

Create work that moves people

 By [Brett Morris](#)

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"Do something that resonates on an emotional level." - Brett Morris, CEO FCB.

There are shifts in the industry - this is the era of disposable content and a demand for high-value content - the challenge is to still create the emotional work that moves people, says Brett Morris, CEO of FCB South Africa.

Morris says that while everyone is predicting the big trends for 2015, it is important not to forget the fundamentals of what great work is made of. Morris took over the reins of FCB South Africa a year ago after serving as executive creative director.

"As an agency, as much as we are exploring a lot of new marketing theory, we are also going back to our roots of what we do and a lot of it is **emotional work**. According to the Gunn report, [emotional work is 11 times more effective](#) than rational work. Emotional work moves people.

"We are in the era of disposable content. The trend is towards the need for more content, high frequency, high-value content, particularly in the digital space, but what I'm interested in is the challenge of marrying the world of high-frequency content to the fundamentals of more powerful, emotional work.

"It is hard to do as we are having to produce it more frequently. What I find interesting about that is how everyone will have to change their models. Entire industries need to shift."

Linked to that, Morris adds, is **insight**. Big data. The key for him is what they do with it, as he believes the insights to be gained from all the data being collected is still being treated quite robotically, rather than with intuition.

"Clients are not embracing insight as they should - it is one thing having access to the data, but they need very smart people to marry the world of numbers and creativity. It will be interesting to see how big data impacts on our lives and who will crack the puzzle and make it come alive in an intuitive way. I'm very interested in how that plays out from a brand point of view."

Storytelling

The 2014 game changer for him was without a doubt the trend towards storytelling, Morris recounts.

"There is a new marketing theory emerging: people making informed and intuitive decisions. We are going back to the

fundamentals of storytelling, including more emotion. There was a study done by McDonald's in the US, in which they measured their award-winning campaign work with their stuff that didn't win awards. They found that the award-winning creative work was 40% more effective in impacting on sales than their other work.

"That is great for me - seeing creativity, emotional work, storytelling - those kinds of fundamentals for great work, becoming a part of the conversation. Brands are taking the initiative with their agency partners and pushing that agenda because they can see the results. Cannes is always a good acid test and that was certainly on everybody's radar. It is part of the global conversation."

What he would like to see more of in 2015 is a conversation around value, rather than remuneration.

"Agencies are under pressure and I'd love us to be judged on the value we add, rather than commoditised. It is a difficult one to leave behind, we are in a tough economic period and I think it will get worse before it gets better."

Morris would also love to see digital content truly come of age in South Africa and take its place in the engaging content space. "Do something that resonates on an emotional level."

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**[Brett Morris](#) was interviewed by [Louise Burgers](#), specialist editor of [Biz Trends 2015](#).*

ABOUT BRETT MORRIS

Brett Morris is the CEO of Nahana Communications Group. In 2014 Brett was appointed Group Chief Executive and has since been voted by his peers as most admired agency leader in Johannesburg for five years in a row and three times across South Africa.

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