

AI and machine learning

 By [Louise Marsland](#)

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Platinum Seed recently appointed Ally Behr as design director, as part of its strategy to expand its service offering and leadership team. Behr is responsible for the conceptualisation and execution of digital touch points for clients. She has worked on a multitude of international brands in a variety of environments, from conceptualising through-the-line campaigns, to operating within specialised teams that built complex products.



Ally Behr

Prior to joining Platinum Seed, Behr was an art director at Ogilvy & Mather, senior creative and user experience designer at Gloop. Here, Behr talks digital marketing trends with Bizcommunity.com and how artificial intelligence is dominating conversations in digital marketing

■ What is the biggest trend in digital marketing currently?

Artificial intelligence and machine learning is definitely the trend everyone is talking about, even though it's been a part of our daily lives for years, from predictive text to chat bots. The possibilities are endless for marketers: if harnessed effectively, the ability to analyse massive data sets and derive meaning from them could be transformational. Beyond the tech, it's just interesting to watch our reaction to AI as a species; while people find it intriguing, it's also fundamentally scary when AI gets something right.

■ What are the key attributes for a successful digital marketing strategy?

We are all aiming for that sweet spot: delivering precisely the right message, at the right time, to the right customer. Rich insights and customer-centric thinking is crucial in order to achieve this, which is always easier said than done, as there are so many factors which can derail this. Keeping the customer at the centre of the experience needs to become an everyday mantra for all stakeholders, in order to deliver something of value. Beyond the strategy, a mark of true success is when one is able to deliver on these learnings with great creative thinking and problem solving.

■ What is the fundamental change in the marketplace today that is impacting on digital marketing strategies?

It is so obvious, but it's still overlooked - people just have less patience, tolerance and time for poor advertising. Usage of the world's most popular ad blocking tool, Adblock, grew 30% globally last year, installed on almost 700 million devices. That's a rude statistic for the industry, and the implications stretch far beyond simply PPC campaigns. There's such an overload of information that if you are not delivering satisfying content it will be sought somewhere else. The internet has (to some extent) democratised the access to information, and we are competing on a global stage. To remain relevant, you have to provide something of value.

■ What will your new role at Platinum Seed encompass and how will you achieve this?

My role as design director is to ensure that the conceptualisation and execution of work across all digital touch points drives the strategic needs of our client portfolio. I'm working with a talented, tight-knit team of interaction designers and developers, on a wide range of work from digital experiences, to service and product design for brands and international start-ups. Operating largely in an agile environment, we have the ability for ideas to be rapidly prototyped and implemented, allowing us to get really hands-on with the business, brand and customer. Beautifully crafted solutions are key to creating a memorable experience, so we are pushing to create work that showcases the value and power of functional, great design.

■ What are your key learnings from your career in digital media and design - tips you can give clients?

Take more risks! Put humans before brands. Invest in great creative. The power of digital and technology is far beyond just being used for advertising purposes, and tech-enabled businesses are becoming more and more prominent - but you still find some brands unaware of how tech can solve their other business challenges.

ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

Louise Burgers (previously Marsland) is Founder/Content Director: SOURCE Content Marketing Agency. Louise is a Writer, Publisher, Editor, Content Strategist, Content/Media Trainer. She has written about consumer trends, brands, branding, media, marketing and the advertising communications industry in SA and across Africa, for over 20 years, notably, as previous Africa Editor: Bizcommunity.com; Editor: Bizcommunity Media/Marketing SA; Editor-in-Chief: AdVantage magazine; Editor: Marketing Mix magazine; Editor: Progressive Retailing magazine; Editor: BusinessBrief magazine; Editor: FMOG Files newsletter. Web: www.sourceagency.co.za.

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