

African research dominated by mobile, social media

By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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There is a cry for insight into African markets, yet there is very little data capability, and what data is available, is often out of date and not accurate. At least, that's the perception.



data/ © dolgachov via [123RF](#)

“The result of this perception is that in Africa we are not going to get to a point very quickly where we can predict what is going to happen,” said Dawn Rowlands, Aegis Media Sub-Saharan Africa CEO. “When clients talk to us, they are looking for campaign performance. “They want to talk to consumers across all browsers, devices and inventory types,” she added.

Rowlands was presenting at the JCDecaux Africa Annual conversation 2018 Connected Brand Stories conference that took place recently in Bryanston.

However, she said, when they did an extensive search on what is available and what can be used and what can be used to potentially innovate across the region to help clients, they found very little email addresses, but a lot of mobile, social and CRM data.

“There is quite a bit of econometric modelling and media data and seeing the modelling happening at top level is a game changer for clients and has led clients to place 25% more, with a 100% growth in digital investment this year,” she said.



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She explained that in the four markets, South Africa Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria, they used single source, 80 plus touchpoints to examine one environment and then compare them and track duplication between media. “Devices were used and so we could overly cookie data. This data set allows us to plan media based on engagement.

“That data is building quickly. By March next year you will see some interesting products from us,” she added.

Change

Africa is changing more quickly than we think she said. “No one is starting with a legacy as they are all leap frogging and starting from the beginning. Maybe South Africa’s advertising industry will experience some legacy issues, but not the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, which will go directly into a new model of advertising.”

“Our aim is 200 million connected consumers in Sub Saharan Africa. If you think that the United States has 300 million personal IDs already, then, from an African perspective this is totally achievable,” she added.

While Out of Home (OOH) investments levels in South Africa are very low (5%), in Kenya and Nigeria, they are much higher - 25% and 40% respectively. “When it comes to Digital Out of Home (DOOH) South Africa is even further behind at 2% compared to 10% in Kenya and 40% in Nigeria. Yet people are spending more and more time out of home,” Rowlands said.

“If we can create an environment where we understand the people’s passion in these countries - and there is more to Africa than music and football - than we can create great content.”

We underestimate the effect that global and environmental trends are having on Africa, she told the audience. Geopolitical factors often led to a volatile environment.

“When the elections in Ghana were postponed, our figures dropped by 40%. Geopolitical events/factor also have a massive effect on the economy.”

Societal factors include cause marketing which is far more extreme in these environments. Technology is a huge factor. “Most people look at Africa and only see that most people are on feature phones. The reality is that most of the market has worked out how to communicate using less tech enabled devices. Technology challenges are only challenges if we allow them to be,” she stressed.

“In addition, GDP growth and advertisement investment as well as ad spend shows that our business needs to change quite quickly. There is turmoil in our environment.”

In the near future, she believed that media companies will be consolidating across the Sub-Saharan African region.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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