

The next decade of digital marketing

 By [Jessica Barrella](#)

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The digital marketing landscape looked very different 10 years ago. Instagram didn't exist and neither did voice assistants. AI, AR and VR were science fiction concepts. So, what can we expect from the next decade of marketing?

Personalisation

Consumers want to feel like individuals, not just 'demographic X'. People want to engage with marketing that feels authentic and genuine, which is what your business now needs to provide to stay competitive. What's more, today's consumers know that this technology is possible and therefore expect personalised messaging. According to an Adobe survey, 64% of Generation Z shoppers and 72% of Millennial shoppers think brands should provide a personalised experience.

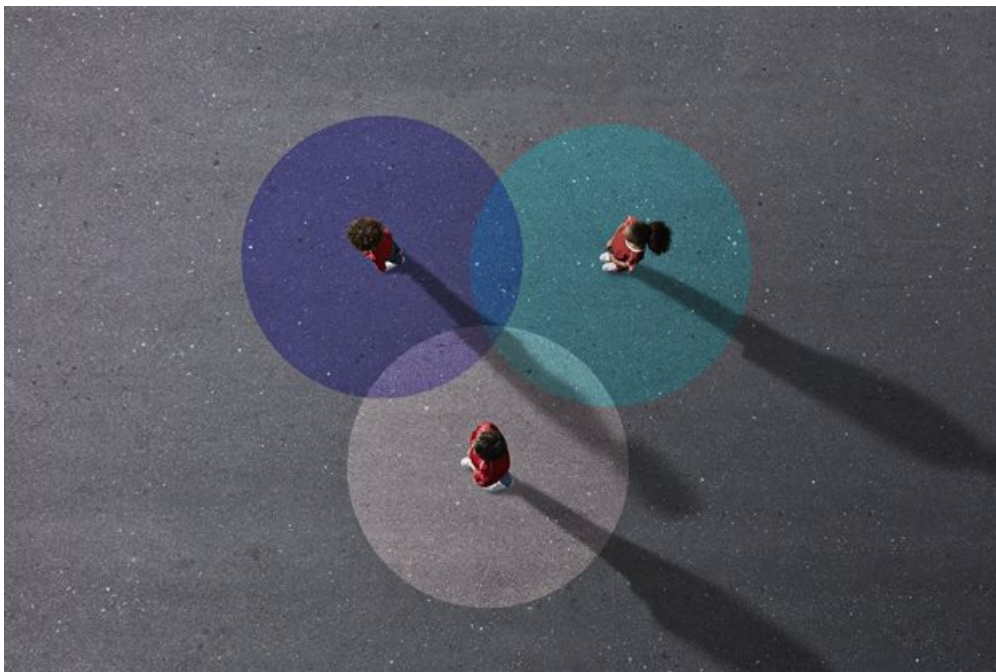


Image source: Gallo/Getty Images

Luckily, the masses of available data make this possible. Basic options for personalised marketing include:

- Social media (simply using their name in an instant messaging reply)
- Email marketing (using information like name, surname, job title, company name and more)
- Chatbots
- Customer journeys

Another method of personalisation is to share user-generated content. Sharing information has become a huge component in the digital landscape and as a connected, mobile-first generation, Gen Zers value shareability, but also relevance. They interact with an average of five screens per day (smartphone, TV, laptop, desktop, iPod/iPad) compared to the Millennials' tame three per day. The new generation is already so inundated with information, they don't have time for content that doesn't apply to their needs or wants.



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Agile marketing

Basically, agile marketing is a measure of how efficient an organisation is at achieving its marketing goals. An agile team provides strategy and theoretical results (backed by real data) and executes quickly. They understand the importance of tangible ROI. Agile marketers realise that new business is more important to their clients than new marketing material is (although we understand that it's the marketing material that supports gaining new business). It's about how quickly you can capitalise on a situation to drive the business forward.



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The rise of agile marketing is thanks to social media, where its speed has shown businesses that a quick response to a situation can be highly effective across marketing channels. Take the KFC couple for example. The KFC team saw an opportunity and while they spent money on the couple, they gained so much more in marketing, which in turn translates into new business, more loyal customers and increased brand awareness and reputation.

“ Mzansi please help us find this beautiful couple, re batla ho ba blesser 💎💎 DM us any leads, there might be a Finger Lickin' Good surprise in it for you too. Batho ba Vaal re thuseng! We love love 💎💎❤️👍 #KFCProposal pic.twitter.com/6bj89dtj4j— KFC South Africa (@KFCSA) [November 7, 2019](#) ”

Transparency

Information is everywhere and today's consumers know how to access it. Unilever's SVP of marketing explained that:

“ Marketing used to be about creating a myth and selling it. It's now about finding a truth and sharing it. ”

That was back in 2015, but those words ring truer today than ever.

The need for transparency is parallel to the consumer's need for authenticity. These days our target markets can easily spot the difference between advertising or branded content and non-commercial content on social media. According to Pardot, 70% of the buyer's journey is complete before they even reach sales, which means we need to engage with audiences in an ongoing conversation and create real relationships.

A quick round-up of other trends to look out for include: a mobile-first approach to website design; voice search optimisation; automated processes for influencer marketing; AI, AR, and VR will continue to advance,; video will continue to grow; and high-level data analysis.

ABOUT JESSICA BARRELLA

Jessica Barrella is passionate about helping other small businesses and entrepreneurs reach the next level with solid marketing.

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