


Bizcommunity hosts #BizTrendsLIVE!, an overview

 By Jessica Tennant, issued by Bizcommunity.com

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Bizcommunity invited contributors to join its vision for Africa (with over 230 industry trend contributions making up the 2019 report) at BizTrendsLIVE!, which took place at Ster-Kinekor Sandton City in Johannesburg on Thursday, 31 January.



Dali Tembo, Bronwyn Williams, Sibongile Vilakazi, Lesley Adams, Louise Marsland and Carmen Murray.

The event featured seven of this year's BizTrends contributors, namely Louise Marsland (Bizcommunity), Lesley Adams (Cinemark), Carmen Murray (Boo-Yah!), Dali Tembo (Instant Grass), Dr Sibongile Vilakazi (Kantar TNS), Bronwyn Williams (Flux Trends) and Alan Knott-Craig (Herotel). Here, a summary of what each of them had to say...

Louise Marsland: 9 Africa Trends for 2019

Louise Marsland, marketing & media: Africa editor at Bizcommunity, renowned for her involvement and thought leadership in BizTrends over the years, emceed the event and provided a B2B outlook into nine Africa trends for 2019, namely:

1. **Africa rising:** Africa is poised for explosive economic growth, similar to the Asian boom, says a new book by McKinsey, *Africa's Business Review Revolution: How to Succeed in the World's Next Big Growth Market*. Seven of the top 10 fastest-growing countries in the globe are in Africa.
2. **Trading up:** The African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) will ensure that African nations become the world's largest trading block; "creating the largest integrated market on the African continent" – President Cyril Ramaphosa.
3. **Youthful tribe:** Africa is the only region in the world where the youth population (those aged under 25 years) is increasing. Latest predictions have put the youth population in sub-Saharan Africa at 945 million by 2050 (this excludes North Africa).

4. **Africa lions roar:** Africa's mighty middle class, 100 million strong, have a spending power of \$400m per day. They are hungry, aspirant and well accustomed to the 'hustle' required to make a living in some of the world's poorest regions.
5. **New scramble for Africa:** With abundant natural resources and the youngest working population in the world, African nations are being courted by China, India, Russia, the EU and the UK in the new scramble for Africa.
6. **Afro-optimism:** While Africa's superpowers, South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt have all suffered political and economic upheaval in recent years, all three nations have re-emerged on the African and global stages. It is also encouraging how North African powers like Morocco and Egypt want to be seen as part of Africa.
7. **Mobile advantage:** Mobile subscribers for sub-Saharan Africa rose by 44% in 2017 and smartphone penetration increased 75%. Mobile broadband is anticipated to comprise 87% of total connections by 2025 across 690 million smartphones.
8. **Industry growth:** Fastest growing sectors on the African continent: technology, including mobile; fintech – mobile banking; business tourism – every major hotel group in the world has expanded into Africa; media – especially streaming and TV services; agribusiness; renewable energy; infrastructure development.
9. **Afrofuturism:** Afrofuturism was the buzzword at Design Indaba last year and after the release of the wildly successful *Black Panther* movie. African content, fashion, art, music and culture is treading the global stage and true African history is being interrogated past its colonial roots.



#BizTrends2019: 9 Africa Trends for 2019

Louise Marsland 31 Jan 2019



Leslie Adams: The Future of VOD

Next up, Lesley Adams, head of sales at Cinemark, shared some insights into the future of video on demand (VOD).

“ Never before has the customer had so much say, never before has the end consumer had so much influence and never before has the media been so irrelevant. ”

This was Adams' opening line and he elaborated further on in his talk, saying that in these difficult times, our mission in business should be to remain relevant and survive.

The real trends, he believes, are actually human truths: trust, affiliation and purpose. In the world of fake news, you need to build trust. "People don't trust the media anymore – they trust brands. People trust Nike, people trust Adidas, people trust Manchester United (I do... unfortunately)." People want affiliation, he says, and everybody has a purpose.

The question to ask ourselves, he says, is, 'What role do we really play?', 'What is our purpose?'. "Because the fact of the matter is, no one cares about the headline anymore because it's freely available; no one cares about the in-depth story on *Carte Blanche* because, let's be honest, it's depressing on a Sunday evening."

So, for Adams, this year is about simple missions, big ideas, survival and (hopefully) profit, but more than anything else, being credible, honest and real.

