real conversions and a direct impact on the bottom line.

Essentially, communications professionals cannot go on claiming that creating brand 'awareness' is sufficient. To truly deliver tangible results, public relations needs to be



A new way for PRs to use radio effectively

While many African communications professionals are focusing increasingly on digital channels to tap into the continent's consumers, radio remains a cost-effective and near-ubiquitous way to reach people.

In February, the APO Group – the Pan-African communications consultancy and press release distribution service – announced the launch of Radio News Release. It is claimed to be the first pan-African news distribution service dedicated to soundbites and audio clips.

“Radios are affordable and portable, and millions of Africans rely on them to stay up to date with what is happening in their communities, countries and around the world,” the company said in a statement.

Quoting data from the African Union, APO noted that more than a third of African adults cannot read or write, so radio is an essential form of mass communication across the continent. And while the rest of the world takes online news for granted, in Africa only 43% of people have access to the internet.

“Radio stations represent a hugely significant and largely untapped cross-section of the African media landscape,” says Grégoire Ndjaka, CEO of the African Union of Broadcasting (AUB).

Mike Simpson, Editor

extremely targeted in strategy and include a mix of disciplines, one of which must be paid media.

The reason for this is two-fold. Firstly, the shrinking media landscape due to Covid-related staff cuts and publication closures means there are fewer editorial opportunities for PR pitches. To ensure your message is landing where it needs to, spending money

on the right platforms will give you that peace of mind and, better yet, increase your client's conversion rate.

The second reason is a case of pure economics. Since African media outlets have suffered great financial losses over the last 24 months, many have put up paywalls or started offering PR packages. The latter can, for a fee of course, include

a press office, advertorials and social media posts.

As part of a hybrid PR strategy, we can also expect to see more use of direct-to-consumer (D2C) marketing. Covid has fast-tracked the shift for brands to prioritise data-centricity and hyper-personalisation, which sees the need for more direct customer engagement. In strong African tech

economies like Nigeria, Rwanda, Kenya and South Africa, brands are adopting direct email marketing strategies, as well as using instant chat platforms like Whatsapp Messenger to plug their business. In many African countries, locals rely on WhatsApp as a primary source of news, which is especially important in rural areas where there is no local news service.

➤ *In-Person and WOM engagement is still extremely relevant*

And for those regions where connectivity is still a significant problem, a D2C marketing and PR strategy would do well to capitalise on the power of word-of-mouth through in-person community engagement – using tactics like on-the-ground activations. Radio is also an important communications tool in such regions, particularly if TV and print media is also difficult to access, or unaffordable (*Editor's note: See our sidebar article on the relevance of radio to African PRs*).

SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE OF AFRICA'S GEN Z CONSUMERS

As we know, 60% of Africans are younger than 25, making this the youngest continent in the world and getting younger. Therefore, African brands that want to keep ahead of the competition need to learn to walk, talk and speak Gen Z, because this is where the consumer power will increasingly lie.

But having a superficial understanding of what appeals to this market will only take you so far. For a PR campaign to really succeed within this market, it needs to speak to the core value system of this generation. For example, Gen Z is fast becoming what *Forbes* business magazine calls the 'Sustainability Generation'. A report released by Mastercard last year shows that 89% of Gen Zs are more mindful of their impact on the environment

since the onset of Covid-19, which is influencing their buying decisions.

Further to this, Gen Z consumers care deeply about mental health and wellbeing, equality and freedom of expression. PR that understands this value system will have a better chance of resonating with this audience.

A good example of a brand that speaks fluent Gen Z is Reebok SA. Its 'Life Is Not a Spectator Sport' campaign hits all the right notes by simultaneously speaking to a core value system (express your individuality) while engaging local influencers.

The campaign sees influencers share their own individual stories of

how they overcame challenges to get to the top, while encouraging their followers to do the same. What makes this campaign so smart is that Reebok is essentially 'selling' a classic leather shoe from the '80s that originally appealed to an older audience. But the brand's marketers reimagined it in a way that speaks to the younger African consumer with spending power.

PR CAN HIGHLIGHT THE POTENTIAL AND INNOVATION IN AFRICA

Africa is full of potential and innovation, so PR efforts that highlight this are becoming increasingly important. This is especially so, given the frequently



➤ Reebok has engaged local influencers such as dancer and choreographer, Sne Mbatha

➤ A great example of using PR to highlight African solutions is Africa Games Week, which brings local and international game developers together to facilitate investment in tech development. Sithe Ncube was a keynote speaker



negative international narrative around Africa which portrays stereotypes related to poverty, corruption, wars and famine in preference to the good news.

Initiatives that are rooted in social upliftment and empowerment of the continent play a critical role in helping to erase or contextualise the negative perceptions – an image further exacerbated by the pandemic.

To quote political economist George Ayittey: *“African problems should have African solutions.”*

A great example of using PR to highlight African solutions is that of Open Design Afrika, an annual event that endorses and empowers African designers and creatives. So too is Africa Games Week Conference, which sees the largest gathering of pan-African and international game developers in the world come together to facilitate investment in tech development.

In both instances, these events present an opportunity for Africans to get access to funding, industry connections and entrepreneurial success. Feel-good stories like these that showcase the tech proficiency, innovation and creative talent on the African continent are extremely appealing to the African media, as they are opportunities to inspire and empower people across the continent.

Better yet, these stories are often picked up by international media, which aids in positioning Brand Africa as an attractive investment opportunity rather than the stereotypical ‘Dark Continent’. ■

Candice Burgess-Look holds a BA Hons in Media & Communication Science. She is the Director and co-founder of South African PR firm, King of the Jungle, and has over 16 years’ experience across the B2B and B2C PR, advertising and marketing sectors.

Can PR change the negative narrative?

Africa’s compelling business stories and successes are continuing to be under-reported in the international media, while stereotypes around conflict, governance, corruption and poverty dominate the narrative. The collective expertise of the continent’s PR industry can surely help to change this.

The *‘Business in Africa Narrative Report’* – released by the NPO Africa No Filter and audience consultancy AKAS, says the keywords, stories, frames, and narratives associated with business on the continent are dangerously distorted.

There is an overemphasis on the role of governments, foreign powers and larger African states – alongside an under-appreciation of the role of young people, women, entrepreneurs, creative businesses, smaller successful African states, and Africa’s future potential.

“We wanted to understand why Africa is seen as a high-risk business destination and why the cost of money is at a premium,” explains Moky Makura, Executive Director at Africa No Filter.

“The report gives us an insight into why. It shows that business opportunities on the continent are both under-represented and misrepresented, and now that we know this, we can work on educating the media and changing the narrative around business in Africa.”

Says Richard Addy of AKAS: “[This] rigorous research is important because narratives, frames and stories are the lenses through which we perceive and experience Africa. They inform beliefs, behaviour and ultimately dictate policy.”

Mike Simpson, Editor

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Chief marketing officers must regain CEOs' trust

With corporate trust in CMOs apparently at an all-time low, a top agency executive discusses how to change this narrative.

ONLY ONE-THIRD OF CEOs trust their chief marketing officers to grow the business and CMO tenure is at a new low point, warns John Connors, CEO and Founder of US-based marketing agency Boathouse.

In a column for the advertising and marketing industry publication *Ad Age*, Connors says it is therefore crucial for CMOs to regain trust and tenure.

He gives five strategies to achieve this, the foremost being to stop striving to emulate other top marketers and to speak their language. Instead, CMOs must have a strategy that's unique to their business and should start listening to their CEOs and boards of directors.

