

Creative collaboration in the mobile world

 By [Ann Nurock](#)

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Ann Nurock at Cannes spoke with Nicola Mendelsohn, Facebook VP of Europe, Middle East and Africa, about the need for creative collaboration, especially in the mobile world.



With users spending almost an hour a day on average on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, mobile creativity has never been more important.

Nurock: Facebook has huge presence at Cannes, what are your primary reasons for coming here?

Mendelsohn: As you know our mission is to make the world more open and connected so that people can come and share more. But actually here at Cannes it's all about creativity, and what we're seeing more and more is that when people come together, that's where you really unlock creativity in a digital age.

Nurock: Facebook is hiring a lot of creatives at the moment. What are your motives behind that?

Mendelsohn: Within Facebook we have something called the Creative Shop, which is a collection of people from around the world who have been creative directors or creative strategists, so they're coming together to really hack on our platforms to truly understand how you can do creativity at scale, in new ways and on mobile.

One of the things we've been doing at Cannes this week is unveiling a whole new suite of things we're doing for creative agencies. So we're building a creative hub, an interface where agencies can go on and see what they're work will look like

on mobile. As you know people are spending on average 50 minutes a day on Facebook and Instagram, so creative agencies need to know what they're work looks like and how they can experiment. It's also a place where different people can come together and collaborate, and that's one of the main things we're saying here this year – people need to work together to produce great creative in the mobile world.

What we're also doing is providing insights from all the incredible data we have from Facebook to have right at the beginning of the creative process, so creatives can come and learn about people in different ways that can inspire them to make amazing new work. Then of course we have some incredible new products - last year Chris Cox had this vision for this new type of mobile format, and that's called Canvas which we only launched a few months ago, and we've already seen 100 years of time spent in the product.

Nurock: Explain what Canvas is...

Mendelsohn: Canvas is a way of bringing together everything we know on what people love about mobile, it's immersive, it uses video, it uses text. It's a format where you can spend time, it opens up like a Pandora's Box – you can use it for a brand or performance message. If you haven't tried it and you're at a creative agency, experiment with it because people love spending time on it.

Nurock: What are some of the implications for Africa?

Mendelsohn: One of the products for creative agencies that came out of our trips to Africa is Slideshow. If you're in an area which doesn't have great bandwidth or only a 2G connection and you still want to be able to tell a story through video, what Slideshow does is bring together still images to make it look as though it's moving. We're seeing huge engagement and take-up, interestingly not only in Africa but all over the world, and it's expanded to over 100 countries. It was developed with the emerging markets in mind, but it can be used anywhere. We saw a great example of Coca-Cola using Slideshow to tell their stories and connect with people and they're seeing great results as well.

Nurock: Tell us more about how Facebook is really helping small businesses succeed in both Africa and around over the world...

Mendelsohn: When I've been in different parts of the world, it's wonderful to see how small and big businesses can come together and use the same tools on Facebook, so what we're really seeing is a democratisation of marketing. It was never possible before for the 'mom and pop' who had a corner business to be able to do the same marketing as the world's biggest advertisers.

Today we have over 3 million advertisers on the Facebook platform and the thing that inspires me every day is that they're growing their businesses thanks to connecting with customers all over the world. It's a really humbling thing to see.

Nurock: How has business been in Africa?

Mendelsohn: We launched in Africa about a year ago and it's fantastic to have Nunu Ntshingila as our head of Africa, who will be talking at Cannes this week about connectivity and bringing the world together, and focusing on people who really appreciate and care about creativity in the mobile world.

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