

Consumer trust is based on advertiser investment, not expenditure

 By [Claudelle Naidoo](#)

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The media and marketing industry in South Africa is at a crossroads at the moment - the big question being asked from brands/spenders is "How can I get the most reach for my buck?", while media owners are trying to show the best value for money to its clients.

Retaining the consumer

I guess the proof is in the pudding - "the consumer" will not pay attention to messages they don't trust, so you will get your reach but not actual consumer attention if they don't trust your brand. While consumer confidence will fluctuate in line with income and consumer spending will change in line with lifestyle and lifestage, consumer trust in a brand will not change unless something really drastic happens from a "brand messaging/positioning" point of view.

Based on this trust, if a brand spends now and only sees the targeted consumer buying the product a year later - you were building trust, and if you instantly got a consumer buying into your brand - you're retaining your consumer.

A consumer who "trusts" a brand will keep the knowledge gained through advertising and this is an investment for any brand - not an expenditure. What the industry does not really talk about is that consumer trust stems from recommendations and opinions and not really advertising. Advertising or content marketing is the "next big thing" the "trend watcher" that keeps ahead of the world and talks to the market continuously to maintain and build consumer engagement.

Addressing consumer needs

To build trust, a brand has to be doing the right thing in addressing consumer needs and problems to get them not only using the brand but talking about it positively too. Advertising through great content to consumers will always be relevant irrespective of what the platform is and how much the media landscape is changing. However, it is imperative for brands to be entertaining and not just "story-tell" but "act it out" by addressing problems and solving it.

In this fast changing consumer landscape it has also become important for brands and media platforms to "find their purpose" and make sure to use it to engage with the market. One of the best ways to unpack "the purpose" is by using rich data to drive advertising content into becoming "insights impersonators".

No matter how much the landscape changes, advertising will always be relevant if used in the right context - but only if it's seen as an investment - which it is, and not as an expense.

ABOUT CLAUDELLE NAIDOO

Claudelle Naidoo is an accomplished Marketing, Consumer & Media Research Specialist with 13 years of experience working across multi-million rand portfolios within organisations such as Nielsen SA, Media 24, Caxton, and Kagiso Media. Currently, Claudelle heads up MediaCom's Analytics & Insights division, where she focuses on using technology and data modelling exercises to develop and execute insights that assist businesses in understanding the impact of their sales and marketing initiatives.

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