

Winners announced for Wan-Ifra's African Digital Media Awards

Wan-Ifra's African Digital Media Awards recognise publishers who have adopted digital media and mobile strategies as part of their total product offering to meet the major changes in how people consume news and information today. This year the majority of Africa digital media winners were from South Africa and Kenya.



Winners of the Digital Media Awards in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The awards provide a snapshot of planetary best-practice across the news media industry, and the second African [Digital Media Awards](#) competition put the finest African media projects on centre stage. Innovation, interactivity, and energy proved the hallmarks of an inspiring range of media.

1. Best news website

Winner: *BusinessLive*, by Tiso Blackstar Group, Johannesburg, South Africa.

BusinessLive is a major move by Tiso Blackstar to bring all its business media titles under one roof. The site combines paid subscription, freemium, and free content and impressed the judges with its fully responsive design and rich media content. As one judge put it; "This is a beautifully designed website that is a pleasure to use on phone and on desktop."

Runner-up: Second *Netwerk24*, by Media24, Cape Town, South Africa.

2. Best in lifestyle, sports or entertainment website

Winner: *W24*, by Media24, Cape Town, South Africa.

Of all the positive comments from the judges, the word "fresh" came up repeatedly for *W24* which is exactly what's needed from a site appealing to "millennial women with a flair for fashion and a passion for all things lifestyle." Easy, natural navigation and engaging content saw the site score strongly with the panel.

Runner-up: *KenyaBuzz*, by Nation Media Group, Nairobi, Kenya.

3. Best use of online video

Winner: Gupta Leaks Video Series by Chronicle Productions, Cape Town, South Africa.

A topical, hard-hitting subject in South Africa got the video treatment from Chronicle Productions with a result that impressed with its “irreverent, intelligent style and lovely use of video effects, excellent graphics, and good lighting.”

Runner-up: Mojo: 16 Days of Activism, by Independent Media (Pty) Ltd , Cape Town, South Africa.

4. Best data visualisation

Winner: Deadly Force Database, by Nation Media Group, Nairobi, Kenya.

This project takes a theme familiar from US investigations into homicide, and brings it home to Kenya with a powerful emphasis on naming each victim; in the process translating faceless statistics back into individuals. As one member of the panel put it; “The visualisations are clear and charts are also used outside the database on key news stories which is a thoughtful reuse of material”.

Runner-up: Only one in 48 applicants gets admission to study medicine, by Media Trust Ltd., Abuja, Nigeria.

5. Best news mobile service

Winner: *News24 Edge*, by Media24, Cape Town, South Africa.

News24 is a long-established premium online news source and *News24 Edge* seeks to move the game on a step with increased personalisation, artificial intelligence, and user interaction. That, combined with “ease of use and intuitiveness,” clearly impressed the judges.

Runner-up: *Nation News App*, Nation Media Group, Nairobi, Kenya.

6. Best lifestyle, sports or entertainment mobile services

Winner: GQ magazine/website, by Condé Nast Independent Magazines, Cape Town, South Africa.

The South African take on GQ magazine impressed with its “fresh and contemporary look” as well as a recent re-design that shows its ambitions in the use of augmented reality and 3D.

Runner-up: *W24*, by Media24, Cape Town, South Africa.

7. Best innovation/new product

Winner: *News24 Edge*, by Media24, Cape Town, South Africa.

Another accolade for the Cape Town team, as *News24 Edge* won again in the New Product category thanks to an approach neatly summed up by one judge as “strong news content married to an excellent app.”

Runner-up: *Nation Messenger Bot*, by Nation Media Group, Nairobi, Kenya.

8. Best in social media engagement

Winner: BBC Media Action Sierra Leone - Facebook page, by BBC Media Action, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Showing the possibilities of social media to break the mold in the typical media landscape, the winner (and runner-up) of the Social Media Engagement category were projects from out of the African media mainstream. While the BBC needs no introduction, BBC Media Action in Freetown does not normally get much international attention and its Facebook page was inspired by the need to give a voice to a country still rebuilding from a civil war and the 2014 Ebola outbreak. Judges were impressed and inspired by short films about “ordinary Sierra Leonians doing extraordinary things”, about the page's celebration of life, and its energetic response to community comments.

Runner-up: Africatoons Advancing Freedom of Expression through Editorial Cartoons, by Africatoons, Johannesburg, South Africa.

9. Best digital advertising campaign (including branded content)

Winner: *Men's Health*, by Media24, Cape Town, South Africa.

“A great concept well executed across a number of channels [that] makes excellent use of user-generated content”, was one judge's comment, “a strategically, well-designed and creative campaign exploiting the massive potential that lies in social media platforms”, was another. A socially-driven campaign with a clear target group and consistent messaging that has all the makings of a stand-alone brand (#beastmode), this project showed the way in terms of the slick marriage of client branding and concept.

Runner-up: *Business Daily* Relaunch, by Nation Media Group, Nairobi, Kenya.

10. Best innovation to engage youth audiences

Winner: *Mynetwork*, by Nation Media Group, Nairobi, Kenya .

The East African media giant beat off strong competition for this category – which arguably represents the key to any publisher's future success. Judges love the combination of calls to action, digital, and social media which work together to bring the medium to life. “The use of WhatsApp and custom channels on Twitter and Facebook encourage continued and focussed engagement, well thought out, well executed, really engaging and a positive investment in their market.”

Runner-up: Project Rise, by Media24, Cape Town, South Africa.

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