

Results from Agency Scope UK 2018/2019 indicate concerns with consumers and the changing digital environment

 By Johanna McDowell

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With the completion of the third edition of Agency Scope UK 2018/2019, a summary of 15 key trends and 10 conclusions in the UK from the highest-level decision-makers in marketing, communications, advertising, digital, media and procurement enable us to note where South Africa stands in comparison.



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The analysis shows differences between the challenges identified for marketers and those identified for agencies. Some 46.7% of marketers see the biggest challenge for their company is to provide ROI, effectiveness, results.



Key findings from Agency Scope UK 2018/2019

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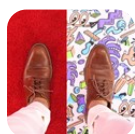
Growing digital spend

For media agencies, cognisance must be taken of the fact that 40.3% of marketers suggest the media agencies will have to improve the honesty and transparency of their remuneration; and creative agencies should note that 27.3% of marketers believe their biggest challenge is innovation and delivering bigger creative ideas.

This information is merely a trailer to the real picture: Digital spend by UK marketers is now 37.8% of budget. The impact of the various digital platforms and services has grown and will continue to do so. Marketers and agencies should be keeping technology and techniques firmly on their radar as tools to ensure client's needs are met.

While many marketers now opt for the integrated agency that provides advertising, digital, BTL, media, events and PR, digital scores of 97.4% in importance for UK marketers and 95.5% among South African executives, who place advertising only slightly higher at 98.5%.

It's clear, then, that local marketing bosses are growing their digital spend.



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Consumers are now the linchpin in brand strategy, being better informed than ever and having new habits, thanks largely to technology and the choice it brings. It must be noted that consumer knowledge stood at 18% in 2015, a full 20.3% lower than today.

Where digital is concerned, 23.4% of marketing executives noted that a creative agency's understanding of different communication platforms and channels is number three on their list, followed by digital expertise and offering at 19.5 %.

With media agencies, understanding of different communication platforms and channels was rated fourth on marketers' lists at 20.9%, up from 16.8% in 2015.



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There's no doubt digital has grown as a marketing tool, but it also appears to have created some flux.

Media agencies are required to provide services that may not have even existed in 2015 – 19.4% of Agency Scope respondents note the importance of tools, measurement, data employed by media agencies; 17.9% highlight differentiation, reinvention, transformation, new players; and 14.9% seek media buying programmatics, automation.

None of these categories existed in 2015, which highlights the digital evolution of the market and, most notably, the real impact of digital transformation.

Vital for growth and resilience and in years to come, the Agency Scope study will slant more towards digital as a driver of change and success for marketers and agencies.

ABOUT JOHANNA MCDOWELL

MD of the Independent Agency Search and Selection Company (IAS), and partner in Scopen Africa, with a background that includes being on both the agency and the client side of the fence, Johanna McDowell is well-placed to offer commentary on marketing and advertising in the South African and international contexts. She built her career in marketing and advertising since 1974, holding directorship in both SA and British advertising agencies. She was MD of Grey Phillips Advertising in 1988.

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