

Advertising's shift beyond 'selling stuff' to tell better regional stories

 By Leigh Andrews

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In our annual #AfricaMonth catch-up, Loeries CEO Andrew Human chats about what to expect from Loeries 2019, why judges are briefed to look for locally relevant experiences and communications, and the rising importance of brand humanity and problem-solving in creativity against the continued shift away from merely punting the client product or service.



Loeries CEO Andrew Human encourages everyone to tell better stories.

The current call to action on the Loeries website reads as follows:

“ For over 40 years, the Loeries – a not for profit association – has been pushing, championing and sharing creativity and innovation. It’s not just an award. It’s about recognising creative brilliance. Making you and me feel something, question and rethink our ways of doing. It’s about telling better stories. Stories that provoke conversation. Challenge traditions. End stereotypes. Celebrate humanity. Tear racial divides. Embrace culture. And change the world. We’ve been rewarding better stories for over 40 years, across Africa and the Middle East. Tell us yours. ”

Here, Human explains the positive impact of the Loeries expanding across the region to include all of Africa and the Middle East, as well as expansion of the design category and more...

■ In our #AfricaMonth interview last year, we spoke about the importance of creative nuances in creativity across the region, and the importance of celebrating locally relevant creativity and original African ideas – not trying to fit a Western idea onto these markets. Does that still ring true?

Definitely. The Loeries expanding into the region has been very positive, for South African agencies as well as brands, because it gives us the ability to be part of a bigger region and not limiting ourselves to our own borders. From a creative point of view, that adds to what you experience and your influences.



#AfricaMonth: "It's time to celebrate cultural nuances in creativity" - Andrew Human

Leigh Andrews 1 Jun 2018



That's also exactly what we brief the judges: to look for locally relevant experiences and communications. They're not the target audience, so shouldn't be saying, "Would this idea work for me back home?" Instead, the judges need to focus on the communication itself: Who is the intended audience, how does it work in that environment?

A good example of this is last year's radio Grand Prix-winning 'Highway Gallery' for Louvre Abu Dhabi by TBWA\RAAD Dubai.

Billboards were placed along perhaps the most boring highway in the world and linked to radio, so as you drove along that 100km-stretch of straight open highway without other distractions, it was like a moving gallery with the radio explaining the history of the art you saw as you drove. In that specific environment, the idea and concept worked very well, but it's not necessarily a concept you could roll out to cities across the globe.

It's about understanding context, which is why it's so important to ask how the ideas work for Kenya or Nigeria and not for London or New York.

■ **Sticking with the importance of region over global, you *also mentioned* that the region gave the world such innovation as irrigation, organised religion, hospital emergency rooms and the understanding that the world revolves on its own axis. Talk us through the importance of brand humanity and problem-solving in creativity, especially against the continued shift away from merely punting the client product or service.**

It's becoming more and more important that brands are questioned about their social relevance as well as their environmental and social impact.



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We tap into this with our shared value category – when we launched it a few years ago, it was an anomaly.

It was difficult to even explain it back then yet nowadays, it's almost becoming the norm.



#Loeries2018: How brands with purpose unlock true business value

Leigh Andrews 16 Aug 2018



It's something that brands and corporates are striving for: to show their business adds value. It's something that consumers are looking more and more to see – how do brands add value to my environment?

■ **That links to the fact that, great work is about more than just awards: Talk us through this year's theme of 'Telling better stories' and how it encapsulates Loeries' 2019 call for stories that upend stereotypes, tear down racial divides, and embrace cultural differences, especially as there are over 2,000 languages across the region.**

With the theme of telling better stories, it's important to look at the positive role advertising plays. Should advertising simply be about selling stuff, or should it act as an influencer in society, acting towards the betterment of society? Ultimately, the question to ask is 'how does advertising help create a better society?'



