

The decade of partnership

Maersk's head of marketing and business development for Africa, Anita de Werd, spoke to Bizcommunity.com about global marketing trends on a recent visit to Cape Town, exclusively for BizTrends2020.



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"2020 is the decade of partnership. People are realising that only by joining hands, can we change the world," said De Werd.

Specifically, on Africa trends, Dutch-born De Werd, who has made her home in Nigeria, said Africa is ahead of the curve when it comes to mobile communications.

"Where Africa is doing better, is mobile communications, there we are way ahead of the curve compared to rest of world. Also, on telling stories – it is a DNA thing in Africa. Where we are also doing better is understanding the importance of relationships - it's a focus in Africa, and also where we are ahead of the curve and where we are more effective in that kind of marketing."

The biggest challenge, however, is metrics: measuring the impact of your marketing, she said.

As a global marketer, these are the changes and key shifts that De Werd sees ahead in this new decade:

- Marketing as a discipline is getting more and more at the heart of business. With data, we can direct the business forward. That is where marketing is going. It used to be more about finance, but marketing will be more accessible.
- Personalisation will become more and more important. One message fits all is more and more difficult. You really have to have relevant content. You need to know your markets very well; you need to know your customers very well. You have to tell a story on why you are different from the competition, what you are bringing to marketing.
- Then, in this personalisation, a lot of corporates struggle to compare offer of company A with company B. You need to help companies with that and get more into that decision-making process. Customer insights are very important here, understanding the customer.
- There is too much content. Content needs to be targeted.
- If you are not on mobile, forget it. There are a lot of bandwidth problems in Africa. People don't have laptops, so the smartphone is their tool to interact with the rest of the world. If you, your platforms, your presence, are not mobile friendly, then forget it.

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