

Youth marketers, here's why traditional advertising doesn't cut it anymore...

 By [Antoinette Pombo](#)

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If you still believe that paying hundreds of thousands of rands for billboard advertising is getting the job done, do the following experiment...

The next time you have to drive your teenagers and their friends to their rugby, soccer or netball games on the other side of town, load them into the car and don't say anything. Just observe their behaviour during the drive and take note of how many billboards and other advertising you pass on the way there.

When you get to your destination, stop the car and ask the teens what advertising they saw on the way. Guaranteed, their answer will be, "Advertising? What advertising!?"

The fact is, traditional advertising goes unnoticed by the youth, except for those rare occasions when it's VERY cleverly done. "Teenagers today have shorter, sharper and different attention spans to when we were growing up. They also have incredibly sophisticated filtering techniques." Says Jane Lyne-Kritzinger, YDx's Managing Director.

According to Andrea Kraushaar, Research and Insights Director at Youth Dynamix (YDx), "Teenagers are extremely busy. They're involved in anything from four to 12 extra mural or sport activities per week and multitask nearly 48 hours' worth of tasks into a 24-hour day".

There's a misconception and misdirection of advertising...

Often you hear the words 'digital revolution' mentioned in marketing articles and seminars. But the truth is, there is no digital revolution. New forms of technology have been launched every year, for decades since the inception of the internet. The Dot.Com revolution ended back in the year 2000.

The fact that people spend more and more time on their cellphones, tablets, laptops and iPads is the reason marketers mistakenly think we're undergoing a digital revolution.

In reality, what's REALLY happening is a Consumer Revolution! The power has shifted from marketers, advertisers and brand managers to the young consumer.

This isn't just a debate on semantics, let me explain...

There are catastrophic consequences for marketers stuck in traditional advertising mode!

The biggest mistake marketers and advertisers can make is to simply take their traditional content and put it into digital channels. It doesn't work! This is because building your brand in this new youth-led marketplace requires a brand new way of communicating with your target market.

It's no longer effective to just communicate a brand or product message. Today, your marketing and advertising has to provide value. Purpose-driven advertising BLENDS into the lives of this new kind of empowered young consumer we're all racing to understand and win over.

To get a piece of their mindshare, you must find ways to become a valuable part of your consumer's daily routine instead of trying to steal their attention for a few seconds of their extremely fast-paced and cluttered day.

How to ensure your young target market takes note of your advertising

- Market research has become even more important in today's marketplace. Collaborate with your consumers to find out what they want and then design your products and marketing messages around them. Make the whole package RELEVANT to your target market.
 - Don't disguise messages as valuable content. Modern consumers have a knack for picking up pretentious brands.
 - Tell a story in your advertising message. This is the only form of messaging that has survived from the very beginning of advertising and is still very effective if it's done well.
 - "Brands that create mystery by communicating something unique or mysterious about their USP/brand DNA allow youth consumers to form emotional connections with the brand." Says Andrea Kraushaar.
 - Connect with your target market in an interactive way. One directional messaging is ineffective in this day and age.
 - "Communication should be unexpected, unpredictable, original and authentic." Adds Kraushaar.
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- Finally, Andrea Kraushaar points out: "The most trusted form of advertising for youth is word-of-mouth according to YDx Trax research. Ensure your brand advertising encourages youth to talk about your brand/brand message and spread the word to their peers."

If you need help understanding your target market better and creating effective marketing that will bring results for your brand, contact [Youth Dynamix](#), a specialist youth and family marketing and research agency.

ABOUT ANTOINETTE POMBO

Antoinette is passionate about result-driven marketing, copywriting and powerful content! She writes for Youth Dynamix, a youth & family specialist research and marketing agency. To activate your brand in the youth market, contact Antoinette.Pombo@YDx.co.za or call 071 551 8200.

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