

Award-show behaving badly

 By [Herman Manson: @marklives](#)

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Immature or wild at heart? Either one could describe the third annual Bookmarks awards evening, where the digital marketing and publishing evening took the opportunity last night, Thursday, 18 November 2010, to pat one another on the back - albeit cautiously.



Held at Brio in Cape Town, the long narrow room filled to capacity by 7pm, the evening kept guests on their feet for the next two and a half hours, literally, since no seating was available.

The vibe was clubby, with MC [Don Packett](#) looking ready to take a club to the audience and batter them into silence ("Shut up. That f*cking works." really did not), the confined space flashing conversations around the hall like those stupid green strobe lights they kept shining into my eyes. I've come to realise there is a reason award shows sit people down at tables and ply them with food or drink. Bookmark organisers take note.

Never had a hope

The MC never had a hope of managing or engaging his audience; with events taking place upfront and obscured by several hundred heads, those at the back had little to do but catch up with other industry folk. Trust digital junkies to turn any event into a networking opportunity.

At the end of it, an annoyed Packett simply [tweeted](#); "The crowd at #bookmarks2010 are honestly the rudest bunch of f*cks I've ever had to entertain. Have some respect for ur industry. Pathetic." Sure fire way to win them over. The porn, strip club and JZ's Facebook relationship status jokes didn't work, either.

For the digital agency crowd, the evening can only be described as disappointing. The awards were few and far between and consisted mostly of Bronzes and a handful of Silvers. Not a single Gold was given out in this category. No awards were given out in six of the listed categories. Is SA's digital marketing industry that bad? If so, clients should be mightily annoyed, considering the judges focus on measurability and results (which counts towards 40% of the final score).

Of the 20 awards given out (18 Pixels and two Best of Show), Ogilvy Interactive stood out with two Silvers and Best of Agency Show (Integrated), thanks to its Goodbye Citi campaign. Gloo won two Silvers and a Bronze, Trigger Isobar two Silvers, Click2Customers won a Silver and Best of Agency Show (Best Paid Search Campaign). ClickThinking got two Bronzes and a Silver and YuppieChef a Bronze and a Silver. New kid on the block Native went home with a single Bronze in this category, as it did at the Loeries earlier this year, thanks to Stonewall+.

Still dominated by publishers

The truth of the matter is that the Digital Media and Marketing Association (DMMA), emerging from the Online Publishers Association as it does, is still dominated by publishers, and it showed in the awards given out (some Golds, at last). And publishing is dominated by Naspers.

At the Bookmarks, as at the PICAs, the company's dominance was near total. Of the 19 Pixels awarded, its subsidiaries walked away with 12 awards. 24.com won a Bronze and four Silvers. DSTv Online won Gold (for Big Brother Africa All Stars), a Bronze and a Silver, FinMedia24 a Gold (for Miningmx) and two bronzes. New Media scored only Silver for its Taste website after the site won Online Solution of the Year at the PICA awards last week.

The *Mail & Guardian* landed a gold (Madiba Tribute microsite) and silver and Memeburn.com landed a Silver and a Bronze.

Native won Gold for The Digital Edge (thanks to Cambrient), as did Both Worlds for ZANews.

At one stage, Elan Lohman, GM of Avusa Media LIVE, was furiously rubbing away at his tie - for luck, I thought - but later realised it must have been a food stain, as his recently refreshed online properties failed to get a nod from the judges.

Hardly deemed cutting edge

Best blogs in the country? FinMedia24's [Marc Ashton](#) and [Jaundiced Eye Media](#). Without going into the merits of the content of the sites in question, it's interesting to note that both blogs are hosted by newspaper publishers and could hardly be deemed cutting edge (not even an integrated Twitter feed?).

In the Individual and Team Awards, Scott Gray from Quirk was deemed Best Social Media Marketer, while Michele Clark from Clicks2Customers won Best Paid Search Marketer. Andre Britz from Quirk won Best Display Marketer. Looking at the awards list, Pick n Pay didn't feature at all, but still walked away with as Client of the Year. Best Agency was won by Clicks2Customers.

In the Individual and Team Publisher Awards The Daily Maverick was acknowledged for best Editorial team. This is the most exciting site in the country editorially - the award does seem like an afterthought as the organisers didn't place it in the official Publishers category.

Fin24 editor David McKay won Digital Editorial Individual (of the year?). Habari Media was deemed best Digital Advertising Sales team. Outgoing DMMA chair Adrian Hewlett won the rather sweeping title of Greatest Individual Contribution to Digital Media & Marketing.

Young award

Within minutes of the awards evening concluding, people spilled into Adderley for a breath of fresh air (soon to be replaced by cigarette smoke), wondering what Hewlett could possibly have said in his closing remarks. Maybe somebody in the front row can let me know.

The Bookmarks is not the Loeries or the PICAs. It's a young award for an industry barely into its teens. It showed. But I look forward to seeing the kid grow up.

View [all the winners](#).

Update 23 November 2010: News24.com was one of the Gold Pixel winners in the "Best Publishing Site" category of the 2010 Bookmarks Awards but, because of an administrative error during the consolidation of the awards, it received Silver at the awards evening last week. "We would like to apologise for the error and congratulate News24.com on winning a well-deserved Gold Pixel," says Nikki Cockcroft, Bookmarks chairperson and Digital Media and Marketing Association (DMMA) deputy chair. The awards are organised by the DMMA.

For more:

- Joblog.co.za (Don Packett's blog:) [My beef with The Bookmarks 2010 crowd behaviour](#)

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