

Creative trends 2024: Crafting effective digital ads

By [Senamile Zungu](#), issued by [Kantar](#)

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Despite persistent load shedding and various other economic pressures, Kantar research has shown that South Africans have remained committed to staying connected. SAffers are finding a sanctuary in the digital sphere – not only to get reprieve from the challenges of everyday life, but also as a means for connection, information, and entertainment. This presents a golden opportunity for brands to leverage the power of effective digital creative.



Our predictions on the key trends and strategies that will define successful digital creative in 2024 are:

Leave a lasting impression with brand at the centre stage

In 2024, the most effective digital ads will be those where the brand takes centre stage in an enjoyable way. While creativity is essential, the brand's identity must shine through seamlessly. Integration from the outset, with a clear and consistent message, will ensure that audiences not only remember the ad but can also effortlessly link it to the brand.

Emotion as the driver of engagement

82% of emotional ads positively impact brand demand. The power of emotion in digital advertising cannot be overstated. Whether through music, compelling dialogue, or other tactics, successful digital creatives in 2024 will be those that elicit a genuine emotional response. Emotion not only captures attention but also forms a lasting connection with the audience. Global studies show that South Africans appreciate humour in advertising more than the rest of world. However, humour in advertising has seen a decline over the years, accelerated by the pandemic. Leveraging consumers' affinity for humour to build emotion is a great way for brands to create impactful and memorable ads.

The 5-second challenge

Digital ads typically have five seconds to capture attention and drive behaviour. This has meant that most brands opt for performance ads in the digital space. However, there is no reason to suggest that a digital platform cannot be used to tell a brand story. In fact, given the continued growth in online platforms, we must challenge ourselves to use digital to build brand demand because it will help avoid the skip if people are engaged.

According to Stacy Sagers, commercial growth director for Kantar South Africa, telling a brand story in the digital space is not easy but it is a challenge worth investing in. Brands that invest in the creative challenge of engaging the audience emotionally, within these initial five seconds, will be the ones that set themselves apart from the rest in 2024.

Customisation for platform

When it comes to creating ads for digital platforms, it's not a case of one size fits all. Brands that tailor their ads to the specific platform, will be more successful. In other words, what works on TV may not work on YouTube. In fact, 52% of TV ads plonked onto a digital platform have lower levels of enjoyment and 46% have lower impact on brand metrics. Successful digital creatives in 2024 will have a good understanding of the audience expectations and consumer missions that define the equity of each platform, and will work with these nuances to create relevant and engaging content.



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Seamless integration across platforms

Take consumers on a brand journey. It is not conducive to effective storytelling to have a team dedicated to above the line content and another dedicated to below the line. Brands need to weave coherent stories that work across all platforms, particularly as there is so little time to land the story with audiences. Kantar has seen that ads that are well integrated across media touchpoints drive overall campaign effectiveness up by 31%. Successful digital creative will be those that seamlessly integrate across platforms, creating a unified brand narrative. Coordination and consistency will be the drivers of crafting impactful storytelling.

The silver bullet to effective digital advertising? Crafting creatives that are brand-centric, positive, emotionally resonant, attention-grabbing within five seconds, platform-customised, and seamlessly integrated across touchpoints will be the key to unlocking success in the digital sphere in 2024.

And last, a little trip down memory lane with Kantar's Best Liked Ads. ♥



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