

Where to from here?

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Andrew Ackah, CEO of [dentsu Ghana](#), is ready to aggressively pursue new business opportunities and draw inspiration from his team as they approach uncertain times.



What are the priorities for your business or region?

It is critical that we harness the opportunities within the entire value chain of marketing communications. We have media and creatives and we need to make sure we are leveraging every opportunity within those areas.

Secondly, excellent client service by both leadership and client-facing account teams. Everyone must lead appropriately within the value chain to service our clients, who will demand a lot from us in 2021. There's a growing trend to demand more value for less, so we need to understand client needs, get closer to them, and be there for them so that we retain current clients and win new ones. To the latter point, we need to aggressively pursue new business opportunities.

Additionally, we will be looking at diversity with a particular focus on female representation in our business – not just in terms of numbers, but in positions of leadership too. It's important to create conditions that attract women to the business. Already, at Carat Ghana, we have women leading and that is something we will continue to encourage. Men need not be concerned. In Ghana, diversity has more to do with gender balance than favouring one sex over another.

What are the anticipated challenges?

Covid-19 is going to be a factor in our lives for a while since vaccine roll-out on the African continent is still at least six months away. Studies show that the pandemic has had a negative impact on people – particularly when it comes to mental wellbeing – because they've been deprived of human touch. The good thing, however, is that it has fast tracked the e-commerce journey.

Buying and doing business online has skyrocketed, which means clients will require innovation from agencies to make sure that every strategy is purposeful and has a viable e-commerce component. It is no longer just about creating awareness; brands need to apply a strategic thinking process that allows them to close a deal within the entire consumer journey. In

simple terms, clients will be looking for amazing strategies filled with great innovation that is purposeful.

It is exciting to note that our new vision, “An Invitation to the Never Before”, positions us to take up these challenges.

Teams need to keep abreast of digital innovations, which iProspect will lead. Staff should also be encouraged to think digital and to upgrade their knowledge on the whole digital ecosystem. Our e-learning portal, [Skill Academy](#), is a great staff resource.

Interestingly, Covid-19 has brought us closer together. Although we have always had a free-flowing and fluid relationship within the business, Covid-19 has revealed that we really care about each other and are ready to support each other. This invaluable experience has built trust among the team and I believe it will be one of our greatest strengths going into 2021.

What consumer or user trends are you using to inform your thinking?

There's no denying that Covid-19 has influenced consumer shopping behaviour. With people avoiding public places, the safest option is online. This has accelerated the [expansion of e-commerce](#) for companies, customers and products. It has provided customers with access to a significant number of products and services from the convenience and safety of their homes and has enabled businesses to continue to operate in spite of contact restrictions and other confinement measures. Online purchasing trends adopted during the pandemic may see permanent adoption.

Higher rates of e-commerce and BOPIS (buy online, pick up in-store) may be the new abnormal, [Adobe data indicates](#).

How will you combine new and old ways of working?

One of the marks of true leadership is allowing your team to give input on how to move the business forward. Listening to the thoughts and ideas from the leadership team and having the willingness to take calculated risks is a strategy that can be applied to every situation and challenge we might encounter in the year ahead.

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