

Andy Rice, a true legend in our industry, passes away

By  Danette Breitenbach

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“There’s a perception advertising is all about the sex, drugs and rock ‘n roll. Sadly, that hasn’t always been my experience.” The words of advertising legend Andy Rice, who sadly passed away on Tuesday morning, leaving the ad industry a poorer place.



Andy Rice, a true legend of the industry, has sadly passed away

Pete Case, CEO and creative chairman of Ogilvy SA, echoes this, “The industry, and our work, have certainly been made immensely stronger by his presence and he will be hugely missed.”

He recalls that he was lucky enough to share the board room on a few occasions with Andy in his early days of growing Gloo.

“He always brought calm clarity and direction to the room. A man who was admired by so many, not just for his deep intellect but also for the gentle manner in which he worked with others. I only ever heard people saying positive things about him when he left the room, and in itself that says a lot.”

“ RIP my friend and former colleague Andy Rice. In three minutes on his weekly 702 Adfeature radio spot he entertained and informed brilliantly without ever sounding rushed. A genuinely nice person.— John Robbie (@John_C_Robbie) [February 7, 2024](#) ”

A massive impact

Rice was still the chairman of Yellowwood when Luca Gallarelli, Group CEO of TBWA\South Africa, first joined TBWA.

"I am hugely saddened to hear of his passing," says Gallarelli.

He says that Rice had a massive impact on their organisation and business as founder of Yellowwood and a member of the group executive team.

"He helped create the group that we are today, so it is massively sad. There are many people in SA within our collective that have worked with Andy, so today there is a huge amount of sadness in the business. He gave so much to us and the industry."

He adds that TBWA will be paying tribute to Andy.

A wordsmith

He was a long-time contributor to *The Money Show*, before stepping back when he retired.

Yesterday Bruce Whitfield remembered Rice as a wordsmith able to deliver 'eviscerating' criticism without the target even being aware of the scale of it at the time. On the show, he shared memories with Refilwe Maluleke, the MD of Yellowwood.

“ *The Money Show* pays tribute to advertising legend, Andy Rice [#TheMoneyShowhttps://t.co/UFwFW3ZhF](https://t.co/UFwFW3ZhF)— 702 (@Radio702) [February 6, 2024](#) ”

Speaking to *Bizcommunity* Maluleke says, "Andy was not only one of the founders of Yellowwood he embodied its spirit. His curiosity, generosity and unconventional wisdom made him not only a great strategist, writer and speaker - but also an incredible leader. His legacy lives on through the many people who have walked the halls of Yellowwood and especially those of us who have been entrusted with its leadership."

The industry expert

Rice was South Africa's branding and advertising expert.

As a strategist, he headed up Ogilvy Johannesburg's account planning department before founding Yellowwood, a specialist brand strategy consultancy that grew to become South Africa's leader in its field.

Up to the start of Covid, he was still the chairperson of Yellowwood, which had become part of TBWA.

“ *Remembering and celebrating Andy Rice today. Andy was a visionary, an irrepressible enthusiast and optimist, a doyen of advertising, and a generous friend. He will be missed by many.* [pic.twitter.com/uPTcliUonN](https://twitter.com/uPTcliUonN)— Mike Stopforth

(@mikestopforth) [February 7, 2024](#) ”

Many, who were not part of the advertising industry, also knew Rice from the popular *AdFeature with Andy Rice* on 702 and his *But Does It Work?* show.

He was a popular speaker and also wrote numerous articles and leadership pieces for marketing publications, including *AdVantage* magazine and *The Annual*.

“ *The great Andy Rice, an oracle in our industry. He will be missed and leaves a huge void. Prayers of comfort to his family and all who knew him.* [pic.twitter.com/9QgJvZQyDS](#)— Katherine Madley (@MadleyKatherine) [February 6, 2024](#) ”

He was also part of many judging panels from the AdFocus Awards, Loeries and the Prism Awards for public relations excellence as well as the then *Finweek*'s Tony Koenderman's AdReview. He, himself, was the recipient of the AdFocus Lifetime Achievement Award, in 2017.

Some years ago he also ventured into animation with the local Jock of the Bushveld 3D animated film production – which, at that time, was the first film of its kind to come out of SA.

Rice was its full-time marketing director, looking after the character licensing of the film.

“ *RIP Andy Rice. You were a gentleman, a well of knowledge, a sage and a kind-hearted soul.* — AHMED TILLY (@AhmedTilly) [February 6, 2024](#) ”

Settling in SA

Born in a little town north of London, he came to South Africa after a trans-African road trip at the age of 22. He stayed in the country, finding a marketing job at the Johannesburg branch of the German chemicals group Henkel, despite only meaning to stay in South Africa for a short time.

His brother is Tim Rice, who is a British lyricist and known for his collaborations with Andrew Lloyd Webber, such as *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (1968), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1970), and *Evita* (1976). Rice also wrote award-winning lyrics for the animated Disney movies *Aladdin* (1992) and *The Lion King* (1994).

This article will be updated as tributes for Rice continue to come in.

“ *A dear friend of FlowCommunications, Andy Rice, has passed away. “He served on advisory councils with me for 20 years and worked closely with me at Vega,” says Flow's MD, Tiffany Turkington-Palmer.* (1/2) [pic.twitter.com/XLCtJKdQFN](#)— FlowCommunications (@FlowComms) [February 7, 2024](#) ”

“ *The passing of Andy Rice, the passing of a giant of a champion in the marketing space* [#RIPAndyRice](#) [#ChampionSouthAfrica](#) <https://t.co/K8LbtR1i40>— Ashraf Garda (@AshrafGarda) [February 6, 2024](#) ”

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of *AdVantage*, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a

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