

PR professional shortlisted for SA's Business Entrepreneur of the Year 2023

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Adam Hunter, managing director and head honcho for PR and integrated marketing agency [Hook, Line & Sinker \(HLS\)](#), was shortlisted as a finalist in SA's Business Partners Entrepreneur of the Year®. This year's awards received more than 250 entries from across the country. Hunter was one of five in the Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year category for 2023.



For 32 years, the annual event has recognised and honoured successful South African entrepreneurs in the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) sector, celebrating excellence in entrepreneurship. This year's submissions covered all sectors and industries, from PR, to recycling, and even a doggie daycare. But it was Hunter's vision of breathing new digital life into the PR industry, added with a small investment of R7000 resulting in rapid staff and exponential growth, that earned him this recognition.

"To be recognised and acknowledged by Business Partners is humbling validation of the relentless dedication and innovative spirit that drives team HLS," he shares.

The accolade adds to a string of successes for Hunter and the HLS team in 2023. In August, the agency scooped Silver for South Africa's Best Small Public Relations Consultancy at the PRISM Awards organised by the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA). Out of +390 qualifying entries - the highest number in the Awards' 26-year history - HLS also scooped silver in the category for Best Healthcare campaign and bronze in the Technology category.

In addition, HLS was awarded the title of 'Best Creative PR & Communications Agency in South Africa' in the global Corporate Vision Small Business Awards which aim to recognise small businesses and highlight their contributions to society. The awards are merit-based with judging criteria including elements such as client dedication, innovation, business growth and longevity, customer feedback and business performance.

Hunter founded HLS in 2018 after being retrenched from a prestigious PR agency with only 25 days to find a job. He

invested the last of his holiday leave in purchasing a laptop and set about combining the power of PR with the world of digital marketing, publicity, advertising, and social media. The agency's first client was an international ICT software company with systems that touch 77% of the world's transactions.

Six months after registering the agency, Covid hit. Amidst the global challenges, he turned adversity into opportunity, evolving HLS from PR consultant, to a small consultancy to global player – quadrupling the company's revenue while also expanding its 25-client base across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East and creating 14 permanent employment opportunities.

From PR to entrepreneurship, Hunter says that success hinges on an agile approach to navigating changing landscapes, seizing opportunities, and building meaningful relationships. And much like entrepreneurs, PR professionals are tasked with not only understanding the pulse of consumer behaviour, industry trends, and the broader socio-economic landscape but also with developing innovative strategies that shake up business sectors and positively impact consumers.

Hunter continues, "As we celebrate the Business Partners prestigious competition and all the resilient finalists who delivered great results, I hope that it also serves as a beacon for every entrepreneur navigating the challenging waters of business – believe in your story, shake up the status quo, say yes - do it with a smile, and success will undoubtedly follow."

"The recognition and awards we have garnered in 2023 are not just milestones; they are reminders of the untapped potential within every challenge. The journey continues, and at Hook, Line & Sinker, we remain committed to telling stories of success," Hunter concludes.

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