

Social media is not a foe but a friend

 By [Musa Msane](#)

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Listening to the head-honcho at WPP, Sir Martin Sorrell recently where he bemoaned the lack of business acumen in the marketing communications industry, which has led to the business community to doubt these disciples because of lack of efficacy measurements.

I must admit, my mind travelled back to my first reading of the book entitled: *Make the other half work too*, penned by Mark Barenblatt and Roger Sinclair. In times of prolonged bad performing economies worldwide, can the industry afford not to account for the other half? Or to put it bluntly, is it proper that we splash hard-earned client's money on elaborate campaigns yet we can't even account for it?



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These are times of advanced technologies in the area of communications, the new social media platforms which are trending in almost every discussion on marketing communications these days have shown that anything can be measured as quickly as clicking Tweet, not unless marketers and media agencies are still stuck in the traditional ways of doing things. If this is still the case, then the industry will need a dollop of faith in the new ways, without change or total disruption, the industry will always be looked on suspiciously. Granted, the digital market is still fragmented compared to the traditional market; however, this is not an excuse for the industry to be laggard in this fast-paced technological reality.

I guess the fear of annihilation of the industry as one knows it, is what is driving most of the behaviour against the digital reality which in many instances has shown measurement efficacy that the business is looking for. The digital reality shouldn't be seen as a substitution though, but as a seamless strategic effort to enhance the efficacy of the campaign in question. It is a known fact that consumers today juggle between traditional media exposure and the digital space, you read an article on newspaper and immediately share a story with your friends on social media, you watch an interesting show on TV and you immediately share with your friends on social platforms, same with listening to radio and seeing an interesting billboard.

Even conversations in taxis have been reduced to the furious tapping on cellphones! That alone shows you that a consumer is as involved as anyone in media space. So, how on earth should one view social media as a rival to traditional media, when they are so joined at the hip?

Again, the asset of the industry lies in the creative execution. It would be unlikely for anyone to be excited about a bland creative execution, even in the times of digital and social media, the industry still has to maintain what it is known for and good at by embracing these new media realities for the benefit of the client and the sustainability of the industry.

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