

## CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN MARKETING

### ASSIGNMENT 01

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

| <b><u>TOPIC</u></b>                                          | <b><u>PAGE N°</u></b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>BACKGROUND.....</b>                                       | <b>3</b>              |
| <b>FAITH-BASED MARKETING</b>                                 |                       |
| What is faith-based marketing.....                           | 4                     |
| Characteristics of faith-based marketing.....                | 4                     |
| The impact of faith-based marketing on businesses .....      | 5                     |
| How to strategically incorporate faith-based marketing.....  | 6                     |
| <b>EVENT-TOURISM MARKETING</b>                               |                       |
| What is event-tourism? .....                                 | 7                     |
| Characteristics of event-tourism.....                        | 8                     |
| The impact of event-tourism on businesses.....               | 8                     |
| How to strategically incorporate event-based marketing?..... | 9                     |
| <b>MARKETING FOR THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (4IR)</b>  |                       |
| What is 4IR?.....                                            | 10                    |
| Characteristics of 4IR marketing.....                        | 11                    |
| The impact of 4IR on businesses.....                         | 12                    |
| How to strategically incorporate 4IR marketing .....         | 13                    |
| <b>ADWORDS MARKETING</b>                                     |                       |
| What is AdWords Marketing? .....                             | 13                    |
| Characteristics of AdWords Marketing.....                    | 14                    |
| The impact of AdWords Marketing on businesses.....           | 15                    |
| How to strategically incorporate AdWords Marketing?.....     | 15                    |
| <b>NFC MARKETING</b>                                         |                       |
| What is NFC?.....                                            | 16                    |
| Characteristics of NFC Marketing .....                       | 17                    |
| The impact of NFC on businesses .....                        | 17                    |
| How to strategically incorporate NFC Marketing?.....         | 18                    |
| <b>AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE</b>                                |                       |
| Faith-based marketing.....                                   | 19                    |
| Event-tourism marketing.....                                 | 20                    |
| 4IR marketing .....                                          | 20                    |
| AdWords marketing.....                                       | 21                    |
| NFC.....                                                     | 21                    |
| <b>CONCLUSION .....</b>                                      | <b>22</b>             |
| <b>REFERENCE LIST .....</b>                                  | <b>22</b>             |

## BACKGROUND

The two biggest unifying (and perhaps most important) themes in contemporary marketing are: the rapid proliferation of media platforms, and, the rapid change in the marketplace (product innovation, marketing terminology/technology, consumer behaviour/tastes). The ever increasing number of marketing options, and the competition for mindshare among consumers and businesses that are overwhelmed with competing marketing messages, are real-world challenges that result from these rapid changes.

Whilst there is a growing number of contemporary marketing issues, only five issues are discussed in this paper based on their creative strategic thinking/innovativeness and sustainability.

Central to the contemporary issues in marketing are the concepts of 'technology', 'social media' and 'brand management' which are part of the analysis of this paper. Accordingly, the five contemporary marketing issues that are currently affecting managerial and innovative processes in the business environment are discussed as follows:

**Faith-based marketing (Religious Marketing)** = the cross-functionality and integration of religious faith into marketing activities and business ventures (Gilgoff, 2012).

**Event-tourism marketing** = managing a portfolio of events as assets in-order to benefit various objectives and goals for the host city, venue or destination (Getz, 2007).

**Marketing for the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution (4IR Marketing)** = fusion of technologies and cyber-physical systems interwoven with other digital spheres (Hawthorne, 2018).

**Google AdWords Marketing** = Search engine's advertising system in which marketing practitioners tag their chosen keywords and attach them onto their 'paid-for' message so that their clickable adverts/content can appear at the top of the search engine's results page (Plaza, 2009).

**Near-Field Communication (NFC Marketing)** = technology that has the ability to link physical products to the digital world or two unique devices without the need for prior or contractual connection setup (Thomas, 2011).

The main discussion areas appear as follows:

The first point of discussion is; the ***identity of each contemporary issue***, which elaborates on definitions, characteristics and important key factors.

The second point of focus is; ***the possible impact on the marketing activities*** and the general business environment.

The discussion in this paper also suggests 'a way forward' through a ***creative marketing responses*** (suggested interventions/actions) for businesses to adopt so they can strategically address these issues in their marketing plans.

Lastly, the ***'African perspective'*** is analysed in detail as part of the contemporary issues because it is clear that the majority of marketing practitioners ignore the fact that, African consumers' livelihoods are largely influenced by African Indigenous Knowledge systems (AIKS), when preparing marketing strategies. However, there is a growing number of consumers who are becoming more socially and culturally conscious and are forcing organisations to leverage value from AIKS in-order to have customised African marketing messaging/content (Okyere-Manu, 2018).

## FAITH-BASED MARKETING

- **What is Faith-Based Marketing?**

### *Definition*

Faith-based marketing is not just about faithfully communicating content that is based on religious principles, but it's also about adapting the content/messaging to give it the desired impact. Gilgoff (2018, p. 1) describes faith-based marketing as, "the cross-functionality and integration of religious faith into marketing activities and business ventures".

This definition of faith-based marketing proves that, this is an incredibly nuanced and more difficult issue that brings with it complex matters and controversial views.

### *Brief historical background of the issue*

The debate and controversy surrounding the use of marketing content by faith-based organisations is over two decades old and still raging. Whilst marketing practitioners have been turning a blind eye towards the overwhelming concerns of Theologians who oppose the use of faith-based systems for marketing content – this issue has developed to measurable proportions, even more so with the rapid growth of social networking, internet advancements and/or online lifestyle (Gilgoff, 2012).

According to Seiple (2015), online behaviour shows that humans do not define themselves demographically. "That explains why there are no Facebook groups for traditional segments like women 25-54 or households making \$75k+/yr" (Seiple, 2009 p. 5). Many scholars have described how people define themselves according to their 'shared interests' with others (Gilgoff, 2012; Okyere-Manu, 2018; Seiple, 2015), which is why there are social media groups for Travel, Faith-based interest, Scrapbooking Fanatics, Yoga Fans, fans of Orlando Pirates etc.

