

Pepe Marais opens Nedbank IMC 2020, makes a case for creativity

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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Master of ceremonies Pepe Marais, co-founder and group CCO of Joe Public United, welcomed a virtual audience of Nedbank IMC 2020 delegates on behalf of Dale Hefer, CEO of the Integrated Marketing Conference (IMC) and Khensani Nobanda, group executive: Marketing at Nedbank.

“ Excited to be a media partner to Nedbank IMC 2020 virtual event this Friday 24 July 2020.

Book now for previously sold-out event which promises to be a first-of-its-kind virtual marketing conference in South Africa.

“Marketing works, more than ever.” [#NedbankIMC2020@IMCConf](#) [pic.twitter.com/YLwPhhaBm6](#) — Bizcommunity.com (@Bizcommunity) [July 22, 2020](#) ”

As part of his opening address, Marais made a case for creativity, sharing a few of his personal insights gained over the last three months.

Money is negative pressure, creativity is positive pressure

What Marais found when Covid-19 hit, was that there was major concern around revenues and he soon realised that while we can't control revenues, clients' spend and marketing budgets, we can control how we apply those budgets and what we're physically doing, and that is marketing.



Pepe Marais, co-founder and group CCO of Joe Public United and Nedbank IMC 2020 master of ceremonies

“We can control our creative product, our quality, our excellence, we can control our delivery, our turnaround times to our clients, and that to me was a huge insight. That the more I focused on what I could control, the more I worked with my partners in business, with our teams, together with our clients to deliver on their demands to the best of our ability, and the more we only focused on that and worried less about the by-product, which is money, or the sales which will come through to our jobs properly, the more I find it easier to manage this time, and that's going to be a huge insight for me going forward. To focus on what I can control, to focus on creative excellence, and the rest must just fall.”

Covid-19 will make consciousness contagious

Marais said we've been speaking about purposeful branding and advertising for about a decade now. "Personally, what I'm seeing happening is there's a huge shift in consciousness. From a consumer point of view, consumers are going to become more aware of what they buy and why they buy what they buy." He said that as they're under pressure, they're going to start looking for brands that stand for more than just their product selling proposition, and for something they can believe in.

But time will tell if people will change their ways. "I'm of a firm view changing habits is always difficult, so time will tell how many people will follow a new way of being in this new world, and a lot of people might fall back... but I believe that if we don't actually take the learnings from this crisis and put it into new actions, new ways of doing things, it will be a waste of pretty much half a million deaths."

In the new world, purpose is no longer a differentiator, action is

And then the third and last insight Marais shared was that in the new world, purpose will no longer be a differentiator. "I'm becoming more aware that as people our Achilles' heel is not being able to take action. It's almost like we know what the right thing to do is but we struggle to apply that knowledge and put it into true action."

To Marais, all this talk of purpose is just talk if we don't put it into action. "I believe it's the duty of brands in a world void of political leadership, in a world void of leadership in general, for us to start leading as brands because we have the mic of being able to reach millions and millions of people and to use our money well and to become really purposeful in our work because in my belief, in my experience, purpose is what truly sells, when it is authentic and when a brand can deliver on it."

Bizcommunity is attending The Nedbank IMC 2020, now live streaming and is proud to be a media partner. Follow @IMCCConf @IMCCConference #NedbankIMC2020 #MarketingWorks for live updates.

ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

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