"Marketing strategies are not one-size-fits-all; the tactics used by the biggest brands may not work for other businesses," Connors emphasises. He lists the following as his other four key strategies:

CHANGE THE CMO NARRATIVE

The CMO narrative needs to get smarter and less narcissistic. The lack of strategic innovation is driving a growing perception with CEOs and boards that chief marketing officers and marketing departments are not keeping pace with the changing business environment.

THINK BEYOND THE CONSUMER

Brand management has long succeeded based on the science of the relationship between a company and the consumer. In today's business environment it is no longer sufficient for CMOs to focus on consumers alone.

The CEO must deal with an incredibly diverse number of stakeholders including the media, government

regulators, elected officials, employees, supply-chain partners, communities, investors, advocacy groups and consumers. Preaching that "it is all about the consumer" is a largely outdated CMO mindset.

THE SCIENCE OF MARKETING

Marketing as a tactical science has grown, while marketing as a strategic science has declined.

Finance, technology, operations and manufacturing have reinvented their strategic fundamentals multiple times over. CMOs need to get moving and find new strategic theories. The industry should not rely on 75-year-old models. There are limitless possibilities in marketing and it's time for CMOs to think bigger.

EMBRACE THE P+L STATEMENT

Since the concept of shareholder value was introduced in 1976, companies have increasingly been focused on the bottom line.

Recent CMO studies have reinforced the fact that marketers are getting the message and becoming performance- and ROI-obsessed. The challenge is that all performance is not the same. When CMOs shows digital marketing ROI or any hyper-narrow vertical measurement to a CEO when the company growth or share price are not doing well, they look like they do not get it.

CMOs need to talk about share price, multiples, valuation, growth rates and exit strategies. Too many CEOs and CMOs are speaking different languages. ■

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Marketing: Key to Prosperity

TikTok: African marketers' new weapon of choice for hooking larger audiences?



Social media platform TikTok has seen market penetration and usage increase dramatically. **Aurelia Mbokazi-Kashe** investigates the potential for African marketers.

RISE IN INTERNET

penetration and the explosion of affordable smartphones and mobile applications has led to a rapid rise in the number of social media users globally and within Africa.

The *Digital 2022 Global Overview Report* places the worldwide number of social media users at 4.62-billion people, 58% of the world's total population. The report also reveals that the total social media ad spend across all platforms was US\$154-billion, about 33% of the total global digital ad spend for 2021.

Last year also saw TikTok emerge as the most-downloaded mobile app. Currently the sixth largest social media platform with 1-billion monthly active users (according to Bytedance in September 2021) the short-video platform is also enjoying strong growth in ad reach and spend. Remarkably, the *Digital 2022 Global Overview Report* also found that TikTok users spent an average of 48% more time on the platform over the past 12 months compared, with the previous year.

Popular among younger audiences – including the sought-after Gen Z grouping defined by Pew Research as those born after 1996 – the application allows users to express their creativity and showcase relatable everyday content through short videos that are between 15 seconds and three-minutes long.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR MARKETERS

Responding to this rapid growth in TikTok users, African marketers are cautiously studying and investing in the platform, which some see as a gateway to tapping into Africa's young and newly connected audiences in large numbers.

Dr John M Mapulanga, Country Manager, Commercial at Abbot Rapid Diagnostics in Zambia, says TikTok is beyond just “shaking or dancing” and is able to deliver a message and provide an enormous business opportunity.

He adds that since the platform fits into the influencer-marketing narrative, it can be used as an effective reach-out tool for business. In fact, he boldly declares that Africa, which has a younger demographic, offers unexploited potential and can be a critical partner to TikTok in its growth trajectory.

In support of Mapulanga's premise, marketers across the continent are conducting local and regional research to best understand and exploit the full potential of digital economies. A West African study by insights consultancy Kantar that homes in on social media, concludes that the digital medium has become a fast-growing, strong market in the region.

The 2022 in Africa: The Good, the Tough and the Growth study recommends that marketers refine their digital strategies to go beyond “online for engagement” to “online for sales” if they are to be future-fit.



TikTok is still very new to our market

Tamara Ojeaga, Chief Client Officer: Insights Division at Kantar in Nigeria, says their regional study also pointed to TikTok being a platform of choice among Gen Zs in West Africa. However, she cautions that a comprehensive understanding of the platform is required before West African marketers can rush in to spend substantial budgets on the platform.

“TikTok is still very new to this [West African] market. Even TikTok is still trying to figure this market out. However, their algorithm is second to none and things pop up based on what you like and have seen,” notes Ojeaga.

She is unsurprised that Kantar's research revealed that Senegal has the highest number of TikTok users of in West Africa, owing to the meteoric rise of that country's global TikTok influencer, Khabane ‘Khabby’ Lame,



➤ Rosehilda Kamanga believes TikTok was a clear winner during the pandemic

who has amassed almost 135-million followers on the App. Nigeria is, in this regard, still playing catch up, she quips.

“People are trying to make a living having multiple channels, and brands are gaining more understanding on how they can leverage micro- and macro-influencers. But we need to better understand Gen Zs as brand owners. I really feel we haven't scratched the surface,” Ojeaga observes.

ADDIS ABABA TAKEN BY STORM

Saminas Seyfu, Director Marketing, Partnership and Community Development at Orbit Innovation Hub in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, says TikTok's relatable and often light-hearted content has taken Addis by storm. Ordinary people, artists and brands in the city quickly gain hundreds of thousands of followers after launching their accounts on the app, he says.

“Local companies are gaining the attention of consumers and are able to expand their market. For example, there's a lady who cooked for fun and now owns a fully fledged catering company and hosts food seminars. She is one of many examples of TikTok's success stories,” notes Seyfu.

Like Ojeaga, Seyfu warns against marketers rushing in to partner with popular TikTok influencers without first establishing if they are the right mix for their brands.



› Khaby Lamy, the TikTok sensation from Senegal

Lame leverages his TikTok star status

Khaby Lame, the global TikTok sensation who was born in Senegal, has leveraged his star status to become a brand ambassador for Hugo Boss and is now part of its major rebranding campaign.

Other brand ambassadors signed up by the company include reality TV star Kendall Jenner of *Kardashians* fame, and Hailey Beiber, American model and wife of musician Justin Beiber.

Lame, who now lives in Italy, was previously an unemployed factory worker who lost his job during the pandemic. He then turned to social media and has since become a massive TikTok star with a following of almost 135-million people. In his time on TikTok he has also amassed more than 2.1-billion 'likes'.

He has achieved his fame on the platform by silently mocking overly complicated life-hack videos.

Hugo Boss signed Lamy to be part of its Boss brand's #BeYourOwnBoss Spring/Summer 2022 fashion collection.

According to the publication *Vogue Business*, the German-based luxury brand is looking to the future with a radical rethink of its direction, focused on a much clearer targeting of its two brands, Boss and Hugo.

"The rethink, which amounts to a full-scale rebranding complete with new logo, is being backed by two of the biggest marketing pushes in the company's history. Boss is now aimed firmly at the Millennials, aged 25-40, while Hugo targets Gen Z, aged under 25," *Vogue Business* reported.

"Despite the growing interest in TikTok, there is still a lot of misunderstanding on what the platform can deliver versus the investment. I manage TikTok channels for artists and companies, and most corporations are treading quite carefully, studying the platform closely."

