

Kellman, Levin partner to launch new influencer marketing agency

Arye Kellman from Tbo Touch's Touch HD and Jason Levin from Elevation Holdings have partnered to start a new agency that will use influencer marketing (social media content, influencers, celebrities and trendsetters, but also 'traditional' media and experiential marketing) to build real connections with digitally-driven audiences and mavens...

CCO Arye Kellman describes the new agency as a team of "influence architects that create magnetic content and then amplify it like wildfire. We are the unfair advantage."

"But we also understand that businesses and brands now need to move at the speed of culture," adds co-founder Jason Levin, who is helping lead the business as a director. "Tilt is baggage-free, so we're sharp, hungry and agile. We're building a specialised, highly creative agency that is also quick and cost-effective: something clients are telling us they can't find."

Experiential and activation expertise will be provided by partner, Funeka Peppeta through Mood Mechanics, and media sales veteran, Tanya Surat, has also joined Tilt on the account management and business development side.



Levin and Kellman knew each other from the Johannesburg marketing circuit, and Kellman approached Levin's company, Elevation Holdings, for some startup advice. When they sat down to iron out the offering, and to try name it, they agreed that the pay-per-post model that, in this space, is widespread but ineffective, was a no-go.

"I wanted to bottle and sell the art and science of using personalities and social media to create disproportionate gains for brands in a way that hasn't been done. But also to push for millennial and early adopter views to be more widely and positively heard," says Kellman.

On the name, Levin explains: "At one point I was talking about how I loved arcades and pinball as a kid, and mentioned 'tilt', meaning when you shove the machine to get the ball to do something advantageous but against the rules. Arye was completely struck by it, and it was a done deal. Well, until we tried to get hold of the domain: tilt.co.za. That's a story on its own, but we succeeded."

Kellman says digital and social media are very much alive and kicking: "Even in South Africa, digital and social media are not the next frontier. They're the now. We have 15-million active social users. The organisations that win in this landscape will be the ones that tilt well-worn marketing recipes and move towards a consumer-led approach. Those conversations now shape the fortunes of brands, and if you get it right, they can yield amazing consumer response."

The marketing tool to watch in 2017

The discipline of influencer marketing is not bleeding edge, but is relatively new, and is already becoming a critical tool for progressive local and international marketers. AdAge and AdWeek, amongst others, have punted it as the marketing tool to watch in 2017, with 84% of US marketers planning to deploy at least one such campaign this year.

Kellman, in his position as creative director at both CliffCentral.com and Touch HD has built strong credentials in concept-led influencer marketing for many high flyer brands, including Nando's, Virgin Atlantic, Kellogg's and FNB. And his #Kellman20 programme, launched in June 2016, was a social media hit driven by 20 local and international ambassadors who created written, video and podcast content. It achieved over 20-million social media impressions in less than 12 hours, and is on track for greater success this year. #MZ17 which was sponsored by Nando's achieved similarly outstanding results in early-2017.

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