

SA marketers fostering meaningful customer relationships beyond first purchase

Salesforce has released its sixth annual State of Marketing report, including South African data for the first time. The report shows that, locally, marketers are at the forefront, with 76% in South Africa leading customer experience initiatives across their companies.



Photo by Lukas from [Pexels](#).

The research found that standards of customer engagement are shifting again, and marketers in South Africa are prioritising innovation in a radically altered landscape.

In addition to new regulations, marketers in South Africa expect that an expanded online population and wearables will bring transformational impacts by 2030. Marketers are anticipating that the online addressable market will increase as people get connected more than ever before.

For this report Salesforce collected data from nearly 7,000 marketing leaders across the globe, spanning six continents, just as the Covid-19 crisis emerged. Robin Fisher, regional VP, Salesforce Emerging Markets says:

“ The Covid-19 crisis is forcing marketers in South Africa to rethink every aspect of their business – from strategic priorities and challenges to the technological and team skills they will need — as they navigate getting back to work during a global crisis, and then continuing to transform the customer experience to be best positioned for success in the years ahead. ”

“The insights in this year’s State of Marketing report are a helpful guide for marketers as they journey to recover and transform their business,” he says.

The trends revealed in the State of Marketing report were collected from marketing leaders from B2B, B2C and B2B2C companies across 30 countries, including 200 respondents from South Africa, which showed the following:

- Marketing transformation takes on new urgency: The expectations and behaviours of consumers, businesses, and society at large are shifting with unprecedented speed and magnitude. Marketers are at the forefront, with 76% in South Africa leading customer experience initiatives across their companies. This involves a combination of both technological and organisational innovation. In South Africa, innovating is a top priority for marketing leaders, while

balancing personalisation with customer comfort levels is a top challenge.

- **Customer data sets the stage for empathetic marketing:** As customers navigate a series of “new normals,” personalised, empathetic engagement has never been more important. Delivering messages and offers that resonate with an individual’s unique needs and expectations requires deep insights. Marketers are shifting how they source and manage customer data and ramping up use of technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) that help them make the most of it. In South Africa, marketers are expected to go from 4 data sources in 2019 to 6 projected data sources in 2021 and 91% report the use of AI with personalising experiences in individual channels being a top use case.
- **Marketers Double Down on Business Value:** As businesses shift from crisis triage to recovery and adaptation, marketers have a unique opportunity to turn trusted customer relationships into business value. Marketers increasingly track metrics like customer satisfaction, digital engagement, and lifetime customer value to gain a holistic picture of what’s working and what isn’t across the customer journey. B2B marketers have a particularly strong role in business growth through account-based marketing (ABM). In South Africa, 60% of marketers track customer lifetime value (LTV) to measure success.

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