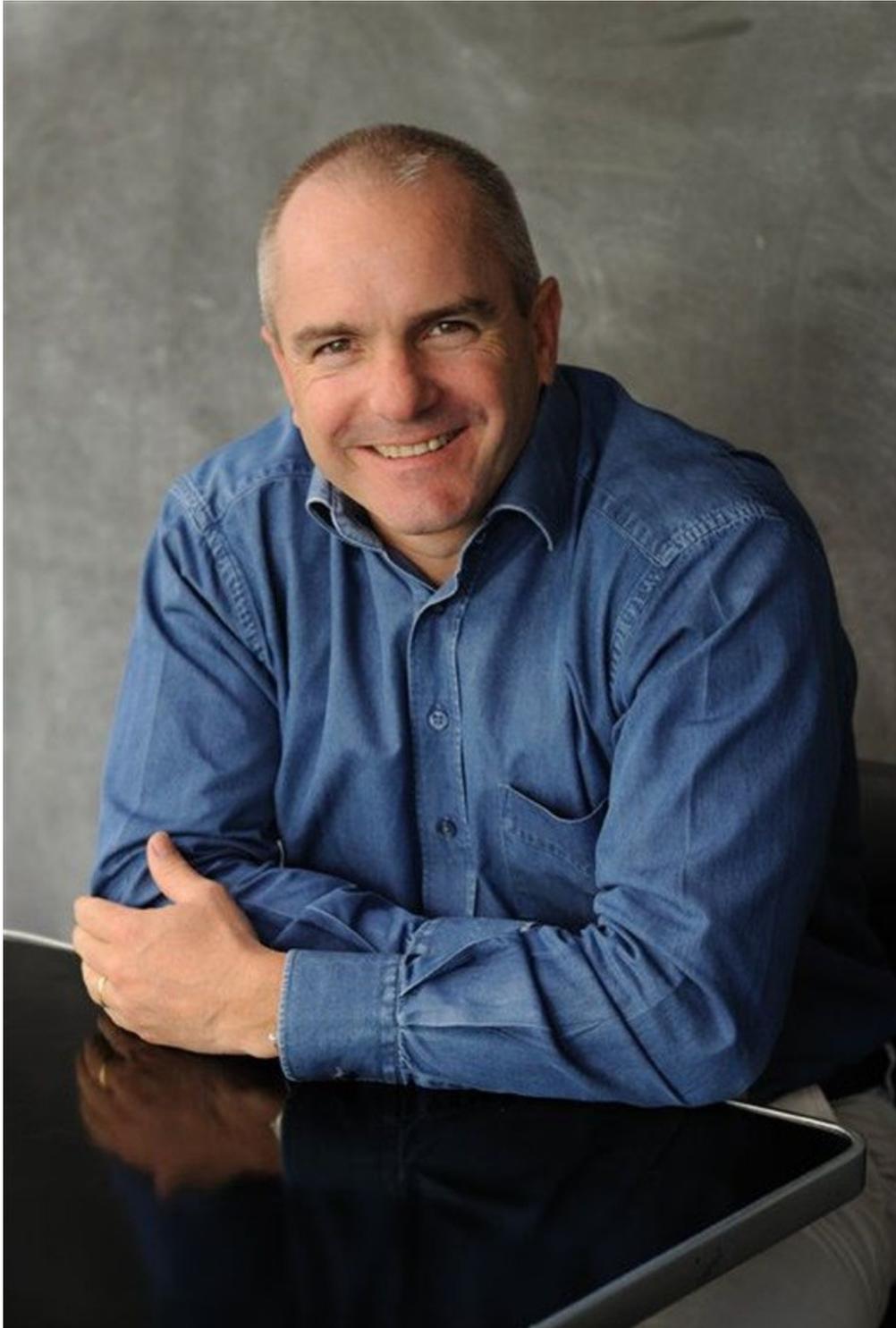


James Barty on brand humanity and doing good business, beyond ticking the 'CSI box'

 By Leigh Andrews

14 Mar 2019

Last week, YPO hosted the world's largest gathering of CEOs right here in Cape Town, on 6 and 7 March 2019, for its Global Leadership Conference and YPO Edge, with the theme, 'Life of Re'. I spoke to King James founder and YPO member James Barty about what he gains from his involvement in YPO and how all businesses can make a better impact.



YPO member James Barty - also ACA chairperson and CEO of King James Group.

With King James advertising agency having just turned 21, CEO James Barty is a well-respected industry leader and

mentor, who also shares his industry knowledge as current chairperson of South Africa's Association for Communication and Advertising (ACA).

But where does he turn for support, when his inspiration well turns dry?

“ A huge day for [@jbarts101](#) and I. Twenty years to the day that we began this epic adventure that is [@kingjamesgroup](#). (Barely aged a day I reckon). To all who have helped us be the agency we are, we thank you. It is everything we ever wished for. pic.twitter.com/y0qG66Oxbn— [alister king \(@ALsparkles\)](#) [January 5, 2018](#) ”

Barty shares that he became part of YPO 12 years ago, having been invited by a CEO client who was a member and thought it would be good for him to join, so he did – as simple as that. So Barty has been an active member for a while now, on and off because how active you want to be as a YPO member is entirely dependent on you.

The power of networking and learning from shared experience

As a result, Barty has led a mentorship portfolio, as that's his passion, and he was part of the YPO members' leadership team for a while. He's far too busy for that now, given his additional roles at King James Group and as the ACA chairperson, so is no longer as active as before.

But mentorship still matters to him, as well as the idea that the core of YPO is really founded around the idea of forum.



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Barty explains that a YPO forum, in particular, is effectively your personal external team, through which you share power, knowledge, experience, criticism and debate – the good and the bad. That's Barty's YPO journey so far, so while he's not a very public member of YPO – in fact, this was his first media interview focused on his YPO membership – he derives lots of great value from it.

For example, when we chatted on the first morning of this year's YPO Edge conference, Barty shares that it had been a “really cool morning” so far. He found the sessions not just inspiring but also emotional as the speakers were sharing visceral talks about shared experience, which he finds to be far more impactful than just learning facts.



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It's about asking yourself what you can learn from someone else's experience, and especially for the members who don't belong to global networks with international offices, there's another highlight in tapping into the considerable networking opportunity that arises from meeting people from all over the world, right here in Cape Town.

Doing good business: Make an impact beyond your bottom line

Barty pointed out that clued-in businesses are now making a conscious effort to make an impact and ease some of the world's social ills. So it's not just in the name of business and making your own brand the best it can be, but about having an impact beyond business.

True investment in doing so means you go beyond seeing corporate social responsibility as a 'corporate CSI box to tick' once a year, to a real belief that by 'doing good', you are doing good business.

Barty says that's become a repetitive mantra of sorts but you actually see examples of this in action at YPO, which Barty found impressive.



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Lastly, from a media and marketing point of view, Barty spoke of the importance of **brand humanity**. YPO does this well as it's literally an organisation of people – it doesn't manufacture anything. In a sense he says that's fascinating, that YPO exists and has collective power as a brand, with amazing characteristics and values.

If it can be used properly, it's something that can really shift the dial and make a real impact.



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That's what YPO is all about. [Click here](#) for more on King James Group and be sure to follow YPO's [YPO Edge](#) on Twitter and the [hashtag](#) for further insights from the global gathering.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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