

Bridging generations: Unveiling nuances in the African market and crafting inclusive brand strategies

Issued by [Dentsu](#)

21 Feb 2024

The African market, characterised by its vibrancy and diversity, poses unique challenges and opportunities for brands striving for sustained success.



Allow me to delve into the intricacies of overcoming ageism in the advertising realm, exploring how brands can reinvent themselves to cater to the diverse demographics of Africa.

From understanding age-specific consumer behaviours to showcasing successful rebranding case studies, this analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of this diverse market and the strategies needed for brands to thrive across generations.

In the rich tapestry of our African culture, embracing all ages is not just a choice but a celebration. Brands that weave inclusivity into their essence resonate deeper, fostering connections that transcend generations and echo the diverse spirit of Africa.

Striking a balance – celebrating age inclusivity in advertising and cultivating connections with the next generation

of consumers

Ageism has been deeply ingrained in advertising practices over past decades, with profound implications for brand communication and consumer engagement.

In the African context, with its rich tapestry of cultures and age groups, neglecting any segment can result in missed opportunities.

A closer look at case studies emphasises the consequences faced by technology brands that exclude older demographics, underlining the need for a more inclusive approach in the South African market.

The changing landscape of brands in South Africa

South Africa has one of the most diverse cultures and languages on the continent, and I would like to review how some brands evolved to remain connected and relevant to a broad audience.

TFG (The Foschini Group)

The evolution of consumer expectations worldwide demands a corresponding transformation in brand strategies. Examining the case of South African retail giant TFG reveals a successful adaptation to changing consumer demands.

TFG's journey underscores the importance of flexibility and innovation in staying relevant, providing valuable insights for brands navigating the dynamic South African market.

Nivea's timeless triumph: Crafting a skincare legacy across generations

In the ever-evolving landscape of the beauty industry, Nivea stands as a testament to the art of reinvention and the mastery of staying relevant across generations.

Since its establishment in 1911, this German body care brand has not merely survived but flourished, solidifying its status as a global household name.

Nivea's journey is a fascinating narrative of adaptation and foresight. Originally catering to women, the brand made a pivotal move by introducing Nivea Men, a strategic expansion that not only broadened its market but also demonstrated an acute awareness of shifting consumer dynamics.

Navigating economic challenges with grace, Nivea expanded its product line intelligently. The creation of umbrella brands such as Nivea Family, Nivea Men, and Nivea Bath Care allowed the brand to delve into diverse categories like body care, face care, and sun care.

This expansion not only showcased resilience but also positioned Nivea as a comprehensive solution for all skincare needs.

What sets Nivea apart is its holistic marketing approach, a carefully crafted mix that addresses the nuances of a dynamic market:

Understanding the consumer: Nivea's product strategy is rooted in thorough market research, identifying key segments based on demographics and preferences. This deep understanding of its consumer base ensures that Nivea remains a brand that resonates with a diverse audience.

Accessible pricing: Intelligent pricing strategies have been a cornerstone of Nivea's success. By adopting pricing structures that appeal to a broad spectrum of consumers, the brand has managed to maintain competitiveness while attracting a larger audience.

Accessibility: Nivea's cost-effective distribution strategy involves collaborating with large retailers globally. This not only enhances accessibility but also ensures that consumers can easily incorporate Nivea products into their daily routines.

Multi-faceted promotion: Nivea's promotion strategy is multi-dimensional, leveraging both traditional and digital platforms. Celebrity endorsements, events, and discounts are seamlessly integrated into a comprehensive promotional approach that keeps the brand in the spotlight.

Demographic inclusivity: With a keen eye on the middle-class demographic, Nivea offers products tailored to all age groups and genders. This inclusive approach ensures that the brand remains a household name for families across different life stages.

Adaptable campaigns: Nivea's marketing campaigns span various mediums, from traditional avenues like television and radio to contemporary platforms such as online and social media. This adaptability reflects a brand in tune with the ever-changing preferences of its audience.

Digital engagement: Nivea has embraced the digital era with a robust social media presence. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok and Facebook serve as arenas for meaningful engagement with consumers, contributing to the brand's modern and dynamic image.

Nivea's success is not just a triumph of product quality but a reflection of strategic segmentation, pricing finesse, and an unwavering commitment to staying attuned to the pulse of its consumer base. In a market where loyalty is fleeting, Nivea has not only retained its ageing clientèle but continually lured in new patrons, making it a beacon of timeless appeal in the beauty industry.

Hops and hype: Decoding the swagger in beer for the younger crowd while keeping the classic pour for the seasoned

Analysing the preferences and engagement patterns of the younger market is crucial for brand success within the beer industry. Beer companies, such as AB InBev, have effectively utilised digital and social media trends. They have successfully navigated the delicate balance between appealing to younger audiences, and retaining the loyalty of older ones.

The role of agencies in fostering inclusivity

Collaboration between beer brands and advertising agencies is pivotal in combating ageism within the beverage industry.

Advertising agencies, such as dentsu, stand out as leading examples of entities actively promoting inclusive advertising practices. Through partnerships and innovative approaches, local agencies contribute significantly to fostering a more inclusive advertising landscape in the beer market, with companies like AB InBev benefiting from such collaborative efforts.

AB InBev's overarching purpose to dream big and create a future with more cheers serves as a guiding principle, inspiring new ways to meet life's moments, move the industry forward, and make a meaningful impact in communities and the world.

Tools and technologies: Personalising experiences with data analytics

In the era of advanced technology, integrating data analytics, AI, and augmented reality is crucial for targeted marketing. South African e-commerce giant Takealot sets the benchmark by utilising data analytics to personalise user experiences, ensuring relevance across diverse age demographics.

