

No ordinary marketing event!

By  Refiloe Khumalo

16 Oct 2019

The first annual #UJMarketingFit experience in collaboration with Boo-Yah! Modern Marketing Services took place on 2 October 2019 at the University of Johannesburg.



Singing the South African national anthem, a call to stand united, as marketers and businesses pledge to start fixing tomorrow's problems, today. Image supplied.

Just a day before the event, the University of Johannesburg (UJ) was graced by a visit from the Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle. This visit championed the energy for the #UJMarketingFit event where the royalties of the marketing industry spoke and attended.



Conferences are dead. Experiences are in!

Boo-Yah! 3 Sep 2019



Solving tomorrow's problems, today

The event was born from a co-creative partnership between Boo-Yah and the UJ department of marketing management to create a memorable and innovative learning experience for the audience.

The event theme was "solving tomorrow's problems today". The diverse speaker lineup, hand-picked and organised by Boo-Yah founder Carmen Murray, and the topics discussed truly pushed the limits of the business ecosystem.

The event commenced with everyone singing the South African National anthem as a call to unite and stand together to effectively deal with the issues that South African society and businesses are faced with.

The space created was conducive for honest conversation and to drive change. Instead of focusing on trends, the event allowed for speakers to shed light on some of the most pressing issues currently affecting – not only the marketing industry but the business environment as a whole, and how marketers/business professionals have a responsibility to be aware and engage with these problems in their organisations. All was not too serious either.

“ About today at the UJMarketingFit Experience! Really opened my mind and inspired me. [@CarmenMurraySA](#) [@bronwynwilliams](#) you are both absolutely beautiful [#UJMarketingFit](#) [#BooYah](#) [#FutureFit](#) [#TheFutureReimagined](#) [pic.twitter.com/qGIQVggwvr](#)— Micaela Magro (@caelacakes_xo) [October 2, 2019](#) ”

The audience was entertained by the UJ Arts students who acted out sketches related to the speakers' talks, performed a surprise dance routine during the lunch session, as well as entertainment by performing artists Mo Malele and Nontokoza Mokoena.

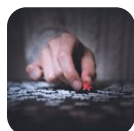
Carmen Murray opened the programme with a compelling statement:

“ The moment that you join a company, you no longer represent the voice of the customer. You represent the voice of the stakeholders, your KPIs, you have to be politically correct; there is a lot of politics happening around you and the fact is, once you have lost your voice; you can no longer be the voice of the customer. ”

Insightful insights

The speaker lineup was impressive and featured prominent figures in the business sphere from CMOs to entrepreneurs, who challenged, provoked and disrupted the conventional way of thinking.

Hers & His is a company determined to bring to light on how culture influences how businesses operate in the modern world, and how it can be positively framed to bring change in the workplace. Duo Ingrid Lotze and Gavin Moffat delivered a heart-wrenching talk titled 'Culture dilemma of the 21st century: The good, the bad and ugly shaping the future of the business'.



#FutureFit Yourself: Going back to basics

Carmen Murray 8 Aug 2019



Pepe Marais, a keynote speaker, author, co-founder and chief executive officer of Joe Public United, took us all on an inward journey to explore our purpose – which was mixed in with interesting facts and stories from his personal life.

His talk was, titled 'The bolster strategy for "purposeless" business', reflective. It was able to empower and inspire a new level of seeing business and how having a clear purpose can take you to new heights.

Dr Melanie van Rooy, former group marketing director for DisChem, offered an informed discussion on 'The data conundrum of the 21st century, standing in the way of creative business models'.

John Vlismas, former comedian, business oracle and disruptive thinker, as well as Mike Sharman, CEO of Retroviral Digital

Communications, stood out with their eccentric talks offering an enlightened perspective on the business environment. Pushing the boundaries and even presenting paradigm shifts in the way we view business success.

The head of segment mass market for Nedbank, Daisy Thlapane, gave us a grounded outlook on **trust** as the currency of the 21st century.

Her talk was in the form of three questions:

- What tools are you using to define your customer?
- Are you authentic toward fulfilling your brand promise?
- Is your perception of their reality?

Musa Kalenga, the founder as well as CEO of Bridge Labs and The House of Brave Group, shared a relatable and informative talk on creative strategies to reach the woke reluctant consumer.

Some of the trends he discussed were:

- The shift from desktop to a mobile device (and what he calls the micro-computer constant companion)
- The shift from one mobile device to more than one.
- The shift from text to visual and
- The shift from attention-seeking to attention-demanding (search to discover)



#FutureFit Yourself: The culture gap conundrum

Carmen Murray 21 Mar 2019



A royal wedding of marketing all-sorts

Multi-talented Kimberleigh Stark, the chairperson of Saftas, founder of Stark Raving, actress, casting director and judge, gave a graceful talk on how to fuel creativity and inspire innovation while she prompted the audience on different case studies.

She commented in her talk addressing storytelling in advertising saying: "We're all so busy trying to be woke, hip and happening, that we are so sensitive about everything." She posed the question "How do you draw that line, how do you play, have fun and be entertaining and not get into trouble?"

Herman Singh, CEO and professor, had all enthralled in his talk as he shared with us some of the major changes happening in the industry. One of them being the death of advertising, and how marketers need to rethink their strategies and the changing marketing landscape.



#Bookmarks2019: The importance of digital is to be of service to humans first

Juanita Pienaar 17 Apr 2019



The UJ department of marketing management had loads to share about the relationship between academia and the working world and how they can work effectively together to create a better world for the customer.

"Thought-provoking speakers, industry champions and Africa's best academic marketing department all in one room. It's like a royal wedding – all the who's who was there. Marketing is an evolving discipline. The consumer is more finicky. This

event is a means where we can learn best practices from each other,” said UJ’s Marius Wait.

The #UJMarketingFit event is far from over! Bonus material in the form of Podcasts and white papers addressing pressing marketing and business challenges were developed through a collaboration with *The Carmen Murray Show* and the UJ department of marketing management.

A total of six podcasts and white papers will be released over the coming weeks that include:

- Spotting Pop Futurist vs Professional Futurist (released before the event)
- AI
- Data
- EQ
- Culture
- Customer experiences

Keep an eye out!

ABOUT REFILOE KHUMALO

As one of the future leaders in the communication industry, Refiloe Khumalo was tasked to cover the UJ Marketing event as a means to bridge the gap between the working and academic world.

■ #UJMarketingFit Experience: No ordinary marketing event! - 16 Oct 2019

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