

Great talent is a driver

 By [Odette van der Haar](#)

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"Creative effectiveness requires strategic partnerships."

Q: Your 'game changer' trend?

A: For a number of years, no Grand Prix was awarded at the APEX awards. However, that changed at the 2014 gala event when DDB South Africa and their client, FNB, were awarded the coveted prize for their 'FNB Switch' campaign. The radio campaign drove creative innovation within the banking sector and, as the year progressed, other creative brand executions on radio drove not only consumer interest but also creative effectivity from an ROI perspective for the brand owners. Our industry witnessed Grand Prix awards in respect of Radio Campaigns later in the year at both Loeries and Cannes, where South African agencies won 21 of the 49 radio campaign awards.

Selecting the correct medium in order to avoid waste is key to any campaign seeking to provide effective creative results. In the case of the FNB Switch campaign, the creative effectiveness was not present simply in its execution, but rather it transcended this to envelop the entire creative process from initial concept through to strategic, media and budgetary planning.

This dovetails into the issue of education and training within the advertising industry, which is the key driver of a stronger and more effective industry overall. Client approach is one of seeking business solutions; they have realised the benefit of investing more in education and training so as to better understand the industry and the business of advertising. We see greater levels of cross-consulting taking place as a means of getting more 'bang for their buck', which helps drive a more effective and professional industry. Creative effectiveness requires strategic partnerships between clients and agencies, and case studies such as the APEX Grand Prix award assists all parties to craft creative executions rooted within firm economic principles.

Q: What do you hope to see less of going into a New Year?

A: The profession has had to remain quite dynamic and inclined to change as technology continuously drives new developments. There needs to be a change in the awarding of business where partnerships and deeper understanding of client as well as consumer needs and insights prevail. We have to strive to reduce the number of 'nonsensical' pitches and eliminate the scourge of clients asking for 'quotes' on a project-by-project basis. As a sector, we hope for less government regulation and greater reliance on self-regulation through the existing industry structures.

Q: What do you hope to see more of in 2015?

A: Great talent is the driver within our industry and we will be doing more to attract new talent into the profession,

encourage talent retention in agencies as well as continuous training and development of talent going forward.

Q: What advice do you have for the industry for the next year?

A: My advice to agencies is as follows: pay attention to the MAC Charter; respect and adhere to the ASA Code - self-regulation is better than Government regulation or legislation; and invest in talent.

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ABOUT ODETTE VAN DER HAAR

Odette van der Haar joined Publicis as the MD from 1 September 2019, before which, she was the CEO of JWT Jhb. She was also CEO of the Association for Communication and Advertising (ACA) (www.acasa.co.za), the industry body of the SA advertising and communications sector, and previously headed up Sentech's Advertising, Events and Sponsorships portfolio...

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