

Bridging the gap by empowering African creativity

By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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In a dynamic masterclass on Black creativity and its global impact, hosted by Greg Edwards, the president and CEO of UniWorld Group (UWG), a resounding call was made for African youth to actively participate in the burgeoning wealth generated by content creation.



Gregory Edwards, Sibusiso Gumbi, Iris Fynn and Jolene Roelofse in conversation. Source: Karabo Ledwaba.

Edwards was speaking at a masterclass at The 45th Loerie Awards which took place this past week 2 - 6 October.

"In the next ten years, content creation will create more millionaires than were created in the first 500 years," he said underlining the unprecedented potential of this industry.

He emphasised: "What better place and what better time than now for African youth and African people to be a part of this wealth creation?"

Diverse voices

Carlo Murison, founder and CEO of Two Tone Global and a key speaker at the event, stressed the significance of diverse voices and perspectives in the advertising world. He pointed out a crucial issue where global and South African brands often fail to grasp the nuances of culture, religion, emotions, spirituality, and socio-economic contexts.

Murison says that campaigns have faced criticism due to their insensitivity to culture, something he experienced as a jury member in Cannes.

He also highlighted the importance of preserving culture, stating, "Exploitation occurs when there is a lack of cultural preservation. We gravitate toward Western brands because they have successfully preserved their culture."



UniWorld Group and Two Tone Global partner as UWG Africa

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Iris Fynn, CEO of RiverGirl celebrated the resurgence of African storytelling in the era of social media. She stated, "As Africans, storytelling is in our DNA, and for the longest time, our stories went untold. However, with the rise of social media, our narratives have gained significance."

Fynn cited examples like the natural hair movement, which empowered Black individuals to take ownership of their hair and pressured brands to adapt, accommodating space for natural hair products.

Transformative marketing

Fynn underscored the vital need for African people to be the storytellers of their own experiences, emphasising, "It's crucial that African people tell African stories."

Jolene Roelofse, founder of Fluence Africa discussed the transformative role of influencers in marketing. She noted that brands used to create universal campaigns designed to appeal to all audiences. However, influencers provide an opportunity to connect with diverse cultures, languages, and beliefs. By allowing influencers to convey brand messages authentically, brands can bridge gaps and resonate with a broader spectrum of consumers.

Roelofse acknowledged the hesitancy of some brands to embrace this approach, citing a lack of bravery. She also highlighted the value of content creators like MacG, who, despite criticism, understand their audiences intimately.

Sbusiso Gumbi, SABC's head of marketing said Amapiano and its global surge is a strong example of how authenticity can have global reach. "I have yet to see SA musicians who are travelling overseas like Amapiano artists."

Roelofse concluded that the only way for African stories to be told is through access.

"We need everybody's culture to be celebrated and known, and that can only be done if we give everyone access and opportunities," she said.

ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

Karabo Ledwaba is a Marketing and Media Editor at Bizcommunity and award-winning journalist. Before joining the publication she worked at Sowetan as a content producer and reporter. She was also responsible for the leadership page at SMag, Sowetan's lifestyle magazine. Contact her at karabo@bizcommunity.com

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