He adds that Ethiopia's second mobile provider, which is set to start operations soon, is an enormous growth opportunity for TikTok among this nation's 115-million-strong population.

› *The platform is now here to stay*

Rosehilda Kamanga, Communication and Marketing Manager at the Marketing Society of Kenya (MSK), says TikTok was a clear winner during the pandemic as Kenya's second-most downloaded app after Facebook, according to the *Nendo's 2021 Digital Trend Report*.

Putting this figure into context, Kamanga explains that there are 11.75-million active social media users in Kenya, out of a population of 55.6-million, as revealed in the *Digital 2022 Global Overview*. She says this proves that the short-form video genre is "here to stay" and shows great growth potential for that nation's digital ecosystem.

"TikTok is one of the best platforms to engage with a younger audience and marketers can maximise this to enhance brands that are typically [focused on] youth," she explains. "Additionally, it provides collaborative channels and opportunities for increased partnerships with creatives – whether it is in music, dance, theatrics or sports."

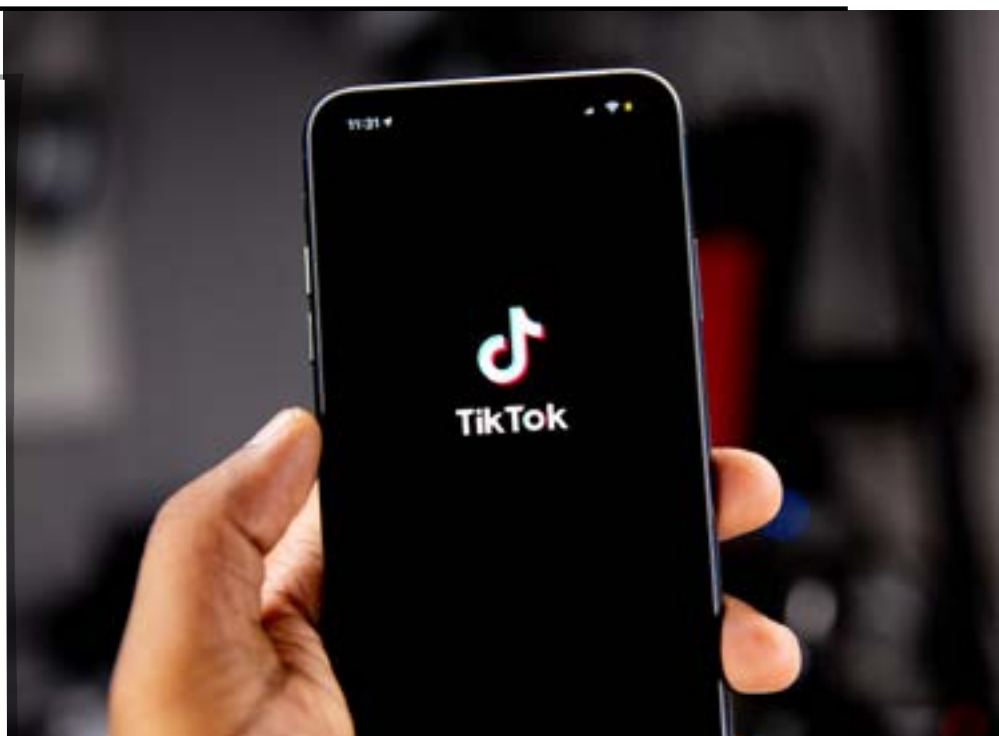
Her advice to marketers when engaging Kenyan TikTok influencers for experiential collaborations is to first study the influencer's ability to attract and retain an audience, and to create



› TikTok users spent an average of 48 % more time on the platform in 2021, compared with the previous year



➤ Saminas Seyfu says TikTok's relatable and often light-hearted content has taken Addis Ababa by storm



and substantiate increased brand awareness. She believes that marketers need to be astute and ensure that their TikTok influencer of choice can influence cash flow by generating sales, increasing the digital footprint of the organisation and enhancing its reach.

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS DATA IS AVAILABLE IN REAL TIME

Mapulanga adds that investing in TikTok takes out the guess work for marketers, thanks to data analytics that can analyse the platform's audiences in real time. It uses a Storm cluster to show clicks, shows, collections, comments and sharing.

"The platform allows a business to reach out to its new and existing customers, increasing brand visibility that makes the brand accessible to new customers, and generates leads. Through analytics we can determine new opportunities and get insight about their needs," he explains, adding that TikTok should become part of the marketing toolkit in order to help drive a brand and improve the bottom line.

Mapulanga says his family's business will be investing in its own TikTok account to tap into the massive audiences on the app.

Ojeaga's parting shot to brands that want to create their own TikTok accounts, as opposed to partnering with influencers, is that they need to first fully understand their audiences, be creative, authentic, relatable and engaging.

"Content needs to be created by relatable individuals, or you can leverage Gen Zs working within your organisation," she advises. ■

Aurelia Mbokazi-Kashe is a freelance journalist, editor and development communications specialist with 23 years' experience in telling impactful stories across Africa on various platforms, including print and the digital space. She has occupied leading roles in national newspapers, magazines and digital platforms.

Africa is a key growth market for TikTok

According to a report published by the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore in late 2021, TikTok has identified Africa as a key growth market due to the continent's young and rising population, the increase in numbers of Chinese-made smartphones, greater broadband penetration rates and cheaper internet data.

"To increase its attraction in Africa, TikTok recently announced a US\$57 000 cash grant and mentorship on content creation and curation for 20 African influencers, while it also launched a 'TikTok for Business' initiative in South Africa

to help businesses advertise and leverage trending content," the report stated.

"TikTok has opened local offices and put specialist teams in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa to organise and teach social media influencers how to engage with and use the platform.

"Music by African songwriters and performers is already proving popular on TikTok and has led to trends such as the electric dance genre #Amapiano the catchy dance routine *Jerusalem* also became a global sensation in 2020 thanks in no small part to TikTok."

Brands can **boost** their reputations and sales by praising rivals

Surprisingly, being complimentary to your competitors in public can pay off in unexpected ways for brands, researchers find.

WHETHER THEY'RE SNIDE comments on billboards or sparring on social media, big brands are known for taking jabs at their business competitors when the opportunity arises. But what these brands usually don't do is say nice things about their rivals, because they wouldn't want to grant an adversary free publicity, says Keisha Cutright, a Marketing Professor at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business in the US.

This sounds reasonable. But recent research by Professor Cutright, published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Marketing*, suggests exactly the opposite: a little goodwill shown to your competitors can pay off.

Remarkably, nearly a dozen experiments with almost 4,000 people show that a brand that compliments a

competitor ends up boosting its own reputation and sales.

› *Being nice to a rival can show consumers what you stand for*

"You don't want to spend your media dollars talking about the competition, but there are times when it makes sense to say something nice, and at the same time signal who you are as a brand," Cutright explains. "That message is that they're a warm, caring brand that you can trust – which implies they're also going to be considerate and warm to their customers."

KIT KAT CONGRATULATED ITS RIVAL BRAND TWIX

In one experiment, the researchers showed a group of consumers a fictitious tweet from chocolate brand Kit Kat praising another chocolate brand, Twix: "Competitor or not, congrats on your 54 years in business! Even we can admit—Twix are delicious."

After 11 days, the researchers asked the consumers who saw the fake tweet to report any candy purchases. People who saw the public message from Kit Kat praising Twix were 34% more likely to buy a Kit Kat compared to a control group that saw a tweet from Kit Kat about its own product. Importantly, the authors noted, Twix sales didn't increase, even after Kit Kat praised the candy as delectable.

