

Display your digital smarts at the 2015 Smarties Awards

 By Leigh Andrews

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This year's Loerie Awards will have something sparkly and new to attract you to all things mobile - the second iteration of the local Mobile Marketing Association (MMASA)'s Smarties Awards...

Nicolle Harding, Country Manager at Effective Measure and Chair of MMASA, says the Smarties is the MMA global awards initiative. It's the world's only global mobile marketing awards programme honouring innovation, creativity, and success - highlighting the teams and talent that push the boundaries of mobile marketing to reach and engage with consumers like no other media channel.



Nicolle Harding

Now there's local incentive to enter, as the Smarties Awards launched locally last year to celebrate mobile success on a global, South African and regional (EMEA) level. Sponsored last year by Standard Bank as part of the Mobile Web Africa Conference, this year they form part of the Loeries 2015 Creative Week.

Overview of the first South African Smarties Awards

"It's always hard to launch something new, but last year's awards were well supported by the MMA's members," explained Harding.

The results were equally positive, with many of the local gold award winners also doing well at the EMEA and global Smarties level. That's the great thing about the Smarties - you enter once and are eligible for all regions.



Last year's Smarties were held at Randlords in Johannesburg, this year the Smarties will be part of the Loeries Creative Week Durban.

This will be an exciting opportunity, says Harding, as it will give the MMA the chance to get in front of people who don't necessarily understand mobile and they don't necessarily already speak to as part of the broader marketing industry.

I got some exclusive insights into last year's Smarties and what to expect this year from Harding...

- **1. Last year's judging was completed independently of MMASA to ensure fair assessment of all shortlisted entries - is the same in store for this year's Awards?**

Harding: Yes it's a standard that the MMA sets globally.

■ **2. Who will be on this year's judging panel, how were they selected?**

Harding: The judges have not been announced yet, however we are sending out a communication to the membership base to suggest potential judges, these then get voted on by the board. We normally have about eight judges. Noteworthy is that only the shortlisted entries are judged locally. There are international judges that pre-screen and judge the work, which is then judged locally.

■ **3. Looking at last year's winning work, *Hungry Lion* and *Tastic Red Pot* were the big winners, with some categories doing poorly. For example, for *Marketing Strategy Products & Services* there's only a Bronze win, only silver for *Mobile Web Only* and nothing at all for *Channel/Media Strategy: Mobile App*. Does this speak of the quality or rather quantity of work entered?**

Harding: As last year was the first year we held the Smarties locally, we did struggle for entries. Part of the reason for the partnership with Loeries is to raise the awareness of the brand, for this exact reason. We want to raise the awareness of mobile marketing as a channel and the awards as the instrument by which to measure success. However, an award does not need to be given in every category. So in some instances we had entries but they were not shortlisted or not deemed good enough to win an award. We judge with a global standard in mind, so winning locally means just as much as winning globally. These guidelines are set for us by global.

■ **4. Last year you partnered with the *Mobile Web Africa Conference*, this year with the *Loeries* - what are the benefits of this form of partnership?**

Harding: The benefits for us this year are to build the Smarties brand through the established and respected Loeries channel.

■ **5. Any exciting new changes/developments to look forward to at this year's awards?**

Harding: We are still in the planning phase for some of this, so that would be letting the cat out of the bag! All I can say is, we have two fabulous sponsors on board and it will be a world-class event.

The Smarties Awards are sponsoring the Loeries' integrated mobile category and will run a workshop on Thursday, 13 August as part of this year's Creative Week, with the Smarties Awards held that evening - I'll attend and provide feedback.

Entries to the awards have been open since April and close on 23 June, with a new programmatic category added to Channel/Media strategy this year, and other categories redefined. The entry deadline is just around the corner - [click here](#) for more information.

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