

Why the SA PR industry should be competing on a global level

By [Sasha Kupritz](#)

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Creative public relations (PR) is one of the most important features of integrated campaign awards entries, yet in South Africa it has not reached its full potential when we compare the industry to international standards



Source © Jakub Jirsák [123rf](#) Creative PR is about the role that PR plays in amplifying brand storytelling, without any gimmicks or other PR tools besides earned and owned

In addition creativity in PR is still a rather vague concept in quest for how PR impacts on advertising and brands.

For instance, if you ask ChatGPT for an explanation of what creative PR is, it says the following: “Creative PR refers to the use of imaginative and innovative communication strategies in public relations to generate attention, interest, and positive perception for a brand, product, service, or individual...”

This description is inaccurate. Creative PR is about the role that PR plays in amplifying brand storytelling, without any gimmicks or other PR tools besides earned and owned... no influencers, and no giveaways...

Creative B2B Lions

An accurate description can be found on the Cannes Lions website: “The Creative B2B Lions celebrate game-changing creativity and effectiveness in work for products and services that are purchased by professionals on behalf of businesses. We wanted to give you the best opportunity to communicate the brand-building strategies used to connect with customers, improve brand health and drive growth.”



Retroviral crowned Africa's PR Agency of the Year at the 2023 EMEA Sabre Awards

Danette Breitenbach 24 Mar 2023



The criteria considered during judging are weighted as 20% idea, 30% strategy, 20% execution, and 30% impact and results. The category has also seen some upgrades including the definition of PR category itself:

“The definition of PR for the purpose of Cannes Lions is the creative use of reputation management by the building and preservation of trust and understanding between individuals, businesses or organisations and their publics/audiences. PR Lions will be awarded to the freshest creative PR campaigns, programs, and tactics that actively engage consumers/audiences to products/brands/organisations.”

Earned media coverage is stated as a prerequisite. While this is the most difficult to achieve for brands, it is the most powerful when it comes to consumer trust and credibility.

While earned media crisscrosses platforms, you can't pay for it, then it would be advertising.

However, earned media is essential to build trust and credibility between brands and their audiences, earned media is essential.

As can be seen from the attention given to the discipline by organisations such as Cannes Lions, Creative PR is increasingly regarded as part of through-the-line, above-the-line, below-the-line, and integrated advertising strategies.

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