

Will someone (Eskom, maybe) please pull the plug?

 By [Sue Disler](#)

31 Jan 2012

That was my first reaction when Bizcommunity's editor Simone Puterman requested an article predicting 12 trends for 2012. A "trend" is defined as "a general tendency, movement, or direction". In my honest opinion, what most people will be purporting as trend is merely (if you analyse it properly), new and improved technology and ideas.



And its these innovations that can be harnessed to facilitate the human trend to explore, consume, entertain, educate, have opinion, make money, con others, share or not etc.

Can't decide? Ask a friend...

The state of digital right now reminds me of my very first trip to New York in the late '80s, where I offered to cook for my friend in lieu of payment for accommodation (upper east side with concierge, no less) and being confronted by an American-style supermarket... not easy to find in the Big Apple, but I did.

So there I was, trying to find the ingredients to make my famous chicken dish (sadly, I can't remember what it was - age, I fear), and almost in tears for nearly an hour looking at the myriad chicken types on offer. I had absolutely no clue as to what to buy...

Now, you have to remember this was way BG (Before Google) and, had I had access to it then, I would have found this purchase far easier*. Eventually I called my friend from a payphone (this event predated cellphones, I'm afraid), and yes, dinner was delicious!

Well, some might prefer to have only one kind of chicken; fortunately for us, in today's world, we all have one amazing thing that helps us navigate through life and that's choice. And choice nowadays is often disguised by something most of us can't live without: the internet. Some of us even substitute it for a friend.

Nice friends I have :)

Out of 500 000 apps in the App(le) store, how did you (and I) download Angry Birds? Well, I saw people writing/raving about the phenomenon on numerous sites, Twitter and Facebook feeds; then, spurred on by its marketing and PR drive and the excuse that I need to experience the phenomena as I work in digital, I eventually went to the store, saw the five-star rating and promptly downloaded it!

Yup, I got addicted and even sought out the other "recommended" additions (Seasons and Rio), plus paid 99c for the Eagle when frustrated. Me and countless others, making them millions!

How do we actually choose? Is it because they have top apps so nicely displayed on the front page? We have become lethargic by relying on data engines to recommend what's best for us and it's how we land up purchasing and consuming content that's not always relevant to us in the long run.

As marketers, we have come to rely on engines to sell our wares - DATA (in all forms) is key to navigating this digital world.

(Target) Market towns

I overheard a conversation the other day around Facebook: something about people being irritated by the fact that brands

and advertisers had taken over their private space. Apart from the fact that they can choose how private their lives are on Facebook, don't you find it strange that we now have a problem around this?

Since ancient times, the method of being where the people are to sell your wares has been practiced: towns have been built around markets. This kind of business sense is inherent in all of us.

So why are people suddenly so concerned? Is this not the way the world works? Or is it that technology has brought the world that much closer and, collectively, we have changed our view so radically that we are now seeing a behaviour change?

Which brings me to...

...bringing in the clouds

Again, not a new notion. The 'cloud' has existed since computers were invented and information could be stored in one place. Communities such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Flickr etc have been clouds for years.

With Apple introducing iCloud and ISPs offering cloud services, our privacy issues, both for consumers and brands, flare up again. One wonders whether this will prompt us to develop a new kind of NDA**?

Finding Nemo

Economic predictions for this year are bleak, so while mobile is the medium most of us still need to crack... think before you leap into blowing the client's budget developing one app for every device. Rather find a clever solution that interrogates the content to ultimately save you time, embarrassment and, most of all, make the client king.

Traversing these waters will make you have to choose discernment over gluttony. And if you cannot, simply pull the plug!

Further reading:

1. Predictions and opinions well worth indulging in - the [2012 Biz Trends series](#) right here on Bizcommunity
2. Brilliant article via [@Greggit](#) on [15 top web design and development trends for 2012](#)
3. Tongue-in-cheek article via [@memeburn](#) on [10 incredible accurate predictions for the tech world in 2012](#)

*Should you actually be interested to find out how chickens are grouped by weight and age, and exactly which ones are better for which dish, [go here](#).

**Non-disclosure agreement

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ABOUT SUE DISLER

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