

The Adfocus Awards: A celebration of the industry

By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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The AdFocus Awards are different to other awards in the creative industry; they are business awards and winning an AdFocus Award means your agency, how it is run, from its people, systems and clients, is the best. They are a celebration of the South African creative industry and its agencies.



Image supplied. Joe Public were crowned the AdFocus Awards Agency of the Year 2023

This year the pickings were rich, with some categories where the agencies were so good, it was difficult for the jury to pick a winner.

The Large Agency of the Year was one of these categories. Won by Joe Public, the agency was also named the AdFocus Agency of the Year 2023. Along the way it also picked up the Transformation Award.



All the FM AdFocus Awards winners

22 Nov 2023



Transformation the foundation for creativity

Speaking to Gareth Leck, co-founder and CEO of Joe Public, at the event he expressed his surprise at being named Agency of the Year.

"To get the recognition is amazing, as there are some really great agencies out there, so it must have been very hotly contested. This is unexpected, to be honest, but I am very proud of the team."

For him, the agency's success lies in the Transformation Award. "I love that we were recognised for the Transformative Award because it says we have a diverse and inclusive agency, and these are key ingredients to produce great creativity which is essentially what we sell."

"So I am as proud of being recognised for the Transformation Award as I am of the agency winning large agency. You need a strong transformation culture that is very supportive of creativity which we have created, and I am proud of the foundation that we have built."



Pendoring Awards winners announced

10 Nov 2023



A state of mind

TBWA/ South Africa was named the Group Agency of the Year for the second consecutive year. It also won the Africa Impact Award - also for the second consecutive year, while Grid Worldwide won Medium Agency.

Luca Gallarelli, Group CEO of TBWA/ South Africa says it has always been the agency's ambition to be the most connected creative collective across South Africa and the continent.

"To be able to offer our clients the best specialists for a fully integrated offer constructed to their very specific needs. To receive the Group of the Year together with the Africa Impact Award for the second year running suggests our direction of travel is tracking well, and we're delighted."

"We believe we've been able to achieve this as we've shifted from this being an issue of structure to it being a state of mind and a state of being. Over 1000 colleagues across the continent operating as one team," he says.



TBWA: proving to be a master of all at the *FM* AdFocus Awards 2022

Danette Breitenbach 1 Dec 2022



The power of versatility

Winners of Medium Agency of the Year, Grid Worldwide, have found success through embracing the power of versatility.

"One of the things we have been pushing as an internal mantra is the power of versatility and when we talk to that it is playing to everyone's strengths and mashing that up in interesting and different ways and we think it is really starting to pay off in terms of working more efficiently, business offering solutions, and doing things in very interesting ways and taking over the world!" says David Cohen, CEO at Grid Worldwide.

"This award is a testament to the eclectic bunch that I work with every day. This is for them and for making it happen, proud of what we have achieved this year and everything we plan to do as we move forward," he adds.



Grid Worldwide top ranked regional agency in ADC 102nd Annual Awards Global Creative Rankings 2023

23 May 2023



Not the biggest but the best

Continuing and recognising its success this year, Retroviral was named Small Agency of the Year.

Mike Sharman, chief creative officer of Retroviral says they will never be the biggest but small agency is their preferred best.

"For 13 years we've been obsessed - not with being the biggest but - with being the best."

"Adfocus is one of the most credible awards in our industry and I'm just so insanely proud of what Retroviral has achieved this year," says Sharman.



SA's Retroviral named in PProvoke Media's 2023 Global PR Agencies of the Year

Danette Breitenbach 11 Oct 2023



An exciting time to be in advertising

Pete Case, CEO and creative chair of Ogilvy South Africa, was named AdFocus Awards Industry Leader for 2023.

He says he is humbled and delighted to receive this award. "I'm very aware that there are some very talented people in our industry, achieving some pretty incredible things, so. This is a wonderful industry to be part of and a very exciting time to be in advertising.

He adds, "I think it's important to add that I'm also acutely aware that our industry is a team sport and the success I've had as a leader can be directly attributed to the amazing people that I've been fortunate enough to work with along the way.

"So a huge thank you to all of those great people who've been on the journey with me. Thank you for believing especially during the rebuilding of Ogilvy South Africa during the last two years."



#Loeries2023: Ogilvy SA named Agency of the Year

7 Oct 2023



Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Ann Nurock, Africa partner of Relationship Audits & Management, says the validation from the industry is amazing. "I am so incredibly proud to receive this award."

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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