

The modern marketing paradox

By [Antoinette Pombo](#)

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How to be a consistent youth brand in a time in which you have to be different

The youth are exposed to around 3000 ads per day and only a fraction of those come anywhere close to being noticed. It's no wonder then that brand managers are trying everything to get their brands to stand out. But this may not be the best approach at all. Creating disruptions in order to get noticed may result in the same negative reaction attention-grabbing children get!



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Five ways to make your youth brand stand out for the right reasons:

1. Messaging consistency is one of the hardest elements for marketers to control when they're trying desperately for their brand to be noticed. But the truth is trying to be funny or clever all the time seldom works. If you happen to get it right once and mess it up the rest of the time, you're doing more damage to your brand than good.

The easiest way to the youth's hearts is through value. If you create campaigns that are designed to add value to your young target market or their families, you will win them over for life. So, replace your empty and frivolous marketing messages with genuine, helpful messages, like a series of tips on how to find a job, for example. The youth are hungry for relevant information and advice.

2. Pricing: Given the choice, the youth will choose a well-known brand over a non-branded item – but not if they perceive your products to be overpriced. They too don't like being ripped off. They will happily buy unbranded items because they're more self-confident than yester-year youth so make their choice easier for them by applying fair pricing strategies.
3. Recognise them for what they are – important customers: Don't push your brand at them and expect them to buy it. Instead, take the time to understand them and mould your brand to fit into their lives. Analyse your brand's four P's (Product, Place, Price and Promotion) to check they're 'youth friendly'.
4. Don't forget functionality: Many brands are so busy trying to be super cool, funny or clever, they're barely functional. Remember, reliability, efficiency, ease-of-use, convenience, accessibility, security, professionalism and transparency are the first steps to sustainability.
5. Reward your customers: A 'thank you' goes a long way in consumerism – it tells your customer that you've acknowledged them and appreciate their patronage. Find frank ways to appreciate your customers on personal level, perhaps on their birthdays or on the anniversary of important occasions... Something that says, 'You're special to us'.

Thankfully, being different these days isn't that difficult because many brands are missing the opportunity to swoon their customers. Don't try to make your brands cool, funny or clever, instead be real and be there for your customers, they'll appreciate you in more ways than you can imagine!

For real insights on the youth market, [contact Youth Dynamix \(YDx\)](#), a specialist research and marketing consultancy in Africa.

ABOUT ANTOINETTE POMBO

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