

Marketing lessons from 2021

The country has been resilient as we unpack the meaning of a new variant and South Africans and the business community continue to remain agile as our economy evens out and rebounds alongside other countries.



Image supplied

South Africa's back to work momentum is gaining traction as optimism to open up the country's sectors and regain 2020 losses has become more apparent. Corporate resilience has risen and businesses have weathered many storms and learned vital lessons to fortify their bottom line into 2022.

Gareth Grant at The MediaShop said that some marketing lessons in the financial sector stood out for him this year. "We've seen a continued rise in contactless payments. Covid-19 has had a dramatic impact on the rise of contactless and cashless payments in South Africa. As much as cash is still king in the informal sector, we are seeing a rapid increase in the adoption of other cashless solutions in the form of POS devices linked to mobile phones," he said.

"Another observation during this year has been the growth of money transfers, which has rocketed during the course of continued lockdowns and as consumers have limited movement," said Grant. "As long as someone has a mobile phone, they can receive a money transfer and withdraw the cash from an ATM. Money transfers transcend more than your traditional banks, we see the likes of telecom companies operating heavily in this space, and we expect this to continue to grow in popularity, along with the received funds being spent via contactless payment solutions as well. This will ultimately lead to a better end-user experience."



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In the entertainment space, The MediaShop's Louise Hefer adds that lockdown accelerated the growth of streaming services and viewing behaviour during 2020.

"Although that slowed slightly in 2021, not reaching the same levels as the initial lockdown in 2020, all indications show that consumer viewing habits have changed permanently compared to pre-Covid-19 levels. In the war for audience share, there are two categories that continuously tip the scale – sport and local content," she said.

"With various sporting events kicking off again in 2021, viewership has shown an increase around these. Most of us know the power of local content – and there has been some noteworthy ones this year - we can see that whenever a new local production has launched, viewership spikes and viewer engagement and conversation increase on social media channels. Sport and local content will always have the ability to attract great audiences," Hefer continued.

In the beauty category, Maggie Pronto says that as with most sectors, this industry was massively impacted by Covid. "With working from home and having to continuously wear a mask, beauty product usage declined with cosmetics being the most challenged. On the flip side, some categories like hair colour experienced growth when salons were not seen as an essential service and consumers needed to colour their grey away."



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"Although lipstick is steadily recovering to its pre-pandemic popularity the industry still faces an uncertain path with consumer behaviour being impacted and adjustments being made for months to come," Pronto said. "The beauty industry has always been at the forefront of innovation and reinvention and with their increased e-commerce drive, this year has been no exception. From clean beauty (eco-friendly) to AI cosmetic solutions, not to mention a drive to support sustainability, brands will be looking to enhance their customer experience and build more meaningful connections going into next year."

The cyclical recovery in global economic growth will transcend gradually into 2022. The year has been forecasted as a year impacted with renewed confidence. This momentum will complement an increase in ad spend as digital channels increase their consumption and reach.