

Are you social listening or social saying?

 By [Rudi Massyn](#)

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Digital media marketing is ballooning at an exciting rate and the ferocity of its spread is a demonstration of its effectiveness.

Large corporates, banks, parastatals, governments, your pizza joint around the corner, all are capitalising on this insurgence and hoping to propel their brands and organisations into the digital stratosphere.

As a communications and digital media professional I often find many people don't really understand the purpose of digital media marketing and still try to manage and implement different strategies for different platforms.



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They treat it like traditional above the line marketing platforms - shotgun. You need to integrate your social media profiles, online advertising and website immediately. They feed off each other. And then, you need to listen.

Communication and interaction

One of the benefits of digital media is that it has no borders and you are able to direct your aim. I was reading an article recently related to social listening and how it communicates to digital media.

Many Southern African business profiles still blindly push content and have no administrator monitoring reputation.

The management of reputation is by far the most crucial aspect of social media and other digital platforms. For the first time you have direct access to your audience and communication is not a one way street anymore.

When doing a radio interview over the weekend the presenter asked me what the major no's were for companies when marketing on social media and other platforms like blogs, website and online advertising. I stressed the importance of not just pushing content down the throats of your audience, but actually lending an ear to their sentiments.

What I didn't mention, and what is equally important is that reputation management is community management. I see too many businesses taking the shotgun approach to digital media. Marketing to anybody seeking a follower or friend. It is imperative that you align your business with the right stakeholders.

Preach to the converted

If you're an estate agent, an industry lagging behind in the integration of traditional and digital marketing in my opinion, there are so many relevant role-players to align your business with, property experts, property investors, business leaders, local property journalists, the list goes on. You need to preach to the converted.

When really listening to your targeted audience speak you will see they guide you on your success and progression. Gaining insight into the thought process of your clients is paramount and an unquestionable asset superior to any external research relating to your industry.

Don't devise a plan, plans are too rigid and hardly ever materialise. Develop a strategy, a strategy demands difficult decisions and brave behaviour. Then, use the interaction to influence the strategy.

The pitfalls always stay the same, companies don't have the budget to spend on a full time marketing guru or don't have the time to manage digital media profiles. Understood, but educate yourself. Trial and error. There is a saying, if you don't do social media right, don't do it at all. Nonsense.

I would advise you though to save up, or allocate a budget to attain the services of a reputable digital media consultant. Even if it is to only analyse your digital presence and advise on solutions and strategies going forward.

ABOUT RUDI MASSYN

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