In a surprising turn, the most sceptical of the consumers in the experiments were likely to have the biggest positive response to brands that tipped their hats to a competitor, the researchers found.

"Seeing a brand take a risk like this seems to break the ice with consumers who are least trusting of companies' intentions," Cutright explained. "But praising a competitor will be most effective when done strategically and at the right moment – authenticity is key.

"If you are constantly talking about the competition, people may not see it as sincere," Cutright said. "This isn't something brands need to do all the time, but it's something they shouldn't be afraid to do occasionally to help boost perceptions of their warmth and trustworthiness."

Readers of our Digital Edition can access the full research [here](#). ■

PHOTO: GERD ALTMANN FROM PIXABAY





Post-Covid rebound provides **positive** outlook for Africa's food retailers

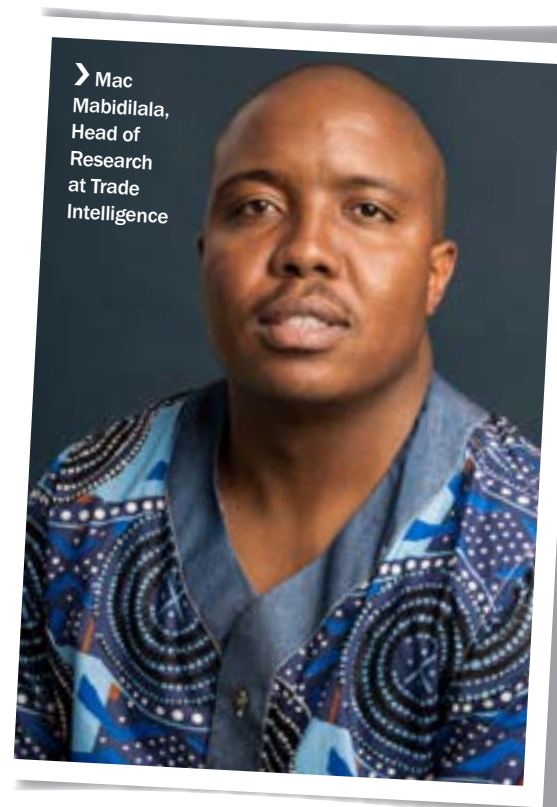
Renewed interest and investment from retail chains, including multinationals, will grow the sector. But informal retail isn't going anywhere, just yet. By **Mike Simpson**.

AS AFRICA ENJOYS A POST-Covid economic rebound, led by strong recoveries in North Africa and East Africa that are expected to bring these regions back to pre-pandemic levels during 2022, the continent's retail sector is looking extremely positive too.

This upbeat outlook was one of the main themes to emerge from the recent *Retail in Africa* webinar organised by Trade Intelligence, an African-based

FMCG retail research and insights company. The webinar covered key retail trends on the continent, broad-based African consumer insights, and an in-detail analysis of the Kenyan retail scene. The main focus of the webinar was on the food/grocery sector.

In his introduction and overview, Mac Mabililala, the Head of Research at Trade Intelligence, noted that poverty levels were decreasing and per capita



incomes rising across Africa. These factors, along with trends such as urbanisation, meant the outlook for retail growth and modernisation was very promising.

However, there were still challenges such as high inflation, currency volatility, lack of infrastructure, and the difficulty of repatriating funds from countries such as Nigeria. The latter had been a major reason for Shoprite's decision to exit the Nigerian market after 15 years.

In general, though, the big retail chains were continuing to show interest in pursuing an African expansion strategy. These included the likes of Carrefour – which is using a franchise model – and Walmart. While some South African-based retailers had retreated to countries closer to their home market, SA's Pick n Pay group had reversed the trend and entered Nigeria through a partnership model.

Mabidilala emphasised that big international retailers and major food-product brands had to come to terms with the dominance of the informal retail sector in most African markets – as much as almost 70% in Kenya and a massive 94% in Nigeria, for example. But informal retail was not necessarily a competitor to modern retail and, rather than just being focused on selling fresh food for daily consumption, these traders also stocked products from the major FMCG brands and could therefore not be ignored, but should be part of the route-to-market strategy.

He believed food retailers intent on cracking the African market needed a clear plan, patience and a long-term view. Mabidilala cited the example of the Singapore-based Tolaram Group, which entered the Nigerian market in the late 1980s with Indomie instant noodles – at a time when noodles were an unknown product. That segment has since exploded, with Indomie being the dominant market player.

But although Tolaram succeeded with an unfamiliar product that consumers sometimes thought were 'worms', retail brands in the food sector are more

likely to be successful in Africa if they innovate around popular national and regional dishes that people take pride in and know.

Mabidilala gave the example of plant-based dishes, which also tie in with the Western trend towards a healthier plant-based diet, and have brought success for the African-based So Fresh group. "Innovate around local culture and opportunities," he stressed.

UNDERSTANDING AFRICAN CONSUMERS IS VITAL

In his presentation, Feyi Olubodun – Managing Partner at Open Squares Consulting and author of the popular book *The Villager: How Africans Consume Brands* – explained how retail industry marketers looking to tap into African consumers needed to be aware of what he calls 'The Villager Construct'.

This contends that, despite so many Africans now being urbanised in many respects, they remain rooted in their family's rural-based traditions and norms. Brands that fail to take account of this in their strategies are doomed to failure.

For international retail chains operating from a developed-world perspective, he emphasised that most Africans are not 'Western' and still hold African values, where the focus is on community rather than the individual. He quoted well-known African commentator GG Alcock's observation that "Africans are modernising, not Westernising".

EXAMINING MODERN AND GENERAL TRADE IN KENYA

In his address to webinar attendees, Kinoti Mbaabu, the Senior Managing Partner at Nineyard Consult in Kenya and a former executive with major retail groups, emphasised that there is significant potential for modern retail to continue to develop in the country.

The sector was attracting noteworthy interest from multinationals such as Tesco and Walmart, as well as private equity firms. Speciality retailers in fields like beauty, cosmetics and healthy foods

were also in the mix.

In the supermarket sector, he noted that distribution strategies were evolving, with increased interest in a decentralised model. Under this system, goods are distributed from the manufacturer direct to the store – without going via a distribution centre.

The growing number of big retail chains entering Kenya meant greater market maturity and more finesse, he said. Both consumers and retailers were growing in sophistication, which meant more 'retail theatre', better shopping experiences, more brand visibility and shoppers spending more time in stores.

There was rising interest in using better category management and shopper-guided science to, among other things, enhance in-store customer satisfaction and boost sales – which in turn led to more bulk displays and ultimately better prices for end users. There were also opportunities for better category branding by suppliers, as well as for private-label expansion to create greater brand loyalty for the retail chains.

Responding to a question from the floor, Mbaabu said he believed the next "big approach" in Kenyan retail was to understand exactly what consumers want. He gave the example of Shoprite which, while liked by Kenyan consumers as a brand, had a sub-optimal stock mix with too few Kenyan products. It exited the country in 2020, only two years after it arrived.

In answer to another question about the market share of supermarket chains in Kenya, he said Naivas Supermarket was the dominant player with around 80 stores; QuickMart Supermarkets with approximately 38 stores; and Carrefour with about 13 outlets. The latter, he added, is "a very robust operation that is doing well and has good locations".

Mike Simpson is the Editor of Strategic Marketing for Africa. He has 30-plus years' experience in journalism, TV, media, marketing and PR. He founded Simpson Media and 2008.

