

It's getting crowded in here

 By [Terry Levin](#)

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The Cape Town Design Indaba running this week from 26-28 February 2014 at the CTICC is celebrating its 20th year in existence, coinciding with another landmark of 20 years of South African democracy.

It also marks the 10th year of Bizcommunity's coverage of the event. Opening the sold out conference Simon Suzman, chair of retail group Woolworth noted the brand's 11th year as a premium sponsor of the event and reaffirming their commitment to South African resourcefulness, creativity and design.



Chris Gotz

Crowd created brand stories

CCO of South Africa's most awarded agency in 2013, OgilvyCT, Chris Gotz ([@MrChristiffa](#)) set the tone for the day showing how their clients such as Carling Black Label achieved massive public participation using collaborative technology, tapping into a core desire of soccer fans to "Be the Coach", allowing them to select player for their teams via SMS from any cellphone and to control the outcome of the final game between Kaiser Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

The award winning activation received 10.5 million voter responses, generated record attendance and engagement at matches and an estimated R83m worth of PR awareness.



Juliana Rotich

Crowd sourced civic info

Speaker Juliana Rotich ([@afromusing](#)), co-founder and director of Kenya-based tech company [Ushahidi](#) presented new African technologies born out of the 2008 post-election violence in the region, which allow the voices of ordinary citizens to report on what they see and hear around them to provide crowd-mapped feedback as to what is going on in their areas.

Innovation hubs such as [iHub*](#) and [Afrilabs](#) ([@AfriLabs](#)), are facilitating new Pan African networks and conversations and we can see why Juliana and others are beginning to imagine Africa as the vanguard for new collaborations and entrepreneurship.

Says Rotich, the fact that Africa has problems like power outages and high costs of connectivity to overcome, has led to unique solutions such as the ingenious and rugged alternative to existing electricity reliant modems, the [BRCK](#) which is in effect a back up generator for internet supply will be available for order within the next few months.



Jake Barton

Crowd pleaser

The power of the crowd was demonstrated by Pechu Kucha design graduate from Design Academy Eindhoven, David Hakken who has show his [#phoneblock](#) concept all over the world. In essence Hakkens's vision is a modular mobile concept, which would allow components to be customized or replaced without having to discard the entire unit and thus minimizing e-waste landfill. What is relevant here is that instead of going out to find someone to make it, he used the principles of the crowd to demonstrate demand - receiving 1 million views with 24 hours of being posted and up to 380 million over time. Turning don an offer from Google - because he did not want "to work in phone company", he is currently engaged with feeding crowd sourced discussions through to Motorola to try and "make it happen"



Ije Nwokorie

Crowd created galleries, classrooms and memorials

Jake Barton ([@Jake_Barton](#)) allows the solutions for the designs to emerge from how people behave and their interactions in public spaces. New meaning is created in museums and art galleries by allowing iPads located in front of each artifact to fill in its historical context.

Truly experiential learning of Middle School physics is demonstrated by sensorised playground equipment, allowing the concepts of mass, acceleration, friction, thermal energy to be literally enacted on children's bodies - turning play into equations and making the abstract concepts of physics fun and accessible.

Stand out work from the Local Projects design studio include experiential solutions for the 9/11 Memorial and museum - where hundred of thousands of individual stories make up the narrative of the memorial's content, allowing all to participate equally in the emotion of the site - from those who weren't even born, to those who lost loved ones, to those who committed acts of heroism and even those who were on the other side of the world when the 9/11 event occurred - to contribute their stories to the experience in a series of interactive environments.

The way the names have been arranged on the memorial is a particularly poignant demonstration of how the victims themselves have determined the design - in this case via thousands of interviews with loved ones. The names of those who succumbed have been grouped with those who were their closest friend and colleagues - as an alternative to alphabetical any other such ordering - adding to the emotion, meaning and considered detail of the monument.



Thomas Hulme

Crowd generated light

Such is the range of the London based agency WolffOlins ([@WolffOlins](#)) that their MD Ije Nwokorie ([@onyeije](#)) eschewed showing the biggest and most successful brand identity case study of the decade - the London 2012 Olympics - in favour of other more worthy causes!

Having experienced all the perils and constraints of growing up in a remote area of Eastern Nigeria, he says half jokingly, that in Africa where systems are wanting, often not fit for purpose, corrupt or broken, creativity isn't an option - you have to design around the system, citing the Little Sun project currently operational in seven African countries - Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, Senegal, Ethiopia and South Africa, as an example.

The Little Sun, a sunflower shaped disc lamp designed by Olafur Eliasson ([@olafureliasson](#)) and Frederik Ottesen was launched at the Tate Modern in London in July 2012 in total darkness - to illustrate the plight of the 1.6 billion people worldwide who are without access to a reliable source of electricity.

Crowd solving

Using collective platforms to invite participation and solve problems through an open call is strongly recommended by entrepreneur and designer Thomas Hulme ([@thulme](#)). His latest venture called [OpenIDEO](#) ([@OpenIDEO](#)) is a growing online community of 60,000 people in 160 countries, built as sort of a virtual support group for real world problems.

Join the crowd in a local initiative [#anotherlightup](#), which sees artists Faith47 ([@faithfourseven](#)) and Thingking ([@weareThingking](#)), collaborating on helping to light a path in Monwabisi township. Find out how to add your light at <http://www.anotherlightup.com/>.

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