It is those 'shared-interest' groupings through the advancement of social networking that has somehow 'awoken' marketing practitioners to focus on these self-segmented groupings. With this rapid growth of online/digital era, marketers are slowly moving beyond demographics because the internet lets marketers glimpse into people's beliefs, passions and interests according to their behaviour online. This insight is what predicts behaviour much more accurately than any other consumer segmentation process. So social media has contributed to the growth of this issue.

- **Characteristics of faith-based marketing**

The one very unique feature or character of the faith-based market that qualifies it to be part of contemporary marketing issues is that: All faith based organisations are compelled to meet/gather consistently and constantly at some place, at a given time of the week/day/year. Evans (2015) points out the various mandatory lifetime days of gathering: for Christians this is every Sunday, whilst Muslims have daily prayer sessions and Buddhist observe Uposatha at chosen times). Bilgin and Nakata (2016) refer to this unique character as a 'given audience'.

According to Gilbert (2018), no other market/consumer segment has this feature. Whilst sports fans, tertiary students or passengers in a taxi, can and have been referred to as a 'given audience' - unlike religious gatherings, their gathering and proximity to marketing content is limited, a student is only a 'given audience' whilst attending classes, and interacting with the marketing content.

Viana (2011) suggests that “Faith-based communications tells a different tale of a lifetime devotion to a certain belief system that becomes the basis of decision-making for all consumers in this segment “.

That means the opportunity for information to spread, including product endorsements, is huge, particularly since the faith-based market places full unquestionable trust on recommendations of faithful peers. No other form of segmentation is like this. The following are some of the more generic features of this issue as illustrated in a recent study by Olotewo (2016):

**Faith-based marketing content has depth** - because it aims to ultimately meet the deepest longings that may only be temporarily addressed by products and services.

**Improves the quality and maintains the culture of society** - faith-based marketing provides a balanced perspective in that there are great things about each culture, while also challenging the areas in which a culture is flawed (i.e. family honour killings, complete loss of independence in a patriarchal society, or loss of community from hyper-individualism).

**Faith-based marketing engages all demographics** – religion/faith/the gospel is a world movement rather than representative of one ethnicity, it has the capability to reach all audiences, industries, and socio-demographics. There is no other narrative that speaks as sharply and comfortably into every culture than religion.

- **The impact of faith-based marketing on businesses**

*Incorporating the marketing-mix in faith-based marketing*

The success factor of each core in the marketing mix is essential to gain the type of consumers that is looking for a product that fulfils their faith, traditions and beliefs. To ensure success in a faith-based market the following marketing mix strategy examples should be considered:

- **Product:** A pragmatic value-based product strategy, focus on the solution more than the product (Viana, 2011) – RHEMA church selling its own branded water to thirsty congregants.
- **Price:** A Psychological pricing strategy, setting slightly lower prices than rounded numbers – RHEMA water costs R5.99 per 500ml and R8.99 per 1lt bottle (Olotewo, 2016).
- **Promotion:** An endorsement/peer-to-peer promotion strategy, the art of switching positions, a trusted member of the church covertly marketing the product - Founder of RHEMA Church, Pastor Ray McCauley constantly taking a sip from the branded water bottle (place on the podium/pulpit for everyone to see) as he preaches (Olotewo, 2016).

*Benefits - Economic impact of the faith-based market*

Faith-based marketing has an unbelievably wide reach, so expansive that in a survey carried out by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2010, eight out of ten people, self-identified with a particular faith tradition. According to the WEF, this translates to unimaginable economic capacity with an estimated purchasing power of:

- \$5.1 trillion p.a. in the USA
- \$3.5 trillion p.a. in the UK
- \$7.1 trillion p.a. in Europe
- \$90 billion p.a. in Africa

### *Challenges – Economic backlash from the faith-based market*

Whilst it is important that organisations should make a concerted effort to synergise their business plans with a relevant faith-based message whether overtly or covertly, in-order to penetrate the market share as illustrated by WEF survey of 2010. Lester (2007) points out that, It is more important that organisations should strive never to communicate in a demeaning, offensive or derogatory manner towards any religion consciously and/or subconsciously, at the risk of economic backlash. Organisations who been known to suffer this type of backlash include:

- 33 000 Woolworths social media followers (supposed consumers) 'unfollowed' the brand in 2010, after it announced the discontinuation of selling Christianity magazines in-store( Daniel, 2010).
- A Pick n Pay store in Tokai, Cape Town was threatened by a shutdown from an angry Muslim community when images were posted on social media platforms showing Halaal poultry products and yoghurt packed in a 'general freezer' together with pork products (Gilbert, 2018).

- **How to strategically incorporate faith-based marketing?**

There are various ways in which an organisation can and should respond to the faith-based market but for the purposes of this paper on a few examples will be discussed. In a recent study Seiple (2015) points out that, the magnitude in numbers of the faith-based market, whether as a function of culture or conviction, tells us that, "faith can't help but influence and impact every sphere of global life, and every sector of a global economy, even those spheres that are unobservable to the outside eye" - In other words, the influence of faith in the business world is so pervasive that it's invisible.

The unobservability/invisibility of faith as a way of life is so influential that we forgot most business plans, marketing strategies, binding contracts and trading traditions are based on centuries old faith-based traditions (Daniel, 2010):

- The constitution of South Africa and constitution of most countries
- Taking an oath (at work, court, community or school)
- Dedicating one day of the week to rest

Some companies incorporate faith-based ideas in their operations, mission statements, or even their packaging, subtly or overtly (Viana, 2011):

- Chick-Fil-A, is a USA franchise chicken burger outlet that closed down its South African operations due to non-profitability in 2001. Chick-Fil-A includes Christian messaging on the packaging of their products.
- Forever 21 is a USA clothing chain with shops in South Africa. Forever 21 has Bible verses printed on all their shopping bags, and the company gives sizeable charity to orphanages, churches and Christian educational institutions.

