

Digital jury jabber with... Lorraine Landon

 By Leigh Andrews

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This year, we'll see the 10th ever IAB Bookmark Awards taking place after the fourth Digital Summit on 1 March in Johannesburg. With award judging having wrapped this weekend, I got some behind-the-scenes insights from Lorraine Landon. She's head of agencies at Google SA and chairing the Bookmarks' first-ever 'performers' jury panel.



Lorraine Landon, head of agencies at Google SA and chairing the Bookmarks' first-ever 'performers' jury panel.

Landon holds BA Honours in drama and English, and is driven by being creative and innovative in her approach to digital strategy.



Bookmarks 2018 finalists announced!

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Says IAB SA CEO Josephine Buys:

“ We have increased our judging categories this year to reflect the constantly evolving digital industry and the range of skill sets and expertise that it now comprises. ”



IAB SA announces Bookmarks 2018 jury president, chairs

17 Jan 2018



The 'performers' panel is one of those. Landon explains her process in judging these campaigns is to distil what being in the 'performers' category demanded of the entrants. And the change in the definition of 'performance over the past decade, from reporting on digital campaigns as merely achieving an above-industry-standard CTR (click-through-rate) or a low CPC (cost-per-click) to actual **impact** of the campaign on the brand's business or initiative.

Here, Landon lets us in on some of the digital excitement by sharing her favourite digital innovation from the past decade, as well as the importance of celebrating digital creative work and what the judging process was like for her...

■ ***This year marks a decade of the Bookmark Awards! Share your favourite digital innovation from the past ten years (explain what and why).***

My favourite innovation is not so much a platform as a trend: I get really excited when I see a brand solve a problem for their consumers digitally. I am particularly passionate about brands knowing their customers and gaining great insights from them.

“ When brands take the time to understand user behaviour, we start seeing websites, apps and digital experiences that really are useful and improve a customer's lifestyle by saving time and data, giving information when requested, and engaging them in relevant entertainment. ”

■ ***Excellent. Elaborate on the importance of celebrating digital creative work in 2018.***

The advertising industry is full of labels; we tend to label people's areas of expertise and ring-fence them as standalone skills. I've heard statements such as: "you're a media person", "a digital person", "a data analyst", a "creative"! However, in order for campaigns to be truly effective and memorable, these siloes need to be broken down.



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When a campaign is celebrated at an awards event such as the Bookmarks, we are acknowledging the artful coming together of data, creativity, media and technology – no label is more important than the other. What it means for individuals in the industry is that they can feel free to explore realms that traditionally may not have been associated with their job title.

■ ***What has the judging process been like for you so far? Share some pointers on your personal judging process and what you're looking for from entrants in your category.***

My approach to the judging of these campaigns was first to distil what being in the "performers" category demanded of the entrants. When I first started reporting on digital campaigns 10 years ago, we defined performance as achieving an above-industry-standard CTR (or a low CPC).



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However, today, whatever the brand, the notion of performance means that we are looking for what **impact** the campaign

had on the brand's business or initiative. While going through each of the campaigns, I continuously asked if the entrant had demonstrated not only innovative creative work but also if the desired impact had been achieved for the client. This meant that the results had to tie back to objectives of the campaign very clearly.



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I also looked at how the campaign had been conceptualised and what key insights had driven the idea around which the campaign was built. I rewarded campaigns that showed a good understanding of the target market and identifying how the campaign was solving a consumer problem. Where such insight existed, it was more likely that the campaign performed to its objectives, resonated with the consumer and had the intended impact.

■ **List a key trend you noticed in judging this year's entries – comment on the overall standard of digital work in SA. Where do we shine and what's still lacking?**

I wouldn't say that there is any great "lack" in our digital work in South Africa; this implies that there is a big global standard against which we, as South Africans are judged.

" We are working in one of the most diverse and challenging markets in the world, talking to different consumers, sometimes with very limited budgets. I really appreciated the innovative strategies that were created within these circumstances. "

Where I think we could explore our capabilities further would be within that notion of impact, and really understanding how to report back on how the campaigns we have created have helped the brand achieve its objectives.

Quite a few of the campaigns reported impressions and engagements as their mark of performance and I would challenge entrants into 2019's Bookmarks to go a level deeper with these results and really interrogate the impact of these campaigns.

■ **What are you personally most looking forward to from this year's IAB Digital Summit and Bookmarks?**

Apart from seeing all the great campaigns in one place, I am really excited to see all the people who work in this industry. I have had the privilege of working with many of them and look forward to the exchange of ideas and hours of catching up!



Tickets on sale for the IAB Digital Summit, Bookmark Awards

11 Jan 2018



As are we! Keep an eye out for my interviews with others from this year's #Bookmarks2018 judging panel, and click through to our [IAB Bookmarks and Digital Summit Special Section](#) for all the latest updates. You can also follow the [IAB SA](#) and [The Bookmarks](#) on Twitter.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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