How sustainability strategies impact buying behaviour in the **beverages** sector

SUSTAINABILITY HAS BECOME a critical business challenge in the 21st century (Nielsen, 2016) and is widely acknowledged to be an integral part of competitive strategising.

At the heart of sustainability are questions about the role of marketing and branding. Firms use their brands to promote the value of sustainability through branding activities that emphasise their sustainability practices (Kumar & Christodoulopoulou, 2014). Businesses address sustainability by looking at process, sourcing and packaging (Nilssen, Bick & Abratt, 2019).

The general business problem is that integrating sustainability into brand strategies is a convoluted process. Problems include providing consistent sustainability messages and strategies that consumers understand, and translating consumers' interest into purchases and brand loyalty.

Considerable research has focused on understanding the impact of sustainable marketing practices on brands, but this has mostly been conducted in developed Western countries. The study described here looked specifically at the South African beverages industry with the aim of determining the impact of sustainability marketing on consumer purchasing behaviour in this industry.

CONSUMERS' BRAND LOYALTY AND PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR

The study looked specifically at consumers' awareness of products, their purchasing behaviour and their brand loyalty.

Awareness of products

Respondents were more aware of claims related to health than those related to environmentally friendly packaging material. Most respondents indicated that they read nutritional labels on beverages. Claims considered to be most important when choosing brands were "no sugar", "low in sugar" and "no preservatives".

Regarding environmentally friendly packaging, the respondents noticed "100% Recyclable" claims along with the claim for packaging material made from 100% recycled plastic. They found technical terms that described beverage-storage material (e.g. "biobased material", "biodegradable" and "compostable") difficult to understand and did not look for them on labels.

Purchasing behaviour

Consumers used claims related to health more often when choosing brands to buy, rather than those related to environmentally friendly packaging material. Most respondents indicated that they often read nutritional labels on beverages and only purchased beverages that had nutritional labels.

Consumers were motivated by feeling good, knowing that they had made healthy choices and feeling empowered about knowing what they put in their body. Motivations related to purchasing environmentally friendly products were rather anchored in consumer values, such as helping care for the environment to benefit future generations and getting personal

Consumers are holding manufacturers accountable and increasingly require them to invest in healthy and environmentally sound solutions, writes **Lindiwe Gumedu**.

satisfaction from doing the right thing.

The respondents were willing to pay premium prices for environmentally friendly and healthy products, with a notable slant towards a willingness to pay more for healthy products.

Brand loyalty

The results showed that sustainability claims could effectively influence consumers' decisions to purchase sustainable brands repeatedly, thus building brand loyalty. When shopping for beverages, respondents indicated that they specifically looked for environmentally friendly and, particularly, healthy brands.

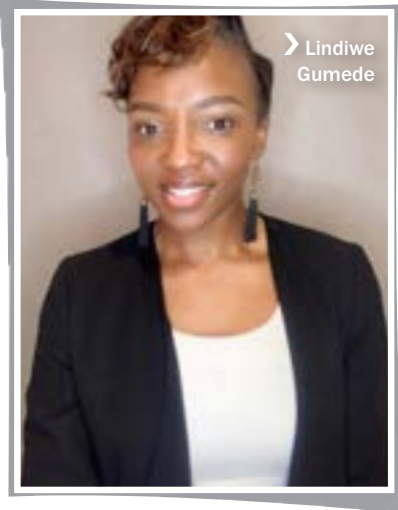
This confirms a study which found that when consumers are educated on sustainability, it helps build brand loyalty and identification (Nilssen et al., 2019). Consumers' willingness to look for only sustainable products indicates trust in these brands (Vukasovic, 2009), which breeds loyalty (Stolber, 2010).

HOW COMPANIES CAN RESPOND

Overall, respondents believed that current marketing initiatives have helped raise awareness of healthier alternative beverages and reduced the negative impact of packaging on the environment. They also made suggestions for further improvements.

Keep abreast of evolving sustainability issues

Sustainability is evolving as new challenges emerge and receive attention from all stakeholders.



Companies should keep abreast of evolving issues to sharpen brand propositions and produce messaging that positively impacts the society and environment in which they operate.

Empower consumers with knowledge

Marketers should continue to raise awareness among communities, highlighting the importance and impact of using environmentally friendly products and healthier alternatives. This could be achieved on mass-media platforms. Benefits and value to consumers need to be highlighted in simple terms.

Deliver on consumers' expectations for transparency

Consumers are looking for honesty and transparency in the way manufacturers

produce beverages, especially when it comes to ingredients used as sugar substitutes. Consumers want to make educated choices, so the effects or dangers, if any, of using such ingredients need to be highlighted.

Make a concerted effort to reduce the negative effect of their operations

Manufacturers must be seen to be actively introducing solutions to resolve problems caused by their operations, such as reducing the impact of plastic packaging or finding alternative environmentally friendly solutions.

When it comes to recycling, consumers often do not know where to begin, and industry players can make consumers feel confident about how to dispose of, or recycle, beverage packaging with practical ideas such as

making available in-home recycling bins and using reverse-vending machines to collect used beverage containers in return for money. Marketers can highlight how this behaviour will enhance the local environment.

Improve product offerings at competitive prices

Some respondents were willing to pay a premium price for sustainable products; however, this may not apply to most local consumers with limited disposable income. Marketers should continuously improve product offerings to deliver competitive and affordable prices for all.

The study results point to ever-evolving consumer needs, with consumers becoming more sophisticated as they gain more knowledge and awareness concerning sustainability. Consumers hold manufacturers accountable for their decisions and require them to invest in healthy and environmentally sound solutions. ■

Lindiwe Gumede is Marketing Senior Manager – Beverages at PepsiCo South Africa and has over 15 years of solid experience in marketing products in the apparel, food and beverage industries. This article summarises research she undertook as part of her Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Marketing studies with the IMM Graduate School.

Editor's Note: Due to space constraints, the author's reference list has been removed, but is available on request from the Editor.

Study finds children being exposed to a **brand** every minute

New research emphasises how our children live in a highly commercialised world; one that bombards them constantly with consumption messages.



ATTACHING CAMERAS TO children has revealed that they are exposed to 554 brands a day through marketing, a new study from the University of Otago in New Zealand has found.

Research co-lead, Associate Professor Leah Watkins from the Department of Marketing at the university, says the results highlight an urgent need to reduce marketing for both personal and planetary health reasons.

To obtain the data, wearable automatic cameras were given to 90 children, aged 11 to 13, to provide an unprecedented view of their daily exposure to marketing over two full days. The study found the kids were exposed to 554 brands in a 10-hour day, which equates to nearly a brand a minute.

Most of these exposures occurred in school (43 percent), at home (30 percent), and in-store (12 percent). The exposures were most commonly on brand labels (46 percent), product packaging (22 percent) and commercial signage (13 percent).

Professor Watkins says children live in a highly commercialised world; one that bombards them with consumption messages.

While she expected to see advertising for unhealthy products, she found the relatively high number of those 'unhealthy' messages – in comparison to positive social and 'healthy' food messages – concerning. Also concerning is the finding that there are links between socio-economic status and exposure to harmful advertising.

"This is alarming given the high rates of obesity, alcohol, and gambling harm in socio-economically deprived neighbourhoods," Watkins says.

INEQUALITIES AMONG CHILDREN COULD BE ACCENTUATED

“It suggests marketing messages may accentuate inequities and place further pressure on those who are already disadvantaged.”

