

# Driving digital growth

By  Danette Breitenbach

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It appears that we are still answering the same questions regarding digital and the growth of digital. This is disappointing, says IAB Chairperson, Jarred Cinman, managing director of NATIVE VML.

Cinman was addressing delegates at this year's IAB Summit that took place at Turbine Hall in Johannesburg in panel discussion.

While agreeing with him, Melissa van Zyl from the AMF is optimistic that digital is where people want to spend money. "While media planners are too comfortable in buying big pieces of media rather than looking at what... media does for a brand, the agency model is broken and audiences are fragmented and expensive to reach. We are at a watershed. Traditionally the industry is slow, but the need to adapt has arrived."



L to R, top to bottom: Cinman, Van Zyl, Kalenga, Ascar, Goosen, Harris, Roed and Buys

A main obstacle is the people making the decisions or gatekeepers of the budget do not understand the digital medium and remain with traditional channels because these are the channels they are familiar and comfortable with says Musa Kalenga, group head: digital marketing at Nedbank and head of brand, IAB South Africa. "This is despite consumers being very ready for digital. The second obstacle is the structure of the medium, more specifically that measurement of the technology has been slow."

## Amazing, complicated digital

Digital is a problem for the market because it's complicated as opposed to reach and frequency, which simple – despite the fact that with digital you can do amazing things that other mediums cannot achieve.

In this context it is important to understand where the different digital platforms are and how they deliver a brand's objectives says Kalenga. "The tension of digital lies in the fact that it gives precision measurement and not mass."

Sharing knowledge and insights will assist clients and brands making the transition to integrating digital into their campaigns. This is a process and involves, for example, not talking jargon that the marketer doesn't understand, says Astrid Ascar, IAB SA's head of education & transformation.

We are too hard on ourselves, interjects Gustav Goosen, IAB vice-chairperson and CEO of The SpaceStation. "We need to look further than the numbers and understand the real growth of digital. Measurement by media spend is a broken methodology and digital has been fragmented from the start, but if we calculate the entire worth of the industry then we see the growth of digital and it is extensive."

## Build digital blueprints

Therefore, he says, the industry is selling itself short by only looking at one part of the growth and the challenge is to get the true view of the market in terms of media spend. "What has worked in traditional media is not applicable to digital and that is why we need tools to build blueprints and case studies. This is not easy and that is why days like today are important."

The value of the measurement the IAB provides is immense, says Ryan Harris, IAB SA's head of measurement (FNB). "We are trying to simplify it so you can plan reach and frequency, as pure reach and frequency can do incredible things."

He adds that the perception is still that the quality audience is sitting on the desktop but that is not true. "Mobile is growing and if you compare the data, you will see that it is representative of people across the spectrum."

The agency guy used to be the smartest guy in the room but this is no longer the case, adds Fred Roed, CEO of World Wide Creative and IAB's head of agencies committee. "This is a challenging and fascinating time for agencies. Big international agencies are parking on their lawn, a lot of companies are bringing delivery type requirements in-house, while digital agencies are expanding their offerings and consulting houses are building in these costing structures. All of these are forcing us to innovate, to be more creative and to increasingly use digital."

In the same discussion, Josephine Buys, IAB CEO, told delegates that the IAB is dedicated to innovation in digital, saying that the IAB exists to build trust, knowledge and spend in a digital marketing. "Our goal is to encourage brands and advertisers to consider digital not as an add-on, but as an integrated part of their marketing campaign. To accomplish this, we need to bring more brands into the conversation earlier and this is what will be driving us this year. The IAB is a critical component in this conversation."

## ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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