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# OPINION: Marketing to a generation of digital wunderkinder

By David Clugston on May 27, 2011 (3 days ago)  
 filed under Digital, Asia-Pacific

David Clugston, regional business consultant at R3, looks at the implications for marketers of a generation of digital wunderkinder moving towards their first month of a disposable income.

### KEYWORDS

digital, opinion, david clugston, r3

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David Clugston

My four year-old daughter can use my iPhone better than I can, and my son, who is closing on one, picked it up the other day and started to do that scrolling motion with his finger on the screen (before trying to eat it). I'm not writing this to evangelise the precocious talents of my clearly gifted prodigy but in consideration of the fact that their adoption of this latter day technology is, well, so normal.

Smart phones, and its ilk, are already a part this new generation's life. While we, their parents, have proved to be perfectly adept at learning these technologies, for our children it will be a matter of intuition. A skill assimilated so early it is barely differentiated from reflex.

Our children will take current digital trends - in communication, in commerce, in addition to its devices - to a new level. Not only will their digital skills have been honed almost since birth but the technology itself will evolve to be better, faster and sleeker.

What are the implications for marketers of a generation of digital wunderkind moving towards their first month of a disposable income?

**Digital devices will be the portals through which our children will see the world – and brands.** The web experience provided by certain brands is almost anachronistic, especially when it comes to e-commerce. This will yield an increasingly untenable position. Integration in marketing used to mean using offline and online advertising channels in the same campaign. The new integration will be almost exclusively digital – integrating online advertising with a seamless social presence, relevant content, a fluid buying experience, and

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comprehensive, customised, digitised customer service.

**Digital devices create a bubble around their users that advertisers find hard to burst.** Apple launched iAd in 2010 as a platform for delivering rich media ads via its apps, as a way of getting inside the bubble. Take up has been slow, however, and it has had to halve the minimum cost of a campaign. Advertisers seem to struggle with the value proposition. Plus, the rigid controls that Apple is putting on creative content are delaying campaign delivery and stifling marketers' creativity, allegedly. The brave new world is creating business models and practical concerns that marketers haven't faced before. Not only must they navigate the 'how' of reaching digitised consumers but also the economics and logistics of these new propositions.

**In a predominantly digital world, our kids will have greater choice of what media they interact with,** and what messages they receive, purely by virtue of the new control that digital technology will provide them. There is more content on the web than could be watched in almost seven billion life times, most of it without ads. Then there are other digital formats, like Tivo, which enable us to remove advertising from the TV experience. For how long will advertisers throw money at commercials people don't watch? How will an FMCG, who today spends 80+ per cent of its media budget on traditional TV, get its message out?

**Email is not a very sexy medium but it will gain currency in a digital world as the hub for social media interaction.** When we send someone a note on Facebook, we are alerted via email; when we connect via LinkedIn, we are alerted by email. Email has been a secondary repository of social network interaction. Already companies like Groupon are taking advantage of this phenomenon with hardcore discounts direct to where consumers eyes are trained most often. Email plays a strong role in customer care for many companies but its full potential as an advertising medium is yet to be realised.

**Would it be a stretch to suggest that social media will be to our kids what the phone is to us?** Maybe, at least in terms of utility – but perhaps not in terms of emotional connection. Very few advertisers have actually leveraged social media effectively but its importance will only grow.

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It is a nice idea. I am happy with your piece of information. Thanks for sharing such a nice post with us. Criminal...

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**Kay Ross** Interesting video and article, thanks. But the fish-shaped moving graphic in the ad on the right hand side of the screen is



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