

# Agency credentials: Marketers look past awards to get to the grit

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Everybody loves an award - and winning agencies almost always get a second look. However, Johanna McDowell, CEO of the Independent Agency Search and Selection Company (IAS), writes that they're looking for grit - credentials that outshine trophies.



# IAS

## Independent Agency Search and Selection Company

Every agency strives for creativity, that 'special sauce' that sets them apart from their peers. But with today's budget constraints and a digital explosion that can edge a brand from good to great with just one campaign, marketers want grit: and this is seen in Credentials that show the backbone of an agency.

Having the confidence to reveal credentials in a pitch shows a marketer that the agency understands the client's business requirements and the importance of ROI. Highlighting the history and their current client list notes the agency's standing in the industry, especially when backed up by press coverage and case studies. What any marketer sees here is value for money.

Add BBBEE standing and procurement recommendations to this agency culture, and the client gets the full picture and not just the frame.

### Sessions to get your credentials glowing

As we head towards the 2023 Assegai Awards, incorporating the IAS Agency Credentials Award, the importance of overall expertise is under the spotlight. Those who have followed the IAS Credentials Award journey will know that the judges are mainly marketers to ensure fairness and not have an agency judging a peer.

Judges include overseas experts in marketing, along with several renowned local marketers. To ensure agencies are clear on how to enter the IAS Credentials Award, this year sees an event we'd suggest you put on your "must attend" calendar.

The IAS is offering a free forum in June to run its agencies wanting to enter through the process of submitting their credentials. With this invaluable input, we're thrilled that Ethan September of the Direct Marketing Association of South Africa (DMASA) will participate.

We urge agencies to join in the session to ensure that their entry meets the specifications and provides the opportunity to shine. The format encourages agencies to present their best sizzle to a calibre of marketing experts they ordinarily may never meet.

With entries open now, the Assegai Awards along with the IAS Credentials Award 2023 close on 31 August - so get your creds out, give them a session or two of polish, and make sure your entry gets noticed – for grit, not just shine.

- **Assegai Awards 2024: Why enter?** 8 May 2024
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The Direct Marketing Association of Southern Africa (DMASA) is a Section 21 company dedicated to the protection and development of the Interactive and Direct Marketing (IDM) industry. It established itself as an independent body in November 2005.

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