

The year of living simply

By [Rudy Hassiem](#)

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2017 should be the year of simplicity. Not to call myself old, but I grew up in an era where TV led the conversation, closely followed by radio. ATL agencies were rock stars with design and BTL communications a little rebelesque in their operations. Yep, it was a simple time.



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In the era of now, however, we operate with native marketing, content marketing, influencer engagement strategies, not to mention livestreaming, chatbots and social strategies.

It is a smorgasbord of doohickeys which the savvy marketer can use to tweak, tinker and twiddle their way to increased engagement levels.

As a self-professed tinkerer, having this array of tools plus all of the traditional tools, is heaven sent. As a matter of fact, I spent many conversational hours discussing the value of true segmentation and having the ability to micro adjust your strategies to reach a more precise segment of the market. The segment which you know already has the awareness, interest and desire to purchase your product.

But how do we go about using all of these tools to engage in way that is simple? How do we make 2017 the year of simplicity? The issue is that as experts we still buy into the philosophy that the shiny pony is the best one to place all your bets on, and then spread the rest of your risk across those other remaining horses.

If we took the same exercise into a controlled experiment environment, then all we are saying is that we are willing to add so many variables into our controlled experiment that the actual determination of efficacy is null and void.

So, let's get back to 2017 and my belief that the biggest trend has to be, and is going to be, simplicity. I am sure that this will be a recurring point from many other contributors and I am therefore honoured to be in such esteemed company.

How do we simplify though?

Let's take this into the boardroom. How many rooms have you been in where the question was asked, "who is the target market?" The answer was often a very clear "Segment A. With overlaps into Segment B and C". Clear as mud, particularly as those segments would operate and consume communication in very different ways. Even more confusing in a country such as South Africa where we have to include additional factors such socio-economic influences, lifestyle trends, geography and history.

So, what if simplicity was not about the tools we used, but the absolute clarity as to who our consumers were and the engagement tools which they used to stay connected to the world? What if simplicity was not about the technology but about the conversation? You know - the kind that leaves both parties richer and more rewarded.

What if simplicity meant that you used less to do more, that you had more honest conversations and less marketing smoke and mirrors?

What if simplicity was a matter of being more human? What if it meant that we spent more time looking our consumers' in the eye and talking to them? Truly understanding their needs and adjusting our products to suit their world, as opposed to the other way around. Yes, simplicity, is not a trend, but it should possibly be a way of life. A connected, but more rewarding life. But don't take my word for it, look into case studies for brands such as P&G and Coca Cola, who have already started understanding that a simpler connection is more valued.

I wish you all the success for 2017 and hope that you are able to engage the power of simplicity in all you do.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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