

# The Loeries Africa Committee: Ulric Charteris

Executive director and owner of Tanzanian advertising agency Roots255 as well as member of the Loeries Africa Committee this year, Ulric Charteris began his advertising career in 1999 at Ogilvy SA as a junior copywriter and worked his way up to creative director of FCB South Africa. In 2006 he moved to Tanzania and opened Roots and an event/film production company, The Works.

## ■ How many people does your agency employ?

**Ulric Charteris:** We have four brands which we operate with:

- Roots255 - Both ATL and BTL advertising, strategy, Corporate Identities etc.
- The Works - Our event management, television and radio production arm
- Hotwire - Public relations
- Medialink - You guessed it. Media

All in all we have around 25 professional staff and have a total of about 40 people in the office.



## ■ What have been your highlights or most relevant take outs of the recent [Loeries Africa Roadshow](#) being held in your region?

**Charteris:** What the Loeries did was bring a very fragmented advertising industry into the same room for the first time. We do not have an advertising association or Creative Circle and this was hopefully the first step in bring the industry together for a common cause - better work. The Roadshow inspired a lot of people - both agency and client - and generated a lot of excitement. There will be a healthy Tanzania contingent at this year's Creative Week and hopefully a few entries.



Ulric Charteris

## ■ What major clients and types of products does your agency work on?

**Charteris:** At Roots255, we handle the four major beer brands in Tanzania for TBL (Tanzanian Breweries Limited - part of SAB Miller). These being Kilimanjaro Premium Lager, Safari Lager, Castle Lager and Ndovu Premium Lager. We also do the country's largest spirit brand, Konyagi for TDL (Tanzanian Distilleries Limited). Other than that, cigarette brands for Tanzanian Cigarette Corporation (TCC) - yes, we are allowed to advertise cigarette brands. Creams and body lotions for Chemi Cotex; First National Bank; East Africa Retail Corporation and Toyota. We have a nice statistic that almost 90% of our clients are leaders in their sectors.

On the events side, we do all the Toyota launches, a lot of work for TBL, TCC with recent highlights being Miss Tanzania, and we are busy with the Tanzanian Music Awards.

## ■ Has your agency or you personally had any major highlights in the past few years that you would like to share?

**Charteris:** We were the first Tanzanian agency to get a finalist at the Loeries (for Kilimanjaro Premium Lager TVC) and it's quite an honour personally to be nominated as a Loerie Regional Judge this year. But I guess the biggest highlights are when we get campaigns right for clients and we've had a good recent run of producing well-liked, effective campaigns for brands such as Kilimanjaro, Safari and Konyagi. The events team have also taken Tanzania events to another level which we are really proud of.



### ■ **What inspires you at the moment?**

**Charteris:**Africa. The opportunity for brands and the opportunity to produce creative, relevant work for those brands. And trying to find an African voice in doing so - not just replicating Eurocentric work and hoping it will work. It won't. But there is a lot of research and insight gathering that needs to take place on the continent. We need to establish the identity of the consumer, what creatively they identify with, and on which mediums they will identify with it. At the moment with the lack of research it is a bit of "spray and pray". It's a long hard road to go down and will take a lot of work, but if we get it right, it will pay dividends. Everyone knows that Africa has the potential, the question is how do we harness it - for brands and for communication agencies alike.

The [Loeries Africa Roadshow](#)'s last stop will be in Accra on 16 April.

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