

#Awareness is so 2014...

 By [Mike Sharman](#)

22 Apr 2015

It's become our obligation as an industry to be able to create a remarkable brand narrative that does more than just create awareness. We need to create content that takes consumers' hands on their journey from awareness of a product to purchase consideration, converting consumers to buy a product, use a service, or download an application.

Digital has gone so far beyond 'creating awareness' for brands, because that's what most measurable media can offer. A perfect example of this is the work that Retroviral did for the Sansui Summer Cup.

The organisers wanted to show residents of Johannesburg that local horse racing events are as relevant to them as the J&B Met is to Cape Town, and the Vodacom Durban July is to that city. However, they wanted to tap into a relevant, local truth to connect emotionally with the target market, resonating with the daily realities faced by city residents.

We created this connection for Johannesburg by conceptualising and producing 'The Jozi Jockeys' with Spitfire - a branded content piece that showed similarities between jockeys jostling for position on the race track and taxi drivers hustling through the city.

Johannesburg has thousands of taxis and unrelenting traffic, and we chose these two observations to create resonance with our target audience, by making the taxi drivers protagonists, rather than antagonists.



Image via [123RF](#)

We wanted the city's residents to be supporting their taxi driver, as much as a horse racing fan would be cheering their favourite on.

The branded piece of content was the launch driver, which in turn had a click through opportunity to drive users to a website where they could purchase tickets there and then.

We don't believe that any piece of content will deliver results if it is released in isolation. A content campaign really does need display media to support the main creative.

We inserted a remarketing code into the YouTube version of our content, ensuring that people who had already viewed the content could be served other, relevant Sansui Summer Cup messaging via banners, because research has shown that consumers consider purchase once they have been exposed to a brand online seven times.

We produced tailored content across the brand's blog, and social media channels - Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram - that showcased the lifestyle elements of horse racing, to illustrate that the sport is so much more than just the races - it's about the fashion, the glamour and the entertainment. These components made it possible to engage with consumers across multiple communication touchpoints.

Furthermore, remarkable content from a storytelling point of view was supported by tactical paid media in the Google Display network and with paid advertising in social media.

This multi-faceted approach saw the campaign delivering two million impressions, resulting in 10,000 conversions to sales on the Sansui Summer Cup website.

The organisers set a target of attracting 18,000 people to the event, but were elated at the final figures of 20 - 25,000 people being on course.

This campaign exceeded the clients' expectations because they understood that greater results can be seen if content is not just seeded. If it is supported by earned, owned and paid media, it will achieve the results that Retroviral believes are possible through remarkable content designed to engage with online communities in order to convert to a commerce decision, whether it be purchase through online retail or brick-and-mortar retail.

Retroviral (with Joe Public) won a Gold Prism Award in the Social Media for Public Relations (Best Use of Social to Lead a Programme) last year.

ABOUT MIKE SHARMAN

Mike Sharman is the owner of Retroviral Digital Communications, an online communications consultancy specialising in communication strategy, social media and content creation.

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