

Online influencers are the billboards of 2015

 By [Mike Sharman](#)

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"The kids play in dark marketing spaces."

Influencer marketing, Africa and reaching the Millennials in the hidden, dark spaces they inhabit online, means brands need to enhance their cult status to win over Generation Z.

Q: Your most significant industry trends for 2015?

A: Influencer marketing will continue to grow exponentially, globally; better video content, more South Africans are consuming video on the go; Millennial moola - the kids have more cash to burn, but they play in dark marketing spaces - IM apps and closer knit groups. Penetrate the closed groups by enhancing your cult status.

Q: Your 'game changer' trend in 2014?

A: Influencer marketing and the monetisation thereof. A game changer for previously 'amateur' publishers, which now have the opportunity to professionalise the passion through which they have built engaged communities. In this revolution of media... online influencers are the billboards of 2015.

Q: What do you hope to see less of going into a New Year?

A: Less talk about 'this year being the year of mobile' and agencies/clients truly understanding the right handset to talk to the right audience. Less of Africa being referred to as a country. As we continue to target more consumers across the continent, we realise how diverse each state is. Africa is not an individual so let's stop being arrogant/ignorant South Africans and make an effort to dive into learning about the amazing cultures that populate this continent filled with opportunities.

Q: What do you hope to see more of in 2015?

A: Continued investment in online video - with high production quality and greater commitment to purchasing the media to support remarkable content. Campaigns need to be seen and the only way this will happen is with media support.

Q: What advice do you have for your peers for the next year?

A: Consider the sales funnel more and how you can continue to create remarkable content that elicits emotion/consideration and develop the rationale for consumers to purchase the product featured within the content. Our job as marketers is to connect people with our brands. Let's be more awareness plus consideration plus commerce.

Q: What would you like to tell your clients?

A: Hold my hand and let's continue to create tomorrow what didn't exist today. Thank you for being more friend and less

client.

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Mike Sharman is the owner of Retroviral Digital Communications, an online communications consultancy specialising in communication strategy, social media and content creation.

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