

Unilever Ubuntu Award promotes sustainable marketing

Issued by [The Loeries](#)

13 Aug 2015

On Saturday, 15 August, during the first awards evening of the Loeries® Africa & the Middle East, the Unilever Ubuntu Award will be presented to a businesses for their commitment to sustainable business practices and marketing efforts. With the global push towards consumer social responsibility, the award is fast becoming one of the most distinguished awards at the annual awards show.



According to National Geographic's *Greendex*, the number of people around the world concerned with the environment has increased rapidly, especially among developing nations, prompting companies to turn their focus to sustainable business, and consumer social responsibility in order to ensure business growth. This has also caused a shift in traditional marketing efforts towards sustainable marketing. "Instead of talking about consumer 'needs', sustainable marketing means tackling issues which affect the fundamentals of people's quality of life," notes Pauline Maclaran, co-author of the book, *Critical Marketing*.

And the numbers speak for themselves. According to Forbes, 87% of consumers around the world feel that businesses should at least put equal weight on society's interests as it does on business interests. What's more, an alarming 91% of consumers indicated that they would switch brands if a competing brand of the same price and quality promotes a good cause, with 90% willing to go so far as boycotting a company with irresponsible business practices). On the up side, more than 70% of consumers would help promote a brand if they believe the brand supports a good cause, making it critical for brand growth in an environment where social media is becoming increasingly important.

With this in mind it is easy to see why the Unilever Ubuntu category for sustainable marketing has seen the biggest growth at this year's Loeries®, growing by an incredible 180%. "This is a good indicator that purpose driven marketing is being recognised as vital for the continued success of brands," says Loeries® CEO Andrew Human.

"This award is about much more than a brand campaign," continues Human. "We are recognising companies that make good corporate neighbours, companies that are able to do good while doing good business."

In 2013 Unilever joined the Loeries® Africa & Middle East Awards in supporting this initiative. "Unilever is, and always has been, focused on using our own brands with purpose to bring about positive change in society and the partnership with the Loeries Ubuntu Award is a clear demonstration of our commitment to a sustainability plan that applies right across the value chain," says Justin Apsey of Unilever South Africa.

"It's very fitting that Unilever join the Loeries to promote creativity and innovation and I believe that together we can influence more brands to participate in our drive for sustainable marketing," adds Human.

This drive towards sustainable marketing is critical not only for business growth, but also for the creative community. While consumers are paying attention to the sustainability efforts of companies behind brands, according to a recent article published in *The Guardian*, bridging the gap between sentiment and shopping basket remains a challenge, and can only be achieved through innovation and creativity. To this end, promoting sustainable business, and purpose-driven marketing among creatives makes the Unilever Ubuntu Award an integral part of the Loeries® Africa & the Middle East.

Durban will be hosting the Loeries from 10 - 16 August. Official events will take place at the Durban ICC and along the

Durban beachfront during [Loeries® Creative Week™](http://www.loeries.com/loeries2015.aspx?link=festival_programme). See the following link of a detailed program http://www.loeries.com/loeries2015.aspx?link=festival_programme

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