Activating on African soil: the time is now

By Stephan Botha , issued by Provantage   26 Jul 2016

Stephan Botha of ProActive™ outlines the reasons why FMCG brands wanting to expand business in Africa can benefit hugely from activations.

For manufacturers wanting to build brands on African soil, now is the time! Whether you are of the opinion that the region is headed into a period of sustained growth, or that tougher trading conditions lie ahead, the reasons to engage your target audiences should not vary.

During prosperous times, brands should 'ride the wave' and market their wares. Equally, and perhaps even more importantly, during a downturn, brands risk losing market share if they are not present and active.

According to Kantar WorldPanel Trend Report 2016, in order to be heard above the clutter, the time to activate your brand is now. This holds true particularly within FMCG, where African consumers are spending more than ever on this sector, with the continent presenting one of the fastest growing regions for FMCG globally.

According to the report, at the current rate of growth, emerging markets will account for more than half of global FMCG sales. Also, annual spending growth in Africa is expected to increase at a faster rate than it is globally. As mentioned, African consumers are spending more than ever on FMCG. Particular growth spots across the continent include: Ghana (+29,4%), Kenya (+9,3%), and Nigeria (+5,2%). It is also important to note that where and how people shop is changing. In Kenya, for example, modern trade holds a 54% value market share, compared to 46% traditional trade, which is significant in terms of strategy around activations campaigns.

No matter how far a brand's budget can stretch, it is important to note that activations play an important role in educating and informing consumers and in keeping brands top of mind. So before you embark on a marketing strategy, consider how well your activations agency understands the market. Consumer purchasing behaviour can be affected by any number of influences. However, if we distil all the research available on what drives consumer behaviour, and how agencies strategize campaigns, we should be able to get the answer to one simple question. Do they understand consumer behaviour? Do they understand, and critically so, how often, where and when they shop?

As in South Africa where activating within a formal trading environment is completely different from how a campaign should be implemented within the informal market, so too are the variances in other countries on the continent. No two countries are the same. In fact, this statement can be dissected even further because no two regions are the same. And in order to implement activations campaigns that truly resonate with the target audience, that speaks to them quite literally in their own language and dialect, that speaks to their needs and values, we do whatever it takes.

We have access to extensive research on, among other things, consumer behaviour undertaken in-house and in conjunction with recognised research houses. We take the time to completely understand the client's objectives. We develop a strategy to create the most effective, seamless campaign that will meet and even surpass set objectives. Furthermore, we understand that economically times are tough and that brands require not only campaigns that engage, but engage effectively and provide a measurable and quantifiable return on investment, irrespective of the size of budget allocation.

Research from The World Bank shows that while growth has slowed, it remains one of the fastest growing regions. Clearly then Africa continues to be ripe for the picking. Consumers on the continent are open to brand messaging and enjoy

engaging with brands if what they offer are campaigns that are entertaining, informative and relevant. This is good news for smaller brands whose budgets don't stretch to above-the-line advertising. These brands find success through road shows, in-store promotions, activation teams and other forms of activations.

Value-add is another key factor in keeping a brand top of mind, so too is an annual promotional calendar. Another very important component to any campaign is timing. If the timing is wrong, it will fall flat with the net effect that budgets are not being spent efficiently.

In a very cluttered marketing environment, it is imperative that your brand rises above and shouts louder than the rest. More importantly however, is that your brand delivers a measurable result to the bottom line. This is only achieved through strategically and effectively implemented campaigns, based on well researched insights.

Don't allow your brand to go blindly into the market. Make sure that your activations agency has an in-depth knowledge of region specific consumer trends, especially if you're talking FMCG.

ProActive ™ Connect. Engage. Convert.

For more information on how ProActive™ can activate your brand in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia, Angola, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Rwanda, contact Stephan Botha on 0861 776 826 or sb@provantage.co.za or go to www.provantage.co.za or follow [@ProvantageSA](https://twitter.com/ProvantageSA).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephan Botha is Business Development Manager of ProActive.

- **Provantage launches SA's first real-time, place-based media audience measurement tool – Protrack** 30 Apr 2024
- **Provantage and T+W launch Ant Lion - A full service digital content agency** 10 Apr 2024
- **Outsurance announces partnership with South African Schools Netball** 3 Apr 2024
- **Cape Town International Airport makes the top 3 in the world – and big brands are noticing** 6 Mar 2024
- **Outdoor Network's rotating digital billboard network goes national, maximising ROI for advertisers** 5 Mar 2024

Provantage

Provantage is one of the largest and most innovative end-to-end integrated marketing solutions and media businesses in Africa, extended over multiple key consumer touchpoints and covering a range of environments and audience segments.

Profile | News | Contact | RSS Feed

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com