

Q&A with Quirk's executive creative director, Conn Bertish

 By [Terry Levin](#)

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Conn Bertish ([@connbertish](#)) is the executive creative director at Quirk. Previously responsible for award-winning campaigns at Ogilvy, The Jupiter Drawing Room, Saatchi&Saatchi and JWT, he has scooped Gold and Silver medals at all major ad festivals worldwide, including a Yellow Pencil at London's D&AD awards for creative direction.

Bizcommunity pitched him a few questions about his current role in charge of all material created for World Design Capital Cape Town 2014.



Could you give our readers an insight into the briefing, objectives, approach, process etc in reaching the final solution?

Bertish: Creating a local 2014 World Design Capital logo was a collaboration between ourselves, Metropolitan Republic and the World Design Capital Cape Town 2014 team. We were looking for a graphic symbol that would assist the WDC team communicate what transformative design was all about to the broader Cape Town audience.

To do this we created the Yellow Geotag. A symbol that signals the locations of over 460 official World Design Capital projects in and around the Cape Town area throughout the year. Each of the Yellow Geotags carries a unique numbered # and SMS short code which will enable people to freely engage with the many and diverse stories of how transformative design can change the city and people's lives for the better.

We saw the Geotag as a good example of what transformative design thinking is all about. A medium-is-the-message type of design. One that has a purpose beyond just the aesthetic, and one that freely spreads and shares the ideology of transformative design democratically.

Have you been involved directly with the City of Cape Town stakeholders, or mainly answering to the World Design Capital team?

Bertish: Our client is the World Design Capital Cape Town 2014 team, so we work for them, however the process has been one of true collaboration with the City of Cape Town and other partners.

We all have a vested interest in pulling off an amazing year of design thinking that will positively transform our city on so many different levels.

Was the idea for the project calendar using the hashtag numbering system yours? Can you tell us a bit about this process?

Bertish: With more than 460 official World Design Capital projects spread across the greater Cape Town region, the hashtag numbering system was devised as a way of sorting, linking and sharing a large amount of information effectively.

The design needed to represent the year in a visually stimulating way underpinned by simplicity and practicality. The graphic nature of the Yellow Geotag, coupled with a range of colour-related project themes, inspired the circular design, creating a never ending loop of transformation.

What have been some of the highlights and/or lows of working on WDC2014?

Bertish: For any creative living in Cape Town it is the ultimate brief to work on - to positively transform the city through design. It doesn't get much better than this. And the fact is, we want to show the world just how it's done. We have some of the best practitioners and examples of transformative design right here in our city, in our country, on our continent and we need to enable them, share them and showcase them.

The most frustrating thing is scale and the possibilities of just how far we can spread this message, we need more collaborators, more sponsors, more creatives, more broadcasters. We need to sing transformative design from the southern tip of Africa, so loudly that the world stops and takes notice.

■Have you got any pet WDC2014 projects or those are particularly meaningful to you?

Bertish: My top project out of the more than 460 inspiring official WDC2014 projects is the World Design Capital Cape Town 2014 itself, as it has the greatest potential to effect real change on a global level.

ABOUT TERRY LEVIN

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