

Is luring back the Loeries CEO all that alluring?

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23 Feb 2012

Running [The Loerie Awards](#) has never been easy. So, when [Andrew Human](#) announced he was [quitting as CEO](#) of the country's premier advertising awards a few months ago, it came as no surprise.



The Loerie Awards

It's a crap job, to be honest. An awful lot of sweat. An awful lot of having to deal with prima donnas at every turn and very little job satisfaction.

Of course, one has to ask why the Loeries board decided to do a little uncharacteristic groveling to persuade a clearly unhappy Human to [step back into the cauldron](#). Were there no other takers? Clearly not.

Good job

In terms of track record, one has to say that Human did a good job in restoring a sense of order, not to mention profitability, to the whole Loeries shindig. The awards had gone through some pretty painful times since Derrick Dickens, the former executive director of the Association of Marketers (ASOM), stepped down.

The [Marketing Federation of Southern Africa](#) (MFSA) made a right royal mess of the awards when it landed in its lap. So much so, that it barely survived.

Since it has been firmly back in the hands of the ad industry, it has regained some of its former glory.



Andrew Human, CEO of The Loerie Awards

But, under Human's tenure, it was not without its problems. Human might be a great organiser but he [seriously upset most of the trade media contingent](#) two years ago. So much so, that traditional Loeries media partners withdrew.

But then, the trade media has always had a tenuous relationship with the Loerie awards since ASOM days. What Dickens did well was to trust the media by letting them have the results a full week in advance, in order to be able to prepare properly and not end up strangled by impossible deadlines by having to wait until late on Saturday and Sunday nights to start putting stories.

Never betrayed trust

Not once in all those ASOM years did the media betray the Loeries' trust. Not a single leak ever.

Latterly, the media have not been trusted at all and have had to just put up with the impossible deadlines and generally shoddy treatment.

Which leads me to the point I have been making for about 20 years now. Either the Loeries board wants press coverage or it doesn't. It can't just insist on the nice bits.

Lepers

The trouble is that recently it has wanted its bread buttered on both sides. It wants the publicity to showcase the winners but it doesn't want the media reporting on all the shenanigans that go on during the awards weekend, or to publicise the gripes of agencies that didn't win anything.

Either the Loeries board should exclude the media and hold a private function in which people can behave like complete idiots without being exposed, or it should let the media in.

If it chooses the latter, then one of Human's first priorities needs to be to make peace with the press.

Hugging them one day and casting them aside like lepers the next is not the way to go.

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