

International guest speakers for SAMRA conference

Three international guest speakers are set to intrigue delegates and spark debate at the 2008 Southern African Marketing Research Association (SAMRA) Conference, thanks to sponsorships from Millward Brown, TNS Research Surveys and Research International. These international speakers, together with the presentation of 20 local papers, will cover new and innovative trends in marketing, branding and research.

The international guest speakers and sponsors are Nigel Hollis, chief global analyst at Millward Brown, Rory Morgan Research International's strategic projects director in the UK, and James Fergusson, strategic head of sectors for the ALM region at TNS.

Hollis, sponsored by Millward Brown, brings with him 26 years of research experience and a thorough understanding of how marketing communications can build and maintain brands. Hollis believes that predicting the future of a brand is risky business, unless you have a little help from consumers.

Mental short cuts

His presentation will review the latest learning on how people use mental short cuts called heuristics to make decisions. He will demonstrate how we can apply that thinking to how people make choices between brands, and show that simple questions can beat the odds to predict future changes in brand share.

Sponsored by Research International, Morgan, who has more than 30 years of experience in marketing research, will discuss the need to identify the characteristics that sets super-brands apart, making them the 'drivers of iconicity'. He will discuss the possibility of using a research 'thermometer' to measure the iconicity of a brand by identifying some key indicators, as opposed to using the usual method of semiotics which is more time consuming and complex.

In Morgan's words, "Some wise sage once said that in order to manage something, we must first seek to measure it. We now have some sensible metrics to investigate this fascinating area further."

Impact of interactive research

Fergusson's presentation will highlight the impact interactive research on the web can have both on client expectations and on research value. Fergusson hopes to encourage the South African market research industry to think outside the box by using case studies and examples of how Web 2.0 can be effectively used and harnessed.

Fergusson, who has 15 years of experience in market research, brings with him a vast knowledge of online research and the latest innovations in this field, and is being brought to the SAMRA Conference by TNS Research Surveys.

The SAMRA 2008 conference will take place 27 – 28 May 2008 at Sun International's Royal Swazi Sun and Spa in the Ezulwini Valley in Swaziland. The conference will bring together researchers, research users and marketers from all over southern Africa with the objective of developing and advancing marketing research in the region by showcasing new trends and developments in the industry.

For more information about the SAMRA Conference or to download booking forms, go to www.samra.co.za. For other queries, email . Bookings close on 10 April.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>