

Fran Luckin looks back at a year of creative innovation

Loeries chairperson and chief creative officer of Grey Africa, Fran Luckin shared her chairperson's report at the recently held Loeries AGM, which included her thoughts on the impact of creativity during the challenges of the past year. She shared her experience of stepping into the role during an unpredictable time and how circumstances inspired more innovation in the industry.



Fran Luckin, Loeries chairperson and chief creative officer of Grey Africa

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, many awards were cancelled as uncertainty hit markets around the world. “The Loeries team and board decided that the Loeries had a moral imperative,” says Luckin. “Key was to continue to offer the industry a much-needed morale boost, to bring the advertising community together in the face of the social and economic devastation caused by COVID-19 and to curate a showcase that demonstrates the value of creativity which ultimately offering proof to brands that they need to invest in their agencies.”

To keep fulfilling its mandate, which is to develop the brand communications industry in Africa and the Middle East, Luckin shared that a decision was made to make entries free for the first time and hold the awards virtually. This would enable many agencies to participate despite an uncertain future brought on by the pandemic.



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What was to be the first Loeries Creative Week at Constitution Hill in Johannesburg, South Africa became the first virtual Loeries experience.

“We managed to unite the industry virtually for a much-needed celebration of creativity, with speakers from over 30 countries and our first-ever virtual Loeries event, which offered us the opportunity to extend the reach of the festival, not only geographically but also to agencies who had previously never entered the Loerie awards,” adds Luckin.

She further observed that there were innovative results that came with this new experience, like receiving more than double the 2,500 entries received in 2019 with 18% of the entries coming from outside South Africa, and a significant increase in brand representation from 646 brands in 2019 to 1217 brands in 2020.

Luckin felt it particularly fitting that the Loerie campaign theme for 2021 is #FighttheGoodFight, “Featuring a set of anthemic headlines, illustrated with colourful portraits of well-known industry figures oozing with energy as they battle the enemies of creativity, it’s both a challenge to the industry and a celebration of all the people in it (brands and agencies) who keep pushing for the better.”



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She noted that with the various challenges came new ideas to connect the industry, such as welcoming representation from Nigeria, Kenya and the UAE on the Loeries Committee and the inauguration of the first ever Loeries Youth Committee, with increased support for sponsorship partners. She remarked that the continued support shows that the brand communication industry is valuable in ensuring that creativity thrives so that businesses benefit and society experiences strong transformative communication.

Luckin concludes that while the past year has, in many ways, been one of the most challenging that many people have encountered in their industry career, it has also shown that there is much hope for the future.

“This year has made even more evident the indisputable truth of something we’ve long asserted: that creativity and innovation are not destroyed by challenges. On the contrary – they thrive. The Loerie Awards Company and Board have embraced each challenge as a creative opportunity, and as a result I believe we’ve discovered anew awesome power of creativity.”

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