

Q&A w/ Holly Meadows, Bookmarks' Best Marketer 2019

By  Juanita Pienaar

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Holly Meadows, editor of *Cosmopolitan* SA walked away with the award for 'Best Marketer' at the 11th annual Bookmark Awards hosted at The Forum in Bryanston last month.

Here, she shares how she leveraged *Cosmopolitan*'s media platforms and went global with hashtags #COSMOxLaverne and #SayYesToLove reaching 17-million within 72 hours, securing her the win and title of 'Best Marketer' for 2019...

■ How does it feel to be named Bookmarks' 'Best Marketer' for 2019?

Fantastic! As editor of *Cosmopolitan* South Africa, it's important to me to leverage the brand's media platforms to engage with our millennial and Gen Z audiences in conversations that matter. Our win was predominantly pitched around our February 2018 edition featuring Laverne Cox as the brand's first ever transgender cover star. My team and I flew to New York to shoot the Emmy-nominated actress.



Holly Meadows, editor of *Cosmopolitan* SA. Image supplied.



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The goal was to play a small part in providing visibility for the LGBTQ+ community, of which Laverne has become a revolutionary icon. The edition included an investigative feature on the 'corrective' rape crisis, a rainbow list of activists and allies who have spearheaded change in South Africa, debates about coming out at work and a fashion spread featuring important LGBTQ+ voices.

Since then we like to think we've spearheaded many important conversations around topics such as why we need to end tampon tax, body diversity in media and ending millennial apathy when it comes to voting in our general elections



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■ **Elaborate on the importance of celebrating digital creative work in 2019. Why do you think award shows like these are important?**

It's important for the industry to set a benchmark for excellence that we can all celebrate and strive toward. I am also a big believer in connecting with media creatives and sharing insights and knowledge, The Bookmarks is a fantastic platform to do exactly that.

■ **Comment on the overall standard of digital work in SA. Is there anything you think the industry can improve on?**

The standard here in South Africa is high, we have incredible talent and exceptional creative work coming out of this country. It's important we recognise that. If there's anything to improve on I'd say it would be more collaborative conferences for sharing best practices and successful case studies.

■ **Who do you look up to and admire in the industry?**

Gosh! A lot of people. Internationally I really admire the work the team at *Cosmopolitan* US has done around the importance of [sex education in schools](#). I also admire Michelle Lee, EIC of *Allure* – especially her recent branded content partnership around [breaking down beauty standards](#).

■ **What is currently on your agenda?**

We have just gone to print with our May issue! May marks our Beats Issue so you can expect Spotify's most downloaded female artist of 2018 on our cover and an inside fashion collaboration with local rap queens currently reigning in a very male-dominated industry.

We've also partnered with the app TickTock for a *Cosmo* lip sync battle challenge that we'll be revealing in the next few weeks. On the branded content front, we're excited to launch a very special campaign in partnership with Stayfree around menstrual education.



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■ **Looking further into the crystal ball, what's next for you?**

A lot! We have our [Cosmo Influencer Workshop](#) in Cape Town on 27 April where you can learn about what it takes to be an influencer and how to make money off your feed, plus loads of Instagram worthy photo opportunities. We are very excited to host our [Cosmo Career Summit](#) on 4 May in Johannesburg.

The summit is catered to women who want work advice and includes a line-up of inspiring talks from celebrities like Bonang Matheba and industry experts like finance coach Mapalo Makhulu. There are panel discussions around everything from how to pitch your startup to potential investors and how to develop a leadership identity. At *Cosmo* we're about service and how we can help her live her best life ever.

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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