Watkins says not only do the results raise concerns about marketing’s role in promoting products directly harmful to public health, but also its role in encouraging overconsumption.

“One of the major threats to planetary health is overconsumption, and the current and continued increases in consumption are unsustainable,” she explains.

The United Nations has called on member states to reduce the level of commercial marketing; to identify spaces which should be free of marketing, such as schools; and to ensure a wider diversity of pro-social messaging.

➤ *Stimulate discussion on future ad policies*

Watkins hopes the research will stimulate important discussions about the policies needed to achieve this for the next generation.

The study is co-authored by Research Fellow Ryan Gage, Professor Louise Signal and Senior Research Fellow Moira Smith – all from the university’s Department of Public Health in Wellington, as well as Lecturer Christina McKerchar from the Department of Population Health in Christchurch, and Professor Robert Aitken from the Department of Marketing.

The team plans to further investigate children’s exposure to marketing in schools through an audit of marketing activities, as schools were the site for a significant number of marketing exposures. A pilot study using software to track children’s online exposure to marketing is also underway.

Readers of our Digital Edition can access the full research [here](#).



Kids unable to discern ads’ persuasive intent

According to an article published by the American Academy of Pediatrics, research on children’s understanding of television advertising demonstrates that those aged seven years and younger have limited ability to understand the persuasive intent of the advertiser.

From ages 7 to 11 years, children can start to recognise television advertising and persuasive intent with their parents’ assistance, but lack the abstract thinking skills that help individuals recognise advertising as a larger commercial concept.

At 12 years of age and older, teenagers were able to identify television advertisements and advertisers’ intention to change behaviour. This is why some countries, such as Sweden and Brazil, have laws banning advertising to children younger than 12 years.

However, recognition of persuasive intent does not necessarily lead to the ability to resist marketing, especially with highly appealing products. Marketers use emotional

or subconscious approaches to engage children, such as using trusted characters or celebrities. At as young as age two, a child can easily identify a familiar character, as well as correctly connect them with an endorsed product.

Importantly, most research on children’s understanding of advertising involves television and print ads only. But newer forms of advertising found in mobile and interactive media and smart technologies, often powered by personal data, are more difficult to identify.

They do not necessarily occur in a predictable manner and are often integrated into the content. Advertising may also be linked to rewards or be embedded in trusted social networks or personalised digital platforms, which may undermine children’s abilities to identify or critically think about advertising messages.

Readers of our Digital Edition can access the full article [here](#).

What is **dark** marketing and why should you care?

The term conjures up images of secret agents, magic spells and supernatural deception. After all, if it's hidden from view it must be devious?





A WELL-KNOWN AFRICAN media commentator recently described dark marketing as having the connotation of “slipping cigarettes to teenagers at parties that take place in places we don’t want to go to ourselves”.

Not so, argues Matthew van der Valk, Executive Creative Director at VMLY&R South Africa, which is part of the global brand and customer experience agency. He is on a mission to rebrand dark marketing – a phrase sometimes used in industry circles but seldom fully understood – into something he calls ‘beyond-the-line’ marketing.

Despite its ominous title, Van der Valk believes dark marketing is an increasingly important element in the marketer’s toolbox.

Speaking to *Strategic Marketing Africa*, he explained: “It’s the stuff you don’t see above the line or below the line. This is why I’ve started calling it beyond the line; because there is no line. You are looking at distribution; you are looking at people’s influence within specific communities; you are looking at borrowed interest. It’s about using the mind of the consumer as a medium.”

Others have different explanations. Writing in the trade publication *Adweek*, the Chief Marketing Officer of New York-based advertising insights company BrandTotal, Noam Harel, described dark marketing as: “the practice of publishing sponsored advertisements that only a certain group of people can see”.

In other words, a hyper-targeted approach for speaking to a niche audience. An approach that flies under the radar. And with Google phasing out third-party cookies for identity tracking on Chrome from this year, Harel noted that this targeted approach would become even more critical in the future.

Jonathan Cherry of Cherryflava, an African-based trends analysis business, cited the ability of dark marketing to leverage “unique sounds, smells and other more subtle sensory cues to create a brand signature”. In the same blog, he referenced an American bookstore that

has created its own fragrance, Powell’s by Powell’s, “that mimics the smell of their store”. This too is a form of dark marketing, he believes.

AN EVOLVING APPROACH THAT IS STEPPING INTO THE LIGHT

While the exact definition is still up in the air, what the experts can agree on is that dark marketing is an evolving approach which is increasingly stepping into the light. As Van der Valk says: “We are defining it and redefining it as we go along.”

For a long time, dark marketing has largely been used by regulated brands as a way of connecting with consumers through innovative, non-restricted avenues. The likes of the tobacco and alcohol industries, casinos and online gaming, arms and ammunition, and even big pharma count among this number – which no doubt has added to the perception of subterfuge attached to the approach.

But, increasingly, the human learnings from these marketing efforts are crossing over into mainstream industries, spurred on by new controls and consumer privacy legislation which will make it harder for marketers to reach consumers using traditional approaches.

Certainly, the past two years of Covid-19 lockdowns have highlighted that no industry is beyond regulation and that gaps exist in any marketing strategy that relies solely on above- or below-the-line thinking, believes Van der Valk.

Today’s marketer needs to look at the whole ecosystem and the full marketing mix, he says, adding that: “it’s about inventing new communication channels that may not look like marketing as we know it”.

A HELPING HAND FROM BEHAVIOURAL ECONOMICS

“A large part of dark marketing is based on behavioural economics,” explains Van der Valk, who emphasises that human beings often make irrational choices based on their personal likes and dislikes, as well as their vices.



› Coca-Cola rolls out branded tents and kiosks at special events, taverns and funerals

Marketers have long tapped into the psychology of unpredictability to come up with real-world strategies like the now ubiquitous ‘buy one get one free’ promotions at supermarkets, or the science behind product positioning on retailers’ shelves. Dark marketing provides a perfect outlet for establishing the sorts of subtle connections that link people to brands.

Van der Valk, for instance, referenced a multi-channel campaign carried out in Nigeria, in which a Campari and beer cocktail was leveraged. The buzz around ‘The Senator’ soon embedded the cocktail across Nigerian culture.

The social media campaign achieved more than 2.5-million impressions with a reach of over 1.3-million, according to the industry news website *Marketing Spread*. It did so because the approach was tied into understanding the psychology of Nigeria and its people, rather than thinking purely with a marketing brain.

In other markets – with different psychologies, cultures and biases – the uptake of such a campaign would be completely different, leading Van der Valk to both exclaim the potential for dark marketing on the African continent, as well as the potential risk of homogenising Africa. Even countries as close geographically as Nigeria and Ghana are culturally diverse, he says, and they deserve the respect of being understood on their own terms.

UNIQUELY AFRICAN SOLUTIONS

Van der Valk cites the distribution challenges in East Africa as an opportunity for marketers in tune with the region. Citing the ear-to-the-ground approach being taken by East African Breweries, Van der Valk says this ‘one street back research’ ethos has unlocked the fact that in Kenya, for instance, all of the available branded fridges were not being used due to costs, erratic electricity supply and a culture of drinking warm beer.

“So, simply replacing fridges with shelving is a form of dark marketing,



➤ Standard Bank has turned some of South Africa's township spaza shops into ‘banking branches’ to bring financial services to the unbanked population

[as it allows] you to merchandise your product at point of sale in a different way,” he says of one simple, but effective, solution.