Carmen Murray: Untrend Leads to Uptrend for Future Fit Business

The next speaker was Carmen Murray, founder and innovation consultant at Boo-Yah!, who spoke about how to ensure your business is fit for the future, and some of the root causes as to why we're not 'future-fit'.

Having worked with marketers for quite some time, she shared three things she's noticed: "One of them is the fact that they use tactics rather than strategy. Then we have what they call 'future shock' – too much change in too short a space of time, so they can't keep up with the pace. And the other thing they struggle with is that they're always chasing the new. "Chasing the new is short-lived. Chasing value is long-lived."

Murray believes chasing trends is a dangerous strategy, so she says to rather 'untrend'. She's sceptical about trends because they're often applied out of context. "You do need to know what's going on in the landscape and the trajectory as to where things are going, but the problem is that we as businesses are following our competitors' trends and we don't have at the pulse of our fingertips on our customers' experience and what's happening in our own environment."

We're moving into a year of being bespoke, she says, and in order to achieve this, you need a bespoke culture.

“ You can't create bespoke experiences for your customers if you don't follow a bespoke business culture... You need to start looking for the trends in your own organisation before you start chasing the trends in your external environment. The biggest and most successful brands in the world shape their own trends; they don't follow them. ”

Ultimately, we need to become customer-obsessed and we need to turn to our customers for information to help guide us into the future. She advises you to go and play in the customer sandpit. "We have to be the voice of our customers... and you need to allow your customers to be the voice of your company."



#BizTrends2019: "Bang bang, feel the pain" if you don't know what customers want

Carmen Murray 21 Jan 2019



Dali Tembo: The Reverse Innovation Trend

Then, Dali Tembo, MD at Instant Grass, shared African insights into the reverse (or trickle-up) innovation trend, which refers to an innovation first seen or likely to be used first in a developing market.

Speaking of the changing perceptions of Africa as "the hopeless continent" to a nation that is rising, Tembo says that when seeking to define the African market, we're looking through the wrong side of the telescope. He notes that in the absence of luxury, creativity is born. For example, the Africa trends he mentioned, such as Bongo Flava, Accra's bike lords and Angola's kuduro music, all started with 'the have nots' and flowed in the opposite direction to 'the haves', so to speak.

Tembo believes that we need to stop exporting and start importing; that township space has been defined as a location, demographic and culture; that innovation doesn't always need wealth, but wealth requires innovation; that some of the biggest innovations are starting from 'the have nots'; and that marketers must relook Africa as a place of potential innovation, not as a dumping ground for obsolete offerings.



#BizTrends2019: The year we rethink segmentation

Dali Tembo 15 Jan 2019



Dr Sibongile Vilakazi: Transforming Trends in the Age of Experience

Next up, Dr Sibongile Vilakazi, customer experience consultant at Kantar TNS shared some interesting stats that could help you transform your business to win in the age of experience. For instance:

- 90% of people, globally, report that they prioritise experience over possessions in their lives
- Three-quarters of organisations believe themselves to be customer-centric; 30% of customers agree
- The result is that 8 in 10 consumers are willing to pay more for a better customer experience as they are frustrated by poor experience
- 89% of CX professionals state that customer experience ROI is not well established in their organisations because of the mismatch between what CX needs to do and what CX is permitted to do
- 20% of brands will give up on strategic CX initiatives and resort to price reduction for short-term gains

In terms of the top four barriers to improving CX, she says, 41% are achieving a single view of the customer; 35% are achieving a consistent customer experience across all channels; 21% lack of C-Suite buy-in; and 20% employee engagement.

Dr Vilakazi says that in order to integrate CX strategy and drive single-mindedness across departments on the delivery of CX, you need to transform your business strategy development practices. “There’s a huge opportunity to elevate customer experience and build lasting customer experiences by becoming truly customer-centric,” she concluded.



#BizTrends2019: Is your organisation transformed enough to get customer experience (CX) right?

Sibongile Vilakazi, Kantar 7 Jan 2019



Bronwyn Williams: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly of Social Credit

Bronwyn Williams, innovation/marketing consultant and business trends analyst at Flux Trends, on the other hand, covered one trend in three ways, and that is, the good, the bad and the ugly of social credit, and how these are impacting our lives, as well as countries and businesses.

She first went into some of the good types of social credit scores and how they benefit us. Some startups that are getting this right include Social Lender, Inventure and Project Ubuntu, to name a few.

