

The genius of judging awards

 By [Bridget von Holdt](#)

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Judging isn't casual reading; you're on the hunt for jaw-dropping perfection. You want to be astonished with creativity, innovation, attention to detail and overall professionalism.

As a member of PRISA and Executive Director of Glasshouse Communication Management, I was invited to judge the Global Alliance COMM PRIX Awards, the only global awards that honour outstanding performance in public relations and communication management globally.

Reviewing entries electronically

Each year an elite group of international public relations, communication professionals and academics is selected to review entries. As a judge I was privy to the best of the best in global public relations practice.

What struck me was the impact and genius of judging digitally. All entries were reviewed electronically and the quality was impressive. But I felt that it was the creative addressing of the campaign that created a story in my own mind as I reviewed each entry.

For an entry to win the work had to be exceptional and the criteria of insight, strategy, execution and results had to be applied to each entry. However, what I found to be most difficult was to remain impartial. However, the judging system is a rigorous process to ensure fair and balanced evaluation.

I also felt many pitfalls remain, no matter which country the entry comes from - bad grammar and spelling errors were a bit off-putting. At least I know it's not just a South African weakness, it seems that carelessness is a global phenomenon.

Impact on the audience

The other issue of concern was that some entries claimed how 'innovative' they were using social media to build a successful campaign. In my mind, innovation means using new methods or ideas - clearly, social media and its use in campaigns is certainly not new. So entrants should give a lot of thought to the wording of the motivation before submitting an entry.

In summing up, I believe that PR campaigns should not only be judged on Return on Investment (ROI) and Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE). What is more important is the impact on the target audience and the measuring of the objective. I certainly applied this principle when judging the Global Alliance COMM PRIX Awards.

ABOUT BRIDGET VON HOLDT

Bridget von Holdt is the Business Director at BCW Africa. Bridget's experience in public relations spans over 30 years and is a registered APR. A revered name in South African Public Relations and communication circles and a recipient of the PRISM Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018, Bridget is known for her vision to see beyond the conventional in the communication industry.

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