

What is the digital consumer hungry for?

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Distracted, demanding content munchers want enhanced experiences and seamless navigation. Shaneel Singh, Chief Strategy Officer at iProspect SA, presents a five-year menu forecast of digital-consumer consumption.



Digital transformation is often attributed to companies, but over the next five years, people are going to experience unprecedented change in the way they bank, connect with family and friends, consume content and plan their lives.

Over the past decade, Africa has vigorously adopted and engaged with digital products, and with [increased internet connectivity](#) and more access to devices, consumers living in Africa have been experiencing a cornucopia of content for which they clearly have an appetite.

There is a unique opportunity for brands and businesses to feed consumers quality content and services that address their challenges and most fundamental human needs:

Connection: social-networking platforms

Efficiency: banking apps; voice assistants, like Siri and Alexa

Information and entertainment: content hubs

Experiences: moments worth remembering

Enter machine learning

Many of the recent innovations in the digital space have been bolstered by machine learning and automation, which allows a computerised system to take action by evaluating large sums of data. From a marketing perspective, iProspect, a global performance marketing agency, [surveyed over 300 chief marketing officers](#) globally in 2019, and this is a snapshot of how they believe machine learning and automation will impact consumers in the next five years.

Q: As a marketer, where do you think machine learning and automation will help you the most in the next five years? (Percentage of respondents selecting the answer)

29% Deliver personalised content at scale

26% Create better efficiencies in my business

24% Automate manual tasks and put greater focus on strategic tasks

22% Make better decisions through processing bigger data sets

Q: Which of these activities have you partially or totally automated in your organisation? (Percentage of respondents selecting the answer)

51% Data/analytics

28% Search

28% Effectiveness measurement

27% Programmatic

23% Social

12% Creative

9% Above-the-line media

7% Other/None

Source: iProspect Global Client Survey 2019, October 2019

The need for feed

Consumers in Africa are pushing brands and companies, through their consumption habits, for more personalised products and services while maintaining speed and flexibility. They have been able to do this for two reasons:

- 1.** Increased internet connectivity and more affordable data costs
- 2.** An easier and more seamless user experience

These pillars will become key drivers in recruiting more customers, building loyalty and evolving products.

We already know video has become a powerful force for change on social channels, and it's not hard to see why if you consider the above. In fact, TikTok, the video-sharing social-networking platform, was [the most downloaded non-gaming app](#) at the start of 2020 because it delivers the kind of snackable, high-quality UGC (user-generated content) consumers are craving more and more. It's not surprising, then, that brands have already been testing the waters with advertising on the platform.

Where to from here?

Modern consumers are changing and adapting as their digital environments transform, but they continue to seek out quality content that's easy to find, consume and share. According to [Harvard Business Review](#), consumers continue to remain loyal to the brands that meet their needs, so if the consumer's needs change, companies need to change their service

offering too. Technology is inextricably part of the consumer's psyche and with more available touchpoints, there is a massive opportunity to build consumer experiences that will be hard to refuse.

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