Other examples include fast-food brand Nando’s and its voice of political satire in South Africa, and Standard Bank turning SA’s township spaza shops into ‘banking branches’ to bring financial services to the unbanked population.

It’s about cigarette brands focusing marketing attention on exposing the economic and social harm done by the illegal trade in cigarettes, and Coca-Cola rolling out branded tents and kiosks at special events, taverns and funerals.

With dark marketing innovation seemingly feeding off restriction and difficulty, there are an abundance of avenues open to marketers operating across Africa. However, this does require the industry to break free of its own ego and reliance on traditional avenues, and embrace empathy, says Van der Valk.

“I think the heart of dark marketing is moving towards this,” he observes. “A lot of it is about changing the perspective of storytelling, without getting into this horrible habit of telling everybody why [your] products are great and why they should buy them – instead of listening to the stories that already exist within

African communities and finding ways to be relevant to those stories.”

At its core, dark marketing embraces the irrationality of human connections by getting close to people, mapping reactions and using these insights to try and brand a space.

“It’s about being relevant to that space, being relevant to [people’s] mindset, their culture, their social group, their social norms and their religious background. It’s just about sensitivity and being conscious of how you show up in people’s lives and make sure that you try and do it in a considered way,” says Van der Valk.

Rather than a dark art, this approach is what marketers should have been doing all along, he feels.

This doesn’t mean throwing TV, radio or print campaigns out of the window, but “looking at the world around us, and investing in new media, trying new things, trying to connect with people, and really getting back to basics”, he explains.

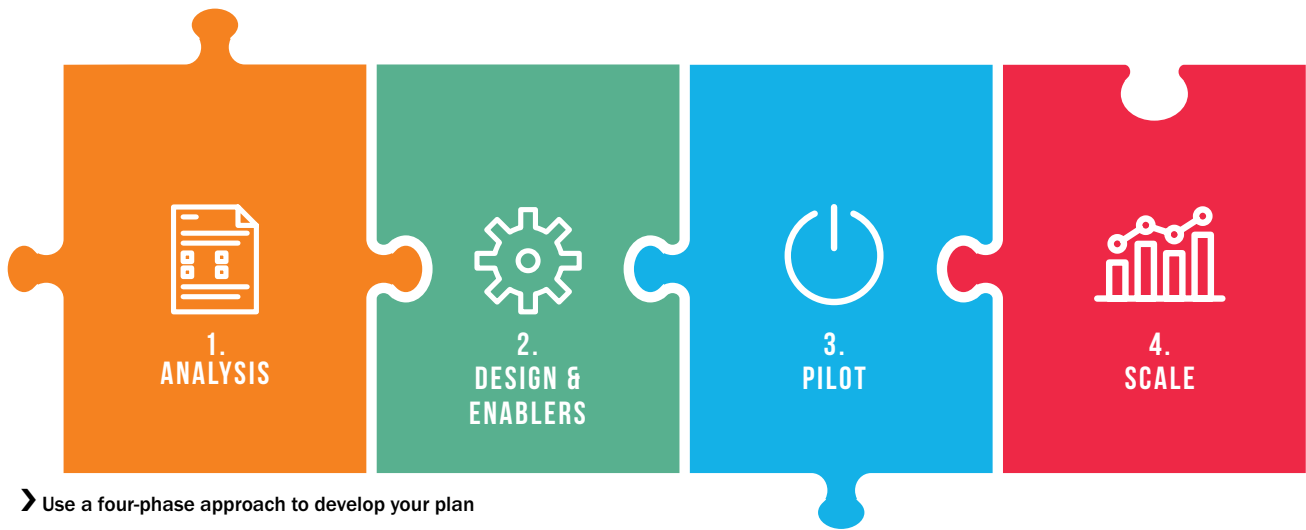
It might not be as ‘dark’ as the name sometimes suggests, but marketing beyond the traditional lines certainly has the potential to break the rules of marketing and embrace creative audacity. ■

➤ Cash is still king in most emerging markets, and marketers must consider how much money people are likely to have in their pockets



Route-to-market in **emerging** markets: Framework and key steps

In the first of a two-part series, **Tielman Nieuwoudt** discusses the Analysis phase of developing a supply chain route-to-market strategy.



➤ Use a four-phase approach to develop your plan

A ROUTE-TO-MARKET strategy, also sometimes known as a go-to-market strategy, is an organisation’s plan – using both internal and external resources such as the in-house sales force and/or external distribution network – to deliver its products to the outlets that service its customers.

WHAT FACTORS MUST YOU TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION?

To develop a route-to-market plan, you need to take into consideration all internal and external factors. In emerging market countries, special attention should be given to key issues such as infrastructure at a macro and micro level, as well as the regulatory environment that could affect your route-to-market design and implementation.

USE A FOUR-PHASE APPROACH WHEN DEVELOPING YOUR PLAN

I like to divide the design and roll-out of a route-to-market plan into four phases. Each phase comprises several building blocks, supported by analysis tools and key enablers. In this article we are focusing on the first (Analysis) phase.

A BROAD OVERVIEW OF THE STEPS IN THE PLAN’S ANALYSIS PHASE

The phase focuses on the analysis of consumers, channel, competitors,

logistics providers, distribution partners, infrastructure, regulatory environment and external stakeholders.

We use several tools during the Analysis phase and discuss a few of these below. For the complete tool list (18 tools) and route-to-market framework, see our [Route-to-Market](#)

➤ *You gain a better understanding by using segmentation*

PowerPoint Presentation. This includes the purpose of each tool, when to use it, how to use it, and material requirements.

THE MOST IMPORTANT ROUTE-TO-MARKET ANALYSIS STEPS

Product: You need a product that meets the needs of a targeted shopper and at a price that represents value. Cash is still king in most emerging markets, and you must consider the actual amount of money that consumers have in their pocket.

Analysis tool: The Ranking Values tool studies the value drivers of a product or service and helps an organisation prioritise their goals.

The approach is very useful for identifying customers’ real opinions about a product or service.

Consumer: Study the consumer and determine who your consumers are, when and how they use a product, and how they feel about a particular brand and product.

Analysis tool: Consumer Insights (CI) research focuses on the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that drive buying decisions. It considers when, how and why consumers engage with a brand and the emotions it awakens. Brand teams work with CI to create the right product message aligned with consumer needs.

Channel: Understand your customers and the channels that will buy your products. They are the core of everything in the distribution model.

Analysis tool 1: Channel Segmentation is the division of channels into separate parts or sections, based on the qualities they have in common – such as products or service, customers and outlet space. By segmenting channels, you gain a better understanding of their product mix, service requirements, merchandising opportunities and value drivers.

