

New service design category serves as wake-up call for any brand

 By Leigh Andrews

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With the introduction of the Loerie Awards Service Design category this year, local advertising is shifting focus to every customer interaction point - especially those that aren't part of your current campaign...



Co-hosts for Loeries 2015 night 2: John Vlismas and Unathi Msengana © Gallo

The second Loerie Awards gala evening kicked off with AKA rapping an original Loeries track on stage, complete with fireworks and green lights - [click here to view](#). MC John Vlismas then introduced the night's co-host Unathi Msengana, and she in turn welcomed to stage the MEC for environmental affairs, Michael Mabuyakhulu. He addressed attendees on how the province benefits from having the Loeries roost on the Durban beachfront for the rest of the current rolling three-year cycle.

Fuelling the creative fire by turning 'No' into 'Yes'

Chris Hitchings, CEO of DSTV Media Sales then set the context for tonight's broadcast advertising categories by speaking of how many times most people who work in creative industries go against the grain hearing 'No' in the span of a career and keep trying until they persevere and make a name for doing things their way; a way that works, with South Africa's own Elon Musk as an example.

Hitchings linked this example to the relevance of [this year's slogan](#), 'How many Nos does it take to win a Loerie?' Those who do succeed in the industry simply didn't accept being told something is impossible and that failure is part of the journey towards achieving creative accomplishment.

Customer-facing staff as your brand's new selling point

Another talking point of the night was the introduction of the service design category, which celebrates the brands that go the extra mile and put customer service first.

This is testament to the fact that the voice on the end of the line or face you see over the store counter is actually the truest form of advertising in today's age, where the customer has more power than ever before. So an out-of-date website, cashiers that don't greet you and call centre staff that aren't aware of the latest special offers customers may call about, would be a serious brand minus in this regard.

Gareth Leck, Joe Public CEO and Andrew Human, Loeries CEO, explained that this first time category is all about the points where you interact with the consumer, where things tend to fall apart in the real-world despite great campaigns that win awards for effectivity and reach. If your brand's staff don't fulfil that promise those customers are likely gone.

[Click here](#) for the full list of winners from tonight, and [here for a reminder](#) of Saturday night's award show results.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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