

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND OPEN UP TO THE NEW WORLD

So you feel like your child does not listen to you anymore? You are absolutely right! The way in which the world works has changed and this means that our children are thinking and interacting differently too.

Evolution is happening and children/youth are your hardest and most critical clients to please! No longer will a mere billboard and advertisement in the local rag suffice: **your child will be exposed to 2 million images by the time they hit 65 at a rate of 110 advertisements per day.** They are assaulted by visual clutter on every level and pay it no more attention than to trees and clouds. Martin Lindstrom sums it up succinctly: Visual branding has become visual “**blanding**”.

It is no secret that technology has changed the way we communicate. BratTrax®, Youth Dynamix’s syndicated research on 7-15 year olds, has shown that the youth when asked to choose one form of media, the **majority pick their mobile phone over television.** Just under 80% of South African 13-15 year olds (LSM 8-10) have cellphones with the

average age of children getting their first phone is at the tender age of 9!(BratTrax® 2007/8) In fact, recent research in the UK showed that British youth had bigger thumbs (also called iPod finger) on their right hands due to excessive texting! Similarly, Japanese youth will choose to text their friends over talking to them – even when they are in the same room. South African teens are catching up – with the majority receiving and sending 1 to 5 SMS a day. (BratTrax® 2007/8) MXit is also a social platform of choice with just under **half of 13- 15 year olds using MXit** as their main form of interaction on their mobile. (BratTrax® 2007)



There has been a shift in human nature and the way we engage –youth in particular, are becoming more complex and multi-sensory. **Children’s senses are 200% stronger than their parents.** The

smell of a Crayola crayon is the 18th most recognized smell in the US and stats prove that **smell has an emotional affect on humans of up to 75%**. Scratch and Sniff may be making a retro comeback in supermarkets where you can sample the smell of a product you are purchasing. Similarly, young people today are cocooned in noise –they work with the television or radio in the background, silence is no longer a viable option.

Children have adapted their thinking patterns with **a shorter attention span** (ask any parent trying to get their child to complete a chore!). However, when they DO concentrate, **the intensity of their absorption is much higher** and their ability to sift through relevant information has evolved into a sophisticated filtering system. Marketing will need to use all 5 senses to build brands and to engage the youth. **Our youth are adept at multitasking** - involvement in 6 different activities at a time is normal for this generation. We need to be marketing to them on many levels to ensure that we are touching all their senses.

Take the new Coke 'Brrr' Campaign:

You got the instantly recognizable Coke Red. *Check colour.*

You got the 'Brrr'. *Check sound.*

You got the shaking motion in tandem with the Brrr. *Check touch.*

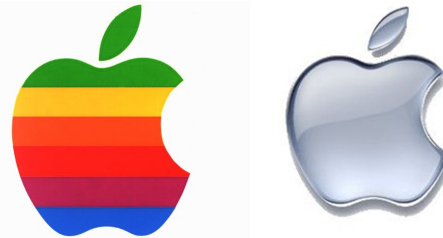
You got the taste. *Check a great campaign incorporating many senses and engaging!*

What does this mean for marketing communications? We need to understand what the right marketing mix is for the youth – **broad communications doesn't work anymore.**

If it is not targeted, don't bother, remember that **they have an evolved information filter.** This audience is sophisticated and incredibly good at filtering marketing communications: if

your message is the same as everyone else, you will be discarded - along with everyone else. **Nichéd communication with concerted, consistent messaging is vital.**

Keep it simple – **branding is becoming more clean and simplistic.** Think the Apple store in Regent Street with no discernable signage other than an etched apple icon. Think Ferrari red. Think the Nokia phone ring.



Senses other than sight need to be engaged to reach the youth. Interaction is critical. Engage the audience to make them yours. The success of MXit and Facebook are clear advocates of interaction and personalisation creating success.

Communication needs to be emotive not rational. Rational is a given – Your phone takes calls and receives SMS's? So does every other phone on the market! Youth are asking : "What makes me connect?" "What makes me part of an exclusive club?"

The vital commandment? Know your audience and know your message. **Use all the senses to interact meaningfully with the youth and MAKE SURE IT IS RELEVANT.** The youth can be your toughest critic but when you get right, your strongest advocate and a vital entry point into the most lucrative market in the world at the moment.

For access to the top Youth knowledge bank in South Africa - allowing you to target the South African youth with nichéd communication, contact Youth Dynamix on 011 806 8000.

WHO ARE YOUTH DYNAMIX?

Youth Dynamix is a leading global youth consultancy that specializes in research, strategic and marketing solutions for clients targeting the youth (0-24 year olds) and the family market segments.

Youth Dynamix has built up and houses one of the most extensive global youth knowledge banks. This is a combination of large syndicated research tracking studies on the youth market, ongoing desk research, and global affiliations with youth agencies in the US, UK and Europe