

# Marketing in a new-age world

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I have been fighting the idea of starting to write opinion pieces about all things 'marketing' for close to two years now and I have finally given in.

There is a saying that goes something like this – “A comfort zone is a beautiful place, but nothing ever grows there”. Well, my comfort zone is and always has been *not* to write and to avoid it at all costs. But, that changes this year.



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What is marketing? What do you do on a daily basis? These are just a few questions I get from people that have no idea what goes on in the world of the marketer. So let's first clarify what marketing is and what we do as marketers on a day to day basis.

My own, but very short description of what marketing is, is this – We do people! Sounds funny I know, but it's precisely that. In the words of Wikipedia – “Marketing is the combination of various techniques and activities that create customers, keep customers and satisfy the customers. The customer is the focus of every activity.”

I intend to focus my attention on marketing-specific topics and trends in my upcoming articles. There are a number of trends and ever changing techniques, but I will only focus on the top five and delve into more detail on each in a five-part series.

In the coming months I will cover the following trends:

## **Virtual and augmented reality:**

This is a computer-programmed headset that is developed to make people feel like they are really in a particular environment. The entire programme is developed to make all the surroundings displayed feel real and tangible. Wikipedia defines virtual reality as – “Virtual reality (VR) typically refers to computer technologies that use virtual reality headsets to generate the realistic images, sounds and other sensations that replicate a real environment or create an imaginary setting. VR also simulates a user's physical presence in this environment.”

## **Artificial intelligence/Machine learning:**

This is basically a computer acting like a brain. It is intelligent computing. Computers are able to learn various actions humans make, and develop a memory on how to do it or even better those actions. It absorbs tons of data and spits out human actions such as problem solving, learning and even understanding human speech. Techopedia.com defines artificial intelligence as – “Artificial intelligence (AI) is an area of computer science that emphasizes the creation of intelligent machines that work and react like humans.”

## **Experiential marketing:**

It is putting your customers in an environment that allows them to touch, feel and experience your brand. There needs to be some form of personal interaction to make experiential marketing work.

## **IoT (Internet of Things):**

This is when an internet connection is inserted in everyday objects to send and receive data, this makes what they call a smart device. Jacob Morgan, a contributing writer for Forbes online describes IOT as this– “Simply put, this is the concept of basically connecting any device with an on and off switch to the Internet (and/or to each other). This includes everything from cellphones, coffee makers, washing machines, headphones, lamps, wearable devices and almost anything else you can think of.”

## **Chat bots:**

This is a computer program developed to have conversations either written or auditory with a human. They often try to simulate how a human would have a conversation and how a human would think. Webopedia.com describe a chat bot as “Short for chat robot, a computer program that simulates human conversation, or chat, through artificial intelligence. Typically, a chat bot will communicate with a real person, but applications are being developed in which two chat bots can communicate with each other.”

Some things are simply just better together and marketing and technology are two of those things. You would have noticed in my themes above that 90% of them are all tech industry related. Marketing and technology are not just better together but they are vital to one another. Gone are the days of popping a few advertisements into a magazine and sending a few press releases out to the media. Customers now demand things on the fly. We have turned into an “I want it now” society. This shift in marketing has happened over the last 10 – 15 years largely due to the change in technology that has become available.

In my coming articles, I will go into more detail on each of the trends for 2017 and how marketing and technology can work together to maximise customer experience, how technology can help make marketers lives easier and also how it can prove as a threat if we don't keep up.

Till next time!

## ABOUT JOLENE DE LANGE

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