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# Getting digital marketing to work for your business



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At our recent Investment Platform Insights event, we highlighted significant shifts in digital marketing trends that have changed how people consume information. Drawing from the latest research, TikTok has emerged as a key influencer in shaping people's preferences for information delivery and attention capture. This shift does not mandate a complete transition of your digital marketing activity efforts to TikTok; rather, it signifies a change in how you connect with your audience. Achieving attention doesn't hinge on having the largest advertising budgets. The actual winner will be whoever effectively engages and reaches the most people.

## Three must-know shifts in marketing your business

As South Africa's digital landscape evolves, these pivotal shifts reshape marketing dynamics. Success is no longer confined to conventional avenues; it thrives on forging deep connections through authentic engagement. The message is clear: In the digital age, capturing attention isn't about who shouts the loudest but who speaks with the most resonance.

### Capturing attention in the digital age: South Africa's pioneering stance

In the dynamic realm of digital consumption, South Africa has solidified its position at the forefront. Not surprisingly, a distinct trend emerges among users aged 16 to 24—the demographic steering the pulse of digital engagement. This demographic's preference for consuming content online showcases a significant milestone: South Africa's average time spent on digital platforms surpasses global averages. The convergence of youth and technology highlights the critical nature of capturing and maintaining this audience's attention. Surprisingly, engagement on the most popular digital platforms is dominated by users aged 25-44. This signals an era where meaningful engagement's profound impact overshadows the traditional advertising expenditure metrics.

### Evolving from expenditure to engagement

Marc Prichard, the visionary Chief Brand Officer of P&G, succinctly encapsulates the new marketing paradigm: 'It is no longer about who spends the most; it's about who reaches the most, who engages the most with the highest efficiency, with superior brand communication that drives growth and value creation.' This perspective mirrors the prevailing winds of change—investment is no longer the sole determinant of marketing success. Instead, the ability to connect authentically, resonate deeply, and evoke emotions drives growth and brand loyalty. Prichard's words underscore a pivotal shift where engagement and communication reign supreme over sheer financial expenditure.

### The shifting media landscape in South Africa

Delving into the statistics that shape South Africa's media landscape, the numbers speak volumes. The nation boasts a staggering 28 million active social media users, marking a significant portion of the population tapped into the digital sphere. Daily, individuals dedicate an average of 3 hours and 44 minutes to their digital devices, immersing themselves in online content<sup>1</sup>. What's more, a staggering 85% of this time is dedicated to consuming video content—a resounding testament to the power of visual storytelling.

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1. Engage Video Group, 2023.

## Transformative shifts in marketing paradigms

A panoramic view of South Africa's digital landscape reveals five distinct shifts that are redefining the marketing arena:

- 1 The transition from traditional to social media:**  
The change from traditional advertising channels to the immersive world of social media is undeniable. The digital domain offers unparalleled opportunities for interaction and engagement, making it an indispensable arena for advisors to reach audiences.
- 2 From multimedia to short-form video:**  
Storytelling has evolved, condensing narratives into bitesize, captivating segments that instantly seize attention.
- 3 From social to content graph:**  
Moving away from peer connections, content quality and interests are now forging the way for meaningful engagement and creating digital audiences.
- 4 From advertising to entertainment:**  
The traditional advertising concept is undergoing a metamorphosis. It's no longer merely about promoting products; it's about entertainment that captures hearts and minds.
- 5 From influencers to creators:**  
The concept of influencers is expanding into a new realm—with often unknown creators who wield the power of genuine connection and inspire loyalty through authentic content.

## Does it matter what social media platform your practice invests time in?

In short, 'no'. However, the way you engage on those platforms is important. While TikTok has seen exceptional user growth (outpacing Facebook's initial growth), the pivotal change lies in how people engage with content. This change revolves around short-form vertical videos, a novel format introduced by TikTok. This innovation prompted Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram to adopt similar forms. While Facebook retains the highest user count for maximising reach, the remarkable growth of TikTok cannot be disregarded, especially if your business has a strategy for generational wealth transfer.

## Closing the gap in marketing to Millennials and GenZers

If targeting these demographics is integral to your business's future success, it's crucial to recognise their diversity across life stages and financial stability. To summarise,<sup>2</sup> three distinct categories emerge: 'recent grads,' 'growing careers,' and the 'emerging wealthy.' Your marketing approach must adapt to each type. Some might need education without immediate reciprocity while enhancing financial literacy could be essential for others. Irrespective of the category, consistent and trustworthy engagement is paramount. Given the impending significant inter-generational wealth transfer, these strategies warrant serious consideration.

## Does social media replace my website?

Social media is not the 'silver bullet' to your marketing solution, but it aids in building familiarity. It can't replace your online visibility, making your website's importance undeniable. Your website grants authority to your business by showcasing your unique name and brand, fostering trust, and integrating your website with your name, bolsters this trust. Additionally, your website offers complete control over your messaging, positioning, and content, in contrast to the limitations of social media.

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1. Jodi Taylor, Wealth Management & Advisor Marketing, Commspace.

## Tactics for website care

**Invest in search engine optimisation** to enhance visibility on platforms like Google and Bing. This ensures your website can be found when someone is searching for keywords or phrases across search engines.

**Ensure mobile responsiveness**, as an unresponsive site can lead to significant traffic loss.

There are numerous other ways to **maintain your website**. Regularly audit your website for broken links, create supportive blogs or articles linked to your landing pages, and seek external credible sites linking to your website.

In addition, think about your help and support pages. **Assess the usability of help and support pages** - are these useful enough and written in an easy-to-understand FAQ format?

If you write regularly, encourage website **visitors to subscribe and share your newsletter** while keeping your content current.

Lastly, **consistently assess your marketing endeavors** to ensure they align with client engagement. Measurement is an influential gauge of your resonance with clients.

Fundamental changes in people's attention span and content consumption require the following considerations:

- Transition your marketing activity from traditional to social media
- Mastering concise video communication, as social media engagement is often fleeting
- Grasping the marketing commitment is essential for successful wealth transfer strategies
- Being ready to educate and build trust with your audience
- Continuously optimising your website
- Exploring partnership models for business growth

In conclusion, embracing these fundamental shifts in attention span and content consumption is crucial. This entails making a seamless transition to social media, mastering the art of concise video communication, understanding the vital role of marketing commitments in facilitating wealth transfer, fostering education and trust-building with your audience, fine-tuning the optimisation of your website, and delving into partnership models for promoting business growth. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, adapting and engaging meaningfully will remain the cornerstone of successful digital marketing strategies.

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