

IAB Digital Summit announces diverse speaker lineup

As a high growth, vastly influential sector impacting all aspects of the South African consumer experience, digital needs to undergo ongoing and conscious transformation. The IAB SA champions diversity in digital, which is apparent in the IAB Digital Summit's programme and speaker lineup including female digital leaders and experts of all ethnicities.



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Josephine Buys, CEO of the IAB SA, comments: "Promoting diversity in digital is still an intentional act in South Africa, where positions of power have been dominated by one segment of our community. Each of our speakers brings a fresh perspective to the current challenges and opportunities digital holds in South Africa."

The programme for the summit has been specifically curated to have relevance to all IAB SA members and assist in boosting the digital performance of any business. Attendees can expect a cross section of industry professionals speaking at the event, including:

- Thebe Ikalafeng, CEO, Brand Leadership
- Jessy Severins, Advertising Yield Manager at Gumtree
- Lee Naik, CEO of TransUnion
- The IAB Measurement Council
- Leonel Silva, Director of Programmatic Development, Celtra
- John Sanei, Trend Specialist
- Ferial Haffajee, Editor-at-Large, HuffPost SA
- Bronwen Auret, Head of the IAB Transformation & Education Council
- Davin Phillips, Executive Director at Communication Services Africa
- Tbo Touch, CEO of TouchCentral and Founder of #DataMustFall

More speakers will be confirmed during the course of the next few weeks.

Thebe Ikalfeng, Founder/Chairman of Brand Africa and Brand Leadership Group, and 2017 Digital Summit speaker, says: “The IAB Digital Summit is a timely platform to showcase the impact technology/digital has had as the most significant catalyst for Africa’s transformation. It has obliterated community and commercial borders and given Africa a voice in the world. Because of the global breakthroughs of technology-led brands such as MTN and Mpesa, two of the most well-respected made in Africa brands, Africa is acknowledged as a cutting edge market for the digital revolution.”

Bronwen Auret, Head of the IAB Transformation & Education Council will speak about the reasoning behind the merging of the two councils, and how they will work together on transformation initiatives in the industry. Auret’s presentation will stimulate conversation on the MAC Charter, the Skills Development Fund and other immediate opportunities to engage with transformation as an IAB member.

According to Auret, “there is a huge opportunity for us to make a significant contribution to transformation in South Africa. As the digital industry we are firmly placed in all sectors. Through the IAB we can directly affect media, advertising and brands. We have a digital skills deficit which needs to be addressed very quickly. This will take commitment and passion from IAB members and the industry collaboration to change. There is one only option – and that is to transform.”

Digital holds many tools in its arsenal to aid in transformation. Education and the professional recognition of skills will nurture new talent, while industry collaboration will accelerate a more equitable working environment. Transformation also needs to be consistently measured to ensure ongoing progress.

Recognising the importance of education in transforming the digital industry, the IAB SA will invite 50 future digital leaders to the Summit free of charge. This is an area of focus and passion for the IAB, as the body strives to transform the digital industry through the provision of education and opportunities.

Says IAB SA CEO Josephine Buys: “Our commitment to sponsoring 50 future digital leaders to attend the Summit is just one of the ways that we are investing in South Africa’s up and coming talent. We have engaged many colleagues and IAB members over the past year and look forward to formalising these initiatives with appropriate industry partners in 2017 and beyond. We are encouraging our partners to deliver on a promise that transformation is taking place in the digital industry via recruitment, staff retention, career development and work environment by committing to evolving their company cultures to embrace the new wave of talent.”

In addition to transformation, conversations at the Summit will include analysing data through a digital lens, programmatic native, digital’s impact on Africa’s brands, fake news, content marketing and the future of television content in the digital age.

As digital’s pervasive impact continues to influence all industries, the IAB SA expects the diversity and number of attendees to evolve and grow. Over 70% of attendees last year were in C-suite management roles, a trend that is set to grow as digital decisions increasingly become the territory of top decision makers.

The IAB Digital Summit and Bookmarks will be held on 16 March at The Galleria in Sandton from 9am until 3pm. Early bird tickets are available until 17 February and cost R1,690. Following that, standard, non-member tickets will cost R1,950. Get your Bookmark Awards tickets now for R1,090 for both the awards and after party or pay R450 for the after party only. Both IAB Digital Summit & Bookmarks tickets are on sale here: <http://iabdigitalsummit.co.za/>.

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