Route-to-market Analysis Steps

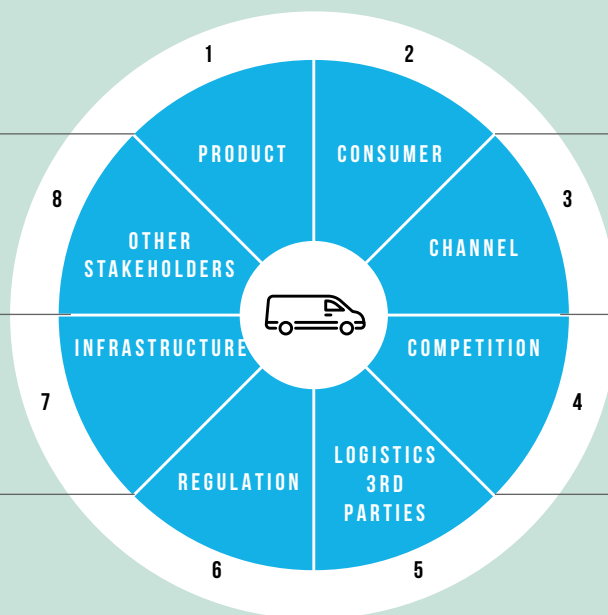
(Credit: Supply Chain Lab)

- Product(s) to service low income consumers

- Financial institutions
- Technology providers
- Non-profit organisations
- Government

- Technology and Infrastructure

- Regulatory factors



- Understand the consumer insights

- Channel landscape

- Competitors activities in the market

- Logistics 3rd parties such as transporters, warehouse and distributors and wholesalers

Analysis tool 2: A Customer Satisfaction survey or voice of the customer survey (VoC) provides insights into customer satisfaction with you and your competitor’s service. It is vital to understand what is important to the customers and the challenges they are facing in the market.

Competitors: Study competitors, their products, services, processes and market activities. Understand why they succeed or fail in the market.

Analysis tool: Benchmarking is the process of comparing your company against other companies using metrics or KPIs. Benchmarking is not limited to KPIs, but you can also compare business processes and

practices used in the market, such as distribution models.

➤ *Study how you may collaborate with other stakeholders*

Logistics and distribution landscape: Assess the logistic landscape, potential distribution partners and 3PLs. A 3PL is a third-party company that handles your supply chain tasks such as warehousing and last-mile delivery.

Analysis tool 1: A Pricing Map assesses the cost and revenue data of a group

of people – such as a specific channel, distribution partners, or consumers. The activity helps to determine different mark-ups in the supply chain and assists with making a business case for a route-to-market model.

Analysis tool 2: The Product Flow is the study of product movement through the supply chain, from the manufacturer or brand owner to the distributors, wholesalers and ultimately to outlets and consumers. It also looks at the product returns and product rejections, or reverse flow. It is used to gain an understanding of where outlets and channels purchase specific products or product categories from, and whether they purchase from multiple sources.

PHOTOS: ONYEMAECHI KESTER KANAYO VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; OLASUNKANMIARIYO VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; SERIEMINOU VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Regulatory environment: Understand the regulatory factors that could impact your route-to-market. In emerging markets, complex bureaucratic processes such as cumbersome customs and clearance procedures still remain a challenge.

Technology: Assess the technology infrastructure. In some developing countries, poor and unstable internet supply is a common problem, while the high cost of importing technology could be a barrier for companies looking to enter a market.

Infrastructure: Analyse how the country's infrastructure will impact your operation. Inadequate infrastructure

adds significant costs to doing business in many emerging markets, and roads, ports, railways, airports, telecoms and electricity supply help businesses and the economy run efficiently.

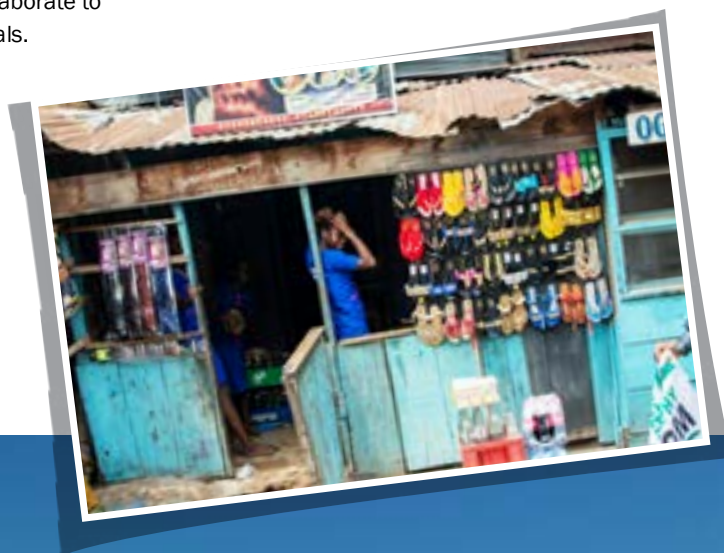
➤ Collaborate with the other stakeholders

External stakeholders: Study how you could collaborate with other external stakeholders in the country and market. Profit and purpose are converging, and companies, government, and non-governmental organisations can collaborate to align development goals.

Part Two of this article will cover aspects such as Distribution Models, Sales, Logistics, and Execution and Measurement. It will be published in Issue 2 2022. ■

Tielman Nieuwoudt is a consultant focused on supply chain, last-mile logistics, and informal retail service models in emerging markets. He has more than two decades of personal and professional experience – working, living and travelling across more than a hundred countries in Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere.

➤ Right: Understand your customers and the channels that will buy your products. Below: ▼ The requirements of modern retail are an important consideration, but many potential customers will use less formal channels



Revamped marketing strategy is giving **Airbnb** a big profit boost

Accommodation giant says more focus on brand building and PR, as well as a new ad campaign, has helped drive a post-lockdown comeback.

AFTER STRUGGLING DURING the lockdowns and travel bans that characterised the early stages of Covid-19, global accommodation giant Airbnb is making a comeback which it attributes, in part, to a revamp in its marketing strategy. This includes an increased focus on brand building and public relations.

The company's third-quarter financial results released in November showed soaring revenue and profits as people around the world began travelling again when restrictions and lockdowns eased.

While pent-up consumer demand for travel products is clearly one of the drivers for Airbnb's significant uptick in performance, CEO Brian Chesky has pointed out that a change to the way in which it does its marketing has also made a significant difference.

"The pandemic has led to a revolution in how we live, work and travel and we're constantly innovating to meet this new way of travelling and living," he commented during his third-quarter results presentation.

THE FOCUS IS ON HIGH MARKETING EFFICIENCY

"We remain focused on making progress towards achieving our long-term profitability goals through reduced variable costs, high marketing efficiency and tightly managed fixed expenses."

The company highlighted the importance of the launch of its first large-scale marketing campaign in five years – called 'Made by Hosts' – at the beginning of 2021. It said business in the countries where the campaign ran was "significantly ahead of non-campaign countries".

Industry publication *Marketing Week* reported: "The brand campaign runs in countries including the UK, US, France and Canada across TV and digital, and came as the business declared it would be making a permanent cut to its overall marketing investment, having noted that slashing spend during Covid had little impact on traffic."

In May 2021, Chesky noted that 90% of traffic to Airbnb's digital platform was either unpaid or direct and that traffic levels had remained similar to 2019, despite the company cutting overall marketing spend by half.

AIRBNB NAME HAS BECOME BOTH A NOUN AND A VERB

"We take a very different approach to sales and marketing than our competition," he explained. "PR, in addition to word of mouth, is the thing that built our brand over the last 10 years. And because of that, Airbnb

really is a noun and a verb used all over the world."

Chesky said Airbnb now considered the role of marketing as "education" and not "to buy customers".

Among the changes in post-lockdown consumer habits that the company wants to capitalise on is the potential for longer stays at its properties. It sees opportunity in long stays of 28 days or more, now that so many high-spending professional people are able to work remotely.

Business travel, though, is unlikely to ever reach previous levels again, Chesky warned in May during a round of media interviews. ■

Editor's note: A version of this article first appeared in the Latest News section of the [African Marketing Confederation website](#). Visit the website daily for marketing news updates from Africa and around the world.

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