Some companies integrate religion and faith into entertainment and business. Such companies specialize in marketing faith-based products by creating special partnerships that target specific groups, such as the family-based audience (Viana, 2011):

- Dangal is an Indian Hindi film directed by Nitesh Tiwari and released in 2016 to the tune of \$340 million worldwide
- The Passion of the Christ is a Christian film directed by the renowned Mel Gibson and released in 2004, it went on to gross over \$600 million worldwide.

## EVENT-TOURISM MARKETING

- **What is event-tourism marketing?**

### *Definition*

Getz (2007) argues that, although there is no known formal definition of event-tourism, it is a well-known contemporary marketing issue that involves event planning, infrastructure preparations, media production and communication management. As with all contemporary issues in marketing, event-tourism marketing also entails, acquisitioning/sourcing of assets, allocation/control of funds, human resources and other resources to achieve the objectives of the destination/host.

Most scholars agree that event-tourism is part of Special Interest Tourism (SIT), where travellers embark on a journey with a primary motivation of visiting/partaking in a specific activity (George, Henthorne & Williams, 2018; Getz, 2007).

Getz (2008) further defines event-tourism marketing as a systematic plan to develop and market events at a specific destination for those travelling in pursuit of SIT.

### *Brief historical background on event-tourism*

Getz and Page (2016); George et al (2018) agree that, it's not clear whether 'event-tourism' as a term was used at all prior to 1987, what is clear from most researchers and scholars is that, the term gained some steady popularity following a document from The New Zealand Tourist and Publicity Department (1987) that reported, "event-tourism is an important and rapidly growing segment of international tourism". That document ignited a spark that saw this issue being the most talked about within the realm of SIT.

Getz and Page (2016) developed a chronological list of progressive growth in event tourism as follows:

| PERIOD            | PROGRESS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Informative years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Events were not yet attractions</li><li>• Festivals, conferences and conventions were business related</li><li>• 1960s and 1970s the events sector started intensifying</li></ul>                                                                          |
| The 1980s         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event-tourism expanded dramatically as a field within SIT</li><li>• More research and studies were carried out</li><li>• Annual events at certain destinations became popular.</li><li>• Developing and 3<sup>rd</sup> World economies joined in</li></ul> |
| The 1990s         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event-tourism became popular in developing countries.</li><li>• Academic degree programmes were developed at various tertiary institutions globally to focus on events/tourism management.</li></ul>                                                       |
| Beyond 2000       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event-tourism marketing is a fully fledged activity of events-tourism</li><li>• Developing countries are competing with developed economies globally for the attention of SIT tourists.</li></ul>                                                          |

- **Characteristics of event-tourism marketing**

Calabuig, Camacho, Gonzalez-Garcia, & Sanz (2018) state that a well developed SIT strategy must include a clear framework for event-tourism, using an integrated approach aimed at development and marketing of all planned events at a particular destination.

To understand the features that make up the characteristics of events-tourism it is important to view this issue from two sides, the demand and the supply ().

*The demand characteristics*

The demand characteristics represent the consumer perspective which display the following characteristics: increased importance of outdoor activities, awareness of ecological problems, educational advances, aesthetic judgement and improvement of self-improvement and society development goals (Camacho et al., 2018).

*The supply characteristics*

On the supply side, the characteristics represents the activities of the marketers as follows (Calabuig et al., 2018, p. 153):

- Event-tourism marketing is seen as a “prime force in the expansion of tourism”.
- This contemporary issue in marketing serves to indicate qualitative differences from those of mass tourism by highlighting ‘socially just forms’ of tourism.
- Event-tourism programmes are clearly defined by the modern tourism descriptive prefixes such as **eco**-tourism, **adventure**-tourism, **cultural**-tourism etc.

- **The impact of event-tourism on businesses**

*Incorporating the marketing-mix in event-tourism marketing*

Event-tourism is widely recognised as a service sold to the tourist (consumer), the tourist experience is the product (Kim & Walker, 2012). As with all products the ‘tourist experience’ must be designed to highlight the benefits for the consumer, it must satisfy the consumer’s needs, fit the consumer’s budget and be communicated on platforms that are convenient to consumers (that is a wholistic view of the marketing mix).

During the process of marketing a tourism product, the marketers must focus on two facets of the following marketing mix components (Kim & Walker, 2012):

- **Product:** tourist experience is an intangible, and non-storable product/service. Therefore, the quality of the product is directly related to the quality of the service a tourism business provides. – When purchasing air-tickets from FlightCentre, the consumer expects to be treated like she is on holiday already (at that particular time FlightCentre and SAA are one and the same to the consumer).
- **Price:** In determining the pricing strategy of the product marketers must consider the following three key factors:

*\*operating costs:* which include *fixed costs* (these are costs that remain same regardless of the sales) and *variable costs* which include costs for remuneration, transportation, maintenance/repairs, cost of production etc.

*\*profit margins*: the amount calculated from sales after all other business costs have been settled.

*\*cost of distribution*: Commissions of intermediaries, these are fees paid to the intermediaries to distribute and sell your product.

### *Benefits*

The economic impact of event-tourism according to the world tourism receipts as analysed by Almedia-Garcia, Balbuena-Vaquez and Cortez Macias (2015):

| Continent         | 2008  | 2010  |
|-------------------|-------|-------|
| World             | 677.0 | 663.6 |
| Africa            | 12.8  | 13.7  |
| Americas          | 142.8 | 132.5 |
| East Asia/Pacific | 92.0  | 102.2 |
| Europe            | 234.5 | 230.4 |
| Middle East       | 12.2  | 11.8  |
| South Asia        | 4.7   | 5.0   |

*\*Calculated in US\$ billions*

### *Challenges – Economic inactivity within the tourism sector*

*Opportunity costs*: if resources are utilised for the development of tourism they cannot be used in other sectors of the economy; if labour is employed in tourism, it is not available for use by other sectors of the economy and if capital is invested in tourism, it cannot be invested in other projects (Almedia-Garcia., 2015).

*Political instability and social conflict*: Countries that have experience long-drawn out periods of wars (Yugoslavia, Uzbekistan, Mali etc) experience little or not tourism at all during the war and during the rebuilding period (Almedia-Garcia., 2015).

