

Accredited digital media marketing curriculum launched

An accredited digital media marketing curriculum has been launched as a part-time course at the Johannesburg campus of the AAA School of Advertising from 21 July 2014 to 1 November 2014.

This is a collaboration between the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) of South Africa (formerly the DMMA) and the AAA School of Advertising to offer a comprehensive course to South African digital marketing professionals and students.



The curriculum will cover the digital landscape, strategic factors that influence design, implementation and execution digital marketing campaigns. Also covered are the tactics available to leverage a range of platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs, search engine marketing and optimisation and content marketing. These industry insights will provide a new appreciation of digital media marketing from a strategic and tactical perspective.

The course is a milestone on the IAB's path to pioneering accredited digital curricula that are tailored to the African market and provide the means to ensure the standardised certification of digital professionals' credentials.

New head of education & transformation portfolio

IAB has appointed digital media specialist, media personality and business strategist, Astrid Ascar as head of the education & transformation portfolio. In her new role, she will pioneer exciting transformation initiatives, including the partnership with AAA to establish digital as a lucrative career path.

Says chairman of the IAB, Jarred Cinman, "We are excited to welcome Ascar on board. She has a wealth of experience in digital education and in the media industry. We believe she has the right combination of industry knowledge and a passionate commitment to skills development to make a difference to an industry with a shortage of skills."

Her career to date has been entirely devoted to the media industry and has spanned radio, television, print, mobile and digital channels. She first appeared on South African television and radio more than twenty years ago and now her on-air career has come full circle with her daily presentation of Ballz Visual Radio's 'The Business' show.

She made her mark breaking away from traditional business model approaches to start-up two sustainable media businesses that are still here today, DStv's Summit, which is now known as BDTV and The Home Channel. Ascar also gained significant experience working with brands that include Carte Blanche, Naspers, MultiChoice, M-Net, CNBC Africa, DStv Mobile and the SABC.

In 2009, Ascar went solo as a digital and social media marketing strategist, as well as a radio and television media skills trainer. Her clients include corporates, SMEs and agencies. She has an MBA from Henley in the UK and writes and produces content for a range of traditional and digital media platforms.

Industry needs old-fashioned principles

Ascar believes that if the industry cuts the jargon and motivates what digital can do according to good old-fashioned business principles, the industry will benefit. "We have to make people care about what we are saying whether it's a display ad, a Facebook post or a tweet."

"In order to change the perception that digital is an 'add on' marketing and media platform, the IAB needs to lay the foundation for integrated marketing approaches that make the most sense to clients."



Astrid Ascar

Heading up her new portfolio, she hopes to reach and educate young students who may not have considered the opportunities and scope that the digital industry can offer them in terms of future careers.

In her new role, she also hopes to achieve collaboration and co-operation with the media and marketing industry. Much work has to be done to give the industry an integrated voice and approach and to equip marketers with the insight and skills to deliver business results to their clients through digital media and marketing solutions. She wants to begin the work that will be required to establish an industry-acknowledged and accepted educational and training framework, whose end point would be a professionally sound 'curriculum'.

"We have to look to young and upcoming talent to urgently address the need to transform our industry in line with national BEE targets. We have several exciting projects kicking off that will position the IAB, and the digital industry as a whole, as an exciting and compelling option for young people," concludes Cinman.

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