

Triple Eight on not just surviving but thriving as an all-female agency

 By Leigh Andrews

16 Sep 2019

Not only is Triple Eight Africa's fastest-growing all-female marketing agency, they were also the 'overall winners for investing in young women' at the recent Gender Mainstreaming Awards. Here's the essence of the socially conscious marketing, PR and digital agency's success.



Sarika Modi, MD of Triple Eight Agency, at the Gender Mainstreaming Awards.

Launched by the Business Engage Association in 2013, the [Gender Mainstreaming Awards](#) celebrate transformation in South Africa, with a particular focus on gender and empowering women.

The awards encourage private sector and government to achieve meaningful representation of women in the mainstream and rewarding those that have already understood the business case for gender diversity and started their programmes.

It seems the awards have done their bit in both raising awareness and resulting in action, as then-Minister in the Presidency Responsible for Women, Susan Shabangu, said in 2017 that South Africa is on course to achieve 50% women representation.



SA on course to achieving 50% women representation

23 Mar 2017



Shabangu was addressing the 61st Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York at the time, and mentioned that the SA government had amended the Employment Equity Act to achieve equity in the workplace.

We also saw an increase in black women directorship of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange Listed Companies from 114 in 2006 to 385 by 2016.



#FairnessFirst: Are we on track for 50/50 by 2020?

Leigh Andrews 8 Jul 2019



Shabangu said: “As government, we have made progress in advancing women and gender parity in the workplace in a relatively short period of time.”

But as recent news headlines have shown, this hasn’t been enough to instil a sense of safety among South African women.



#FairnessFirst: Stepping up to keep SA's females safe

Leigh Andrews 9 Sep 2019



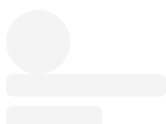
Luckily, the Gender Mainstreaming Awards have continued to further the cause. Colleen Larsen, president of the 30% Club Southern African Chapter said [at the 2018 gala event](#):

“ While we are still a long way from achieving gender parity, there has been steady progress in the last few years and there’s a growing recognition that gender diversity makes good business sense. These awards acknowledge the efforts being made by business to achieve gender equality. ”

In this light, actuary, entrepreneur and founder of Triple Eight Sarika Modi is fast becoming a spokesperson and leader in empowerment of women and purpose or impact marketing.

Also a finalist in the Gender Mainstreaming Awards’ category of Inclusive Leader Entrepreneur, her passion for investing for impact combined with experience with working with large multinationals, led to the idea of starting a company in this area.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



We started in 2012 with a team of just 3 women. Today we are Africa's only all-women socially conscious marketing impact agency with a team of over 70 professionals. #WomenEmpoweredInAfrica #TripleEight

A post shared by Triple Eight (@triple_eight_marketing) on Jul 25, 2019 at 7:19am PDT

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And so Triple Eight was born in 2012 as a company of three.

Since then, it has grown to over 7 countries with 70 female professionals and thousands of health workers and brand ambassadors employed within their projects.



#FairnessFirst: Time to stand for purpose-led marketing and social impact advertising

Leigh Andrews 21 Jan 2019



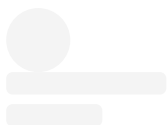
That's why Triple Eight was announced as the 2019 Gender Mainstreaming Awards' winners in the sub-categories of Investing in Young Women for Non-JSE listed companies, as well as Empowering Women in Communities for Non-JSE listed companies.

That's in addition to the title of Overall Winners for Investing in Young Women.

Socially investing in Africa's women

Triple Eight currently works with over 500 unemployed moms and young women to help build their confidence, skill them up and place them in casual jobs as part of their initiative to Invest in Young Women in Africa.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



Triple Eight currently works with over 500 unemployed moms and young women to help build their confidence, skill them up and place them in casual jobs. This is part of our initiative to Invest in Young Women in Africa. This is one of the reasons why we won at the Gender Awards on Thursday evening for Investing in Young Women in Africa. #GenderAwards2019 #TripleEight #CampaignsThatMatter

A post shared by Triple Eight (@triple_eight_marketing) on Sep 10, 2019 at 5:46am PDT

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Here, MODI explains how this socially conscious, all-female marketing agency specialises in purpose, people and planet to help some of the world's leading brands make a positive impact in Africa through marketing projects and female-focused CSR initiatives...

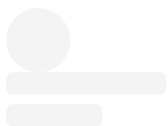
■ **What does your Gender Mainstreaming Awards win mean to the agency?**

As a relatively new agency, Triple Eight was able to successfully compete against massive global and JSE-listed companies. We are extremely proud that we are an all-female agency and that we are not just surviving, but thriving.

