



# BEHIND THE BRAND...

Massmart powered by Walmart 

**Katherine Madley**  
Vice President of  
Group Marketing: Massmart



It is important for professionals in whichever field they operate, to belong to that industry's professional body. For us as marketers, MASA is the only accredited organisation for marketing professionals.

## Why MASA matters

Massmart is a corporate member of MASA because it is important for professionals in whichever field they operate, to belong to that industry's professional body. For us as marketers, MASA is the only accredited organisation for marketing professionals.

And, as client-side marketers, we believe that if you want to be taken seriously, if you want to be credible and have pedigree, corporate membership of MASA is a must. It is a must for us at Massmart just as it is for our legal teams to belong to the Law Society, or the CA(SA)s to join SAICA or the actuaries to be a part of the Actuarial Society. Who wouldn't want to be a proud member of their particular professional body? As Massmart, we are extremely proud of our membership and strongly feel that to ensure the continued professionalisation of our industry, all marketers and marketing teams should become members of MASA.

## Growing professionalisation of the industry

MASA membership is also about growing the professionalisation of the industry. Our group operates in retail, but retail is not only about people who have grown up on the shop floor or built shops into businesses: the retail environment today is highly sophisticated and academic. There are very few people here at head office or in the regions who are not degreed or have a tertiary qualification. As such, there is a level of professionalism that we need to benchmark in the country for marketers operating in the retail and e-commerce environments, and we believe MASA can play an important and strategic role here.

## Protecting the customer

Being serious about the POPI Act is one of them, ensuring that we are always protecting customers and their privacy and reputation. This forms part of the landscape of professionalism that needs to be shared across the entire spectrum – it's bigger than Massmart, it's about retail as a whole: making the industry respectful of the consumer and championing for them in an ethical business environment.

MASA brings ethics and respect to the table, and its collaborative work with industry organisations such as ACA, ARB, IABSA, IMC, MRF, the Loeries and others, sets the industry standard.



# BEHIND THE BRAND...

**Katherine Madley**  
Vice President of  
Group Marketing: Massmart



This is so important for retail and of course for all other industries too. Retail speaks to almost 62-million South Africans every day, which places a huge burden of responsibility on us to do it properly and ethically, and with respect.

The late Raymond Ackerman is a shining example of these traits: how he was honoured and lauded on his passing revealed a retailer who lived by strong ethics. Marketing needs to set these standards: when we engage with our customers, we cannot afford the use of any underhand tactics, and MASA has a role to play here to ensure adherence to these standards. This includes the manipulative dark arts of digital, where we feel there is a very real need to get serious about creating and enforcing laws of customer protection.

## Strategic research

Access to strategic, independently sourced research is a vital tool in the arsenal of any marketer. For this reason, Massmart will always be a subscriber to the intelligent research from MASA and its partnership with the MRF for the MAPS surveys. What we find particularly useful about this research is that it is proper third-party research. It is not sponsored, and it is not commissioned by any media house or agency. It is real independent research using a thorough sample size, it is exhaustive and thus extremely valuable.

As Massmart, we have access to the extensive global Walmart research, and our team is clocked into what is going on both globally and locally. We find the MASA / MAPS research complements this and we don't need to subscribe to outside parties' research:

all our research needs are met through our global research team's reports and what we learn from the MAPS research.

## Accolades and acknowledgement

While peer-to-peer recognition is an acknowledgment of great work and helps to benchmark us against our competitors and other industry players, receiving an 'award' from our customers is the ultimate accolade. They are who we serve at the end of the day, and if they recognise that we are doing great work, or what we are doing helped them in one way or another, for us that's the best form of reward! For a customer to sit down and write a letter or take the time to make a phone call to compliment us on a great shopping experience or excellent customer service is something special.

But there will always be a place in our industry for awards such as the Marketing Achievement Awards, because the end customer doesn't recognise the marketer who briefed in a brilliant campaign, or the creative who executed an award-winning advert. As humans, we need accolades – it's what drives us to excel, it's an acknowledgement of marketing or creative status, and it's a celebration of our achievements.

*There is not one profession whose members don't want to be recognised and rewarded – it is part of our innate psyche. But it is as important that peer recognition is done authentically – it must be deserving to encourage the industry to keep pushing the boundaries to produce marketing excellence.*