

Marketing Achievement Awards announce Rising Star of the Year finalists

The 2022 Marketing Achievement Awards' (MAA) have announced its Rising Star of the Year Award's top five finalists.



Supplied. The 2022 Marketing Achievement Awards' Rising Star of the Year Award five finalists

The finalists are:

- Fanelwa Xhiphu, brand manager at The Prestige Cosmetics Group
- Taryn Jankes, social media specialist at Discovery
- Neliswa Mncube, head of marketing at LexisNexis South Africa
- Pertunia Mabotja, Marketing Manager: Customer Experience at Nando's
- Jared Patel, head of marketing at Sea Harvest Group.

The award, sponsored by Mondelēz Africa, celebrates the best young marketer under the age of 35 who has demonstrated the potential to become an outstanding industry leader through impactful analytical and creative marketing efforts.

The finalists demonstrated exactly this, simultaneously reflecting this year's MAA theme, *Marketing that means business*, which speaks to the potential of strategic marketing as a critical tool for business success.

Role models for young marketers

The Mondelēz MAA Rising Star of the Year Award celebrates great marketers on the rise – future leaders who will serve as role models for other young marketers in years to come.

These individuals think differently; they disrupt the status quo; challenge the way we think and redefine the business of marketing.

Searching for all of this and more in this year's Rising Star entrants were judges Dr Doug Mattheus, an independent marketing and leadership consultant at Doug M Consultancy; Professor Madéle Tait, Professor in the Department: Marketing Management at Nelson Mandela University; Gugu Mthembu, chief marketing officer at Telkom; and Serisha Pillay, senior marketing manager at Sage and the 2021 winner of the MAA Rising Star of the Year Award.

Speaking on behalf of the panel, Mattheus says the judges were looking for a marketer with an edge. One was who was shaping the future of marketing, and pushing the discipline forward while demonstrating leadership, innovation, forward-thinking, and the ability to strategise for impact and growth.

"The panel had its work cut out for it, sifting through all the remarkable submissions received to select just five talented finalists," says Mattheus.

The Mondelēz MAA Rising Star of the Year Award winner will be announced at this year's presentation of awards on 13 July 2022.

Marketing as humaning

As a purpose-led business committed to building an organisation of marketers with diverse skills, incorporating both technical and visionary approaches, Mondelēz Africa was the natural sponsor for this award category.

Nadia Mohamed, Marketing Director, Mondelēz Africa, says the company views creativity and a strong ability to visualise the 'brand dream', supported by analysis of data to draw meaningful consumer insights, as critical skills to a marketer's success.

"Our current landscape is in a constant evolution, further complicated by a highly competitive environment.

"The most successful marketers are those who are able to leverage a balanced skills set, which encourages transformation through thinking holistically about growth, enabling both the now and next while future-proofing their organisations," says Mohamed.

"We believe so strongly in this approach that internally, we refer to marketing as 'humaning'," she explains.

"This places equal emphasis on the importance of creativity as a lever for deeply connecting with our consumers, and on data analysis as a skill to be leveraged to better understand our consumers and anticipate their current and future needs," she adds.

Critical areas for marketing

Mohamed says there are a number of areas within marketing that are critical for delivering sustainable long-term growth.

"Purpose-led marketing is one such area. We need to elevate our brands beyond just products to become vehicles for change that positively contribute towards society and the environment while delivering against the bottom line," she explains.

"Empathy at scale/digital innovation is another area, which highlights the importance of leveraging first party data as a tool to unlock our ability to connect more meaningfully with consumers while still achieving scale and driving commercial

growth,” she says.

An exciting career

Mohamed adds that marketing remains an exciting, fast-evolving career.

She advises young marketers: “Remain curious and open to what is most relevant to marketing today but also to where future growth will come from so your skills may evolve accordingly.

“The best marketers are those who are commercially minded but complement this with cross-functional breadth. Be brave! It’s those who are brave enough to try to shift culture who eventually do.”

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