

Panning the marketers' jury panel

 By Leigh Andrews

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Digital advice from a selection of the 2016 Bookmark Awards' marketers' jury panel: Prepare for an evolution in digital thinking and greater brand equity. But first, stop treating digital as a department.

An incredible amount of effort was put into finding the most appropriate and experienced judges for the various Bookmarks categories. With [Felix Kessel](#), CEO of OwenKessel Leo Burnett, judging the marketing panel, we caught up with three of its members to find out what we can expect from this year's results...

Kessel [revealed last week](#) that his role as the marketing panel chair is to assist with facilitating dialogue and debate among the judges around the work presented, while also mediating the panel.



Masango, Van Rookhuyzen and Laloo.

[Nkanyezi Masango](#), creative director at Y&R Cape Town; Eric van Rookhuyzen, head of digital at MEC Nota Bene; and [Nalisha Laloo](#), digital marketing manager of Pernot Ricard are just three of that 11-strong [marketing jury](#) panel. Here, they exclusively share their insights into judging this category of digital work...

1. What are you most looking forward to from this year's IAB Digital Summit & Bookmark Awards?

Masango: Inspiration and having my mind blown.

Van Rookhuyzen: I think the speakers attending are some really exciting faces, with a strong bias towards technology. As for the Bookmark Awards, as a first-time judge it is firstly an honour, but also exciting to see all the great work we as an industry produce and how the evolution of digital thinking progresses.

Lalloo: I can't wait to get a bird's eye view of the clever thinking and innovative marketing techniques the past year has produced in SA's digital landscape.

2. Share some pointers on your personal judging process and what you're looking for from entrants in your category.

Masango: I was looking for ideas that live at the intersection of originality and relevance. Then I judged the craft – how the execution accentuates the idea.

Van Rookhuyzen: I targeted the combination of innovation and results. Not one or the other, but rather at the entire integrated campaign that excites and ignites ROI.

Lalloo: I kept an eye out for entrants that were bold enough to push the boundaries in order to take the industry forward in terms of innovation, as well as those whose boldness was well thought-out enough to attain valuable results for the brands.

3. Elaborate on the overall standard of digital work in SA. Where do we shine and what's still lacking?

Masango: I think we have incredible talent where the technology is concerned. Now we need to be better at connecting the technology to the human experience. This will happen as soon we stop treating digital as a department and rather as an integrated part of a creative studio.

Van Rookhuyzen: I think the standard grows from strength to strength every year – and the bar is high. There certainly is great innovative thinking out there, but we are also in a position where we work within the limitations of our partners, their platforms, and this technology locally. I think as an industry in SA, we still have a lot of room to grow in technology, as not only a way of implementing or running media, but also providing business solutions for our clients that offer long-term value. Another key focus would be data: not necessarily collecting, but rather segmenting, analysing and interpretation of data that is generated in real time. Where do we shine digitally in SA? Social media is certainly a strong point for us, to engage with and moderate communities that has such diversity, is really remarkable and we do it incredibly well.

Lalloo: SA's digital landscape is exciting right now. We have a wealth of very smart digital thinkers and an equally large number of creative masterminds. I feel that one of the problems we've had is in trying to get those two to collide and take the industry beyond just churning out digital media plans aimed at cost-effective buying, to start to create true digital marketing strategies that focus on building digital brand equity and testing new measures of success as the industry evolves.

Exciting times! If you're eager to delve in deeper into digital, click through to [this podcast](#) interview with Josephine Buys, CEO of IAB South Africa, to find out more about the highly anticipated IAB Digital Summit & Bookmark Awards 2016, taking place at Turbine Hall in Johannesburg on 3 March 2016. [Click here](#) for the full list of Bookmarks 2016 judges and [here](#) for the full list of finalists and watch for our in-depth coverage.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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