As South Africa's market continues to evolve, brands that embrace inclusivity, adaptability, and innovative strategies are poised for success. Overcoming ageism requires a nuanced understanding of diverse consumer behaviours and a commitment to crafting brand narratives that resonate across generations.

These insights serve as a roadmap for brands navigating the dynamic and diverse South African market, ensuring sustained relevance and success in an ever-changing landscape.

Where to next?

With faster, wider, and deeper data analytics, understanding and proprietary tools, we at dentsu are now able to plan multi-generational campaigns.

More importantly, each generation can be catered for as they age themselves and new trends emerge as the “generations” age through their 20s, 30s, 40s, and so on. Demographic-driven campaigns are not new; however, the number of actionable insights is expanding exponentially. Currently, dentsu is at the forefront of these, through the development and implementation of products and services, such as:

Consumer connected survey (CCS): Measuring 'outward' behaviour

CCS is our robust audience data system in South Africa, providing rich insights into demographics, opinions, channel planning, hobbies, activities, and decision-making. Available to clients, this tool is essential for effective reach planning and industry discussions on attention planning. If you're not a client, connect with us to explore how CCS can help shape your tomorrow.

Discovering real people behind the data – Dentsu's approach delves into real people using proprietary quantitative, qualitative, and real-time data sources. Understanding real behaviour, beliefs, and culture is vital for brands aiming to connect emotionally and succeed in the long term.

Zeitgeist: Real-time insights

Zeitgeist goes beyond tracking past trends. It uses dentsu's CCS to connect offline interview data with online trends, offering real-time insights into concepts, authors, and keywords. It predicts the relevance of conversations, identifies influencers, and allows immediate adjustments, minimising wasted efforts.

A deeper understanding of target audiences – Zeitgeist monitors real-time conversations across various channels, providing a deeper understanding of market segmentation and demographics. It predicts the relevance of concepts, allowing brands to stay ahead of trends and modify content for effective and relevant conversations.

NightVision: Real-time adtech for load shedding

Capturing attention during load shedding – NightVision, a first-of-its-kind adtech, taps into load shedding schedules for real-time media exposures. Developed with insights into human behaviour, API integrations, and geo-fencing capabilities, it ensures brands maximise their reach and engagement even during power cuts.

Optimising investment and impact – managing clients' investments during load shedding, NightVision automatically boosts spending in areas with a more attentive audience. This strategic approach resulted in a 16% increase in click-through rate, 175% increase in conversions, 366% improvement in click-to-conversion rate, and a 61% decrease in cost per conversion during a test campaign.

Bridging gaps for inclusive advertising – OOH Marketplace

In a landmark move, dentsu has unveiled the OOH Marketplace in 2023, accompanied by a significant investment. This platform is designed to revolutionise out-of-home (OOH) advertising in South Africa, connecting brands with diverse audiences from urban centres to rural areas.

Dentsu's substantial investment underscores its commitment to diversity and growth within the OOH sector. The OOH Marketplace serves as a user-friendly, tech-driven platform that empowers black-owned OOH media businesses. This initiative ensures accessibility, transparency, and efficiency in connecting media owners, agencies, and brands in real-time.

Benefiting both the industry and brands, OOH Marketplace streamlines processes, providing media agencies with real-time site availability, negotiation capabilities, and direct bookings with site owners. This innovation aims to create a dynamic landscape, allowing brands to connect with diverse audiences seamlessly, transcending geographical boundaries.

Dentsu School of Influences (DSI): Shaping creative voices

Empowering the next generation of creators, DSI is a transformative eight-month journey for aspiring creators over 21. Beyond content creation, it equips them with skills, tools, and connections for success in influencer marketing. Mentored by industry experts, participants explore content creation, storytelling, and ethical considerations.

Championing responsible creativity DSI aims to redefine influencer marketing in Southern Africa by fostering a community of responsible and impactful voices. It goes beyond being a school; it is a launchpad for the next wave of influential creators contributing positively to society.

Pioneering multi-generational excellence at dentsu

In our pursuit of innovation and inclusivity within the dynamic Southern African market, dentsu emerges as the vanguard, crafting brand strategies that resonate across generations. Our journey unfolds as a testament to our commitment to breaking barriers and fostering connections that celebrate the diversity of our audience.

Delving into the intricacies of overcoming ageism, we unveil a strategic understanding of diverse consumer behaviours, exemplified through our analysis of successful rebranding case studies. Dentsu stands as a beacon, advocating for age inclusivity in advertising, ensuring that no segment is neglected in our vibrant and culturally rich landscape.

From navigating the ever-evolving beauty industry with Nivea's timeless triumph to decoding the preferences of the younger market in the beer industry, dentsu demonstrates a profound insight into the nuances that define each generation. Our collaboration with beer brands like AB InBev and the groundbreaking launch of the OOH Marketplace underscore our commitment to driving positive change in the industry.

Our technological prowess, embodied in tools like Consumer Connected Survey (CCS), Zeitgeist, NightVision, and the transformative Dentsu School of Influences (DSI), empowers brands to navigate the intricate landscape of South African consumer behaviour. Dentsu stands at the forefront of data-driven, multi-generational campaigns, providing actionable insights and innovative tools that propel brands toward sustained success.

Looking ahead, dentsu's dedication to fostering responsible creativity through DSI and reshaping influencer marketing emphasises our role as a catalyst for positive transformation.

In the realm where innovation meets inclusivity, dentsu's voice resonates as the leader, seamlessly connecting brands with the diverse heartbeats of Southern Africa, ensuring enduring relevance and success in our ever-evolving market.

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