

Attendees' opinions unveiled, part 2

 By Leigh Andrews

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So many agencies, so many award shows, so many opinions. Here's what some of the representatives who are set to attend next week's 20th APEX awards Gala evening are hoping to see, and how they think the industry can improve...

There's no better feeling than being on par with the rest of the world. That's why it's uplifting to hear that Laurent Marty, Chief Strategic Officer at Joe Public, feels this is exactly what makes the APEX awards stand out from the crowd - they highlight increasing alignment with global best practice. We asked Marty for more insights; as well as fellow attendees Mia Cronje, Strategic Planner at Ogilvy & Mather Cape Town; and the attending team from The Jupiter Drawing Room Johannesburg (TJDR JHB).



Marty, Cronje and the Jupiter Drawing Room JHB attendees

■ 1. Sum up your views on the state of local advertising and communication in a sentence...

Marty: Local advertising has to adapt to one very significant trend: in almost every consumer category, the black middle class is changing the game, for brands and advertisers alike.

Cronje: Increased complexity and a demand for an integrated approach, which requires greater involvement and greater knowledge across a variety of disciplines.

TJDR JHB: The South African advertising industry is in a slight state of stagnation right now. There is great work happening but, for the most part, things haven't progressed much in the last few years. Effectiveness (ROMI), shared value and responsible advertising should be at the very centre of each campaign rather than advertising just for advertising's sake.

■ 2. There are so many industry awards, local and global, what makes the APEX awards stand out for you?

Marty: There's only one award show that rewards the business performance of advertising campaigns in South Africa and that is APEX. It has managed to carve itself a space in the South African industry that is as important as the IPA Effectiveness Awards are to the UK market or the Effies to the US market. This is an encouraging sign of increasing sophistication of the South African market and of increasing alignment with global best practice.

Cronje: The APEX awards are all about effectiveness - communication that works and delivers ROI. In these tough financial times, the pressure is on to prove that the work we as agencies and marketers put out to consumers actually delivers on what it set out to achieve. These awards provide a platform for the industry to demonstrate credibility - we don't just make pretty ads. The entries are very thorough and it is extremely difficult to win an APEX award, which makes it quite sought after.

TJDR JHB: The emphasis placed purely on advertising effectiveness and strategy. An APEX award appeals to existing and new clients alike as it clearly demonstrates that their investment is in competent hands. Furthermore, strategists that work behind the scenes often get little recognition for the success of a campaign. With the APEX awards, strategy is given its time to shine, showing that our work definitely has real impact. It's also one of the few awards we can strive for as strategists. Winning an APEX award places you above the rest. Lastly, an APEX award stands out because it's not an easy award to win, it's not a short case study or video, it is an in-depth report on the end result of a campaign that takes many hours to complete.

■ 3. *What do you expect from the Gala night?*

Marty: Great work delivering great results: that's all marketers have ever asked of advertising.

Cronje: To represent the brands we work on as a client - an agency team that works together to achieve greatness. And hopefully, to walk away with a trophy!

TJDR JHB: To learn what strategies are being used in South Africa, to get to the hearts and minds of the local consumer. It's always interesting to see how other strategists tackle difficult problems and come up with an idea that has tangible business results. Winning an award would be a great bonus.

[Click here](#) for a refresher on how the ACA APEX awards truly prove local communication effectiveness and excellence, and [here for a reminder of what our first batch of respondents](#) is expecting from Monday's Gala evening...

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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