Loeries more compelling than ever before

Davy Ivins, MFSA GM Events and Corporate Social Investment, on the ‘new look’.

Exuberant, celebratory, and controversial: all traditional hallmarks of the creative industry’s favourite event. Loeries 2003 was no exception, and will be remembered for its record number of entries, over 3 500 attendees of all hues – and the challenge by MFSA chair Jabu Mabuza to transform the event.

Now 2004 will see a totally remade Loeries. To be hosted from 1 to 3 October at Sun City the event is a strategic response to the challenges of maintaining freshness, adding relevance, speeding transformation and showcasing African creativity. The revamp follows an encompassing review of the entire mfsa awards and events portfolio.

The most obvious changes are the date (moved from June to sunny October), the scope (reducing proliferation by consolidating the Assegai direct marketing and Raptor sponsorship awards into the Loerie brand), and the offering (now including an international conference, exhibition, showcase and network environment). These make for a compelling communications and marketing festival, and will deliver a comprehensive blend of celebration, learning and networking in one weekend package. The event also addresses the challenge of drawing blue-chip marketers and captains of industry back to the event, whilst adding real value to the traditional Loeries creative community.

Less obvious is the response to the questions of transformation and relevance reflected in last year’s opening address. October 2004 will not disappoint. More fundamental than the progress already made in the organising committees, judging panels, and mentorship programmes is the far-reaching judging criteria proposed by the Creative Circle, ACA, CAFé, and Think (Design Council).

Unanimously adopted, the new approach will see Loeries 2004 reward the “conceptualisation and execution of fresh and engaging world class ideas that are contextualised in African idiomatic expression, language, societal values and habits”.

Entries for Loerie 2004 open on 1 March.

“African focus

The concept is not complex. Loeries 2004 will reward outstanding creative work that speaks to the South African and African markets – whether targeted at the rural Zulu homestead, the platteland Afrikaner, the white Sandton housewife, or the Portuguese-speaking Mozambican. The definition codifies the African focus inherent in Loeries, whilst recognising that our society is infinitely diverse in language, culture, and lifestyle.

Will this African focus detract from winning at festivals like Cannes or Young Guns? Absolutely not. World-beating creatives understand the need to be global citizens with a passion for work that is grounded in providing value to their local clients. And whilst Loeries 2004 unashamedly emphasises the point, the reality is that this is nothing new. It’s simply about reflecting your target audience’s values, and talking to them in the local idiom. That’s what great advertising is about.

What is new and exciting is the opportunity to showcase our work at a compelling event, attended by the cream of Africa’s marketing and communications community, and underpinned by a comprehensive festival of networking, learning and celebration.

“Loerie judges will be looking for outstanding creative work that speaks to the South African and African market.”

“The essence of who we are as an industry is that we are creative ideas people. I invite you to help us find solutions moving forward.”