

BEHIND THE BRAND... MR D

Su-lise Tessendorf-Louw: Chief Marketing Officer

As the first e-commerce business to become a MASA corporate member, Mr D is hoping that other corporates operating in this space will follow suit. We can be stronger together in growing our sector, but we can also learn from and feed off each other's experiences to set industry benchmarks, acknowledge and celebrate best in practice work, and be recognised and rewarded.



Traditional vs. performance-driven marketing

Delivery-on-demand tech company Mr D is the first e-commerce business to join MASA as a corporate member and is looking forward to bringing a new dynamic and energy to the association. In return, MASA membership gives the company gravitas in the performance-driven space in which it operates.

As one of a few performance-based corporates to become a MASA member, Mr D is hoping that other corporates operating in the e-commerce space will follow suit. We can be stronger together in growing our sector, but we can also learn from and feed off each other's experiences to set industry benchmarks, acknowledge and celebrate best in practice work, and be recognised and rewarded.

We believe MASA will be a trusted ally to Mr D as we navigate the rapidly changing face of marketing with machine learning, AI and ChatGPT presenting marketers with new frontiers, new opportunities and new dynamics. This is particularly evident in our industry sector, which is a step away from the more traditional marketing world where many of us honed our marketing skills and expertise.

Unicorns, CRM specialists

With many of the marketing roles and responsibilities in-house at Mr D, the teams comprise exciting young marketers – they are unicorns, performance specialists in the CRM and digital environments, but many of them have not worked in a traditional marketing environment. While they are excellent at what they do, there is an important and integral role for MASA to fulfil, to place both emphasis and focus on designations for the specialist roles and specific skillsets required in these fields. Approved qualifications and certification would mean they have the minimum requirements to succeed in their roles within the performance space and attain a certain level of sophistication. Currently there is a gap that exists between the two marketing worlds where a governing body like MASA could play a significant role, and we look forward to Mr D playing a role here too, to mobilise this effort into a reality.

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Best in practice

Our teams need to understand what best in practice is and what it means to be a fully-fledged marketer. However, with so many of the core marketing functions based in-house at Mr D, we run the risk of 'marking our own homework'. While there is a high level of competence in this environment, we need an independent platform where we can recognise and assess our relevance from outside the organisation too. We need to celebrate marketing excellence equally in both the traditional and the performance-driven sectors, and we are confident that having Mr D on board as a member of MASA will give impetus to this drive.

Designation & development

MASA represents competence in our marketing profession as a SAQA-approved professional body, championing professional certification and continuous professional development for marketers. This is also an area of focus much needed in the performance-driven marketing environment in which we operate and where we need to consistently grow new marketers. While there is no shortage of young people coming into the industry who we can train, the experience and expertise in professional development and designations offered by MASA is a crucial role the association can play in talent development.

Industry challenges

As marketers, we need to ensure we can excel in multi-vertical environments, and that we can respond to the industry's challenges in dynamic ways. One of these is how we enable the fusion of traditional marketing principles with technology in the on-demand e-commerce space. In this changing environment, best practice is evolving rapidly, and we consider MASA to be a trusted partner to Mr D as we venture into these uncharted territories.

Inclusive membership

As marketers, we need to remain on our learning paths – always evolving and finding new ways to connect with people through our brands. MASA provides us with a dynamic learning environment that drives us to do better – and to consider different ways to get this right.

Mr D considers it of value that MASA and its members represent the collective ambition of all marketers in South Africa to deliver more powerful marketing practices. We view MASA as a leading association in our landscape because it is the representative voice for our industry – not only enabling us to connect, learn and share, but to maintain a high standard as marketers who subscribe to excellence.

Peer recognition

Excellence can only be assessed by others as it is reflected in how they experience our companies, our brands, and our service. Recognition by industry peers is one of the strongest reviews that we, as marketers, can receive. We are hopeful that more performance-driven organisations join the association so we can assess best practice and be judged against our competitors in the same space.

Being able to measure ourselves and our businesses' acumen and growth in a like-minded environment is good for best in practice not only for the industry and our brands, but ultimately, for our consumers too.