

Better representation across the board

 By [Ann Nurock](#)

8 May 2018

As The One Club for Creativity's Creative Week 2018 gets underway, I sit down with CEO Kevin Swanepoel for a catch-up on their developments over the past year.



Kevin Swanepoel, CEO of The One Club for Creativity.

Hi Kevin, it's so good to be here representing Bizcommunity for the third year. What developments have there been with the One Club in the last year?

When you came through last year, we had just sealed the deal with the Art Directors Club (ADC) and we've now had a full year [together]. What's amazing is that it's been during a period where Publicis, one of the biggest international holding companies, decided to pull out of awards for a year.



Publicis Groupe shifts spend on award shows, other events to AI initiative

Jessica Tennant 21 Jun 2017



But despite our concern, we've seen entries up over 30% year on year, so this bodes really well for next year. It's also a credit to us putting somebody at the helm of the ADC Awards in the form of Michael O'Rourke, the executive director. I appointed him to lead the ADC awards and I think both he and his team are doing an incredible job of broadening the ADC to be more inclusive of design, design thinking and craft, whereas beforehand it was really trying to chase down what The One Show was doing. So we've had a year where we are telling two stories in a very different way.



All the 2018 ADC Award winners!

8 May 2018



They are also judged with very specific and different lenses, the jury is very different and I think it's been a huge success, seeing the numbers come through and the fact that people are embracing the differences between the two.

■ **What developments have there been on the education front, with that being one of your strongest pillars?**

Last year actually we had a group from Germany, the GWA, which is like a non-profit organisation for agency owners in Germany, reach out to us and ask if we could do a special for them during the week, so we worked out a package called the Executive Creative Summit, which is an invitation-only event that takes place during Creative Week.



BSSP's John Butler on why the "anti-conference approach" works

Leigh Andrews 10 Oct 2017



It is for all founders and chief creative officers of agencies. We did the first one last year during Creative Week, and had just under 70 people attend. It's meant to be small and intimate – no cell phones and no press present – but it was remarkable because we were then asked to do one in Milan and another in Berlin, which included people not only from Germany but also Canada, Amsterdam and other countries. And now this year, we had to stop the invitations as we are already at 80 people!

■ **Your Creative Boot Camps have also been so successful, and are held regularly in South Africa. Are you increasing them?**

It's been a really interesting journey, from the time Ross Chowles ran the first one there. Now Xolisa Dyeshana has taken up that charge and is doing such an incredible job with the Creative Circle and the local agencies in South Africa, this year they are even aiming to get it down to Durban.



#OneShow2017: Reflections with Xolisa Dyeshana

Leigh Andrews 26 May 2017



We are thrilled that Woolworths and Vodacom are back as sponsors but the real importance of these boot camps is the need for diversity in agencies globally.

“ When you look at a country like South Africa where there are 50 million people in the country, and when you have a look that the white population that only represents about one and a half million people. But when you go into the creative departments in South Africa, there are very few black people. ”

So this, for me, was one of the biggest needs that had to be fulfilled, and as The One Club is non-profit organisation, we stepped in to work with the Creative Circle and agency partners to at least make this sort of career available and accessible, to demonstrate that the under-represented could have a great job as a creative in the industry.



#OneShow2016: Deepening SA's diversity drive

Leigh Andrews 6 May 2016



I would like to say 'thank you' to the agencies in South Africa because without their support and entering the ADC and One Show Awards, we would not have the revenue to do these types of things. This is one of the mistakes people make when they put all award shows into the same bucket, because the revenue we generate from The One Show and The ADC awards – other than paying the staff, literally every penny goes back into education.

■ ***Of course the big news this past week was Susan Credle being appointed as the first chairwoman of the One Club...***

Yes, one of the things I'm really proud of is when we have a look at the One Club board of directors now, we probably have a gender split of about 45% women to about 55% men. We are diverse in gender and race, with two African Americans also on the board.



The One Club names FCB's Susan Credle chairwoman

3 May 2018



Susan becoming the first chairwoman woman of the board makes me really proud, as she is really active when it comes to trying to get more women involved in leadership positions in this industry and I think having her on the board means our gender equality programme will really be pushed to the fore.

Looks set to be an exciting year ahead for the One Club for creativity and the industry as a whole. Visit our [One Show special section](#) for the latest updates!

ABOUT ANN NUROCK

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