*Risk of imports flood*: Should the planned event be heavily reliant on imported goods and services, there is a risk that locally manufactured goods/production may be displaced (Almedia-Garcia., 2015).

- **How to strategically incorporate event-tourism in marketing?**

There are numerous ways and means to strategically incorporate event-tourism into a destination marketing strategy. The very first step is, to carry out secondary research - organisations should consider reviewing strategies of destinations that have experience in this field, Belaska (2015) illustrates with the following examples:

- The city of Vienna in Austria hosts the world's largest music festival every year the 'Donauinselfest'. In 2014 it was attended by 3.1 million people and it went on without a glitch or security threats.
- 'Mawazine' is an annual cultural music festival that takes place in Rabat, a city in Morocco, it is organised by the royal family. In 2014, the festival saw 2.6 million attendees gathered. No incident/accident was reported for the duration of the festival.
- The largest music festival held annually in the USA is known as 'Summerfest', it's held at the Henry Maier Festival Park in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The festival takes place in Summer (June-July) and lasts for 11 days. In 2014 Summerfest

attracted 850 000 festival goers and it is considered as one of the safest global events of the world.

- 'Rock in Rio' is a festival concept launched in Rio de Janeiro in 1985. It has since been franchised over five cities across Spanish and Portuguese speaking nations. Rock in Rio is the most successful music festival in South America, boasting a crowd of over 700 000 spectators in 2014.

## FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (4IR) MARKETING

### • What is 4IR?

#### *Definition*

We all recall History lessons at school about the industrial revolution that introduced the; steam engines and factories for manufacturing goods, which brought about global changes in the economic landscape. What we don't recall is that; there were two subsequent industrial revolutions that followed:

- The age of science and mass production
- The digital revolution

Hawthorne, (2018), and Oosthuizen, (2017) agree that, with both these industrial revolutions the world experienced heightened anticipation in preparation for the dramatic technological expansions, unimaginable advances and social changes.

Once again, the entire world is standing at the brink of such heightened anticipation, as the globe moves steadfastly towards a new era called 'The Fourth Revolution', sometimes known as '4IR' – which essentially means, the fourth known iteration of the first industrial major change, Hawthorne (2018).

Oosthuizen (2017) further defines 4IR as, a massive overhaul of industry standards and goods production whilst using advanced technological inventions. Most scholars agree with this definition (Iraki, 2018; Knott-Craig, 2018; Rodny-Gumede, 2019). Rodny-Gumede (2019, p. 2) elaborates further and defines the major 4IR technologies as: "vogue new features and products like 3D printing, robotics, nanotechnology, data mining and bio-tech".

#### *Brief historical background of 4IR.*

Knott-Craig (2018) illustrates the brief historical background of all four industrial revolutions as follows:

| PERIOD      | REVOLUTION TYPE                       | ADVANCES/PROGRESS                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1765 – 1784 | 1 <sup>st</sup> Industrial Revolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invention of steam engine</li> <li>• Introduction of factories</li> <li>• Hydro &amp; steam power generation</li> </ul>                                             |
| 1870        | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Industrial Revolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass goods production</li> <li>• Use of electric energy</li> </ul>                                                                                                  |
| 1969 – 1989 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Industrial Revolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced electronic developments</li> <li>• IT used for automization</li> </ul>                                                                                     |
| Current     | 4 <sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Cyber-physical systems</li> <li>• Genetic sequencing</li> <li>• Artificial intelligence (A.I.)</li> <li>• Miniaturized sensors (Nanotechnology)</li> </ul> |

|  |  |                                                                 |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3D printing</li> </ul> |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------|

- **Characteristics of 4IR marketing**

To best identify the characteristics of 4IR, this paper discusses a few variables or types of technologies that influence the progress of the 4IR. The following variables are features that make up the characteristics of the 4IR.

*A.I. becomes a standard form of communication:* Scientists and IT experts have developed and are advancing these developments, whilst marketers are finding best use for artificial intelligence in various ways. The most common form of A.I. assisting marketers to reach their objectives is; the advancement in the field of digital gadgets, this allows computers and phones to be programmed to learn and make decisions on their own, like accepting and interactive with content from marketers (Hattar, 2018).

*The Internet Things (IoT).* The IoT is a term coined by Keven Ashton in his presentation to Proctor & Gamble (Ashton, 2009). It is the ability of many non-computers (cars, manufacturing machines, appliances, hospital equipment, etc.) to connect to the internet and to each other as a network.

*Mass Data.* Hattar (2018) defines this characteristic of 4IR as a 'marketers dream', made up of massive connectivity and the blending of the digital and physical worlds. Everything, from our smartphones to our manufacturing plants to our mattresses to our refrigerators, is now producing data. Mass data platforms assists marketers to join, analyze, and make meaningful marketing decisions as per data availability

*Robotics.* Robotic and other related devices are beginning to play a key role in a variety of marketing related fields, from FMCG products, to mining/exploration communication and health advancement Iraki (2018). With robotics, marketers have the ability to understand the consumer better , perform jobs that we previously could not and speed up other tasks, Hattar (2018).

*Augmented Reality VS Virtual world.* This is basically a simulated reality as suggested by Iraki, (2018) and Hattar, (2018). Hattar, (2018) further explains that, the same technologies that we have experienced with the enormous success of 'Pokemon Go' is the same technology that will progress into widespread augmented reality. It is without a doubt that, the idea that marketers can now digitally add to the physical world or create entirely new digital worlds is tantalizing for marketers and consumers alike.

*Advanced Security Systems.* In his recent study Knott-Craig (2018) point out that, the recent hacking issues have made cyber-security a massive issue for many companies. Responding to this, marketers are beginning to require all sorts of new authentication, from simple two-factor all the way up to bio-identification for consumers to access and interact with digital content, passwords, finger-print ID etc (Knott-Craig, 2018; & Hattar, 2018).

- **The impact of 4IR marketing on businesses**

*Incorporating the marketing-mix in 4IR marketing*

Oosthuizen (2017) and Knott-Craig (2018) agree that, the words 'digital' and '4IR' are the most popular terms in marketing currently. It goes without saying, that the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) has impacted every facet of society, work and business.

