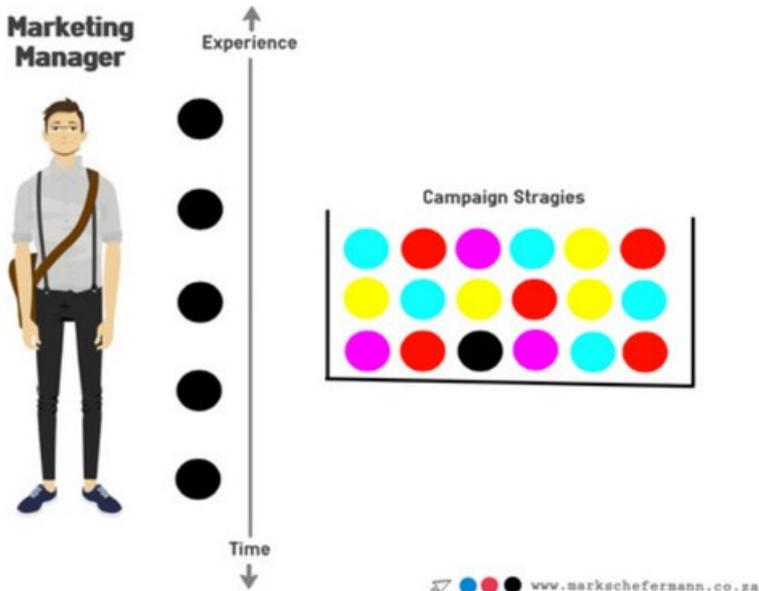


Digital phobia: The fear of new media

By [Mark Schefermann](#)

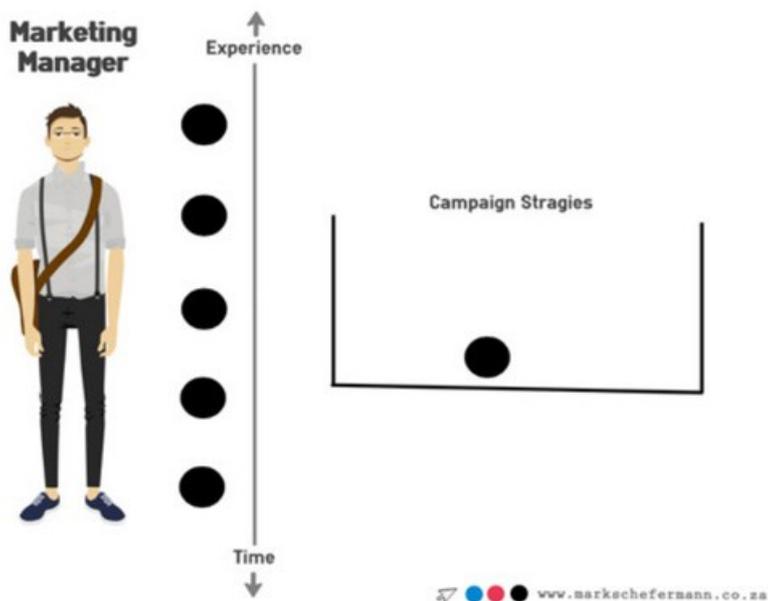
2 Nov 2012

At the beginning of the year I attended a strategy workshop. One of the concepts we were taken through was the theory behind why people often don't like trying new things, specifically when it comes to marketing.



Working at a digital agency we often deal with clients who experience what I like to call "digital phobia" the fear of using new media and digital for marketing strategies. The cause of this phobia is due to a lack of knowledge and/or lack of willingness to learn about these new innovative media solutions. Above is an illustration of this phobia in practice. Here we have a marketing manager who over time and the years he has spent in the marketing industry, has gained a lot of experience and knowledge. This experience determines how he plans, implements and measures his marketing strategies. The black circles illustrate this experience over time and the box to the right illustrates the new media and digital solutions available. However, due to the marketing manager's experience and what he has done successfully in the past, he selects all the black circles for his marketing strategy because that's what he knows and has done well in the past.

