

A purpose-filled future

 By [Pepe Marais](#)

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"People are attracted to brands that display a deeper sense of purpose."

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Q: My 'game changer' trend in 2014?

A: My 'game-changer' trend for 2014 is very far from being a trend, but it sure as hell is a game-changer. There have been rumours of it in talks at Cannes since 2012. The ongoing recession simultaneously seems to be opening the minds of business leaders and marketers to this new idea. Yet, it remains something people just talk about, as they are not clear on exactly what it means. I am talking about the concept called Purpose.

It is becoming clear as we catapult into the future that something larger is at play. And the more the world feels devoid of meaning, the more people are attracted to brands that display a deeper sense of purpose. One business that gets this is Unilever. This can be seen in the way they are starting to market across their brands. It is my personal intention to take this concept forward into the business world over the coming year, because it's only through leading by purpose that your brand can add real value to your customer's life.

Q: What do you hope to see less of going into a New Year?

A: Meetings. They are the number one destroyer of ideas and are mostly frequented by naysayers who add nothing. Meetings in their current form are holding our world back from moving forward. Look at Parliament. It's a prime example of a very long meeting with no galvanising outcome. If a meeting is not in place to find constructive solutions, then it will fast become the most destructive forum within a corporate structure.

Q: What do you hope to see more of in 2015?

A: More creation. After all, it is what we are paid to do. Within an economic climate drenched in fear, where the growth rate of our country has halved in the last quarter, and where fat cats are renovating their homes at the expense of the masses, there can be only one rudder to weather the storm: Creativity.

Q: What advice do you have for your employees/peers for the next year?

A: Find greater meaning to your life. Yes, this may sound a bit deep, but it's when you dig deep that you grow as a human being. Search within and uncover who you really are. Remove the mask, the brave face, the smile you show the world, the "I'm fine" when you know you are not.

Be brave. Be brutally honest. Because honesty is the only path to greatness. And hey, it's when you dig deep that you are more likely to strike gold.

Q: What would you like to tell your clients?

A: Start trusting your instinct. Trust your gut. Stop operating from your head and follow your heart. Yes, it may be easy to say, because it is not my money. But your business is our business and your growth is ours. It's as a creative business person that I have learned that the power of the heart is much, much more likely to add bottom-line value than that of the head.

Remember, at the end of the day, after the countless meetings, the endless discussions, the briefs, the re-briefs and the research, the consumer only gets to see our ads. And if an ad doesn't emotionally connect with them, or move them towards your brand, then the entire preceding process was an absolute waste of time. Steve Jobs once said, "People don't know what they want until you show it to them. That's why I never rely on market research." It's hardly surprising that Apple is the most valuable brand in the world today. It's time to read things not yet on the page. Let's become the Apple of our consumers' eyes in 2015.

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ABOUT PEPE MARAIS

Pepe Marais is the founding partner and group chief creative officer of brand and communications group Joe Public United. He lives for creativity that deeply connects with people. His passion is to co-create an environment and culture that breed exponential growth, Growthn - the growth of Joe Public United's people, clients and ultimately our country.

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