Marketers should now ask the question: *How to incorporate the business' marketing mix to compete in the 4IR?*:

- *Product*: Revive the way in which products are marketed to suit consumers of the 4IR. The design and features of the product will help sell and illustrate the benefits of the products, but good quality products and unique branding will help companies to reflect the price charged (quality) and attract attention (branding), Oosthuizen (2017).
- *Price*: Implement a 'penetration pricing strategy', this is best for new market entry. The idea is to keep prices low until established in the market, Oosthuizen (2017).
- *Promotion*: The following promotional strategies are best for 4IR marketing; Influencer Content, Email advertising, Paid Search Results and Digital affiliate marketing, Knott-Craig (2018).

### *Benefits*

As discussed above, the 4IR is responsible for the convergence of multiple digital fields. Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, nanotechnology and biotechnology are only a few of these digital fields. van Burg and Romme (2014) point out that, as new technology emerges and new markets develop, the scope of marketing influence will continue to grow.

Currently these are the benefits enjoyed by marketers and companies who are progressing with technological advances of high economic value. The economic impact for these services is so enormous that it can only be analysed using the 60 second time scale (van Burg and Romme 2014):

- |                       |   |                        |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
| - Email sent/received | = | 187 million per minute |
| - WhatsApp messages   | = | 38 million per minute  |
| - Text messages       | = | 18 million per minute  |
| - Internet searches   | = | 3.7 million per minute |

### *Challenges*

- *Challenges in patenting* – Schwab (2016) points out that, there is little doubt that sensors can easily be patented, however, the communication, processing and visualization of data are challenging fields when it comes to patenting.
- *Redundant careers* - Some jobs will become less popular while others will become obsolete. It is not yet known which professions will thrive/die, the assumption is that, the jobs that robots are unlikely or unable to perform will become more popular (Schwab, 2016).
- Today's technology will be old and less useful by 4IR standards. The top of the range computers currently in use are already obsolete the second it goes into production (Schwab 2016).

### • **How to strategically incorporate 4IR marketing?**

Some scholars in the 80s did not believe that marketers and companies alike would even begin to fully comprehend the scope and progression of the 4IR (Leonard-Barton, & Kraus, 1985; & Stenberg, 1985), because of the complications associated with it.

For this reason it would be advisable for marketers and manufacturers to start with the following basics as examples of the key roles they will need to play in the 4IR (Tredger, 2018):

- Companies must start developing nanotechnologies' compliant products
- It is import to rebalance the marketing budget inorder to increase sales with more marketing-sourced leads.
- Developing machinery and robotics compatible with automation technology
- Modernise existing marketing tools = Recognize which systems are stalling progress back
- Refresh your brand to appeal to 4IR consumers. The millennials and Generation Z consumers of 4IR era are looking forward-looking, not backward. Brands must always remain; sharp, sleek, vibrant and energetic.

## **ADWORDS MARKETING**

- **What is Google Ads Marketing?**

### *Definition*

Plaza (2009) simply defines Google Ads as an online marketplace where advertising agencies and marketers purchase digital advertising space, but, there is much more to this contemporary marketing issue than just purchasing advertising space.

To put these words into perspective, some scholars describe how Google Ads work (the process), in-order to understand what it is (the meaning), Haeckel (1999) and Kumar (2016), as illustrated below:

### *From the consumer market*

When a consumer searches for information on Google, the first five to ten results of the search are usually a list of adverts by companies that offer that type of service. Experienced internet users usually scroll down to find their results, but most consumers do click on the advert links – which means the company that put up that advert must then pay Google because the consumer has 'interacted with the advert', Haeckel (1999) and Kumar (2016).

### *From the consumer market*

Haeckel (1999) and Kumar (2016) describe the business market category as a process where marketers select/buy keywords that are mostly likely to come up on their list of services or products. These words are attached onto prepared adverts as 'tags', e.g. UNISA will tag the following words 'scholarship', 'post-graduate', 'education', 'student'. Knowing that UNISA is not the only tertiary institution in the world, Google auctions these keywords to the highest bidder (marketer/advertiser). Once a consumer searches for one or a group of the keywords, UNISA and the other relevant adverts come up, if a consumer clicks on UNISA advert, UNISA must pay Google a premium for that service – that payment plan is called 'Pay-Per-Click' (PPC).

*Brief historical background of Google Ads* – according to the Google Economic Impact report

- 2000 - AdWords was launched, advertisers paid for the service monthly.
- 2005 - Google launched a service teaching advertisers/users about AdWords.
- 2013 - Google added enhanced applications to AdWords to aid advertisers.
- 2015 - Gmail Ads was integrated with Google AdWords (for a wider reach).
- 2016 - Google enhanced AdWords, with the new format, advertisers could choose to have a series of images appear in search results related to them.
- 2017 - Google revised AdWords daily budget caps, from 120% of pre-set daily budgets, to a maximum of 200%.
- 2018 - Google rebranded Google AdWords to become Google Ads

In 2019, Google announced, they will offer a full range of advertising functions for small businesses who don't have the time or resources, so Google Ads became an advertising agency with the most profitable revenue stream of all online advertising (Callahan, & Lewis, 2018).

- **Characteristics of Google Ads**

Contemporary marketing issues belong to a universe that is forever expanding, Google Ads is no exception. As illustrated above (brief history) Google Ads has changed some things, improved some services, demoted or taken away other functions and they are constantly adding new feature/services

For marketers, it is vital to stay on beat with the latest characteristics of Google Ads' developments in-order to gain that competitive advantage over their competitors. Below is a summarized look into some of the most important characteristics/features and how best marketers can use them to their advantage.

**User Interface (UI):** This feature allows the marketer to perform consumer segmentation tasks that previously cost hundreds of thousands, this means marketers can now at the press of a button; target households by income, review publishing/landing pages' performance (Coleman, 2017).

