

We count down to IAB Bookmarks with Razia Pillay

By  Emily Stander

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On the eve of the annual IAB Bookmarks event, IAB CEO Razia Pillay says she is looking forward to the industry coming together and celebrating!



Image supplied: Razia Pillay, IAB CEO

■ *Tell us a bit more about your career journey and your work*

My career started out at a travel and tourism publishing organisation that focused on online editorial and advertising. This led to my journey toward online news media which allowed me to disrupt the norms of media by integrating offline media with the emerging online market.

Integrated digital marketing was always my focus — and my customer-centric mindset allowed me opportunities to find innovative and creative solutions for both mass appeal and segmented markets like youth, influencers and women.

My most memorable achievement to date was shaking President Barack Obama's hand at the Young African Leaders Initiative of which I am an alumnus. Since then, my career has catapulted into spearheading digital transformation and growth. I believe that being at the helm of an organisation that drives digital transformation and growth was always part of my destiny. I am humbled to be where I am today.

■ *What are you looking forward to most at Bookmarks this year?*

Celebrating together! This is the first local industry event that will be held in person after two years of pandemic restrictions.

The calibre of entries submitted this year is a testament to the creativity that sprung from this time and the Bookmark Awards 2022 will not only provide an opportunity to award digital excellence together but also pay tribute to the many colleagues who we lost during this time.



2022 Bookmark Awards live event to celebrate the power of togetherness

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▣ ***What can we expect to see? Will there be anything different in the format?***

The last two years of Bookmarks have been held online so there will be a return to a – dare I use this overused phrase? – ‘new normal’ of an in-person event.

In addition to the awards showcase, expect a warm and celebratory atmosphere with so much excitement around us. We will also have a dedicated media room for interviews and our naming rights partner, DStv Media Sales, will be giving away an amazing prize to a lucky guest in attendance.

▣ ***What trends have you noticed from the entries?***

There has been a real move to showcase authenticity and South Africans’ will to survive and succeed. Nearly every entry pulled at the heartstrings, inspired or provoked audiences to take action but most importantly, to drive digital forward. We saw some excellent innovative work that allows the digital industry to move towards the future - and work that met business objectives.

▣ ***What do you think are the essential components of winning work?***

Work that excites and drives change but most importantly, the measurability of work that meets the objectives of the business.

▣ ***Do you have any words for the finalists before the winners are revealed this week?***

I’d like to extend a huge thank you to all those who entered this year’s Bookmark Awards. Whether you are a winner or not at this week’s event, your work has shown a dedication and commitment to your craft, and opened doors for those that follow in your footsteps.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

Freelancer specialising in games and entertainment | My first loves are writing, music and video games

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