

Leveraging essential services for essential needs

By [Candy Dempers](#), issued by [MediaHeads 360](#)

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We have become quite accustomed to the term "essential services" during lockdown 2020. Our lived reality during the Covid-19 pandemic is that an essential service is someone or something that delivers a 'must-have' for society to be adequately stocked, serviced, fed and maintained. Food, medicine, electricity, telecoms, emergency services and the finance sector are a few of the obvious essentials that come to mind.



From the way local social media has exploded with home remedies, private deliveries of all sorts and what could be best described as illicit trading, it is also obvious to see what is not generally considered to be an essential service. From roasted chickens, stationery, hardware items and [yeast](#), we've had to accept government's reasoning around essential services.

It was while I was dreaming of a freshly roasted chicken and a white wine spritzer on the freshly painted table at my neighbour's house, that I started thinking about industry-specific services and at what point they become an essential consideration and not a nice-to-have. Media marketing and sales, as well as their associated broadcast, print and digital platforms, are currently weathering a wave of uncertainty. Many big brands have halted spend and are considering future campaigns after the corona pandemic while others are moving, and repositioning current spend to be more tactical with limited budgets.

Now more than ever you need to consider essential partners when leveraging brand spend to promote products and services to people. Like brewing homemade beer using pineapples, yeast and sugar, there is a chance that you get it right. In fact, you may even get it right more than once, and that is the long-term problem you are setting yourself up with. After two or three successful buckets in the sun, you will consider yourself a brew master, when in fact you are just a home brewer. To experience constant long-term euphoria and that crisp taste, leave it to the professionals.

So, what are the essential professional services you need to activate, captivate and amplify?

To connect with audiences and stand out, you need exceptional **creative** thinking and solutions. Ideas need to solve brand problems and offer entertaining and engaging touchpoints for both platform (radio and TV) as well as audiences. Creative solutions need to be bold, brand-conscious, on-brief and on-budget. There is not an opportunity post-covid to consider the best creative options for your brand. We need to understand that we will come out of the current lockdown and those brands that have done the groundwork now will win with audiences and capture the first wave of consumer spend. A strong creative plan is the first step out of the covid-blocks (so to speak).

Budgeting and campaign costs are more relevant now than ever. The South African economy is going to be challenged like never before. **Relationships** with key platforms, presenters and production companies will prove to be invaluable as brands seek to extract maximum value on their investment. It will be essential to work and partner with a team that is respected in the industry and who have developed key relationships that are genuine and well established. There is no doubt that established relationships carry a level of trust and honesty that add a level of value that far exceeds the budgeted expectation.

An essential key to running a campaign is running the campaign. Efficient **campaign management** is the silent essential service that ensures that the 360-degree thinking and planning is seamlessly executed. Experienced campaign managers identify areas of concern and address them before they become problematic, they have a keen eye for detail and will spot booking and billing errors as well as briefing issues at platform level. Part of successful campaign management is the supplying of regular status updates as well as a comprehensive post-campaign analysis. Partner with a team that runs your

campaign like it is their own.

The Covid-19 crisis has put renewed focus on **technology** and has thrust us further into the 4IR. To thrive it is essential to work with people and companies who embrace technology and leverage the latest offerings as well as proven tech platforms when considering marketing and advertising initiatives. Not only must you be where your audience is, you must always engage and extend your reach with the consumer. Technology must also not be used for technology's sake, it needs to make sense, add value and be user-friendly for both consumer and broadcast platform. The key messaging around technology is that it needs to form an essential part when crafting and creating campaigns.

The one resource that is often underestimated is **time**. Time and timing is an essential ingredient in any campaign. Take the time to develop and cultivate a long-term partnership with a team of experts you can trust. The reason why this is essential is that it will save you time in the long run; it will eliminate the thinking, worrying and micro-management of elements that are best handled by an essential media partner, giving you more time to focus on the business of your business.

The buzz off the backend of lockdown is "the new normal". There is no doubt that business, business cycles and businesses purposes will have been affected and will change. While "the new normal" becomes the norm, the essential media services will evolve and adapt. The good ones will still:

- consider creative thinking and solutions;
- build develop and maintain relationships;
- take control through efficient campaign management;
- harness technology;
- and be mindful of time and timelines.

Our team at Mediaheads 360 is living and working "the new normal" and embraces being an essential media service. At MediaHeads 360 we: **ACTIVATE** by creating holistic, result-driven campaigns within the right environment; **CAPTIVATE** through well-implemented and engaging campaigns with multiple touchpoints; **AMPLIFY** and optimise your reach and impact with 360 solutions.

ABOUT CANDY DEMPERS

Candy Dempers has loved all things media for twenty-three years. A sales and marketing specialist, her first love was radio and bringing brands and platforms together.

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