

F/NE CEO on partnering w/ GlobalHealthPR

 By Jessica Tennant

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Johannesburg-based strategic communications consultancy [F/NE](#), with its reach into Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe, recently partnered with [GlobalHealthPR](#) (GHPR), the world's largest independent health and science communications agency partnership, in order to expand the network's presence and capabilities in Africa.

"We at F/NE are most excited about this partnership," says founder and CEO Mandi Fine. "We have collaborated with GHPR over the last few years and the formalisation of our affiliation and partnership is a fantastic way for us to kick off 2018. This partnership agreement is part of our globalisation strategy and we are delighted."



Mandi Fine

Fine says the partnership allows its clients the benefits of a global network of expertise and knowledge, from top global biopharmaceutical companies, medical-device manufacturers, health-technology companies, advocacy/professional associations and consumer goods companies with a presence in Africa or interest in expanding there.

F/NE's strong presence in South Africa and a deep understanding of African markets, will expand GHPR's ability to serve multinational clients and draw on local expertise.

“For the industry as a whole, collaboration and global alignment creates efficiencies and consistency of messages, as well as greater reach into areas that may have previously been left off the map,” she adds.

Here, Fine shares why she’s passionate about healthcare communications, as well as some of the key trends she thinks we’ll see play out in 2018...

■ **What do you love most about your career in healthcare communications?**

Working in healthcare communications is exceptionally rewarding. Currently fewer than 50% of Africans have access to modern healthcare facilities, though urban development and increased wealth, coupled with greater access to mobile phones and the internet, are likely to significantly change the delivery of healthcare in the coming years.

For years F/NE has been pioneering innovative ways to improve access to health information to both patients and healthcare workers. Knowing that our work leads to improved health and better lives drives us to be passionate about what we do.



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■ **What’s at the top of your to-do list?**

Booking some time out for yoga and walking with friends – the healthy things that keep me sane and grounded.

■ **What are you currently reading, watching and/or listening to for work?**

I have a pile of books that I am reading. The first is *The Book of Joy* by Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Reading it has been an amazing way to start the year and to help me feel inspired in every moment.

On a more clinical note but with a similar tone, I am reading the book *The Anatomy of Hope: How People Prevail in the Face of Illness* by Dr Jerome Groopman.

Finally, I am reading *Ramaphosa: The Man Who Would Be King* by Ray Hartley. I think it’s important to remember the history of the man who will now lead us into the next chapter of our political lives.

■ **What industry trends do you predict for the year?**

I was most fortunate to have been the first and only SA judge in the pharma category at Cannes Lions last year in June.



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Based on the trends that I was witness to during that process, I think we will see the following key trends play out in 2018:

- The lines will become blurred between agencies, research and data companies, tech companies and consultancies.

Innovation will come from the **collaboration** of these skill sets.

- As we have access to so much data the skills of drawing insights from **data, and data analytics** will become critical differentiators for organisations and communication agencies.
- This plethora of information and access to data makes the need for **simple and succinct messaging** even more important than ever. The companies that are single minded and who communicate simply and succinctly with personally relevant messages will be more likely to develop trust and loyalty with their customers.
- Brands that have a **social conscience** and address social issues as core principles will embed themselves in the hearts of consumers.
- Storytelling remains the differentiator in separating compelling work from the rest. Whilst AR, VR and numerous other tech platforms are prolific in assisting to bring these stories to life in new and exciting ways, I believe a brand's ability to tell a **meaningful story** will become even more important as the clutter of communication mediums and methods continue to expand.

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