

Social media South Africa 2018, are we ready?

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I recently attended Arthur Goldstuck's presentation on the SA Social Media Landscape 2018. From research conducted by World Wide Worx and Ornico, 118 of South Africa's largest businesses shared information on their social media, digital strategy and future plans. What stood out for me was the potential for brands on YouTube. Plus a bigger question, are some businesses still not prepared for social media integration?



Image provided.

For someone in the industry it was heartening to see the positive growth statistics of social media in South Africa over the last year. What's gone up? Facebook is now used by 97% of big business, a rise from 91% in 2016, Instagram from 62% to 71.6% and LinkedIn from 63% to 71.6%. Corporate blogs grew from 24% to 36% this year and we can look forward to 8% more businesses adding blogs to their social media bouquet - so deeper content creation is alive and well.

I was particularly interested in the statistics on YouTube. Used by 60% of businesses in 2015, up to 66% in 2016 and now at 68% with 16% (the highest growth) of brands planning to add YouTube in 2018. In real terms, the monthly active users on YouTube in South Africa haven't grown as quickly as the 7.2 million leap in 2014, but the figures are impressive in relative terms; up by 8.28 million in 2015 and 8.74 million in 2016.

YouTube's social metrics engagement figure

Looking at the YouTube's social metrics engagement figure: in 2015 there were approximately 14k views per video and in 2016 26k, so there's potential there. With regards advertising spend, YouTube comes in fifth after Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn with only 27% of businesses using ads on the platform, so again, more potential for brands wanting to push content on YouTube for better sales and growth.

With regards overall social media and strategy: out of South Africa's 118 biggest brands, two of them don't use social at all, and out of those that did, 12% said they didn't have a social media strategy. The question is, how do you implement something effectively (particularly at this level of business) without a strategy? Following on from this; only 47% of businesses use their social media primarily for customer lead generation, which I consider low in terms of ROI.

The good news is that although 50% businesses surveyed admit to having less than optimal digital media skills, 60% are investing in training their own people, 16% using specialist social media agencies and 10% a social media consultant. And to the 27% of big business who have no plans to work on their social media skills, I would argue that now would be the perfect time to invest in some necessary expertise.

ABOUT JAINITA KHATRI

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