**Call only ads:** Call only ads is a feature that puts Google Ads on a class of its own. The marketing messages and adverts linked to this feature are optimized for phone-call click with in-built autodial. By simply clicking on the content/advert/marketing message, the consumer is automatically connected to the supplier/retailer/advertiser. (Coleman, 2017).

**Time lag reporting:** This characteristic assists marketers to ascertain how much time it takes the average consumer to reach the 'check-out'/purchasing phase. It is an important feature of Google Ads because it allows the marketer to track interaction. If a consumer takes over 3 days to complete a purchase instead of one day, then Google Ads has another feature to help speed up the purchase, it's called 'Remarketing'.

**Remarketing:** This feature can be referred to as 'a stalker' because it tips off marketers to display their adverts to those who have visited their website before (on the same platform/gadget). Simply put, once a consumer visits a website that has Google Ads, that consumer has unknowingly 'signed up' to receive content from that retailer/website, whenever that consumer goes online, those adverts will appear (at least for a few days after the initial visit), Coleman, (2017).

- **The impact of Google Ads on businesses**

*Incorporating the marketing-mix into Google Ads*

Google Ads has an undeniable impact on the way marketers are interacting with the consumers. It is clear that Google Ads has become a crucial part of the marketing mix and must play a key role in every marketing strategy as follows:

*Product:* Businesses have to keep developing new products and adding new services to expand their reach and grow with their consumers (Lester, 2007) – UNISA has grown and diversified adding services like, 'free browsing' for students to connect onto MyUnisa regardless whether they have airtime/credit on their phone to do so or not.

*Price:* It is advisable to implement a progressive pricing strategy that satisfies the different kinds of consumers. Notably, 'Freemium' is a new pricing strategy that allows the business to offer free products, whilst selling the premium features of the same product – Gmail, offers free email services, but they also have a premium version that is used by businesses (Lester, 2007).

*Promotional:* It would benefit businesses to adequately distribute their level of intensity over the following promotional strategies/elements; advertising, public relations, direct marketing. Businesses use more than one promotional element to induce consumers to instantly purchase a service/good (Lester, 2007).

*Benefits*

Although Google Ads is a contemporary 'easy to use' marketing issue, it is still important that business have some level of; creativity, technical know-how and budget optimization for their marketing content to be effective. Here are some benefits for businesses who get it right, according to the Google Economic Impact Report:

- Businesses stand to gain an average of \$2 for every \$1 spent on Google Ads.
- Google Ads has proven to be much faster than Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), it generates expanded traffic leads, advertisers can focus on multiple keywords (tags) at a time.
- There are over 1.5 billion Gmail Users in the world and Google Ads are run/displayed on all Gmail accounts (under the promotions tab)

*Challenges*

- Google Ads is a DIY marketing element, marketers who are not familiar with it might make a loss than generate revenue for their companies (Smith, 2016).
- Google Ads allows marketers to use their competitors name, tags and keywords when programming adverts or marketing content, this might prove detrimental for smaller business (Smith, 2016).

- **How to strategically incorporate Google Ads marketing**

The most vital point when using Google Ads is that, companies must employ marketers who are well-experienced in Pay-Per-Click (PPC) systems, Haeckel, (1999). Should companies not have an Google expert, Google offers the following academic/training programmes for novices:

- PPC University
- Google Ad Words Learning Centre
- PPC Chat

The following are the most important details/steps to be considered if a business aims to run a successful marketing campaign online, Kumar, (2016):

- Companies must conduct 'keyword research' to gain insight on which words consumers use to search the internet (so they can bid for/buy those words).
- PPC experts should always try to include a bid on a few "problem" keywords, that gives companies a chance to direct their adverts to "solution" content on their website.
- Just like planning a holiday/pay-day/ marketing campaign, companies should create a custom schedule to ensure they're advertising at the best profitable hours.
- For retailers to outsell their competition through they must ensure that, their adverts display high quality images, accurate prices, to allow the consumer to get all the information they need. This brings high-intent clicks, which are generally result in purchases.

## NEAR FIELD COMMUNICATION (NFC) MARKETING

- **What is NFC marketing?**

### *Definition*

Thomas (2011), describes NFC marketing is a technology derived from Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). Walker, (2012) further points out that, it is a proximity marketing element used to interact with devices at a small distance (Bluetooth is an example of NFC). Thomas, (2011) and Walker, (2012) agree that, NFC works by creating 'close contacts' that allow devices or a device and a physical object to communicate without having to set up a prior connection.

### *Brief historical background of NFC Marketing (Arslan, & Oz, 2019):*

1983 - The patent for creating RFID was awarded to Charles Walton, although many contributed to the invention, Walton was awarded ten patents in all for various RFID-related inventions.

1997 - RFID first used in toys for children.

2002 - Sony and Philips agreed to establish a technology specification and created a technical outline that enabled different devices to connect wirelessly

2004 – 2009    \*Nokia, Philips and Sony established the NFC Forum  
                      \*Specifications of NFC Tags were established  
                      \*Nokia launched the first NFC enabled phones  
                      \*Samsung launched the first Android and NFC enabled phones

2010 - Nice, in France became the first city to launch a wireless mobile project, providing locals with NFC mobile phones, bank cards, and a "bouquet of services" covering transportation, tourism and student's services

2013 - Samsung in partnership with VISA developed and launched mobile payments systems.

- **Characteristics of NFC Marketing**

This form of marketing operates on wireless technology. NFC is a communication tool used by marketers to give instant access to any digital data and information from your mobile device – that is one of the unique characteristics of this contemporary marketing issue. Below is a summary of the unique features/characteristics of NFC Marketing according to Beaconstac (2018):

**The peer-to-peer mode:** This mode involves an interaction and exchange of data, between two mobile devices whilst communicating with each other via NFC – When a cell-phone user exchanges contact information (vCard) with another cell-phone user, transferring content such as photos or videos is also an example of the 'peer-to-peer' feature. Retailers/restaurants use NFC marketing by allowing shoppers to connect onto their WIFI only to receive scores of that retailer's adverts.

