

# Is your digital agency about thought creation or regurgitation?

 By [Anice Hassim](#)

18 Oct 2011

Are you surrounded by talkers or doers when it comes to getting into the digital space? You may know the type that just sits there pontificating about this that or the other but, when push comes to shove, doesn't deliver the goods. We definitely know them; hell, we've even had to work with them from time to time but it's time to embrace a breath of fresh new digital air...

## Rebooting required

Without a doubt, the post-PC revolution has brought tremendous challenges to organisations wishing to take advantage of the massive migration of users to these platforms. With the new intimacy of technology (post-PC devices in particular resonate with humans at a far more intimate level than PCs), architecting, managing and deploying solutions within organisations require a rebooting of hardware assumptions, software integration and people support.

Unfortunately, often when we sit across from potential clients and espouse the brave new world of Post-PC devices and what it takes to be a real player in the market, many of them look at us like the proverbial spy who came in from the cold. My question is, "Why?"

In my experience, it's largely because their partners to date haven't been servicing them as they should.

## Create something out of nothing

It's one thing to be able to drive someone else's platform but it's quite another to create something out of nothing - in this instance, unequivocal intellectual property (IP). So the reality is because digital now touches every part of your business, you don't need people who know about social media as much as people who create, and the only way an agency gets to do that is to have its own IP.

The mobile agencies aren't going to tell you that SMS messaging is needlessly expensive, limiting and frustrating to users. They aren't going to tell you that messaging costs could be collapsed by encouraging your users to use your app, and then communicating to them via push notifications, rather than SMS. They are NOT going to tell you the truth of a future that threatens their very existence.

One of the biggest challenges we face, however, is explaining to clients that the issue is not one of budget but of innovation. If all you do is deploy budget, you'll never get anything that transcends your brand.

## Listening to a talking head

But all too often it's not that the clients don't have the resources but rather the knowledge and skill provided by the right partner. They've basically been listening to a talking head who has sold them a raft of ideas, as opposed to actually implementing them.

What's clear then is that a new generation of digital agency is required to unpack and help clients architect and deploy interventions.

In Africa, we have even more significant challenges in that resources, skills and infrastructure are thin and scarce. Much of the supply chain and consulting ability in Africa, in particular, operate as pilot fish for their principles and are generally large solutions providers and carriers.

Many of these agencies depend on the status quo for their livelihood but the bottom line is that they are not able to sell you the future, only the past.

## ABOUT ANICE HASSIM

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