

# 5 marketing trends to look out for in 2022

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We've heard it a thousand times before: "Digital marketing is constantly changing". And it's true: in 2021 Facebook alone issued over 40 updates - 40!



In an attempt to keep up with these changes - and to learn more about what we can expect in 2022 - we chatted to Fadi Sader, a digital and strategic expert at Wavemaker South Africa. Sader has been with Wavemaker since 2018 and has nine years' experience in media and communications. His commitment to elevating performance and profitability for his clients, together with his tactical and strategic approach to brand reputation and digital marketing, led to his recent appointment as head of content at Wavemaker South Africa.

In the following piece, Sader outlines the top five strategic marketing trends to look out for this year and beyond. As digital marketers, we – and our strategies – need to be as dynamic as the world around us. Research has shown that strategies that are constantly tweaked and tested can have results that are seven times more effective than campaigns that follow a non-dynamic approach.

With that in mind, how do we set ourselves up for success in 2022, and what trends should we consider when pulling our strategies together?

## 1. Content is key

If I had just one recommendation for 2022, this would be it.

We're tasked to help our clients understand how to reach their consumers, but now more than ever, it's the "what" that's important. We've all heard of data-driven media but now we need to start thinking of data-driven content.

In Q3 2020, Facebook had 10,000,000 active advertisers promoting various products and services. This indicates just how competitive our environment is; we're fighting for consumers' attention against brands that number into the millions. Gone are the days when we looked at media and content separately. Today, they're a cohesive, integrated pair.

And this content needs to be specific. According to Everage, 92% of marketers say consumers expect a personalised experience. Which brings me to my next point.

## 2. The rise of AI

Here, I'm talking about the kind of AI that allows marketers to implement dynamic campaigns that optimise ROI for clients.

The beauty of AI marketing is that it can understand millions of consumer data points in a split second and show the right creative to the right person at the right time.

Another Everage study showed that 99% of marketers say personalisation helped advance customer relationships, with 78% claiming it had a "strong" or "extremely strong" impact. We've seen it in the numbers, with CTRs of over 35% outperforming every other metric in the digital environment.

### **3. Now more than ever, video**

Covid caused fundamental shifts in digital marketing. During lockdown, consumers started to spend more time on their devices, which meant that they were more likely to engage with long-form content, including videos.

Looking ahead, the prediction that stands out the most for me is that the average person is expected to spend 100 minutes per day watching online videos in 2022. That alone makes video content the most crucial part of any successful strategy. Combine it with the fact that we see an average of five times better results from video than static content and you've got a winning formula.

### **4. Conversational marketing**

With millions of data points available and AI making it easier than ever to launch personalised marketing campaigns, it's time to establish "one-on-one" communication with consumers. An Epsilon study in 2018 showed that 80% of consumers were more likely to do business with a brand that offered personalised experiences. This likelihood has only increased in the years since.

Through remarketing, audience building and automation, we can segment the consumer funnel and have indirect data-driven conversations with consumers based on their particular needs. This humanises brands and ultimately helps drive consumers towards businesses' end goals.

It sounds complicated, but it's really broken down into three steps:

1. Offer consumers what they want based on their data points
2. Create better content based on their previous behaviours
3. Humanise your brand by giving consumers more friendly and personalised experiences

With a well thought out strategy and the understanding that this will need constant tweaking, marketers can start using this to develop data pools that drive better ROI on other campaigns.

### **5. Micro-influencer marketing**

Influencer marketing has become an essential medium in the success of many strategies, showing massive ROI compared to other traditional mediums. This is mainly because referrals are one of the top reasons consumers purchase or buy into a product or brand. But with big influencers constantly changing their sponsorships, it's hard for consumers to trust that influencer referrals aren't being bought, which reduces their authenticity and impact.

As a result, we've seen the rise of the micro-influencer, influencers who might have a smaller following, but whose views are considered more authentic and trusted.

In 2022 we'll see that influencers' powers won't be measured by the sheer number of people they can reach but rather the relationships they hold with their followers.

This ever-evolving space favours flexibility and ingenuity. With a bit of both, your brands will be the ones to stand out amid the noise.

"I am excited to watch Fadi's growth journey at Wavemaker, in his new role as head of content he brings a happy marriage of great strategic acumen and creative prowess to bear. Expect to see guidance on the evolving landscape from Metaverse playbooks, dynamic content solutions and truly deliberate strategies built to deliver business results from Fadi and his

team," said Merissa CEO Incumbent Wavemaker South Africa.

This new role at Wavemaker will make Sader responsible for the leadership of the team that will develop various content streams for clients including long and short form video, blogs, infographics, data visualisations as well as strategy and analytics that speak back to the core of Wavemaker's service offering suite.

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