

You know me better than I know myself...

By [Molly Schlinger](#), issued by [TLC Worldwide Africa](#)

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There are over seven billion people in the world today, and more than 52 million of those are in South Africa alone. Chances are they aren't all interested in the exact same thing.



Enter demographics, target audiences, really expensive database memberships - and tailored experiential promotions.

The time for standard product-based rewards is [nearing an end](#) as more humanised, emotionally connected incentives and consumer engagement rises to the fore. Through careful market research and an understanding of specific demographics, brands now have the ability to truly get to know their consumers; what they like, what they do, what they want-and act accordingly. It opens the door for brands to connect on the emotional level humans crave so much. Now it's just a matter of who actually walks in that open door.

Although I was thrilled to receive another plastic keychain when I signed up for a new checking account recently, it made me realise that we as consumers are demanding more from the brands we love and trust and, even more so now, the ones we don't know yet. When Edelman Berland surveyed some 4,000 people, it found that 75% said they want brands to "provide them with the opportunity for more life experiences."

Now here's where it gets a little tricky. Consumers want new experiences, just like brands and experience providers want new consumers. Right about now you're probably expecting me to quote the party line and say that we can't all win. And this is where you'll be wrong.

It takes lots of blood, lots of sweat, and years, but creating a business model in which everyone gets what they want is possible, and quite easy at that. It all boils down to a simple equation: partnering up with all of the experience providers like paintball venues, independent beauty salons, golf courses, and dance studios that adore the free traffic, and connecting them with the brands looking to captivate the same audience. A match made in marketing heaven.

Then it's up to the brands and their teams of market research analysts to understand their consumers, to get to know them on a first name basis, find out exactly what they like to do, and serve it up to them on a silver platter, or POS leaflet, dedicated micro site, shelf talker, or on-pack sticker-whatever the case may be.

After more than 100 years of couponing, slapping 27-step mail-in rebates on box tops, and handing out complimentary pens to get attention, its time brands started to change it up.

So, do the research, get your hands dirty, and ask your consumers a few questions.

I'll leave you with a question of my own: Have you gotten to know your consumers today?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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