

Another year of growth and award wins for Machine_

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Although the last two years have impacted the advertising industry, Machine_ has built on a record-breaking 2021 with an even more successful 2022 - growing in staff complement and winning clients as well as multiple awards across the board.



Lockdown and the Covid-19 Pandemic brought about unprecedented change and uncertainty for many industries, especially the media, marketing and advertising sectors. But 2021 and 2022 have both been years of incredible growth for Machine_. For an agency to have achieved a record year during the Pandemic is already an amazing feat, but having two back-to-back, record-breaking years is a remarkable achievement that speaks to the success of the business strategy and client partnerships.

New business wins for Machine_

Looking back on 2022, in the first quarter, Machine_ pitched on Pepsico's sub-Saharan African digital portfolio and won White Star, Sasko, Liqui-Fruit, Weet-Bix and Spekko, adding to the list of clients Machine_ was already looking after for Pepsico: Simba and Lay's.

This was a fantastic win to kick off the year, shortly followed by another win to do the rebrand for the international education institute: Setanta College. Machine_ was responsible for updating the brand's CI from the logo through to the visual language and templates for communication – globally. On another international front, Machine_ also ran a new digital campaign for the Tourism Authority of Thailand.

More exciting new business included taking on Prime Video as a client, working on projects such as the launch of “The Terminal List”, “The Rings Of Power”, “The Peripheral” and, most recently, “Jack Ryan”.

“It's been a great privilege to work on the Prime Video projects this year,” says Lauren Brabant, Machine_ Cape Town client service business lead. “Our team has had so much fun collaborating with the Prime Video team and agency partners, with the opportunity to roll out through-the-line work, from billboards to social to influencer watch parties. We're so excited for all the upcoming campaigns – watch this space,” she says.

Machine_'s award-winning work

“Over the last 12-months, Machine_ has developed highly effective work that has received notable recognition at both local and international award shows. Machine_ was the pre-eminent Publicis Agency at the Publicis Golden Lion Awards, walking away with the Product Excellent Gold – the only one to be awarded for work done on Heineken,” says Machine_ Cape Town’s managing director, Robyn Campbell.

Campbell was also awarded the title of “Womxn Advocate of the Year” by the IAB SA (Interactive Advertising Bureau) – a recognition of excellence in driving the advancement of other women in their organisation and across their industry. We also walked away with a global award for top Radio Ad on Best Ads On TV for Spotify’s “Young Cece” – which also won a Silver at Creative Circle Ad of the Month. Adding to that, we took home a Creative Circle Bronze for Heineken “UCL Live”.

Some of our other notable awards won this year, among multiple craft certificates, include being named a Top 10 Agency at the Pendoring Awards and taking home four awards for “Xhosa-fying Halloween”. Machine_ also took home 2 Golds, 4 Silvers and 3 Bronzes at the New Generation Awards. At the Assegai Awards, we won 2 Silvers and 3 Bronzes. We also won a Bronze at Bookmarks. Additionally, Machine_ also won Best Website, Best Interactive Digital Publication, Best Email / Newsletter and Editor of the Year at the 2022 SAPF Awards.

Internal growth and change at Machine_

“Our agency has continued to build on its notable culture and connection in a new, hybrid working world. We have ensured that our people’s needs are put first, and that the agency adapts around those needs. And it is working,” says Campbell.

We have seen the biggest growth in our Johannesburg office, which had 30 people at the start of 2021 and 55 people by December 2022. “Growing, while simultaneously building and establishing agency culture is not easy!” says Lindsey Rayner, Machine_ Johannesburg managing director. “It requires resilience, belief and a bit of fight to sometimes go left when everyone else says go right. Culture does not just exist in the fun stuff, but in the way we show up for each other every day,” she says.

“Inspired by the Springbok Rugby World Cup team, we established our very own Bomb Squad – essentially expanding the agency’s leadership team – in service of the team grafting “on the field,” explains Rayner of one of the initiatives implemented in the Joburg office. “Beyond the agency leadership function, the Bomb Squad gets stuck in, providing high-impact, tactical experience, problem-solving skills and fresh legs when needed most! It’s a tangible way in which our culture shows up in the everyday and has set a great foundation for the year ahead,” she says.

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Machine_ is a creative solutions agency represented across Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, and is home to over 75 adventurous minds.

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