

Influence marketing - Ogilvy SA enters the fray

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Ogilvy South Africa has launched its own influence marketing division, entitled *InfluenceO*, with Dylan Joubert at the helm.



Dylan Joubert appointed head of influence marketing for Ogilvy South Africa

InfluenceO will assist clients in making the most of this new channel as part of their marketing mix and will offer an end-to-end, full service and integrated approach that does not *only* focus on identifying influencers as so many other platforms do, but develops strategic and creative answers to brand briefs.

Ogilvy says Covid-19 has shown the power of influencers during the crisis and its South African division will have direct access to the agency's global network.

Head of *InfluenceO*, Dylan Joubert, says it has never been more important to be agile, especially in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. "The winners will be the brands who see the opportunities to partner with influencers in strategic and creative ways in order to land their message – especially in a time of social distancing and economic recovery," he says.

Since March, this trend has gone into overdrive with brands increasingly looking for innovative ways to reach consumers. Advertising budgets in past recessions were often slashed far beyond actual GDP losses, suggesting a tendency for marketers to overreact to economic hardship.

Joubert observes that globally Ogilvy has seen a shift in the influencer landscape away from social reach, or vanity engagement metrics, toward a focus on driving real long-term brand results.

Influencer activations can increase ROI by 35%

Global lead for influence marketing at Ogilvy, Rahul Titus, says influencer marketing offers cost efficiencies in terms of distribution and production.

“In fact, as we find many markets staring down a potential recession, brands are needing to prove that every penny in their marketing budget is worth the investment. Which, in turn, means that influencer activations are rightfully coming under further scrutiny to prove their ROI. Our data shows that when influence is added to the mix we increase ROI by up to 35%.”

Data and analytics

InfluenceO will be heavily driven by data and metrics says Joubert. A key focus will be identifying the correct influencer for a client who best suits the brand values and strategy. “This identification process then goes deeper as we look at their audience, location, topics, engagement rates, true reach, brand portfolio and potential risk factors,” says Joubert.

Ogilvy’s technology stack assists in monitoring performance using a wide range of metrics to measure the ROI.

Influencers vary in age, expertise and background.

“This could include a celebrity with a large fan base or an expert in a particular field who is an authoritative voice on the subject. Many media personalities are influencers as are sports people, bloggers and vloggers. The key is extracting value for our clients by partnering with the right influencers,” he says.

Snapshot of the influencer landscape

The 2020 SA Social Media Landscape Report shows the increasing power of social media platforms, especially to the new kid on the block, TikTok.

According to the report there are an estimated 24 million Facebook users in South Africa, 7.7 million on LinkedIn, more than nine million on Twitter and Instagram. Rapidly closing the gap on its competitors is TikTok with approximately six million account holders.

Globally influencer marketing has surpassed print marketing and it has ROI rates 11 times greater than online advertising according to The Influencer Marketing Hub.

In South Africa, our influencer landscape is dominated by 18–34-year-olds, saying that their purchase decisions have been swayed by influencers on social media by up to 60%.

The rise in Influencer Marketing goes hand-in-hand with social commerce

The maturation of social media and online shopping is leading to the rise of influencer-led social commerce, finally bridging the gap between customers and sellers, and creating a new way to go direct to consumers through social platforms.

According to a global survey undertaken by EY, 42% of consumers believe the way they shop will fundamentally change during and after Covid-19 with multiple sources forecasting that social commerce will contribute 5-7% to global retail sales by 2022.

Ogilvy says it sees *InfluenceO* helping brands to navigate these changes through influence-led campaigns, removing the stress and anxieties as much as possible, as businesses and consumers figure out just exactly how life will change post the virus.

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