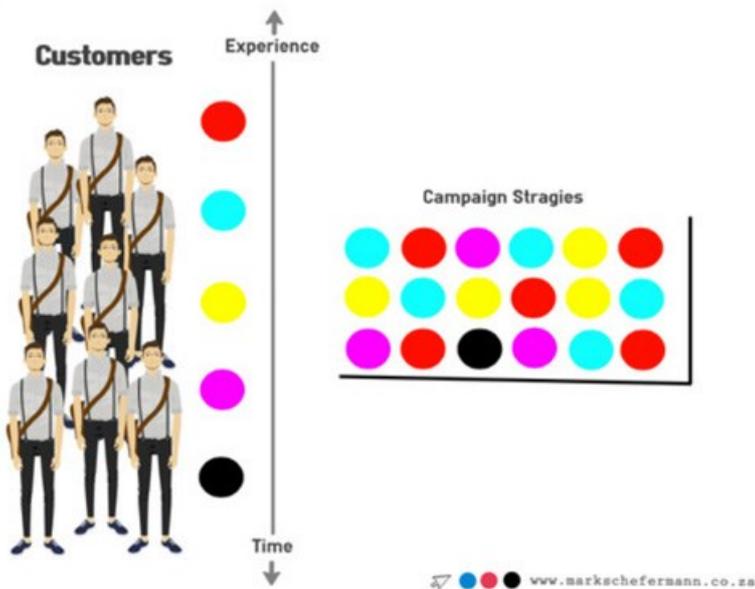
These black circles can represent TV, print, radio, email and SMS campaigns. The problem is that there are so many more options available, like SEM (Search Engine Marketing), Social Media, Display Advertising, RFID and NFC technology for activations and so much more. If marketers don't know what it is and how it works they very often don't trust it and aren't willing to give it a try. The reality is digital is the most measurable form of advertising, we can track just about every detail and calculate the ROI for every cent spent. The misconception out there in the industry is that digital is easy, quick to implement and just a banner on a website.



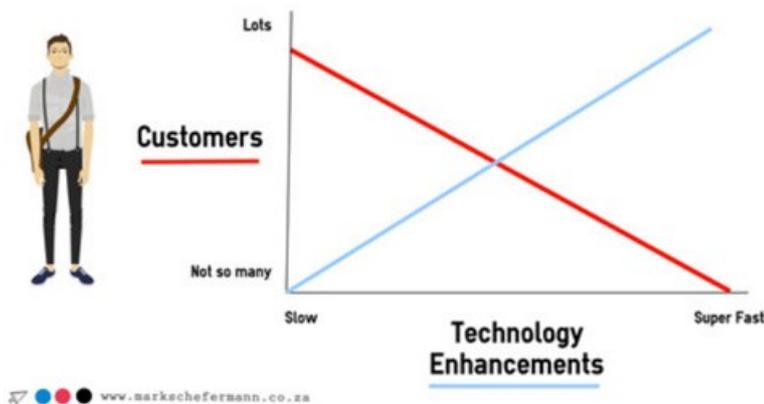
Customers have evolved over time, however, especially in the way they make their purchasing decision. The customers' experiences over time have also changed, a few years ago we didn't have mobile phones, there was no internet, no Google, no Windows or IOS and certainly no social media. Technology evolves at a rapid rate and with that so do the customer expectations and behaviours. They now expect everything then and there, they want a personal experience with every brand, and they are always connected anywhere and at anytime. In some schools it is now compulsory for senior students to have an iPad and there are iPad curricula that are implemented from a young age.

The school's approach is to educate these students for their futures, not ours. This is the same approach that marketing managers and directors should be taking. Marketing strategies have to evolve in order to stay relevant in the minds of customers. Customers often expect the box to the right full of all the different colours illustrated below versus just the black circles.

These different coloured circles represent things like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, SEM, Mobile Apps, Mobile Sites and so much more. In 2012, if your company or brand is still only offering the black circle to your customers, in a few years your company will most likely not perform well and lose market share. It is imperative to stay ahead of the curve and always remain relevant to your target audience. In saying this though, I am not implying that every brand should have all these things, your brand should have the ones that are relevant to their "[why](#)" and there must be a long-term strategy in place.



Marketing managers need to realise that they have to keep ahead of the trends of change, if they don't, their customers will find a competitor that offers the full box with all the colours. The illustration below shows how the curve of "technology enhancements" is growing at a rapid rate and how a brands market share will start to decline if they don't offer campaigns and products that are relevant in the lives of their customers.



To summarise, marketing managers shouldn't be scared to try new digital solutions and new media options available to them. If the right skills and expertise are not in place make sure you hire specialists or appoint an agency that can offer these services. Start with "why", understand what you want your brand to stand for in the mind of the customer, define the relevant digital channels/platforms that you believe your brand should have a presence on, implement long-term and short-term strategies, measure everything and constantly optimise.

ABOUT MARK SCHEFERMANN

My knowledge and enthusiasm for the digital world enables me to think creatively and challenge briefs. My passion is strategy and showing how digital can open new opportunities for clients. Well conceived digital strategies and campaigns will push brands ever forward in the consciousness of their audiences and lead to long lasting adoption, advocacy and allow them to forge individual relationships with their audiences.

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