

Engaging with a digital-first generation

By  Beverley Klein

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During the second day of the MRMW conference in Cape Town, the focus was on millennials and some of the research being done to conduct the trends on social media.



Image via [123RF](#)

Andiswe Mazibuko-Ntholeng, Former Brand and Customer Manager at MSD, spoke on the rise of millennials and how marketers need to rethink their strategies to reach the first digital generation. Millennials are hyper-stimulated, environmentally and socially aware, and technology is always convenient and open.

According to statistics:

- 80% want brands to entertain them
- 40% want to participate with brands
- 70% give feedback after good or bad brand experience

This last factor is incredibly important in today's age, as millennials will usually take to social media to express a negative experience with a brand. So brands need to make sure their relationship with consumers is in tip-top condition, from call centres to retail staff.

Seeing as the average millennial will spend approximately 18 hours a day consuming media, it becomes more difficult for brands to stand out from the crowd. But the brands they look for are the ones that are able to add value to their lives, or the lives of others (remember they're very socially aware). It would be wise for brands to create a two-way conversation between the brand and consumer and allow user to feel as though they're talking to a face, not a logo.

Another key factor for brands is to keep a finger on trends and, through that avenue, share and engage with millennials. Brands that embrace digital and bring value to their consumers' lives will come out on top - create apps, stick to your brand blueprint and be brilliant about the basics.

Research for the ages

The next two speakers mainly spoke on market research and conducting research. Alistair Hill, Co-Founder of On Device Research, gave an in-depth view on mobile surveys with some interesting outcomes - after all, On Device Research has done over 30 million surveys in over 90 countries.

He states that with mobile, shorter is better. Users tend to start fading out towards the end of a long survey and they might not be putting as much thought into their answers as they were at the beginning. Hill says that a complex survey doesn't need to be long, it just needs to be smart, and short surveys work better across the board for LSMs.

Tim Shier, CEO of Meta Insights, then gave the crowd an energetic display of some of the big data research being done on local trends. With the high volume of data there is now, Shier says it becomes problematic to keep up with the all data, and consumers are redefining themselves on a daily basis.

When we look at the stats:

- 72% of SA have access to a mobile device
- 97% of households have access to a mobile device
- 85% have access to Twitter on mobile in SA
- 80% have access to Facebook on mobile in SA

Those are pretty high statistics, and brands need to tap into this mobile generation.

Shier remarks on four features to take into account when looking into social insights:

- Monitor - keep track on what people are saying digitally
- Measure - what are the high level metrics?
- Manage - manage the insights
- Measure - measure these insights

We looked into some of the trends on social media and by far the [#feesmustfall initiative](#) has been the biggest trend in the last few years.

Some brands are already tapping into these trends, but it has to be done in a way where it doesn't seem as though they're feeding off of powerful initiatives that can make a change. Strategies have never been more important as brands try engage with a digital generation.

ABOUT BEVERLEY KLEIN

Beverley Klein is the editor of the Marketing Media South Africa section on Bizcommunity.com. With a background in journalism and historical studies, she's dived into the world of industry news, curating content, writing and interviewing thought leaders. She's often spotted in a forest on the weekend and rarely seen without a camera. Follow @BevCPT.

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