

Facebook's Aviv Weil on how upskilling the youth can impact the creative industry in a powerful way

By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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We chat to head of Facebook Africa's Creative Shop, Aviv Weil about the Facebook Student Challenge and workshops at Loeries 2019, Facebook's partnership with UN Women for the HeForShe campaign and how upskilling the youth translates into the creative industry being much more powerful.



Aviv Weil with the winners of the Facebook and Brand South Africa workshop. Image credit: Strikeapose Photography.

Can you please elaborate more on the role Facebook will be playing at the Loeries this year?

This is now our fourth year sponsoring the Facebook Challenge which is for students and which I am very much a part of. It's all about, growing the future creative youth of the country and we are putting a lot of resources into growing the next wave of young creatives.



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We've created this thing called the Facebook Challenge, which is a competition with an NGO where we give students around Middle East and Africa the chance to work on the same brief, come up with amazing solutions and enter it into the Loeries themselves and it gets judged by industry professionals, ECDs, CCOs from all the agencies. We've also been really lucky that every year there has been an actual Loerie given.

This year we've partnered with UN Women for the HeForShe campaign, a solidarity movement for gender equality. It's a global campaign and the brief to the students was; how can we get the HeForShe campaign more awareness, given that there are so many like-minded campaigns around the world, like the #metoo movement, etc.

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We got some amazing ideas put forward and we'll announce the winners this evening.

■ ***What workshops will Facebook and Instagram be hosting during the creative week?***

I head up the Creative Shop for sub-Saharan Africa. So, I like to collaborate and include everyone in the room. Part of what we do, instead of just showing the students what Instagram is all about, is that we actually take them on a 2-3 hour Instawalk through, in this case, Durban city.



Image credit: Strikeapose Photography.

We uncover the most incredible hidden spots in the city and allow them to capture content along the way and there is also a little contest attached to it. So this year, the brief to the students was to help Brand South Africa, one of the main sponsors of the Loeries in coming up with content that helps the world see South Africa for how amazing it actually is.

There have been a lot of bad press and a lot of ups and downs of late with people asking, "Is it a country worth investing in or not. Is there actual commerce going on there. Are people happy or not?" So an Instawalk through the Durban City Centre finding the most incredible rooftop farms and amazing markets and amazing commerce and happy people - and it all being real - is a great place to catch content to actually build Instagram Story ads for Brand South Africa.



Image credit: Strikeapose Photography.

They will get two hours to craft their Stories, then we'll have a judging panel, including representatives from Brand South Africa and Facebook and Instagram and we'll award some trophies at the end. This is a very hands-on experience for the students as opposed to just going to watch a lecture - actually getting them involved in what Instagram is all about.

We also do Story School, which is essentially just that, a school. It's got lessons on how to use every feature of Stories/Instagram to make their Stories that much more impactful. And you'll be surprised at how many people think they know Instagram and then you show them something new and they get super excited.

■ **Please comment on the importance of the creative industry across the region and Facebook's work within this space.**

It is a mobile economy and creativity is the most important aspect because that is what breaks through all the clutter and that is what gets noticed on the feed. And the better we are at expressing our creative ideas, whether we are students or brands or ad agencies and even media companies, the more impactful it will be and the more successful everyone will be.

“ With technology at the centre of this, there is a huge opportunity to innovate and create on our continent. That, for me, is the most exciting part, that we actually get to be part of leading the way, not just competing with the rest of the world. ”

Some of the most really incredible campaigns have come from South Africa, from Nigeria, from Cameroon. It's incredible what's going on here. There is a democracy of ideas for the first time in a long time, thanks to mobile technology, thanks to platforms like ours, and we are trusting brands to take our advice and implement stuff with their agencies.



#Loeries2019: Africans aren't just swimming with the creative sharks, we are the sharks

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It's a really, really wonderful place and especially from the point of view of the future of this continent. Africa is young and you got a whole slew of people born with phones in their hands and wanting to express themselves with it.

By enabling them and showing them how to best do that on these platforms, it translates into the creative industry being that much more powerful. So we can show up on global stages such as Cannes, Loeries or anywhere else, that we show up as good, if not better, and that for me is the real opportunity and we've actually been quite successful.

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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