“ This should stand as an example to all organisations of the impact that women can have in leadership and decision-making positions. It should also help foster more confidence and self-belief for women in their abilities in business. ”

Women who work at Triple Eight know that there's no glass ceiling in terms of what they can achieve.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



Happy Women's Month, at Triple Eight it's always a Happy Women's Month!

A post shared by Triple Eight (@triple_eight_marketing) on Aug 1, 2019 at 8:24am PDT

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we also have progressive policies in place to employ talented women from junior levels and help develop and mentor them to rise to senior positions, and to accommodate mums' responsibilities to balance family and work life.

As a socially conscious marketing agency, serving some of the best-known brands in the world, we also have a strong purpose of our own – empowerment of women.

And through more than 50 purpose-driven marketing campaigns to date, we have achieved more than 44 million social impact impressions.



How marketing with CSR at its heart can change the world

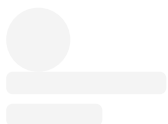
Leigh Andrews 14 May 2019



The majority of those beneficiaries were women in communities.

The relevant causes include fighting malaria, cholera, HIV, infant and maternal mortality, providing emergency response to crises and projects supporting the economic empowerment of women, youth and young girls.

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Happy Birthday Connect-Ed! The program has turned 7 years old today. It is our longest running purpose driven project. We have reached over 6 million learners over the years, with a significant decline seen in teen pregnancies in this period.

#Connect-Ed #marketingagency #TripleEight #CampaignsThatMatter

A post shared by [Triple Eight](#) (@triple_eight_marketing) on Aug 26, 2019 at 7:22am PDT

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We believe that Triple Eight serves as inspiration for women and we feel proud that the Gender Awards recognised this!

■ ***Understandably so. Why are awards like this so important – how do they help transform the industry?***

The Gender Mainstreaming Awards seeks to recognise organisations that are making a meaningful impact and progress towards empowering women across all industries, businesses and professions.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



Tonight is the big night! Here is our red carpet entrance for the Loeries Awards 2019. #Loeries2019 #LoeriesTellBetterStories #TripleEight

#CampaignsThatMatter

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They help generate advocacy and a spotlight for gender empowerment as well as the encouragement for companies to improve their credentials.

This platform also helps successful organisations and leaders share ideas for the many ways in which they have positively impacted women empowerment.



#FairnessFirst: Goodbye, boys' club! Time's up, advertising...

Leigh Andrews 19 Mar 2018



Importantly, the different categories of awards highlight the many different platforms for empowerment of women. For example, Triple Eight won in the categories of empowering women in communities and investing in young women.

Other categories include number of women on boards, empowerment of women in the workplace, equal representation and participation and positive role models.

■ ***Love that. Looking at what still needs to change, what's the biggest challenge agencies face when it comes to equality today – both internally and in the work created?***

The marketing and advertising industry as a whole faces significant underrepresentation of women, particularly in key management and decision-making positions. This is the case, despite the fact that globally 80% of consumer purchase decisions are made by women.



Brands: Meet the #UntaggableForce

Megan Bowman 30 Nov 2017



Whilst we see that there are many more women in the industry in junior and mid-management, for most agencies it's men who are on the executive committees or in the lead positions.

This problem has many aspects to it:

- A lack of opportunities for **women to rise through the ranks** – whilst we come from a history of patriarchy in the industry, I believe that there is a more genuine intention today to give women more opportunities in senior positions. However, the intention needs to be followed up with more progressive policies to make women leadership a stronger reality.
- **Lack of confidence** from women to aim for these roles – as women, we need to back ourselves and each other more strongly. When we were interviewed for the Gender Awards recently, the panel of interviewers commented to me on how many candidates listed confidence and self-belief as one of the primary factors they felt were key to their ability to attain leadership positions.
- **A working environment that is not mum-friendly** – the industry has a reputation for burnout culture, demanding deadlines and working into all hours of the day and night.

#FairnessFirst: Is 40 hours a week enough? Yes and no...

Leigh Andrews 19 Aug 2019





This makes healthy family life a challenge and can put mums right off off full-time employment or management positions.

“ Triple Eight believes that the brands of tomorrow need to have purpose beyond profits. And Triple Eight itself has a purpose in empowering women. With more than 80% of purchase decisions globally being made by women, we believe the marketing industry needs to be more reflective of this. As an all-female agency, our successes stand as a beacon of inspiration to young women. Our message is that you can do and be what you want, just believe in yourself, work hard and be your best you. ”

Simple as that. Follow Triple Eight on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for the latest updates.

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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