

: Cresting the digital wave

 By [Terry Levin](#)

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The Bookmarks Awards, honouring the most measurable and meaningful creative work in the digital land was held at the Artscape theatre in Cape Town last night 14 November 2013.



Maybe it's because digital work requires real skill-sets, like programming and hard tech, that the digital crowd seem more intimate, more mutually supportive and genuinely respectful of one another's achievements than other awards crowds.

The fact that winners such as Digital Agency of the Year, [Native](#), is only three years old, winner of the Digital Publishers of the Year Award [Daily Maverick](#) is only four years old (in its online form), that neither those adjudged best Tech Innovators [Ikineo](#) and [Gloo](#), nor other award winners such as Synergize, [MACHINE](#), [Hello Computer](#) and others are much more than a decade old, is also testament to the fact that the digital players of today have not only had to have the necessary tech know-how, but also the business savvy to take them from start-ups to viable business models.

So-called traditional Advertising agencies, who have been building their digital human resources, such as O&M, along with specialised Digital purveyors such as [Quirk](#), last night reaped the fruits of their labours with enough of the Bookmarks cubes to build a small house.

The collaborations between traditional agencies and digital enablers and relatively new job descriptions such as Community Managers, Organic Search marketer and Social Media Marketers etc all require exciting new skills set.

Despite the fact that the result of the collective labours of the digital industry are often no larger than a postage stamp, does not minimise its potential for social and commercial impact far beyond its pocket-size dimensions.

Most importantly, especially for those who hold purse strings of their marketing budgets tightly, its measurable social and behavioural responses are generated by real people and real data and the best of them, such as Nedbank's Ke Yona from Native, have the potential to yield real socio-economic results.

The Bookmarks Awards themselves are only six years old and they threw a good party in honour of their peers. There is work to be done in standardising the entry templates and criteria and display of entries on the night, but these are minor in the scheme of their intentions, which is ultimately for the leaders of the digital curve to find ways of enabling the 45% of the population in our region who are under the age of 25, with the necessary tech to survive the future.

Digital's potential does not really lie in the best interface, the prettiest website or the most amount of likes, these are just demonstrations of the potential that the critical mass of digital power can and will continue to provide for our region.

Hats off to the pioneers. Bizcommunity applauds you all.

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