

TBWA\South Africa proves having a purpose brings its own rewards

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The agency has been crowned Agency of the Year at the contest recognising the world's most powerful cause marketing



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Hot on the heels of last week's success at the Cannes Lions, TBWA\South Africa has won Agency of the Year at the Purpose Awards. The agency also bagged the Brand-led Best Advocacy Campaign category for its "Wear it for Me" campaign for MTN.

The international Purpose Awards, held annually in London but conducted during a digital ceremony this week on 29 and 30 June, recognise powerful and effective cause marketing for a greater purpose – which has become increasingly mainstream among major brands and companies.

Charities, non-profit organisations and public sector bodies have similarly upped their game, by producing powerful work in support of their own progressive causes.

The Purpose Awards recognise campaigns that use creative ideas to further [positive causes](#) and acknowledge the organisations behind them. They are open to agencies, brands, public sector bodies, charities and NGOs throughout EMEA.



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For the winning campaign, "[Wear it for Me](#)", TBWA\South Africa turned mothers into influencers to persuade the youth of Africa to wear masks to stem the spread of Covid-19. With many people refusing to wear masks or not wearing them correctly, the campaign was part of MTN's drive to raise awareness about mask-wearing in its 21 African and Middle Eastern markets.

TBWA\South Africa has committed its resources, time and expertise to cause marketing for years but in 2020, the agency doubled down on pro-bono work.

The agency also addressed the second pandemic, of gender-based violence in South Africa, which earned it five Cannes Lions for the "Blame No More" victim-blaming campaign.

It leveraged their resources, time and expertise to put 550,000 pairs of school shoes on children's feet and provide 750,000

meals to people who were economically hit by the pandemic through work with Spar Group.

And TBWA\South Africa helped conceive and launch the Solidarity Fund, set up to address the most urgent needs of the pandemic.

These campaigns did not 'look' like charity because they were not: They were tangible expressions of purpose that the client, their staff and their customers could be a part of.



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Luca Gallarelli, group CEO of TBWA\South Africa, says: "As a group, we're delighted to receive this latest accolade just a week after winning a Glass Lion for change at the Cannes International Festival of Creativity.

"We believe in the power of creativity to act as a force for good and, more importantly, a force for change. Producing purposeful work for our clients that impacts our continent positively, is what drives us."

TBWA\Hunt\Lascaris Johannesburg's chief creative officer, Pete Khoury, adds: "Brands and agencies that are doing more than they're saying, are building their businesses for future success."

As a creative company, TBWA\South Africa gives up a lot of time, resources and energy into projects of this nature, annually.

"We use the power of storytelling, not just to build brands and sell products, but also to bring into awareness narratives that can impact society in positive ways. That can create real change," Khoury says.

Zama Hlophe, strategy director at Yellowwood, says: "Not many of us had an opportunity to do something about the pandemic. MTN had the bravery to respond with a single-minded focus on mask-wearing.

"That focus really liberated us to explore the most motivating reasons for wearing a mask; reasons that while universal could have stand out in Africa."

About the Purpose Awards

Cause marketing has moved from a niche pursuit to a popular approach among major corporations and brands. Old-style CSR has largely been replaced by a desire to add a bigger purpose at the heart of organisations.

This trend accelerated in 2020, with the onset of the coronavirus, the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and the growing climate emergency.

Against this backdrop, leading titles [PRWeek](#), [Campaign](#) and [Third Sector](#) have launched The Purpose Awards EMEA for a second year.

Previously called The Campaigns for Good Awards, the new name was adopted in 2019. It reflects the growing use of 'purpose' as a term for modern campaigning that puts a positive cause or progressive movement at its centre.

The awards recognise campaigns that use creative ideas successfully to further positive causes, and also acknowledge the organisations behind them.

The awards are open to agencies, brands, public sector bodies, charities and NGOs throughout EMEA.

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