**The reader mode:** This characteristics means that, a gadget can act like an "active" wireless chip reader. This feature allows the user to read information or trigger actions by simply "tapping" or "bumping" a chipped device close to a NFC tag. Examples would include payments that allow a customer to 'tap' their bank card onto a pay-point (speed-point), without typing in any information the speed-point reads the bank card and effects payment.

**The ticket validation mode:** This is the most utilised characteristic of NFC marketing. The validation mode works like a smart chip that matches certain characters on a bank note, sports ticket, ID card or any coded document. The consumer presents the item (bank note, ID card, sports ticket) to a device that sends the information to the NFC device to check the validity of the presented item. When a soccer fan enters the stadium he must present his ticket to a gadget with a laser light that reads and confirm validity to grant entry (that is one of the many examples).

- **The impact of NFC Marketing on businesses**

*Incorporating the marketing -mix in NFC Marketing*

The possibilities of success for those companies that can plan, develop and implement a marketing-mix into their NFC Marketing are endless (Cassidy, 2015; Evans, 2011, & Kotler, 2017), they provide analysis of how companies can do this without glitches.

**Product:** Besides the fact that companies need to invest in innovative product development to cope with the advancements in the NFC space, companies must also place products with RFID tags strategically, so that consumers do not need to be stuck in a certain position/space for them to get a signal (Evans, 2011) – when a customer scans an item to check the price on an item at Makro, the barcode of the product must be compatible to the scan.

**Price:** Because of the low costs associated with developing NFC Marketing, it is widely assumed that companies would have save money in the regard. Therefore the best pricing strategy would be economy pricing, which aims to attract the most price-conscious of consumers (Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan2017). Flight Centre and other travel agencies use this type of pricing strategy – when you go buy an airfare ticket at

the airport, it is more costly than buying it online. ABSA and other banks also use economy pricing, eg, it's cheaper to withdraw money from an ATM than inside the bank (from a teller)

**Promotion:** The best promotion strategy for NFC is the mobile marketing strategy, this type of promotion will best unleash the full potential of NFC marketing. It must be noted that a mobile marketing strategy does not exist in a silo – it is part of a broader/overall marketing strategy (Cassidy, 2015), but for the purposes of this paper it will not be discussed in detail.

*Benefits* – as illustrated by Kemp, 2017:

**NFC bridges the on/offline customer experiences:** NFC can provide the link as customers enter the retailer to interact with the brand. CNA in South Africa enabled an innovative campaign in 2018 where children entered and participated in an Easter Egg Hunt competition using their app to help build store traffic and strengthen brand loyalty.

**One-on-One marketing.** NFC affords companies the opportunity for a direct, user-initiated connection that enables companies to gain insight into the customers needs and develop tailored offerings that customers value.

**NFC brings artificial intelligence to objects.** Whether a consumer is standing at a bus stop in the suburbs with no airtime credit on the phone or is about to board a taxi with in the rural areas with no WIFI in sight, as long as there is an NFC tag, that consumer will be able to tap onto the poster/gadget/device and read the information where there. A poster on a street pole can be tagged with a chip that allows it to share information with consumers who come close to it.

*Challenges* – as illustrated by Watson, 2016:

**Identity theft and fraud:** While NFC provides some security against transactional fraud, there has been some successful incidents of theft and fraud worldwide.

**Spyware or Malware Interference:** On a few reported instances, hackers have managed to transfer a form of spyware or malware onto gadgets, systems and mobile phones through an interaction with that device.

- **How to strategically incorporate NFC Marketing?**

Some companies choose to focus on proximity marketing, some on omnichannel strategies or search engine optimisation, whichever strategy is chosen, there's one marketing element to include on all strategies, that element is NFC. Below are some suggestions on how to strategically incorporate marketing (Thomas, 2011):

- Attach tags onto advertisement: This will transform any advertisement into an interactive experience. Tagging posters/signages will allow consumers to access more-in-depth product information, about the brand with just a tap.
- Link NFC customers to a loyalty program – this will boost engagement with customers and increase chances of purchase action by customer.
- Reviews and ratings – If a company provides a service that lets customers tap to leave a review at the checkout counter/tab, clients are more than likely going to leave a favourable/positive review

- Infotainment – A very powerful use of NFC marketing is educational. Companies could give access to the ingredients of a dish, tutorial videos, warranty cards, product description and the list is endless. Woolworths has this option in some selected stores/branches.

## **AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE**

The continent of Africa is made up of 54 countries, each country boasting at-least two types of precious mineral resources with an estimated 2500-3000 different spoken languages. The astronomical economic growth and rapid technical developments in Africa demands that marketers leverage value from African indigenous knowledge systems (AIKS) to keep their marketing content relevant (Bright, 2017; Iraki, 2018; Okyere-Manu, 2018; Olotewo, 2016; Thomas, 2011).

However, most scholars agree there are factors that exist which must be taken into consideration when undertaking marketing projects in Africa, factors that concern most (if not all) consumers within the continent. Those factors include: the economy, socio-political intricacies, language barriers, currency fluctuations and even wars (Okyere-Manu, 2018).

- **How contemporary issues in marketing affect businesses in an African context**

### **Faith-based marketing**

Beliefs drive behaviour and 'believers' are the largest segment of consumers in Africa. (2.1 billion) and in the United States (231 million). As marketers stop relying on out-dated demographics and begin to monitor belief instead, they will recognize the value of Faith-Based Marketing (Okyere-Manu, 2018; & Oletewo, 2016).

Although demographics are far from an infallible crystal ball on the future of faith-based consumers in Africa, trends in population growth and family do correlate strongly with religious attitudes. Whilst the western world might be losing its attachment to faith-based practises and beliefs, as can be clearly seen in an increasingly secularized Europe, these trends point to startling opposite direction, which is a new significance for Africa (Okyere-Manu, 2018; & Oletewo, 2016).

Okyere-Marun (2018) and Oletewo, 2016 agree that because of this Africa is now home to the world's largest Christian and Muslim communities. Ethiopia's Christian population, at 6 million in 1900, will grow to a projected 100 million in 2050. In Nigeria, the population in 1900 included 4.2 million Muslims and 180,000 Christians, today, the country claims about 80 million of each faith, and each should grow by another 100 million by 2050 (Okyere-Marun, 2018; & Oletewo, 2018).

