

Marketing to the *next* generation at the speed of culture

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

22 Jun 2018

Bongani Chinkanda, CEO of HDI Youth Marketeers, the agency that conducts the research for the *Sunday Times* Generation Next study, released last week, provided an overview at the conference, which took place on Thursday, 14 June at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg.



Bongani Chinkanda

The key takeout is that the youth is moving at the speed of culture and that marketers need to catch a wake-up... Interestingly, while the study provides insights, Chinkanda says what scares him about 'Gen Next' is that the study looks back as far as 18 months, but that as brands we should be looking at where culture is going and how we adopt it.



SA youth's favourite brands revealed in 2018 Sunday Times Generation Next survey

14 Jun 2018



This is what the youth space looks like according to HDI's 'Jbod':

Explaining this, Chinkanda says this is just six months of the year, and yet that's how much the youth of South Africa have been bombarded with. The question is, 'How do we nudge the gate, as marketers, around this culture?' In answer to this question, he took delegates through the five pillars he believes will assist marketers in navigating the youth space.

1. Brands need to have a greater purpose

According to the study, purpose is the fourth biggest brand connector that the youth is invested in, and they believe that brands, in turn, need to invest in improving their communities.

SAB is getting this right. Here's a brand of theirs that recently took this to the next level:

"Who would have thought three years ago that Carling Black Label would be taking on women and child abuse, and it just shows how brands now need to change the narrative and be involved in what's going on in their communities."



#BehindtheSelfie with... Bongani Chinkanda

Leigh Andrews 5 Apr 2017



2. Understand route and channel to market

Chinkanda says clients often want to go to Maboneng to reach the black youth market, but that's not where they are. They're at universities and shopping malls, but digital is their new playground. He provided some interesting stats:

Out of the 12,000 youth they surveyed, 90% of them have cellphones, with 67% owning a smartphone. In the last minute, worldwide there have been 500 hours of video loaded on YouTube, 3.3m Facebook posts, 29m WhatsApp messages and 3.8m searches on Google. When it comes to taking photos and selfies, in 2017 alone 1.2tn digital photos were taken, of that 300m were selfies. 80% of Instagram accounts follow business accounts, and 300m accounts on Instagram are posting stories.

The point is: "When you're thinking of your marketing mix and how to take your products to market, do not ignore digital because this is the future."



Marketing to the youth of 2017

Jessica Tennant 16 May 2017



3. Be consistent and authentic

Here, Chinkanda looks at what not to do, and mistakes brands have made that we can learn from, such as Absa's 'black tax' tweet:



Absa's 'black tax' tweet offends clients, competitors capitalise

15 Jun 2018



And Kendall Jenner's controversial Pepsi ad:

Which result in tweets that go viral, like this:



Tweet



Ira Madison III

@ira



When the cops come and you only got
Coca-Cola in the fridge



4/4/17, 3:52 PM from Los Angeles, CA

"So, you need to be consistent as a brand and authentic to who you are, because the youth are able to see through it."

4. Be hungry and curious

"We're seeing brands that we never imagined being in the space that they're in now, but they're creating waves."

[BURBERRY X THEM \(by Alasdair McLellan\)](#) from [Alexandros Pissourios](#) on [Vimeo](#).

5. Locate your brand in youth culture

“We believe at HDI that our competition as marketers is everything in culture, so your brand needs to move at the speed of culture; you can’t wait.”

Look at how Sanlam is selling its Indie life insurance product:

Since Chinkanda started at HDI, just six months ago, they’ve looked at all these points internally and questioned whether, they, as a brand, are doing this, locating themselves in brand culture and so on, and what they’ve discovered is that they are for the next and the next, to them, is the next culture, the next job, the next degree, the next brand, the next shoe... That’s how they’re seeing the youth today. “At HDI we believe the youth are the biggest influencers of the future, and we exist to make that future meaningful.”



#NewCampaign: Standard Bank's *next*

Jessica Tennant 27 Jul 2017



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