

Adclick Africa's predictions of digital marketing trends in 2017

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1. Live video streaming is on the ascendancy

The proliferation of smartphones and faster internet connectivity has given rise to a demand for visual content, especially video. This is reflected by the actual usage statistics. According to Facebook reports, there are 8 billion video views on their platform. The Cisco Visual Networking Index supports this too. It shows that mobile video traffic accounted for 55% of total mobile traffic worldwide in 2015 and it is set to increase to 75% by 2020.

Thus, it is not surprising that live video streaming will dominate 2017. Social media users now want more in-the-moment content as they want to experience events that they do not have access to.

2. Widespread use of data visualisation tools

The demand for data is unceasing as the pressure for improved ROI increases. Data is the lifeblood of any significant marketing activity because marketers need quantitative information that demonstrates how prospective buyers are interacting with their campaigns and digital assets. This intelligence is then used to improve the performance of campaigns.

However, most analytics dashboards are very intimidating as they display lots of information. Fortunately, technology is finally catching up to the "interpretation" part of data analysis.

3. Small businesses are going to add digital marketing to their mix

SMMEs have finally realised that digital marketing is a game changer and can boost their growth. The popularity of digital stems from the fact that customer's media consumption habits have changed radically. They have moved from traditional sources of information to digital media. Therefore, the imperative to go digital is a natural response to this shift.

The pressure on ad budgets will also force SMMEs to go digital as online marketing is comparatively cheaper and more effective than traditional outbound marketing.

In the New Year, SMMEs will seek to create a compelling online presence through SEO, mobile marketing and PPC campaigns. Email marketing will continue to be popular also.

4. The rise of ad-funded free WiFi advertising

This is a no-brainer actually. A huge number of people in South Africa own smartphones but they are failing to maximize their usage due to the high data costs. This is a blessing in disguise as it has given savvy brands an opportunity to sponsor WiFi access in exchange for the display ads to the users.

This solution is very effective for marketing to Millennials and those in the lower LSMs.

5. Native advertising will come Of age

Competition for clients is getting increasingly fierce by the day. A lot of clutter has been created by brands desperate for the attention of their prospective customers. Paradoxically, these efforts have caused customers to ignore or even block ads online.

Native advertising remains the best way out of this mess. Newer and more improved forms of native advertising will be offered by major publishers and digital advertising agencies.

6. Experiential marketing with virtual reality

We anticipate an increase in experiential marketing campaigns that are powered by virtual reality. VR adds a virtual experience that enhances the brand message and consumers will most likely gain a better understanding of what the brand is trying to convey.

Why is VR posed to be popular with marketers in 2017? The following points highlight its strength:

When it comes to marketing, virtual reality is playing an ever-increasing role in engaging with customers, especially as it is:

Immersive – users wearing a headset are completely immersed in the content meaning fewer distractions and more attention on the message.

Impactful – the intensity of a VR experience is greater than traditional media generating strong emotions in its users which are linked to real behaviour change.

Memorable – our brains are built to remember events linked to locations, this means that VR experiences have a longer trace in the audience's memory.

Novel – with high media and public interest in VR early adopters can benefit from favourable media exposure.

Marketers are constantly pushing the boundaries of “what’s next” in the field of digital marketing and innovation in technology makes this possible. However, this means that successful strategies of yesterday might not produce the best results in the new year. There is need to adapt to the changes and the time is now to start planning on the strategies that will make a difference to your marketing in 2017. At Adclick Africa, we help brands leverage the latest result-driven best practices in digital marketing.

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