Olotewo (2016) highlighted that, marketers wishing to gain some traction in an African faith-based market must draw inspiration from:

- Leveraging value of AIKS
- Inherent belief systems which the faith-based communities hold dear
- Valuable traditional virtues like honesty, steadfastness, kindness, integrity, and justice.

If marketers are to understand how continental changes in Africa affect the potential impact of the faith-based consumers, ignoring AIKS is not an option, as it will result in failure of any marketing effort directed to these consumers.

### **Event-tourism marketing**

As it has been stated by many scholars in research that, Africa's population is the youngest in the whole world with at-least 20% of it's population being youth (Boucher, Calitz & Cullen, 2017; Okyere-Marui, 2018). These are economically active young people with purchasing powers.

Boucher et al., (2017) remarked that, firms and organisation who recognising this are attracted to the continent for investments and businesses linked to event-tourism. However, key to the success of these investments and partnerships is AIKS. Accordingly this means in Africa, events are not just a programme on the calendar, they are expected to:

- Provide some form of economic empowerment
- Create/establish/ a favourable image for the destination (against Africa's image)
- Address historical imbalances of the past

Boucher et al., (2017) estimates that global events hosted by African destinations, like the Cape-Town Jazz Festival, Mawazine in Morocco, Grahamstown Arts Festival and the Durban July combined bring in an estimated \$10 billion worth of economic benefits. These are examples of events that have adopted AIKS into their strategies and restored the values African knowledge systems.

### **4IR**

The future is 4IR and the success of this future is in the hands of African youth. That is why it is so important for firms wishing to implement 4IR marketing in Africa to learn, adapt and adopt AIKS in-order for their products and messaging to be appealing to the youth (Tredger, 2018). Various researchers agree that, whether or not Africa can leverage on the value of 4IR and address many of its challenges will depend on the buy-in and participation of its youth (Tredger, 2018; Knott-Craig, 2018; Rodny-Gumede, 2019).

This tremendous growth means that, Africa and the rest of the world are on the verge of yet another industrial revolution, and firms doing business in Africa are on the cusp of a colossal opportunities as Africa is the fastest growing continent (Iraki, 2018).

Africans too have an opportunity to make the best of this industrial revolution. Iraki (2018) point out the 3 options Africans have with regards to adopting 4IR:

- Africa can sit by and watch the rest of the world move on to 4IR
- Africa can 'leap-frog' this revolution, as they did the Second Industrial Revolution
- Africa can move itself up the value-chain and be champions of 4IR

There are firms that have taken up to 4IR without hesitation in Africa and made it work, firms like Zipline, distributing/delivering much needed medication in the far-flung areas of Rwanda by use of a remotely controlled drones. Iraki (2018) stated that, this is a service unique to the continent, because Africa's vastness and inaccessible territories, we might see drones taking over in this sector (health and lifestyle), with the help of 4IR.

## **Google Adwords**

Google and all its subsidiaries is a company that has somehow grasped the ethos of AIKS, to such an extent that they have customised the company's services and products to fit each country or region within which they operate. Google has gone as far as employing full time officials and CEO's of each major region they occupy in Africa, according to the Google Economic Impact report:

- For SADC, based in South Africa Mr Luke Mckend, heads the operations
  - West African nations have Ms Juliet Ehimuan based in Nigeria as head
  - The Eastern African region have their base in Kenya headed by Mr Charles Murito
- These individuals head large offices with customer-care and technical capabilities curated specifically for the region they serve. Customizing services and company structures is a strategy that serves to fulfil one of the very important pillars of AIKS, which is 'economic empowerment'

Due to its affordability, accessibility and ease of use, Google Adwords as a product of Google and an important contemporary marketing issue fits in perfectly within the African context of doing business. Google Adwords is a preferred platform by advertising agencies in Africa because of how well they have adopted AIKS whilst equally saturating the market.

## **NFC Marketing**

NFC as an element of marketing is a very diverse field with many uses, objectives and technologies. Africa is an unlikely continent for this contemporary marketing issue to thrive and find a home, but it has – atleast in some uses/technologies but not all.

Due to the fact that most of Africa's is suffering from high unemployment rates and poverty, most economically active people are migrant workers and or economic refugees (Walker, 2012). This means they do not live in the countries of birth and therefore cannot send money home as and when needed. Thomas (2011) believes that's where NFC marketing comes in with customised African services like:

- FNB eWallet (South Africa)
- Splash Money (Sierra Leone)
- MKesh (Mozambique)
- M-Pesa (Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan)

Whilst this use of 'money transfer' has taken off well and is used widely by Africans from all walks of life, it is not the only technology within the realm of NFC. The reason it saturated the market so well and effortlessly is because it is closely linked to the needs of Africans according to AIKS (Thomas, 2011). NFC marketing does not attempt to 'force-feed' Africans about what is good and what isn't – instead each product utilising the NFC technology is customised accordingly.

Unlike in other countries of the world, where NFC marketing is so common and accessible - in Africa the capital-intensive process of rolling out the infrastructure will be the big barrier to the adoption of more uses for NFC technologies.

## CONCLUSION

As contemporary marketing issues proliferate, wiping away traces of traditional marketing tools, companies need to find ways to connect more directly and interactively with prospects and existing customers.

Contemporary marketing issues are as a result of a changing global economies. This has an effect of everything we know about companies and it changes the way the globe has been doing business - e.g Business should now seriously consider employing people with titles like: Digital Marketer, Certified AdWords Specialist. Providers of these services are also coming up with new academic qualifications to help speed up implementation and saturation of various markets. So in order to be a Certified AdWords Specialist, one must enrol and attend classes with Google.

In an era of globalisation where businesses are influenced by the similar policies and expected to start operating on a uniform international scale and standards - it is worth noting that marketers are expected to keep in mind that, various countries have their own unique civilization and cultures. This translates into unique challenges for marketers hoping to incorporate contemporary marketing issues into their strategies.

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