#Loeries2019: Mama Creative explains why it's on all of us to tell better stories

Leigh Andrews 26 Apr 2019



Advertising is definitely a powerful medium, tool and influencer. You need to ask yourself as a brand, an advertiser, an advertising agency: Are you reinforcing negative stereotypes, or are you helping to move things in a positive direction?

That's the main idea behind the 2019 Loeries' campaign: Use advertising to tell better stories, and in telling better stories, change what you can.

■ **Drilling down further, let's talk all things design: Nando's has come on board as design category partner and you've broadened the category to include all aspects ranging from retail design like furniture, lighting and fabric design, industrial design, interior design and architecture, as well as all elements of traditional graphic design. Talk us through this specific change and what we can expect from the 41st year of Loeries.**

The design category definitely creates positive change, as we felt design as a whole hadn't been getting a lot of recognition – here in South Africa and the rest of the region, at least – for the concept of design.

We wanted to broaden and go beyond just brand communication, which is why we opened up our design category to include all areas including product design and even wallpaper – it doesn't have to be design for corporate brands. We want to recognise and reward all good design.

Nando's coming onboard as a partner is a good example of using good design, as Nando's understands how to make great creativity, great design and art integral to the success of their brand. It goes back to the idea of shared value, and that shared value is not charity.



#Loeries2018: Gordon Ray on winning a Grand Prix for Nando's '#rightmyname'

Jessica Tennant 24 Aug 2018



It's not about running your business and giving a donation to an art gallery or a college on the side. Instead, you need to incorporate the principle into your business of doing good while doing good business.

The Nando's business has benefitted from using creativity, in supporting local designers. They're effectively growing the whole design industry around their brand, and while growing the local design industry, they're also benefitting as a brand.

Looking at other changes, 2018 is the year we moved the award nights from Saturday and Sunday to Friday and Saturday. This change was monumental in that it condensed things and made the overall Loeries experience busier and more vibrant on the Friday and Saturday, especially as we now have the masterclasses on the Thursday and DStv Seminar of Creativity on the Friday. Overall, the whole experience worked very well.

■ ***That it did, definitely something to look forward to in just a few months' time. Let's flip the script now, and end with a question usually reserved for the attendees rather than the man behind the scenes: What are you most looking forward to from Loeries Creative Week 2019?***

This year, we once again have a fantastic line-up of [jury presidents](#) providing an aspect of global creative leadership. All of them will be speaking at the DStv Seminar of Creativity, with already revealed highlights, including Nedal Ahmed as jury president of the DStv Film category, and Katja Thielen as jury president of the Nando's Design category.



Meet the Loeries Design Jury President 2019

Loeries 10 Apr 2019



Nadal has a fantastic background as the creative behind the Cannes Lions Grand Prix-winning piece, 'The Talk'.

That work speaks to everything we've discussed in this interview in terms of work that creates positive change and turns stereotypes on their head.

Having a jury president with that background is fantastic, especially as she's from the region, having been born in Libya to Sudanese parents, then moved to the US at the age of 11 and now working in Amsterdam.

Having someone with that global experience is great to both have leading the jury panel and to speak at the seminar – it's usually a once-off opportunity, listening to the seminar talks and engaging with the speakers, so that's usually what I look

forward to most from Loeries Creative Week.

A clear call for all to start telling better stories – entries for Loeries 2019 are open until 15 May, but consider yourself warned against trying to enter work designed exclusively for the award shows. The Loeries' 'all or nothing' rule results in the most severe penalty for this type of scam – if the work wasn't approved by a client or didn't actually flight, the Loeries has the right to not only cancel that entry but all entries submitted by that agency, irrespective of whether the other work is legitimate or not.

If you can't wait for Loeries Creative Week Durban, taking place from 14 to 20 August 2019, you can [click here](#) to go further Behind the Selfie with Human, keep an eye on the Loeries' [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) feeds and stay tuned for my interviews with a handful of those international jury presidents and all the latest updates in our Loeries' [special section](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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