

Matthew Bull is appointed Creative Counsel to the OPA

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Matthew Bull, the charismatic, talented and super-charged Global Creative Director of Lowe Worldwide has been appointed Creative Counsel to the OPA.

Bull is one of South Africa's most awarded creatives, and with his endorsement and counsel, the OPA aims to educate and encourage South African agencies, designers and clients as to the benefits and possibilities inherent in online advertising. Adrian Hewlett, chairperson of the OPA adds, "With Matthew as a creative digital figurehead, we hope to inspire aspiring creatives to see digital, rather than the traditional TV or print, as a medium for making their mark in this creative industry."

Bull is a whole-hearted believer in the potential of the digital medium, following his time based in London working with brands like Tesco's and Stella Artois, where he experienced first hand the power of the medium in full flight. He has no doubt that the digital environment will explode in South Africa, just as it has in other developing nations.

Bull's most recent trip to The Cannes Lions International Advertising festival galvanised his passion for digital advertising, but simultaneously pressed home the realization that South Africa desperately needs to catch up when it comes to creativity in this environment. "The calibre of digital advertising was outstanding at Cannes, with campaigns from Japan, Sweden, Canada, United States and Brazil all winning awards. South African agencies didn't get a mention, they didn't even make the shortlists, let alone win anything. We are behind the curve and if we do not hurry up we will disappear off the creative radar all together."

Bull emphasises that advertisers, and clients alike, need to gear up to the shift that has taken place with society, and how they interact with media. "The age of digital advertising is upon us and South African creative's need to rise to this challenge." He adds that digital advertising is trackable, entertaining, instantaneous and targeted, giving it far more benefits over conventional advertising. "There is no excuse for our lack of creativity in this sector. The South African industry is renowned for its ability to make first-class tequila when clients throw us lemons. The tougher the constraints, the harder we should work to overcome them. It's called thinking beyond the box, and it's a talent we seem to possess inherently. We just need to focus it on a new medium."

One of the first projects that Bull will be executing alongside the OPA will be the launch of a local digital advertising award, to inspire creatives to think beyond that box.

"This is a major win for both the OPA and the online industry," says Hewlett.

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