

Purpose-driven marketing

The IAB SA hosted its 27th insight event on 23 June. Featuring host Tshegofatso Phetlhe, creative director at VMLY&R, speakers included: Marnus Kruger, chief operating officer at Think Wifi, Camilla Clerke, executive creative director Ogilvy Cape Town, Nadia Mohamed, marketing director at Mondelez and Lara Sidersky, category lead Chocolate SSA, Mondelez.



Nadia Mohamed, Camilla Clerke, Lara Sidersky and Marnus Kruger

In this fifth episode of the year, the speakers addressed how they use purpose-driven marketing to make a significant change. Kruger specifically focused on uplifting communities through closing the digital divide, Clerke focused on the responsibility of big brands aligning with causes to create powerful purpose work and Mohamed and Sidersky (Mondelez) focused on the importance of brands standing for something. The episode as a whole looked at how purpose-driven marketing is key to connecting with communities and taking a stand against issues that matter.

The event was specifically relevant to all marketers, advertisers, publishers and agencies who want to understand how to use purpose-driven marketing to its full potential. Here, some of the speakers shared insights into their talking points and key messages we could take away...

You can watch the full episode below this article

What was the key theme or message of your talk?

Kruger: Advertising with a purpose: Uplifting underserved communities by closing the digital divide while giving brands saliency in the township economy.

Clerke: Our brands have a responsibility to solve problems and create behaviour change in South Africa.

Mondelez: We are in an environment where brands need to stand for something in order to be counted. Where modern consumers choose to engage brands that reflect their values and use the 'power of their wallet' to support brands that value more than simply their bottom line. Adopting a purpose-driven marketing approach isn't a nice to have or a 'tick box' item. Rather, it's an opportunity to establish an authentic connection with your audience, remaining relevant in a constantly changing world while driving long-term impact and loyalty. To succeed in this environment you need genuine belief in your purpose and long-term commitment to go the stretch – entrenched at all levels of your organisation.

■ ***Talk us through some of the key insights that determined which changes, updates, constants will be happening in the digital advertising industry in 2021.***

Kruger: In the WiFi Advertising space, we find that captive portals create a journey for audiences that give brands exclusive attention before breaking out to the internet. Change is inevitable, the current pandemic has shifted and already migrating audiences more online than ever before. Brands are having to do more to earn brand trust and advocacy in the market. Audiences are looking beyond the end product or service and looking more to how much brands care about them.

Clerke:

- Consumers value brands that make a difference: brands that align with causes, stand for more and aren't afraid to have a point of view are chosen by the consumer – even at a premium price. We can expect to see more meaning and less product pushing in the future.
- Purpose marketing must become part of the brand values and DNA: consumers see right through brands that align with causes just to look good. They want to know that the brand is authentic in their approach, which means the focus is less on the big brand ad, and more on the ongoing social narrative.
- Brands have the ability to add value in new and innovative ways: utility marketing is sure to rise as brands create digital products and solutions that aid people on a daily basis. From WhatsApp that has become a tool to report gender-based violence to Facebook Messenger that can counsel a child who is being bullied, purpose marketing can now become purpose utility.

Mondelez: According to trend expert Dion Chang 'good washing' has become a term to look out for – the perception that a brand is doing good when in reality it isn't. In order to not get tainted with that brush, which can do irrevocable damage to a brand, a purpose-led marketing approach needs to focus on measurable outcomes affecting real impact. Brands need to hold themselves accountable to meeting their commitments and fluid enough to adapt their approach as demanded by the environment.

Use the power of your brand and platforms to focus on areas where you can create the most impact rather than tackling huge societal issues, where your efforts may not have much effect.

Affecting real change takes time, brands that take on a purpose-led approach for a quick once-off campaign often come across as 'tone deaf'. Adopting a purpose-led approach implies a long-term commitment of resources and time and a genuine desire to affect the environment around us.

■ ***What one main call to action would you advise your fellow industry colleagues at this time (in the context of your talk) to help companies who are looking to beat the benchmark in digital advertising and create work that exceeds business goals?***

Kruger: Serve your audience and they will support you. In the online advertising space today we need to look beyond the end report stats if you want to stay relevant and have a significant impact on your audience. What are you as a brand

doing to uplift, support and positively impact your audiences?

Clerke: If the work is provocative, alluring and worthy, everything else will sort itself out. Worry about the work, first.

Mondelez: Define your brand purpose from a place of authenticity. Brands can't be everything to everyone and they can take on every cause or societal challenge that comes their way. Once you establish what your brand truly stands for you can then comfortably put your purpose into action with credibility.

■ **Please share one key learning from 2020 that you have personally (or professionally) taken on board, that you believe will assist others to navigate the future of work as we (are getting to) know it.**

Kruger: Collaboration in an online space, especially since most of us have been working from home is key, you cannot do good work alone, it takes a passionate team to get things done.

Clerke: Consistency is key. Consistency doesn't mean a lack of creativity - it means that we should develop a platform we love and keep throwing great creative ideas at it until it resonates with the audience who start to trust it. People need consistency and trusting relationships now more than ever.

Mondelez: Actioning a brand's purpose can be a costly, time-consuming endeavour, especially in a continuously changing environment. The pandemic highlighted this and highlighted the need to be adaptable and fluid in your approaching shift and respond to changing needs and demands of our audience as they happen.

The IAB SA has taken its Insight Series online to provide 60 minutes of insights, featuring fellow and future industry leaders, on subjects selected by IAB members and the industry at large to make better digital decisions. Episode 27 is brought to you in partnership with Everlytic, Gumtree and Bizcommunity. The 2021 IAB Insight Series is also approved for 2 CPD points at CMSA-level under marketing, by the Marketing Association of South Africa. To attend our next episode on Integrating Offline and Online Digital Marketing on 22 July 2021, you can register for free [here](#). Episode 28 is open to the full industry to attend.