

The power of fear and boredom

By  Angie White

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Fabian Frese, chief creative officer at Kolle Rebbe in Germany, second-last speaker at the DStv Seminar of Creativity, spoke of the boredom that inspired him to make the best move in his career.



Fabian Frese, CCO of Kolle Rebbe Germany and #Loeries2018 film and radio and audio jury president. © Al Ncoll, Gallo Images.

Frese joined Kolle Rebbe in 2014 as partner and MD: creation, and is responsible for accounts such as Netflix, Lufthansa, Apple, Amazon, Audi and Telefonica. He says that Kolle Rebbe is not your regular agency, and that while they build brands as an agency does, they also support and grow startups and invent their own products.

When boredom happens

Frese says that there is a specific type of boredom that paralyses you and makes you not want to work, which also makes you indifferent to the things you do.

He described his time as executive creative director at Jung von Matt as the peak of his career, but also as the time he was the most bored. He says he went from being excited and proud of his very first cinema commercial, the Incredible Mini ad, to leaving straight after the Cannes Lions awards - having won a Grand Prix for the Mercedes Benz Invisible car – and going straight to bed, simply because he had lost his fascination with the work he did.

According to Frese, the things he got excited about in the beginning just vanished. “When you lose your excitement, you lose your passion,” he says. It was at this point he realised he had to change something.

In 2013, Frese quit his job at Jung von Matt and started travelling as an intern through a variety of digital companies.



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“Boredom has huge power to change things or get things started,” says Frese. “When boredom knocks at your door, it will stay until you change something – it is a fantastic driver for change.”

To prove his point, he showed the Lufthansa #lifechangingplaces ad campaign that was inspired by boredom.

Frese then talked us through a two forms of fear common to creatives.

Fear: Everyone is scared

Fear of imperfection

The first type of fear is the fear of imperfection. This type of fear is often experienced in the industry with creatives wanting their work to be perfect. Frese says that this kind of fear makes you realise that there are people around you that can help you, people you can collaborate and know that you are not alone.

He described a particular campaign for PETA (known for fighting for animal rights) called Eyetoeye – a VR campaign that he was fearful of doing at first, but the end result was revolutionary.

Fear of losing control

The second kind of fear is the fear of losing control. Frese says that it's important to move outside your comfort zone and that whenever he is scared, it's usually when it's something new.

“ No fear means it has been done before... Fear means it's fresh and good and a good quality checker. ”

He referred to the social swipe campaign for Misereor, where Kolle Rebbe had to create new technology that didn't exist

before in order implement the idea.

Frese concluded by saying that if you face your fear you rise, and that we should always remember that it's only advertising!

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