

Serving the Prism Awards

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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This Saturday the public relations (PR) industry will celebrate 20 years of the Prism Awards. Entries have grown since the first Prism Awards in 1997, and today over 200 entries are received on average, annually. With this the number of judges have also grown to over 60 this year, many of whom are seasoned judges in the Awards.



Anton van Rensburg

Anton van Rensburg, country director – UK & Ireland, Expandi Group, and chief judge for Cluster 3 has been involved with the Prism Awards for five years. “I have been fortunate enough to be involved with the Prism Awards since 2013 and can tell you that seeing the evolution of entries in this particular cluster has been an amazing journey.”

Cluster 3 judges the Financial Services, Investor Relations, Business-to-Business and Sponsorship Sectors and the Practices: Corporate Communications, Publications and Consumer PR for an existing product, service or category.

Every year the judges look forward to learning about great campaigns, how they were planned and executed and how the results positively affected the various clients, he says. “It’s so much fun to see what different entrants experience in their efforts to bring a campaign to full fruition.”

Cluster 5 chief judge, Vicki St Quintin, Corporate Affairs manager, Adcock Ingram Healthcare, believes there is a high standard shown in the entries that they judged. “There was quite a lot of agility where required, and clever campaigns that would have a lasting effect on brand reputation.”

This is her fourth sequential year of judging the Prism Awards. Of these she has judged Cluster 5 three times. Cluster 5 includes Healthcare, Environmental, Community Relations, and Corporate Responsibility Sectors and the Practices: best use of an event to build or change reputation and the launch of a new service, product or category.



Vicki St Quintin



Kevin Welman

In his fifth year overall judging and his second for Cluster 7, Student Campaigns, chief judge Kevin Welman, director ByDesign Communications, says the industry has a lot to look forward to as these students enter the workplace in the next year or so.

“Our students have truly been educated in an integrated world where traditional and social media exist in parallel. This year I think there was a higher level of creativity, with several campaigns really being brought to life differently.”

Lucy Balona, head of Marketing and Communication, Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA), has been chief judge for Cluster 1, which includes the sectors of Tourism, Travel & Tourism, Public Affairs, Public Sector and NGO Campaigns and the Practice of Crisis Management, for the last three years. She has been a Prism Awards judge since 2012.

Commenting on this year’s entries, she says some work needs to be done on really applying ourselves. “We’re in a tough economic climate at the moment, and every rand should be accounted for in terms of budgets.”

It is during tough times that PR professionals have a wonderful opportunity to be creative and use their PR skills to the fullest, she adds. "When there is very little budget, we should be able to try to be more resourceful and come up with new ideas and methods that can really make an impact."

She believes the country has a thriving industry. "PR is so essential as part of the integrated marketing mix, so the Prism Awards is a super platform to showcase the real value PR offers."

The Prism Awards take place on Saturday, 6 May at The Park House of Events on 7 in Gauteng.



Lucy Balona

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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