

# Far behind the CX trend

 By [Zama Manjana](#)

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With the surge of e-commerce in recent years, retail marketers have experienced a shift from generic marketing to customer-focused marketing that looks deeply into data to drive more real customer experience. The success of this has resulted in many digital campaigns that continue to be revenue drivers. A common example of this can be found in the execution of email marketing campaigns.



When I first entered the industry, we worked off a huge database, a pool of email addresses, acquired in way undefinable. Some of these emails were either bought databases or sign-up from a drunken trade show. Our only mandate was to send out a set number of emails a week – hit 'send' and hope for the best. Today, impeccable sense has seeped into marketing in a way that has made it almost odd to imagine how retailers ran their business in “the good old days”.

But here's what troubles me. As I survey the retail industry, the good old days are not a distant past for many retailers. We can never be ignorant of the fact that while some retailers are evolving with new technology, digital trends and even AI – others remain stuck in the archaic way of running their businesses. Remaining stagnant leaves them far from reach of their ever-evolving customer.

I don't know what to call this retailer. Ignorant or arrogant, or a bit of both. For SMEs, this retailer may likely be ignorant – and that I can understand. I have worked with a number of SMEs, led by great businessmen and women who were not too literate with omni-marketing or acquiring customers through digital platforms. These companies were more open to agency advice, third-party assistance and listening to trends.

The large companies, I found, led more with their arrogant knowledge. Limited knowledge, but arrogant. Big business has kept the lights on for years, running on profit, and this makes it hard for them to accept a new wave of knowledge about their customer. In fact, it goes beyond ignoring their shopper's evolution, they may go as far as dismissing employees who foster this change and evolutionary thinking, killing their creativity and blocking them out from the desire of "future state".



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When KPMG published its report *Global Retail Trends 2019*, I noticed that the companies I've just described lag far behind the trend, because retail just got deeper and hyper-personalisation is now a thing. Hyper-personalisation is not just about data, it's about more and more data. It helps create an even deeper way for the retailer to come close to the customer.

Without concise knowledge of who the customer is, I mean who they *really* are (not who you think or may have thought they are), retailers can never fully understand why the graph looks the way it does and why some brands they work with seem to pull out and find better business opportunities.

Customer experience is not new, it's been a thing for the longest time. Hyper-personalisation is just a whole new level to help retailers and retail marketers speak to the needs of today's customer.

In this digital world, with highly contextual software and technology to help retailers evolve with customers, there are countless solutions to help retailers optimise their offering.

## ABOUT ZAMA MLANJANA

Zama Manjana is a marketer specialising in e-commerce and omni-channel, with close to 7 years of industry experience. Her focus is on customer experience, studying trends and working with developers to improve UX and help grow retail business revenue through profitable e-retailing strategies.

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