

How brands can win in the digital era

By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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We are entering the digital era. In 2022 voice commerce sales is projected to be US\$40bn in the US alone. Does this mean marketers should abandon long-term branding? No, says Doreen Wang, the global head of BrandZ.



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“Branding is not lost and marketing is not a cost. They are the most important investment and will continue to be.”

Wang gave five key lessons for brands to win in the digital era at the recent Brand Z launch in Johannesburg and Cape Town.



Leverage digital to accelerate growth of brand equity and value

Doreen Wang, Kantar 28 Jun 2017



Lesson 1: Have a strong brand purpose

Brands with a strong brand purpose know why they exist and ask how they can make the world and people's lives better. "These brands live their purpose every day. They are successful, and they have more halo benefits, for example, they are the best places to work."

Lesson 2: Perceived innovation

This is the biggest driver of the five lessons. It drives brand value, not innovation. Perceived innovation is innovation that is noticed and endorsed by consumers. "Only brands perceived to have high innovation are able to achieve this in the minds of consumers. A brand is either in the top tier or bottom; there is no middle tier. Brands in the middle might as well be in the bottom. That is why innovation and perceived innovation is so important."

Lesson 3: Communications

“While the format of communication has changed, its foundation has not. Strong communications – not just great advertising - still put your brand at an advantage. Brands that use communications to amplify their innovation, allow consumers to endorse it.”

Lesson 4: Brand experience

Delivering great brand experiences, again and again, allow you to grow your relationship with consumers. It needs to be noted that brand engagement and experience and transaction experiences are merging on the e-commerce platform.

Lesson 5: Love

If consumers form an emotional attachment to your brand, then your brand will grow. Love sustains this value. It is the intangible and subjective aspect of choosing a brand that gives consumers pleasure.

“The pathway to build a meaningful different brand starts with a strong brand purpose that motivates your consumer and yourself, that delivers innovation that consumers feel and endorse. Followed by great communications amplify this, and a great brand experience cements it,” she adds



Brands disrupting the playing fields

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“Love follows brand experience. It is the cushion till your next big innovation. Technology enables, but it is the human touch that will give you the edge,” she concludes.

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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