

An industry in flux

By Jerry Mpuwane

24 Jan 2018

Remote judging of over 600 entries to the 10th annual edition of the IAB SA Bookmark Awards has commenced.



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All around the country, 55 judges, led by myself and the jury panel chairs, are evaluating and assessing the best that the South African digital industry has to offer.



IAB SA announces Bookmarks 2018 jury president, chairs

17 Jan 2018



At the same time, during 2018, the revised marketing, advertising and communication sector BEE code will require agencies to increase black ownership to a minimum of 45%, from the current 25%. Of the 45%, at least 30% must be held by women.

In a fragmented and high-speed world of communications, marketers want to capture the consumer's attention and build brand value. The industry's sights are set firmly on building a diverse human capital capability that can deliver great market insight as a springboard to resonant big ideas.

With all of these momentous things going on, many would ask what difference could a bunch of creatives possibly be making to a society in deep flux?

The nurturing of human capital

The marketing services industry does not exist in isolation. The industry exists to service brands who wish to sell products and services, ultimately driving the economy forward. A growing economy benefits all of humanity.

Paramount to the digital industry's growth and sustainability is the nurturing of human capital. In that regard, we must see an acceleration of all efforts towards transforming the industry, inclusive of opening up opportunities for communities who are otherwise historically disadvantaged.

The digital industry must embrace local content – we can only grow if we promote local storytelling, which means that local South Africans can be gainfully and commercially engaged in the digital economy.

In addition, the digital industry must embrace its role in the broader society by producing purposeful work that helps grow brands and solves society's problems at the same time – creativity reaches its most meaningful position when ideas help change people's lives for the better.

Winning campaigns are about great ideas

I am very tempted to say we have seen great progress being made in growing the digital aspect of the marketing services industry. However, we must never rest until a South African idea wins any of all of the following, inclusive of but not limited to: a Cannes Cyber Grand Prix – recognising excellence in interactive communications; a Cannes Glass Grand Prix – recognising breakthroughs in opening up the industry to women; and a Cannes Sustainable Development Goals Lion – demonstrating that great ideas can indeed change the world for the better.



Cannes Lions launches revamped 2018 Festival of Creativity!

14 Nov 2017



In that light, The Bookmark Awards are important because they recognise and reward creativity – it is only through great ideas that we can change the world and contribute to the enhancement of our humanity. Creative industry awards must drive, purposefully, the design of national identity – we need to be more deliberate in helping foster a national identity for our new democracy, and the creative industries have a huge role to play here (a big reason why the MAC Charter was launched in the first place!).

A great example of an execution that made a real, human difference is The Streetstore Campaign - the world's first rent-free, premises-free, free pop-up store for the homeless. This was an idea born in Cape Town, and today boasts a global movement of close to 800 street stores already hosted in more than 60 different cities of the world. A great idea that changes people's lives – the haves and the have-nots in equal measure, via a digitally hosted portal.

Winning campaigns are about great ideas, and doing good while doing business. For South Africa, at this time, this has never been more relevant.

ABOUT JERRY MPUFANE

Jury President IAB SA Bookmarks 2018 and Chairman of the M&C Saatchi JHB Group
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