

# Creating a sustainable future

By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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The golden thread at the recent Apex Awards Masterclass 2019 was to create a sustainable future. This was the overriding message from the presentations on the days that ranged from gender diversity, creating a culture of trust, identifying as an African, balancing media channels or marketing to the township.



Refilwe Maluleke, MD Yellowwood on stage. © [ACASA Twitter](#).

The Apex Awards Masterclass, with the theme 'Africa the Revolution', took place the morning of the Awards at The Venue, The Houghton Hotel in Johannesburg and kicked off with renowned *New York Times* bestselling author, Stan Slap, the CEO of the Slap Company.



#ApexAwards2019: Ending an era with magic

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## Hungry and the Hunted

Entitled the 'Hungry and the Hunted', Slap's keynote focused on how to transform a company into a brand by maximising the commitment of a company's management, employees and customers. "Transforming a company into a brand is a rare achievement, but one that will serve you well in the future," he said.

A company does not have to be the best or the biggest to be a brand. "What it has to do is to inspire its customers to have faith and faith is the deepest level of trust. This is the rarest gift your customers can give you," he said.

To achieve this trust, companies need to understand that a brand is not a verb, it is a tribute given to you. "This tribute comes from your employees and your customers and happens when you achieve performance sustainability through your actions," he added.

## Africans need to connect with each other

Bringing an African perspective to the event, the next speaker, Thebe Ikalafeng, shared his thoughts on how Africa can brand itself by taking the best of the West and its own rich cultures and bringing them together. “We need to reclaim our culture and our narrative,” he said.

The importance of intra-Africa trade and connecting with fellow Africans is as important. “As Africans, we need to connect with each other and value each other and what we have to offer. We need to buy from each other and we need to travel in our own continent.”

## Develop a well-integrated customised campaign

Jane Ostler, global head of media, Insights Division Kantar, addressed how marketers can develop successful connected, multichannel campaigns that build brands and avoid the pitfalls of fragmentation. She said it started with a central idea. “This will give you a higher brand impact and your brand will perform above average,” she said.

Next, develop a well-integrated customised campaign. “By ensuring your campaign is well integrated it will allow you to reach different people on different platforms. Channels play an important role in determining impact on an individual level,” she said.



### Marketers continue to struggle with integrated campaigns

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“A well-customised ad campaign can improve campaign effectiveness by as much as 20%,” she added. She advised looking beyond paid media and relooking at the role of each channel delivering the message.

## Advertising needs to catch up with the real world

Women are an enormous market globally, controlling 75% of global discretionary spend, “Despite this, companies and businesses still using data constructs of fixed stereotypes across every category. 85% of women agree that advertising needs to catch up with the real world,” said Refilwe Maluleke, MD Yellowwood.



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When it comes to women in business, only 3% of women globally are leaders, despite it having been proven that women in

business make a company more innovative, with 20% more patents produced than in teams with only male leaders.

“Both these need to be addressed, and agencies need to think about their role in how to encourage a different type of thinking. There is also the role of men in readdressing the current imbalance as it requires a combined effort,” she said.

## Township marketing is not marketing for blacks

Tbo Touch, CEO Touch HD and Marketing, gave the delegates insights into the township economy. He made the point that we are all consuming the same products, but brands market differently to the township.

“That said if you are going to market to this segment, make sure you get it right. This means all the elements, from language, images and culture must be in line with the township culture. Kasi life is a real culture and township marketing is not marketing for blacks.”

## ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from VUts.

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