

## Promax Africa Awards conference hosts global experts

The Promax Africa Awards take place on 2 November at the Maslow Hotel in Sandton, kicking off with a conference with expert speakers from various parts of the world.



Image supplied. Lee Hunt, marketer and strategist with over 40 years of experience in the media and entertainment industry, is one of the global speakers at Promax Africa

The association for entertainment marketing, Promax Africa brings together content creators, marketers and designers reflecting a vibrant community – and provides opportunities to learn, grow, connect and be inspired at the conference.

### Africa the most fun

One of the speakers, Lee Hunt, marketer and strategist with over 40 years of experience in the media and entertainment industry, owner of Lee Hunt LLC and publisher and editor-in-chief of *CMOintelligence*, says while he has not been to PromaxAfrica in a couple of years, he is looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones.

“Over the years, I’ve attended Promax conferences across the globe: US, UK, Europe, Asia, India, Arabia, Russia, and China, and I have to admit that Africa is the most fun.”

Hunt's *CMOintelligence* tracks and analyses the on-air marketing of linear and streaming services in the US. Every month it collects about 1,000 new promos, and every week it publishes a "promo of the week" highlighting a particular spot or campaign.

"Some of my favourites have been the Disney 100th Anniversary spots—amazing editing and emotional storytelling, and Paramount+ Mountain of Entertainment.

"While every other streamer launched with montage spots, Paramount+ took their shows' characters and had them climb the Paramount Mountain. It was a great launch campaign, and they continue to build on the live-action spots every few months.

"It's a great way for them to own their logo (the Paramount Mountain) and stand out from the crowd. I'll be showing these and a lot more in my New Best Practices session," shares Hunt.

## A simple formula

For Hunt, franchises seem to be the new trend. "With so many series across so many platforms, it's hard to promote them all so networks and streamers are now focusing more on collections of shows rather than individual titles."

Good examples are Paramount's *Yellowstone*, NBCU's *Chicago (Fire, PD, & Med)* and Warner Bros. Discovery's "90 Days... (seven series and counting!).

"The formula is pretty simple: when you have a hit series, spin it off (and again and again), then market the collection. It's a much more efficient way to promote your shows and helps viewers who have too many choices," he explains.

## Person still needed to drive storytelling

Talking about the future of AI and machine learning and how these are shaping the marketing landscape, as well as the opportunities and challenges they present, he says that he is currently working with a company out of India that uses AI to take long-form news content and edit it into social promotion and interstitials.

"While that that is not new, what previously took several hours of work now only takes five minutes. That's great for immediacy (getting the story out quickly) and operational efficiency, but it will change our roles as creative marketers," he says.

But, he adds, "The important thing to remember is that it will still take a person with great storytelling skills to drive the AI."

He says what he is still trying to figure out is how to find a differentiator for streaming services that are so broad and have such deep content.

"I used to think it was hard for free-to-air networks to define themselves against niche pay-tv channels, but streaming takes that challenge to a whole other level."

He says he has been working with one of the US O&O streamers (owned & operated by a media company with linear channels) on their brand evolution.

"They, like the majority of the larger US streamers, launched two years ago. Now the market is saturated with streamers all

making essentially the same promise, “we have lots of different kinds of content for everyone in the family.”



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### A line up of speakers

Other speakers include:

- Charlie Mawer, Bafta nominated and multiple award-winning executive creative director of London-based agency Red Bee Creative.
- Bennum Van Jaarsveld, corporate communications manager e.tv/eMedia.
- Wanuri Kahiu, Kenyan producer, film director and author. Her first feature film, *From a Whisper* received 12 nominations and five wins at the Africa Movie Academy Awards in 2009.
- Maurice Marable, a preeminent filmmakers working in the business with multiple high-profile projects. He directed and executive-produced the highly acclaimed Craig Robinson-led comedy, *Killing It*, which will return for a second season on Peacock.

Disney+ plays host to the pre-award drinks on the day, with Netflix, Disney+, Paramount, eTV and Open View the gold sponsors for Promax Africa 2023.10.31

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