

The digital marketing trends marketers need to pay attention to

By [Gustav Goosen](#)

8 Jan 2018

Since the birth of advertising, marketers have tried to create brand resonance, then turn it into sales by telling a story (as I said in a [piece](#) I wrote recently about our [Digital Salt](#) conference). In essence, they did this by telling the customer what they thought they needed to hear, in a place where they hoped they'd be paying attention.



Gustav Goosen, CEO of The SpaceStation.

And while this basic premise hasn't changed much – everything is a lot more complex and competitive. Here are some trends that I believe marketers should pay attention to in 2018 to help them navigate the beast.

1. Video content: Just when we think video has hit its peak... The demand for engaging, relevant, easy to consume and valuable video content continues to surprise us. 2017 saw the launch of Facebook's new six second ads which fuelled an increase in demand for video advertising.

Publishers pounced on out-stream video, launching on web and mobile, with brands always on the lookout for more inventory as 'created for web' content hit its stride. 2017 also saw a massive growth in live streaming on social media platforms.

This is only going to get more and more popular because of the immersive nature of live content – great for brands that are wanting to connect with their audiences on a deeply interactive level. Other worthwhile video trends to look out for in 2018 is 360 video which allows a viewer to control their perspective while watching the content as well as shoppable video which, if done correctly, allows users to purchase directly after viewing the video ad. This immersive experience obviously works massively well in terms of increasing conversion when used in online advertising.

2. Micro-moments: The concept of micro-moments has now been around for two years. It's the mobile driven consumer behaviour of wanting to know, immediately, where to buy, what to do, where to go and how to do it. The concept of mobile moments has certainly put a spotlight on the importance of mobile and in some ways has helped companies develop their roadmaps for incorporating mobile into their strategies – which can be daunting.

In 2018 we will continue to see the importance of mobile (and micro moments) grow, with web traffic very much in the shadow of mobile web and app traffic – and the brands that most successfully navigate this online landscape are going to be the those that correctly anticipate those impulsive informational needs. When it comes to mobile, 2018 is going to be about addressing this and raising the bar. More info, more personalisation, more speed and more functionality.

3. Personalisation: As we learn more and more about who our customers are (i.e. big data) so they are going to expect greater personalisation and tailored advertising messaging. We are going to see this become vital in 2018. For me, personalisation is about creating an environment of trust and deep engagement. In the increasingly competitive online environment consumers are demanding to be seen. They want to know that brands understand who they are, and they want to see marketing delivered with this in mind.

4. Online marketing: Online marketing is a complex animal. Increasingly so, especially as the use of big data grows as a tool to understand consumers and their needs. Customer Journey Mapping, I believe, will reveal itself to be an important tool in 2018 for all marketers. A roadmap, if you will, that defines who your consumer is and how they will move through the customer lifecycle and touch points that you have (or not) created. As a marketer, if you can get your head around this journey and understand properly where and how your customer wants to engage on their path-to-purchase – you are well on your way to success.

More budget is allocated to digital marketing each year. In fact, it's now passé to refer to it as 'digital' marketing – it's all just marketing. With this continued growth comes greater responsibility though. As marketers and publishers, it is up to us to understand who our customers are, what they want and how to speak to them, all while the environment becomes increasingly complex and competitive.

**The SpaceStation is the lead sponsor and digital trends sponsor of BizTrends2018.*

ABOUT GUSTAV GOOSEN

Gustav Goosen is the CEO of The SpaceStation, a digital media sales company. The SpaceStation executes world-class, multi-platform digital media solutions across more than 40 premium websites, mobile sites and apps, from leading brands at Media24, 24.com and MultiChoice, making them a leader in the rapidly growing and evolving digital advertising arena in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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