

Staying agile in marketing: A Q&A with Promax Africa chairperson Koo Govender

In the lead-up to the November Promax Africa Awards, chairperson and current CEO of Publicis Africa Koo Govender speaks on the constant changes within the industry, and how creative marketers can remain agile.



Koo Govender is the chairperson of the Promax Awards. Source: Supplied.

The awards reward outstanding achievements in entertainment promotion marketing and design.

Q: How has the role of a traditional marketing manager evolved in response to the rapidly changing business landscape?

It used to be that marketing managers primarily focused on creating and executing advertising campaigns, managed market research, and oversaw product development.

Today, marketing managers are expected to be much more strategic and data-driven in their approach. They need to have a deep understanding of market trends, customer behaviour, and emerging technologies in order to develop effective marketing strategies that can help their organisations (or clients) stay ahead of the competition. Marketing is also influenced by procurement and Return on Investment (ROI).

Q: What are the key challenges that marketers and creatives face when dealing with constant pivots in their strategies?

As a marketer or creative, dealing with constant pivots in strategies can be a daunting challenge. It's like trying to navigate a winding and unpredictable road that requires you to remain agile and adaptable at all times. You face the pressure of tight deadlines and limited resources, while still needing to maintain consistency in messaging and branding.

It can be difficult to accurately measure success and ROI, and this can make it challenging to make informed decisions going forward. But the key is to remain flexible, adaptable, and resilient in the face of change.

Q: How imperative is flexibility in marketing strategies, and how can industry players maintain a balance between consistency and adaptability?

Consistency helps establish a strong brand identity and build customer trust, while adaptability allows you to remain relevant and effective in the face of changing market conditions. It's like walking a tightrope - you need to keep your balance and adjust your steps as you go.



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In my experience, balance can only really be achieved when you adhere to the following: define your brand identity, monitor market trends, test and measure campaigns, remain agile and flexible, and communicate openly with stakeholders. Covid-19 has taught us to be adaptable, agile and pivot to customers' demands.

Q: With so many digital platforms available, how do we identify the most effective channels for a campaign?

Identifying the most effective digital platforms for a campaign can be a daunting task, especially with so many options available. It's like trying to navigate a crowded marketplace, where every platform is fighting for your attention.

The key is to focus on your target audience and understand where they are most likely to engage with your brand. By doing this, you can identify the most effective channels to reach them and create a more targeted and impactful campaign.

Q: How can marketing managers ensure consistent messaging and branding across various channels?

As a marketing manager, ensuring consistent messaging and branding across various channels is crucial to establishing a strong brand identity and building customer trust. It's like conducting an orchestra - you need to ensure that every instrument is playing in harmony to create a beautiful symphony.

To achieve this, marketing managers should establish clear brand guidelines and messaging that can be easily understood and applied across all channels. They should also regularly monitor and audit their marketing efforts to ensure that they are aligned with these guidelines. Additionally, they should provide ongoing training and support to their team to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

As author and consultant, Simon Sinek, once said, "People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it." So, by ensuring consistency in messaging and branding, marketing managers can create a powerful and memorable brand that resonates with their target audience.

Q: What are some real-world examples of companies that have successfully navigated constant pivots in their marketing strategies?

Companies like Netflix, Airbnb, Amazon, and Coca-Cola have all pivoted their marketing strategies successfully by recognising changing consumer preferences and adapting their business models accordingly. By maintaining consistency

in their branding and messaging while pivoting their strategies, these companies have remained relevant and competitive in their respective industries.

Q: As technology continues to advance, how can marketers strike a balance between automation, the advancement of AI and maintaining a personal touch in their campaigns?

For me, it's like finding the right recipe for a perfect dish - you need to mix the ingredients in the right proportions with the right level of care to create a masterpiece. Marketers can achieve this balance by using automation and AI to streamline their campaigns and personalise their messaging based on customer data. However, they must also ensure that they don't sacrifice the human touch that makes their campaigns resonate with their audience.

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