

MTN Radio Awards: Joffe responds to Rothschild

 By [Graeme Joffe](#)

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I have read with interest [Lance Rothschild's four-page response](#) to my [opinion piece](#) on the [MTN Radio Awards](#). I appreciate that he took the time but feel my questions have not been answered.



Also, comparing the MTN Radio Awards to the Oscars is a little farfetched - the MTN Radio Awards should be setting its own benchmark.

So, let me address Rothschild's response element by element.

LR: "That MTN gets value out of these awards should not come as a surprise to Joffers."

Indeed, it comes as no surprise but what is a surprise is that you have a title sponsor for an event and it still costs R950 (excluding VAT) for a seat. Can all community and PBS stations afford it and some still have to buy airline tickets to attend the dinner? The individual categories were also sponsored by other corporates - so, it still begs the question - what is MTN paying for?

LR: "The MTN Radio awards is a year-round programme."

Maybe I'm missing something but is a year not a long time to prepare for an awards gala dinner?

But if one year is needed, then this should alleviate the necessity of having 22 judges.

Get five independent judges (with specific expertise) for the year and let them listen to live radio. They don't need to travel, what with most stations now available on streaming audio. A year should give them ample time to sample the best of South African radio.

Listening to six-minute edited clips is not a fair gauge for awards. It needs to be live and I'm almost certain that having a totally independent panel of judges, with no link to any stations, would mean that many of the results would be very different. I won't go down that road for fear of denting some egos!

LR: "The Sandton Convention Centre is a premier venue."

Yes, it is and it's not easy to cater for over a 1000 people at a gala dinner. But I can assure you I'm not the only one who found the service and food to be very average. (Come on, Joffers, stop always worrying about your stomach!)

LR: "In addition, the production of the awards ceremony has to meet certain expectations and has to be a quality production."

Did I miss something here? I don't remember much in the way of any production apart from still graphics on the screen. It would have been nice to hear some radio clips of the finalists and even some comments from the 22 judges; it just felt like nominee after nominee, award after award, and nothing in between to spice it up.

LR: "The MTN Radio Awards is a living and developing programme and there were many awards because the programme included awards for each sector (Commercial, PBS, Community and Campus), and was expanded based on feedback from the industry over the previous awards presentation. We are, after all, recognising achievements

and talent in the entire broadcast radio industry."

Adding awards every year will certainly help you grow the numbers but so many of the current categories could be combined into one.

For example, if a station wins "Best Morning Show", does that not include the finance, traffic, sports, producer, innovative packaging and on-air packaging? Yet, these are all separate categories, making for a long night of nominees and nearly 100 awards.

Judges and MCs

In my initial opinion piece, contrary to Rothschild's suggestions, I was neither critical of the judges nor the MCs but I do feel strongly that no judge nor, for that matter the CEO, should have a current tie to any station. It immediately creates an impression whether the judge excludes him or herself from whichever category or not.

In closing, well done to all the winners but I'm already pained by the amount of repeated MTN award-winning promos and self-glorification on some of the stations. Your listeners should be praising you, not you praising yourselves! So, once again, does the MTN Radio Awards actually reward excellence or is it an exercise in self-sponsored self-promotion?

For more:

- Bizcommunity: [MTN Radio Awards CEO responds to Graeme Joffe](#) by Lance Rothschild
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Graeme Joffe, a former sports presenter for CNN and 94.7 Highveld Stereo, now hosts his own hard-hitting sports talk show "SportsFire" on Radio Today and is syndicated on West Coast FM in Namibia, 90.3fm in Plettenberg Bay and Knysna FM. He is also a co-founder of Township TV (www.townshiptv.co.za). Email him graeme@butterbean.co.za and follow @joffersmyboy on Twitter.

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