

Don't make your customers type

 By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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"The problem with personalised messaging is time. The solution is to automate and, beyond bots, the solution is voice. Because if you are looking to provide the ultimate in convenience and seductiveness to your customers, don't make them type."



Juanita Pienaar, editorial assistant and content creator, Bizcommunity.

These were the words of Godfrey Parkin, who spoke at Marketing Mix's Landscape Briefing for 2019 last year about future marketing trends, specifically focussing on the topic of messaging.



#SML18: Speakers announced for Social Media Landscape Briefing 2019

11 Sep 2018



Parkin said he didn't understand why social media is still the focus of many marketers' relationship marketing when less than 2% of Facebook posts get delivered to fan feeds.

But if you look at messaging, 98% of mobile messages are opened, they all get delivered to where they are supposed to go and 90% of them are opened within 3 seconds.



#SML18: How SA brands are approaching social media

Juanita Pienaar 24 Oct 2018



Messaging allows for more personal and intimate communication

That's a huge difference between the messages marketers are putting out on Facebook and the messages being put out on WhatsApp or some of the other messaging apps. This means that a new subscriber to your messenger list is worth more to marketers than a Facebook fan.

Parkin argued that unlike social media, messaging is getting you directly to where you want to go and it feels intimate, it feels personal and it feels immediate.

He said marketers who want to build relationships with their customers should think about the conversations that they value most. It's always private conversations. True relationships are intimate and that is what has driven the movement of a lot of people away from Facebook, particularly younger people in the United States, and into messaging.

Why? Because they can develop closer relationships with people, they can talk a lot more about the stuff that really means something to them in a one-on-one or one-to-small-group environment.

Conversational architecture

Here is where bots come in. Thus far, we have also seen the growth of hundreds of branded bots. Most of the major brands out there in cosmetics and in fashion and in automotive have started to launch bots or are experimenting with bots. They've put bots on their websites and bots on their Facebook pages.

Parkin said the hard part of putting chatbots together is not the technology, it's the conversational architecture, which is a term, he said, we are going to start hearing more and more about in the same way we started hearing more and more about CX and UX.

Conversational architecture is really all about how you make these things seem relevant and natural. How to 'architect' a conversation so that it leads in the direction that you as a marketer want it to lead to but also helps the other party to get what they want to get out of the conversation.

That is the hard part and it is a talent that does not exist. Parkin predicts that that is going to be a new talent in future.

The problem is time, the solution is voice

And this leads us to what Parkin said above:

“ The problem with personalised messaging is time. The solution is to automate and, beyond bots, the solution is voice. Because if you are looking to provide the ultimate in convenience and seductiveness to your customers, don't make them type. ”

He added that bots aren't new and that we've all been using them for years. One of his favourite influencers is a bot called Google Search. Think about it. We take its advice on where we should go, where we should eat, where we should drive and which route we should take every day.

We've already been seduced to thinking that bots are superior to people and we're happy with that because it saves us time, he said. Watch below as Google Duplex, an AI assistant calls a hair salon to make an appointment sounding remarkably similar to a human.

Chatbots will continue to disrupt 2019

Chatbots and virtual customer assistants will continue to disrupt CX in 2019. In an article listing the [Eight Trends That Will Shape The Future Of Customer Experience in 2019](#), the author states that artificial intelligence is at a phase where it can only go upwards and that it has made its way into how we interact.



AI and the future of customer experience

Adriaan van Staden 21 Dec 2018



“ Enterprises are blending AI-driven customer interaction systems such as chatbots, and virtual customer assistants with NLP algorithms to build conversational AI systems. This allows them to automate and drive personalised customer engagements at scale. Conversational AI isn't a technology meant only for enterprises. It is the force behind a growing \$2.68bn industry that's projected to reach over \$11bn by 2023. For instance, Google Home smart speakers allow users to have a full-fledged conversation with the bot. ”

Customers have been demanding a more in-depth and more personalised approach from the brands that they engage with throughout 2018 and in 2019 new technologies in the digital space will help brands to achieve this. [Gartner](#) has revealed that 25% of customer service and support operations will integrate virtual customer assistant (VCA) or chatbot technology

across engagement channels by 2020, up from less than 2% in 2017.

[CCW Digital says](#) the number one priority in 2019 will be increasing investment in digital channels.

“ The interest in improving digital channels coincides with the goal of adding a human factor to historically ‘low-touch’ environments. Few organisations offer a ‘full service’ experience within their digital channels, and many are looking to change that reality. They want to inject deeper engagement into their digital channels, making them more personal, more conversational, more resolute and, ultimately, more valuable. ”

Interestingly enough, CCW Digital also adds that the top investment area for 2019 will be the voice channel.

In conclusion, messaging is surpassing social media as an effective marketing tool to communicate in a more intimate and personal level to consumers. When it comes to the personalisation of messaging, beyond automation and beyond bots, the solution is voice. In 2019 technologies like conversational AI will help brands to give customers what they want, more personalised and in-depth engagements and simply more time.

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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