

# What are agencies doing wrong when entering digital awards?

By [Michael Walker](#)

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Having worked in the digital marketing space for more than a decade, I've twice served as a judge for the Bookmarks Awards (Performance Marketing category) and as a judge for the MMA Awards. As the current head of marketing for Gumtree South Africa, I share my thoughts on what agencies are doing wrong (and right) when entering awards.



Source: [www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com)

The talent within the South African marketing community is truly staggering. Agencies are finding interesting ways of merging the digital space and the offline world, while also considering the financial and connectivity challenges of our market.

Unfortunately, many of these talented agencies will not receive the accolades they deserve because of submission errors and misconceptions about upping their odds with awards' judging panels.

There are three things every agency should do when they are entering their submissions for digital awards:

## 1. Know your category

One of the fundamentals that all marketers learn is that to be successful you must be targeted. Digital marketers have perfected the art of personalisation, but they consistently fail to apply the principles to their awards entries. I can't tell you how many agencies enter the exact same submission for every single category, using the same blurbs and the same content.

Contrary to popular belief, this doesn't increase your odds of winning. Judges spend the first round of judging putting submissions in an In or an Out pile. If it's the third time I've seen your entry, and I can't see or remember a link to the category, it goes in the Out pile. If you make it to the In pile, judges will spend a whole day deliberating whether you deserve an awards' nod or not.

Judges may love your campaign, but they start loving it less and less the more times they see it pop up as a submission in irrelevant categories.

Adopting a spray and pray approach may see your entry unfairly dismissed right out of the gate. Never enter for consideration in a category that doesn't make sense.

## **2. Make sure your entries are correct**

I can't tell you how many entries were submitted this year, linking to incorrect videos or campaign information. Don't delegate your entries to the interns and juniors. Always check and double-check that your work is correct before submitting it.

If you are wondering why your stellar campaign didn't get picked up, this could be a reason.

## **3. Customize your metrics**

Your clients may not be the most technically savvy, but judges are. As performance marketers, we are going to interrogate your performance metrics and hold you to the highest industry standards. Don't focus on vanity metrics like impressions; focus on tangible results.

If possible, include the budget. This is an important part of the context. If your campaign achieved impressive results with a low budget, you deserve an accolade.

If all this sounds laughingly simple...it is! You can increase your odds of walking away with an award by sticking the basic principles you were taught during your first year of study. Personalize, stay accurate, and focus on ROI achieved.

Trust the work that you've done and don't rely on crazy tactics that never pay off. You'll improve your odds and stand out from the crowd.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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