

The Customer Innovation Lab: The age of technology

 By [Beverley Klein](#)

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Like a 90s kid walking into the new hippest arcade - that's how I felt walking into Ogilvy's Customer Innovation Lab. Kitted out with the latest technology, the agency is looking to introduce the modern digital world to its clients and campaigns.

From 3D printers, virtual reality headsets and hand gesture technology to innovative equipment for educational and safety purposes, the Lab is sure to produce some excellent work in the future.

The event involved a tour through the lab and a chance to play with all the gadgets and technology generally reserved for big agencies overseas.

Some of the amazing technology included a way to play the piano by tapping on oranges, you read right, oranges! Another involved a robot which could draw octagon shapes resulting in beautiful geometric shapes.

“ Amazing gesture technology at the Customer Innovation Lab [@OgilvyCT pic.twitter.com/JV5Pvt0RrY](#)—

[Bizcommunity.com \(@Bizcommunity\)](#) [April 12, 2016](#) ”

But the lab isn't just to be wowed by these impressive gadgets, it's also doing important work by creating technology that is easy to understand for kids, bringing them into the world of robotics and science, as well as safety uses, with fire detectors being installed in homes in informal settlements to alert them if there's a fire in the area.

Of course virtual reality will always be the one thing people will make a beeline to try. With the release of the Oculus headset and others like the Samsung Gear and Google Cardboard, Ogilvy have been using virtual reality for a few clients already, and we had the chance to view two case studies proving the excitement and reach new technology has on consumers.

Barloworld

[Barloworld Equipment Virtual Reality](#) from [Creative Awards](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Puma

[Puma-R698-Bookmarks-2015](#) from [Creative Awards](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Located at the Gloop@Ogilvy office space in De Waterkant, Ben Evans, managing director of the digital portfolio at O&M says: “The Lab is a space where emerging technologies and customer insights intersect, and its purpose is two-fold. To inspire creative use of technology and to design truly effective experiences.

“To enable technology to be used creatively, we must inspire through interaction – encouraging exploration and play. It’s only through interaction that we can unlock the creative potential of technology for our clients and their customers. The Lab allows us to ‘play’, and this playful exploration and experimentation provides the perfect climate for genuine innovation.

“Secondly, to design a truly effective experience we must ensure that real customers actively participate in its design. They must co-author the experience for it to be truly relevant.

“It’s here where we can help our teams and clients actively explore the ‘art of the impossible’ through real-world interaction.”

Technology for marketing

The usability lab focuses on gaining insight into how people use a website. Using eye-tracking technology you can visually see where your viewers are looking at first and how often their eyes move to certain areas of a site.

Usability testing is a major part of a website's success these days with customers often getting frustrated by a site's functionality and simply leaving to find a simpler process.



We've all watched the emergence of new technology, from the Nokia 3310 to the Apple iPhone 6S, technology has become a part of our daily lives. [Virtual reality](#) is a key force towards new and exciting marketing campaigns, while drones are releasing footage of the world we've never seen before.

Regardless of whether technology is here to disrupt customers or to educate them, agencies need to embrace it, learn from it and share it with their consumers.

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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