

New OPA chair to focus on boosting online advertising

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Newly elected chairperson of the Online Publishers Association (OPA), Russell Hanly, says the organisation will focus on growing the share of online advertising and broadening the membership of the organisation.

The OPA, which represents South Africa's major online publishers, elected Hanly (GM Media 24 Digital) unanimously to take over from outgoing chairperson Russel Yeo. Mark Buwalda (MD of Ananzi) was elected OPA deputy chairperson.

"We have walked the hard miles of getting the market leaders around the table and reaching agreement on critical issues such as measurement and now we have to really focus on the primary aim of the OPA which is to grow the share of advertising spend committed to the online medium," says Hanly.

Hanly says that with the OPA's recent launch of the world-renowned Nielsen//NetRatings SiteCensus product, online publishers in South Africa will for the very first time be measuring and reporting the size and demographic profile of their respective audiences in a totally consistent manner comparable to other media types.

It also means advertisers will now have access to advanced statistics and demographics of the online publications in South Africa who are on the system.

Hanly says the OPA would take on a marketing challenge on two fronts.

"Firstly we need to broaden the membership base and ensure that the Nielsen//NetRating Site Census measurement tool becomes the industry standard which all online publishers in SA are benchmarked against."

"Secondly we need to ensure that online publishers report their advertising and sponsorship income to Nielsen for inclusion in their AdEx Report as this is after all the yardstick against which the OPA measures its success," he says.

Hanly acknowledged the commitment and dedication of outgoing chairperson Russel Yeo whose "considerable understanding of the media industry and their research requirements had played an important role in getting the OPA onto its feet with all the major online players actively participating".

The new elected OPA committees are:

Marketing: Matthew Buckland (Editor & Manager of M&G Online)

Monitoring: Mark Buwalda (MD of Ananzi)

Measurement: JP Farinha (GM of M-Web Studios)

Finance: Leon Lategan (Independent Online Sales & Marketing Director)

The OPA members are:

365 digital, Ananzi, BDFM, CareerJunction, iafrica.com, Independent Online, ITWeb, Johnnic, Mail & Guardian, Moneymax, M-Web, Media24 Digital, Moneyweb, Ramsay Son & Parker and Supersport.

Find out more about the OPA on: www.opa.org.za .

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