



THEME: Retailing: Who moved our model?

The one certainty in retailing is that we're in a cycle of constant change. Better mousetraps are built every day. And people are beating a path to the door of those that can deliver closer targeting, better alliances, smarter solutions.

Data is king. Too much information about our customers seems never enough – their habits, their likes and dislikes, their personal details, lifestyles, online behaviour. And as we create the algorithms that get us closer to our customers, our ability to fulfil their wishes becomes stronger and more profitable.

But if the status quo is now about automation, how do you create the friction that makes the consumer stop and buy? If everyone's travelling north, why not try south? Where are the differentiators?

Diversification – sometimes taking decision making to new levels of courage. Sometimes showing complete out of the box thinking with non-intuitive ideas gaining traction. Take Crayola for instance. They have a massive audience of pre-teens so why not create a make-up line using all the brand's cache? Strange? Maybe. Successful? Definitely.

Companies are forced to re-invent themselves, blowing up current business models and re-writing the rules. If they don't their competition will. Technology companies are becoming retailers, retailers are ramping up on technology and it's a fierce battleground out there. Make no mistake, it's war with alliances forming between retail and tech, Woolies and Google for instance, or Alexa and Bing (Amazon and Microsoft).

And that's where iMedia Online Retail Summit comes in. To make sense of the rapid and constant change, to discover the new things and the better mousetraps around the corner. To predict at least the immediate future and discuss the strategies and tactics that can keep us all as retailers ahead of the game.

It's never been so vibrant, hard to navigate, but never have the spoils been so rich. And getting it right so fruitful.