

Digital jury jabber with... Jade Amic

 By Leigh Andrews

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This year, we'll see the 10th ever IAB Bookmark Awards taking place after the fourth Digital Summit on 1 March in Johannesburg. With award judging underway, I got some behind-the-scenes insights with Jade Amic. She's VML's creative group head and chair of the Bookmarks' 'innovative engineers' jury panel



Jade Amic - Native VML's creative group head and chair of the Bookmarks 2018's 'innovative engineers' jury panel.

Of the judging process so far, creative problem-solver Amic says it's been interesting trying to define 'tech innovation' versus 'innovative use of tech'. When does it become something 'entirely new' as opposed to an innovative use or adaption of something that already exists?



IAB SA announces Bookmarks 2018 jury president, chairs

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It's quite the thought-starter, and ties in nicely with what Amic predicted for the year ahead when she was first announced as one of the 2018 Bookmarks' jury chairs:

“ Machine learning and AI are becoming more and more part of our daily lives at a rapid rate. We're finding ourselves speaking to machines more frequently and they are deriving meaning from every word we say (or don't say). Our world is becoming totally customised for us, by us, without us even knowing it. It's not only changing our lives but completely shifting industries. The fact that we have no idea what tomorrow will look like is incredibly scary and exciting at the same time. 2018 is looking to be a really interesting year. ”

Here, Amic lets us in on some of the digital excitement by sharing her favourite digital innovation from the past decade, as well as the importance of celebrating digital creative work and what the judging process has been like for her so far...

■ **This year marks a decade of the Bookmark Awards! Share your favourite digital innovation from the past ten years.**

There have been so many innovations that have come out of the last decade – Uber, Waze, Tinder and the countless apps that we have become so dependent on. But ultimately, these innovations were born because of the ‘smartphone revolution’. Without our mobile lifestyles, they wouldn’t exist.



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2 Mar 2017



While smartphones have been around for many years, the launch of the iPhone in 2007 (yes, I realise we’re in 2018 now, but I’m going to steal a few months) catapulted the evolution of the smartphone and transformed the way we think about mobile technology – and life in general.

“ *It was no longer “business as usual.” The evolution of the smartphone has led to industries changing, improving, disappearing... and new business models being created.* ”

We’ve stopped seeing our phones as a device that we simply use to call people and now see it as an integral solution to our daily lives. Our phones have become our personal assistants, our travel guides, our navigation and concierge services, and even a way for us to bank, no matter where we are.

This understanding of what a “phone” has become is also impacting how we look at and use feature phones. We’re constantly trying to find ways to bring smart functionality to a not-so-smart device and make it more accessible.

■ **Elaborate on the importance of celebrating digital creative work in 2018.**

Digital technology makes the world a much smaller place. It transcends borders, time zones, languages, age and societal barriers, and gives us access to things we ordinarily wouldn’t have access to.

“ *I believe that if we’re all a little closer to one another, we can help each other a little more. Our role as creatives is to solve problems. Combine our hunger for problem-solving with continuous tech innovations and deep research methods, and you soon realise that we really can change the world. It’s never been more important to do purpose-driven work, because it’s never been more possible.* ”

■ **What has the judging process been like for you so far? Share some pointers on your personal judging process and what you’re looking for from entrants in your category.**

The first thing I look for is the idea and the intention of the piece. These bring everything together and give it purpose. They guide every part of the project and done right, should lead to great results.

The results are equally as important and in digital, almost everything can be measured. Whether it's an innovation, application or a campaign, each piece has a unique objective that needs to be considered. It can be anything from engagement to awareness, CTRs, reach, acquisition, earned media, paid media or setting out to change behaviour.

📊List a key trend you're noticing as you judge this year's entries – comment on the overall standard of digital work in SA. Where do we shine and what's still lacking?

- **Key trend:**

Overall the production quality of the pieces is high and the target markets are considered throughout. There is a definite trend in the AI and Machine Learning category in how content is streamlined and tailored to the user.

- **Where SA's digital work shines:**

There are some great digitally-led campaigns that are smart and genuinely add value to the consumers' lives by tapping into the human truths. We're embracing global tech like VR, AR, IoT, AI, Machine Learning and so much more which is really exciting.

- **Where SA's digital work is lacking:**

In some cases, I think we're lacking in the ability to see the full potential of tech and are still being very functional in how we use it rather than pushing it in a creative way. We often see tech as the idea versus seeing it as an execution of the idea.

📊What are you personally most looking forward to from this year's IAB Digital Summit and Bookmarks?

I'm really excited to see the full spectrum of work and how thinking has progressed over the last year. I'll also be in good company!



Tickets on sale for the IAB Digital Summit, Bookmark Awards

11 Jan 2018



As are we! Keep an eye out for my interviews with others from this year's #Bookmarks2018 judging panel, and click through to our [IAB Bookmarks and Digital Summit Special Section](#) for all the latest updates. You can also follow the [IAB SA](#), [The Bookmarks](#) and [Amic](#) on Twitter.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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