Talking about the bad types of social credit scores – those that we impose upon ourselves and fundamentally judge the people that we interact with every day, she said:

“ To a large extent, we place our value on how popular we are on social media and this has real-world implications because in a global economy you can build a social media following that can translate into real-world impact. If you are an influencer, you can earn a living just from being popular, and what we’re doing now, is quantifying that popularity and in essence judging our ranking in the pyramid of the social scheme of the world in general based on these quantifiable metrics, which is quite depressing. ”

Some sub-trends coming out of this include Snapchat Dysmorphia, the ‘Overton Window’, Social (Mob) Justice, Social Cooling, Confirmation Bias, Twitter Demetricator and Corporate Censorship.

Speaking of the ugly, she says, this is probably the most important version but also one that peoples eyes tend to glaze

over because it seems too far-fetched and too “science fictiony” but it’s not actually the case at all. Here, she’s talking about how that data profile is not just going to be the way that we’re judged by our peers and our ranking in society but rather that social credit score that’s been accumulated on us based on all of our data trails throughout our digital presence is still going to have a quantifiable, tangible impact on your life and your access to opportunity.

“The masses will be processed by machines and the privileged by people,” says Cathy O’Neil, author of *Weapons of Math Destruction*, in her book, which is about how the big data algorithms that are increasingly running our lives are colourful, large-scale but also opaque – we don’t know how they’ve been run – and this digital inequality that’s emerging, explains Williams.

In conclusion, she says, “With great data comes great responsibility. With great power comes great responsibility. In a world where great data is great power, we need to use that power responsibly, for good and not for evil and we need to think carefully about who we’re sharing our data with and what we’re doing with that data because it will define and dictate our lives going into the future.”



#BizTrends2019: Social credit scores three ways: The good, the bad and the ugly

Bronwyn Williams 7 Jan 2019



Alan Knott Craig: The Fourth Industrial Revolution in Africa

And lastly, Alan Knott-Craig, chairman of Herotel spoke about the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) in Africa and how it’s going to impact business and life as we know it. Two of the industries he believes it’s going to affect significantly are education and safety and security. “The Fourth Industrial Revolution means more information, more transparency and much less temptation for corruption...”

Three major issues have to do with smart devices, whether you can get connected and of course, there’s the cost issue – the fact that data is so expensive. Knott-Craig says that in SA we don’t have alternatives to 3G, which he compared to Valpré water (3G) in relation to grey water (public Wi-Fi), tap water (home Wi-Fi such as fibre) and on the other side of the spectrum, Perrier (for people have too much money and want you to know it).

Internet access is very much the same thing, he says.

“ In South Africa, what we’re trying to do is we’re trying to take Valpré and wash our clothes and water the garden with it. ”

On his mission towards free Wi-Fi for Africa, he says you just need to look at countries like America and San Francisco, for instance, to see where it’s going. “There can be different ways to get there, and the people in South Africa that are going to make money and make a difference are going to be the people that come up with an original way to get there. Fundamentally we all have to remain optimists...”



#BizTrends2019: What's holding back the value of 4IR?

Alan Knott-Craig 14 Jan 2019



The morning saw #BizTrends and #BizTrendsLIVE! trending on twitter as delegates shared their learnings and posted rave reviews.

“ [#biztrends2019](#) is now trending in South Africa <https://t.co/iDljpfuuVs> pic.twitter.com/m93zk6wZR — Trendsmap SthAfrica (@TrendsSthAfrica) [January 31, 2019](#) ”

A R1,000 Takealot voucher was awarded to the top tweeter of the morning, Ewetse Khama AKA @MonsieurPolk, senior PR projects manager at APO.

“ WINNER WINNER, CHICKEN DINNER!💎💎 Actually, the prize is a [@TAKEALOT](#) voucher, but chicken-centric content won the day. Congrats [@MonsieurPolk](#), senior PR Projects Manager at [@APO_source](#)! Thanks for excellent tweets from the [#biztrendLIVE](#) [#BizTrends2019](#) event with [@Cinemarksk!](#) 💎💎 pic.twitter.com/zjHbkf8ele — Bizcommunity.com (@Bizcommunity) [January 31, 2019](#) ”

That's the last of Bizcommunity's #BizTrends2019 coverage, but it's by no means the end of our trends coverage. To keep your finger on the pulse, visit our [special section](#) for other trend-related articles over the course of the year.

ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

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