

Digital transformation is a race between all SA media companies

 By [Jennilee Peremore-Oliver](#)

7 Jan 2020

The marketing and media industry is in a state of flux. As the fourth industrial revolution threatens the longevity of the print industry, marketing professionals working in print advertising are on a crusade to implement the best marketing campaigns to sell their digital offering.



Jennilee Peremore-Oliver, owner/CEO of Jenniemore, a Communications Consultancy.

On top of this looming threat of print becoming extinct, marketers must balance the demands of proving to advertisers that print brands should be the preferred and leading multimedia platform for advertisers, balancing circulation, event management and brand marketing initiatives. A similar balancing game is played by marketing professionals in radio and TV, just the metrics differ.

As for the consumers of media advertisements – the older and more mature audiences are still relying on the traditional, trusted sources (which is great for sustaining the print industry). The younger and digitally savvy audience is seeking out

the media platforms of companies that have already mastered the digital offering and can comfortably translate brand advertising messages digitally.

For the audience, regardless of their age, whether they are baby boomers or Gen Z's, everyone wants convenience and cost-effectiveness. Even the rich, because the rich didn't become rich by paying double when they could have paid half-price. With the high cost of the most basic needs, and an increase in retrenchments that hit South Africa in 2019, time and cash are high commodities, the more we can save in time and money makes us all winners. In fact, saving in time and money is just about the only ways we can win in the current economic state of South Africa.



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Despite this rather disconcerting picture, it's not all doom and gloom, but as with all races, only the best will win. And don't be mistaken, this is a race. Media companies are not in this together, this is a competition. With the rise of the fourth industrial revolution, the pool of competition has become bigger.

It's no longer the print media companies working against print, radio competing against radio, and TV against TV – digital is every media company's competition. They are competing against each other. The question is which platform is better prepared to be the best, the fastest and smartest media company to win the digital race.



SA media's race against digital revolution

Issa Sikiti da Silva 25 Jan 2007



The winners in the digital race will be the ones who master the following:

Diversity

The advertising leaders of the fourth industrial revolution will celebrate and embrace diversity in their organisations. Embracing diversity is not about whether your company is on the lowest level of the B-BBEE scorecard or which company has the most colourful team photo on their website.

Embracing diversity is about going deeper than ticking a block on a form. People from diverse backgrounds give fresh and unique perspectives and solutions to problems. By hearing diverse perspectives, we can come up with new, improved and unique solutions to our clients' problems.

However, the kind of diversity that bears this kind of valuable fruit within an organisation is only possible if people feel accepted, understood and appreciated for who they are. If people, in any way feel ostracised for their differences, they will become silent and allow their company leaders to make the kind of mistakes that will cost them.



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Leigh Andrews 2 Sep 2019



No company can afford to do primary research for every problem they are faced with, whether it be an internal issue or a client issue, but diversity in your organisation provides a rich source of primary information about the culture, community or age group represented by each employee.

Diversity gives depth to an organisation, but even after two decades of democracy few organisations are reaping the benefits of truly embracing diversity. To transform a product digitally, innovation is required. Innovation is only possible with new and fresh perspectives that is nurtured through a diverse culture within your business.

Specialisation

Retrenchments have hit South Africa hard. Instead of cutting down on services, leaders want their workers to do more with less. The media companies who will win with digital transformation and lead the way will be the ones who allow their staff to specialise and focus on what they do best. This will mean taking an honest, hard look at their business, on how things are done, how their resources are being used, and whether they are making the best use of the talent and skills they have within their business.



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Digital transformation is not possible without people who can innovate and use their knowledge and skills to create new problem-solving tools and advertising solutions for clients. It is not easy to cut down on services, but winners focus on what they do best, they don't try and be everything for everyone.

Employee wellness

Employee wellness falls into one of two categories in South Africa; the taboo topic, or the Passive Acceptance category. If employee wellness falls under taboo in a company, it's something no one ever speaks about, because "after all this is work and we're only here to work." The Passive Acceptance category is where people speak about employee wellness, but it's limited to birthday cake and annual staff parties.



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However, the media companies who will be the leaders in digital transformation will live and work digitally. They will employ the top digital and marketing specialists and trust them to do what they are supposed to do. There will be no 9-5 working hours for these professionals, they will manage their own time from wherever they are, and their output will be measured based on results, not based on the timesheet where they must clock in and out. The media companies of the future will

know that inspiration and creativity don't have a time period, it comes when it comes, wherever that may be.

Excellence

Retrenchments generally make people angry, but they also make employees look at each other, their fellow employees, senior managers and the leadership in a whole new light. They're assessing whether their peers and leaders deserved to be in the positions they are in, whether the people that lost their jobs deserved to lose it.

Mediocrity is no longer an option, employees will hold each other accountable and anything produced that is less than excellent or produces less than excellent results will be abhorred. This is the future of digital transformation. Nothing less than excellent will be accepted.



Digital transformation is not just about technology - it's about people

Anton Cabral 11 Sep 2017



The media company who wins the race will produce excellent results for their employees, their audience and their clients. They will be the preferred source of information for the reader, the listener, the viewer, and they will be the preferred platform for advertising. The media company who wins the race will be the best, the fastest and the smartest because they will only employ the best mix of specialists to drive digital transformation.

ABOUT JENNILEE PEREMORE-OLIVER

Jennilee Peremore-Oliver is an award-winning media and communications professional, who started her career in 2009. In 2017 she founded the Communications Agency, Jenniemore (Pty) Ltd. She has worked with brands in the corporate, media and non-profit sectors.

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