

# View from on top of the world

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A sneak peek at some the Scopen 2022 pre-analytics data shows a current trend that is already hugely important to marketers and their clients is social media and, in particular, influencers.



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With social media playing an ever-more significant role in the media mix, our consumer-driven landscape means it is becoming increasingly common for advertisers to engage brand influencers to achieve marketing objectives.

The right influencer can leverage their social media prowess and engage authentically with their followers to connect audiences and brands. Vast networks of an influencer's followers are peers that trust, value and share their recommendations.

The potential value for marketers to amplify brand awareness is huge, and we believe influencers will continue to play an important role with younger consumers, who are likely to "grow up" with them, too.

With e-commerce rising to unprecedented levels during the pandemic, we foresee no slowing down of its rapid growth.

From a global standpoint, Scopen is also noting market places already offering strong opposition to Amazon in various countries.

In the field of e-commerce, we see the particular importance of brands seeking the right partners to work with on strategies, campaigns and initiatives for success. At this time, the average spend by marketers on e-commerce platforms is 10% to 15% overseas, compared to 5% in South Africa.

The focus on e-commerce came about unexpectedly with the onset of the pandemic and not all brands had access to the technology essential to the successful switch to online sales. I believe this figure will grow as local companies find that mix of creative, technology, and marketing skills to get products and services online and in front of the right people, while making the whole experience as user-friendly and on-brand as possible.

Another trend of vital – and growing - importance is data-driven marketing, which enables the monitoring of performance on an ongoing basis and is a key part of any marketing strategy. Marketers can gain real-time insights into the tastes, preferences, behaviours and habits of their audience, and make the necessary changes improve conversion rates.

Data analytics can ultimately help predict consumer behaviour, which can improve decision-making for marketers and agencies, and show the ROI of campaigns. With appropriate analytics, market share can be tracked and opportunities for expansion into new territories made simpler.

As the market increases in complexity so the number of agency partners a marketer works with has increased to 13 on average in South Africa and up to 15-20 in the larger overseas markets. Agency selection is becoming increasingly important as marketers seek to identify their ideal agency. Traits that speak to potential partners include agility, best use of technology and data, and strategic planning.

Also noted is how marketers will select partners going forward. Agency martech capabilities have become an essential consideration. In addition, agencies that showed sustainability during the pandemic are now on the radar, with clients realising that creativity and originality under the tough lockdown conditions is likely to blossom in free range settings, making these winning agencies.

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