

# The consumer is in control

 By [Craig Page-Lee](#)

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***"More consumer groups will start bartering with their data."***

The consumer has to be at the centre of brand decisions because they are in control, at the centre of the experience and information flows, says Craig Page-Lee, MD Posterscope SA.

"There is an overarching concept, a turn of phrase we are using more: 'fluidity of time, place and platform'. This is about putting the consumer in control or at the centre of brand decision and brand experience. Really plugging into the 'always on' concept. Not in the sense of a technology platform, but literally managing the experience around brands.'

"Consumers are able, through technology, to conduct conversations on social media, purchase food online, live seamless lives, from machine to machine, from device to machine, not just from laptop to desktop to mobile to tablet, but also with, for example, mannequins in-store pushing data to you in the future as you walk past into a store... A seamless integration of product, machine and data," explains Page-Lee.

All of this comes down to experiences, not just product, which means that at the back-end of all of this, there will be a lot more development around retailer apps, mass customisation, and harnessing the big data behind that. It is time for retailers to take centre stage, he says.

Page-Lee's further trend predictions for 2015 are:

- **Connecting retailers to consumers:** Retailers will be in the 'always on' space too. Connecting retailers to the consumers and having more of that purposeful, meaningful dialogue.
- **Virtual world:** Augmented reality has had a good run. It will be coming into play at the shelf. In some catalogues these days, you can point your phone to the catalogue and then point it to a wall and see the product in situ, see the product come to life, see your product in your life... Awesome stuff. We will see some dabbling in that in South Africa. It is on the up in Europe and America.
- **Wi-Fi, utility of Wi-Fi, free Wi-Fi** for consumers in any long-haul spaces, from parks to malls and transit areas... all provided by cities. There will be rewards systems around that.
- **Consumers definitely understand the value of data:** More consumer groups will start bartering with their data and getting further rewards.

- **Brands of association partnering:** No brand exists in isolation and powerful brands will link up with other powerful brands and create cross-marketing platforms because they understand the power of supporting their brands, but while budgets are under pressure, smaller brands will come together to collaborate.
- **Real time bidding** on the back-end of digital banner space will appear in the TV space and OOH space, as the world is demanding more and brands will be able to bid in real-time based on consumer behaviour at the time, to buy networks and buy space to push a product, based on real-time trends.
- **Good behaviour:** Organisations with a social conscience will remain relevant.
- **Content creation:** We are all content creators and aggregators, connected consumers need to be at the heart to enable the construct of fluidity of the time-space platform.

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*\*Craig Page-Lee was interviewed by Louise Burgers, specialist editor of Biz Trends 2015.*

## ABOUT CRAIG PAGE-LEE

Craig Page-Lee, is managing director of Posterscope SA, an Out-of-Home communications agency. He is an architect and retail designer by qualification. With 21 years' experience across the fields of marketing, branding, advertising, media, retail and design, he has worked on some of the world's leading brands, including managing the Vodafone and Cannon global brand accounts while living in London.

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