

Vodacom's Andisa Ntsubane: Making Africa's voice heard

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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Named Cannes Lions' 2024 Creative B2B jury president, Andisa Ntsubane, Vodacom's managing executive: brand marketing and communications Africa, is the only African and South African jury president at the festival this year.



Image supplied. Andisa Ntsubane, Vodacom's managing executive: brand marketing and communications Africa, is the Cannes Lions 2024 Creative B2B jury president - the only jury president from the continent this year

He follows in the footsteps of local creative greats such as Tseliso Rangaka, chief creative officer of FCB Africa and Hellocomputer, who was the jury president for the Radio & Audio Lions jury at Cannes Lions last year.

Ensuring the voice of Africa is heard

No stranger to Cannes, which he attends every year, nor to the Creative B2B category - he served as a jury member last year – he says it has been his mission to ensure the Continent's voice is heard at the world's biggest advertising and marketing event in the world.

“Cannes Lions is the biggest showcase of creativity in the world, and I have always held the view that you cannot have this global platform without a strong representation from the continent of Africa.”

For too long, he says, we have looked West, and not towards ourselves, but this is no longer the case, as we see African music, fashion and culture spreading throughout the world.

“There are transformational initiatives and innovations that are happening on the African continent that are not happening anywhere else in the world, and I think that there is a lot that the world can learn from us, from a creativity and Innovation point of view.”

Therefore, being the only African jury president at the 2024 Cannes Lions Festival, he says is a great privilege and he is honoured to have been recommended for the opportunity.

“I am truly proud to be representing not just my country, but the continent of Africa, at large. This recommendation is also a testament to the fact that the work we do is world-class and respected across the globe.”



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Elevating the B2B category

He is as passionate about elevating the B2B practice, globally, as he is about the African continent.

The Creative B2B Lions celebrates game-changing creativity and effectiveness in work for products and services that are purchased by professionals on behalf of businesses.

The category was introduced three years ago, and he believes this will be the decade of B2B. “Over the next few years, the category and the B2B marketing leaders will finally get the elevation and respect they deserve. I think you will see more interest in the Creative B2B category in 2024.”

He adds that some of the best marketers come from B2B and that B2C could learn a lot from them.

“There is so much that B2C can learn from B2B, not just commercial connectedness, but in how B2B brands are leading in targeting decision-makers with precision and innovative tactics that enable them to connect both functionally and emotionally.”



Image supplied. No stranger to Cannes or the Creative B2B category, Nisubane was a jury member last year

Work with real impact

He also believes that the groundbreaking work within this category that we see every year will continue this year. "More than other categories, B2B is unique in that it is well-positioned to showcase work that is helping to solve real-world problems."

He adds, "Last year's finalists as well as winners delivered outstanding work both from an impact and effectiveness point of view and I believe we will see more innovation, more cross-channel usage, more technology integration, more impact and more purpose-led work."

When he talks about last year's Grand Prix winner, he says he still gets goosebumps.

"Certainly, for me, it was a reminder that the ones who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do as well as the fact that a powerful idea can truly change the world, both for the sustainability of the world and for the brands they serve."

He adds: "I can't wait to see and experience the festival of powerful creative ideas that will be in contention for the coveted Grand Prix this year."

Jury deliberations

But to get there, as the jury president, he will need to ensure the jury understands B2B and that the deliberations and discussions are open and honest.

"The jury needs to be a space of psychological safety where all jury members feel free to express themselves. Only then can critical debates and engagement as well as diversity of thinking take place," he says.

He explains that concerning the above, it is important to ensure objectivity and removal of bias.

"Therefore, we always go back to the objectives of the work to ensure alignment, and then also ensure we operate at the highest level of professionalism."

Unique trends to B2B

In terms of some of the trends that we will see in 2024, he sees the following five trends emerging:

1. **AI and machine learning platforms:** Their impact on B2B marketing will continue to grow as technology advances and data becomes more accessible.
2. **Marketing automation:** This will transform the way B2B marketers operate. Modern tools will enable marketers to streamline repetitive tasks, personalise content, and optimise marketing campaigns.
3. **Video marketing:** B2B marketers are leveraging Video Marketing to drive engaging content, deliver storytelling agendas and improve SEO rankings that enable brands to be more visible.
4. **Brand leadership and purpose:** B2B marketing has traditionally been perceived to be very functional and focused on leads and sales, however, we are seeing great brand and purpose-led work coming from B2B brands that create an emotional connection and accelerate equity. This will continue as marketing investment in B2B shifts from products to brand building in service of B2B2H (Business to Business to Human).
5. **Customer experience:** This will be one of the frontiers where the battle for the customer will be fought, with a focus on delighting customers through end-to-end journey mapping and messaging.

The Cannes jury presidents

As a jury president, Ntsubane is one of a select few from across the globe.

Commenting on the jury presidents, Simon Cook, CEO, of the Lions, says: "Our jury presidents play a crucial role in the existence of the Lions. Their knowledge, skills and incredible talent, combined with the commitment and leadership that they will bring to their roles, bring integrity and rigour to the Lions. This is an exceptional line-up of talent from across the world, and we can't wait to see the work that rises to the top in June."

All the Cannes Lions jury presidents for 2024 can be seen [here](#).

Cannes Lions is now open for awards submissions until 11 April 2024.

Cannes Lions 2024 takes place from 17 to 21 June in Cannes, France.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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