

Is your brand truly relevant?

 By [Pasqua Heard](#)

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Marco Cremona, Google Creative Lab lead Moscow, Russia, took to the stage at the DStv Creative Seminar during Loeries Creative Week to share how the advertising industry differs to the tech industry, challenged the audience's career choice and concluded with a deeply moving campaign.

Advertising versus the tech industry

Cremona explained the differences he has found between his 25 years of advertising experience to that of working with Google, which he deemed “an engineer’s company, not an advertising agency.”

“I thought I knew everything about mobile, but then I realised that in advertising, we are very good at becoming experts in any field within 24 hours – but we do that very superficially. Whereas Google goes much deeper into their work.”



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Cremona also spoke highly of Google's flat structure, a strategy known as ‘management on the edge of chaos’, that challenged the hierarchical structure he had experienced in advertising. He explained that pyramids in companies can lend to people refusing to do work based on it not being part of their contract, whereas Google’s approach increased productivity.

“Another thing I like about the flat structure approach is that because of the consensus that needs to be reached in order to

approve an idea, you really need to be passionate and motivated about your idea in order to see it through.”

Cremano then shared Google’s creative mantras with the audience, which also differed greatly from his experience of advertising:

- The product is the idea
- Users above all
- Demos and documentaries, not ads. To this point, Cremano mentioned, “This destroyed me, because one of the most beautiful things in my ad years was using fantasy to create worlds that didn’t exist.”
- Make people smile, cry or think

The challenges of mobile

The first challenge regarding mobile that Cremona highlighted was that people’s attention span has decreased since the year 2000 from 12 seconds to eight seconds. Cremona offered the following solution: “You need to find a way to communicate to people relevantly in the micro moments (those three seconds they take to go online on their phone).”

According to Cremona, ad blocking poses the second challenge to mobile advertisers. “What ad blocking says to me is that people are not happy with the kind of advertising that is on mobile today. The average click-through rate of display ads is 0.06%. It means that most probably, the 0.06% of people that ended up watching the ads could not find the X button to close them, because it was too small.”

One further challenge was around what platform one should use in one’s campaign. “Every day is not only a creative struggle, it’s a media struggle. You have to know what channels are relevant to people and know how to use these in a relevant way,” explains Cremona.

Make brands relevant

Cremona made the point that in order to engage an audience in a relevant way, brands need to adapt international brands to gain local insights. Cremona likened speaking a global language in places where you should actually ‘speak local’ to trying to pick up sushi with billiard sticks. “It’s very difficult and not always successful,” he says.

He provided the example of an international campaign showing Sesame Street’s Cookie Monster, well-known to American audiences. The campaign reached fourteen countries, but Cremona felt it could’ve been improved. “As much as the campaign was amusing, had they used a character that was recognised by the local market, such as Cheburashka who is an equivalent in Russia, they would’ve been more relevant,” says Cremona.

Cremona ended the seminar with a captivating campaign that raised awareness around disabled parking bays in Russia by displaying a hologram before non-disabled drivers requesting that they respect drivers with disabilities and find another parking bay. “Work really has to have an effect on people’s lives, such as the work created for Dislife.ru which turned a flat sign into a real person.”

View the campaign below:

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