

The prominence of PR

 By Leigh Andrews

17 Aug 2016

This year's Loerie Awards include a new Public Relations Communication category. PRISA's two-day PR-themed conference also forms part of Loeries® Creative Week™ Durban. Here's why you simply can't ignore PR as part of the creativity mix.



Paulsen

The Public Relations Institute of South Africa (PRISA) executive director Adele Paulsen explains the importance of PR in today's increasingly digital communication space...

"Imagine a full two days' immersion in a content-driven conference set to improve your understanding of how to maximise and embrace the evolution of public relations and communication in this ever-changing world while exploring ways that brands interact with the consumer and media, all set in sunny Durban with the movers and shakers of the PR, marketing and advertising industry."

That's the #PRISArise2016 Conference 2016 in a nutshell: The theme of 'Advance, Rise, Grow' brings a different dynamic to the PR industry, as does the fact that PRISA has decided to collaborate with the Loeries, having noted the beneficial shifts of the media landscape's promotional mix elements on the PR industry. This serves as the Loeries®

Creative Week™ Durban opener, taking place before the advertising and marketing-centric Loeries activities begin, with the 2016 #PRISArise conference getting underway today.

Paulsen adds that PR ties into the Loeries' overall 'Creativity Unites' theme for 2016 as creativity is certainly a part of PR, you simply can't have a successful activation without it. That's why PRISA goes hand-in-hand with the Loeries this year. We need public relations or PR as a component of every campaign and activation. In digital, it's just one aspect to emerge, and it's an essential aspect for brand managers in getting their message across.

Well-rounded communications activation

Of the conference, Paulsen says to expect a well-rounded communications activation from academic and professional tracks alike. Open your mind to the new information shared and be sure to act on it when you get back to your office.

One of those speakers is Mokebe Thulo, portfolio manager at HDi Youth Marketeers. She says while many might suggest that the PR industry is slowly dying, along with traditional media platforms in the increasingly digital world, she would wholeheartedly disagree.

"People are increasingly hungry for content and PR is the gateway to feeding people this curiosity. The PR industry is widespread and can live on all media platforms. This flexibility makes it more accessible to organisations and consumers. So I would say, until the consumer stops consuming content and pigs fly... the PR industry will continue to grow."

Elaborating on that growth, Thulo says there's a huge opportunity for the PR industry to collaborate with creative thinkers across other industries, to take ordinary campaigns and create extraordinary reach and results out of them. Creativity and innovation has the potential to bring all communications industries together, allowing parties to reach greater heights, through collaborative innovation, under a shared goal.



Thulo

Sharing a preview of her talk at the PRISA conference titled 'High road, low road?', Thulo explains it'll give a youthful edge to five of futurologist [Clem Sunter's](#) South African flags that'll determine the direction the nation is heading in. Using data from the 2016 *Sunday Times* Generation Next study, which probes deep into the minds of South Africa's youth, Thulo's insight will leave attendees suitably informed to decide themselves whether South Africa is at risk of becoming a failed state.

Other topics to be addressed at the conference include an overview of how to make PR thrive in a changing digital landscape; a study of African communication trends; and of course, the changing environment of PR and communication industries, as well as panel discussions on topics such as [crisis communication](#). The integration of public relations, marketing and advertising will serve as a platform to trigger an exchange of viewpoints among delegates and experts within the industry.

Here's to two days of sharing, challenging and coming back enlightened and ready to implement what's been learned.

[Click here](#) to find out more about PRISA as the official sponsor of the Loeries' brand new Public Relations Communication category, and [here](#) for more on the PRISA conference.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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