

The ultimate 'state of the industry' event

 By Leigh Andrews

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How will the advertising industry adapt AI at a larger scale? Can we innovate with data analysis and profiling without creeping out customers? I discussed the possibilities and explored the power of digital with three of this year's scheduled female powerhouse speakers for the fourth IAB SA Digital Summit, taking place next week on 1 March 2018 at the Theatre on the Track.



Severins, Murray and De Stadler, three of this year's IAB SA Digital Summit speakers.

With a speaker lineup set to cover such digitally diverse topics as the need for transformation for the industry, the legislation and regulation that governs it and the technology that drives it, you're guaranteed a day of digital stimulation and inspiration.



IAB SA Digital Summit speaker lineup announced

31 Jan 2018



For example, Jessy Severins is ad operations and yield manager at Gumtree. One of last year's IAB Digital Summit speakers, she'll be a panel moderator this year.

Or take Novcon CEO and consumer law specialist, Elizabeth de Stadler. She'll address the impact of the Protection of Personal Information Act (PoPI) on digital marketing, specifically the challenges and opportunities around data analytics, profiling and direct marketing.



How will your right to privacy change under POPIA?

Elizabeth de Stadler 26 Jan 2018



Then there's Carmen Murray, host of the Witee Chatterbots show and who is the founder of Boo-Yah! She's set to unpack

mobile as a catalyst and enabler of the connected marketer at this year's IAB SA Digital Summit. Murray herself interviewed Severins and De Stadler as just two of her favourite 'wonder women of digital,' sharing 11 lessons from 11 of SA's digital leaders to inspire both women and men alike...



11 valuable lessons from 11 wonder women in digital

Carmen Murray 14 Feb 2018



When I asked Severins and De Stadler which digital trend they're most looking forward to from the year ahead, they responded as follows:

Severins: I'm curious how the advertising industry is going to adapt AI at a larger scale. We see it happening in retail and slowly reaching the masses – for example, *AdWeek's* [recent article](#) about a grocery shelf that might analyse your eye movements. How will the advertising industry keep up? Will this result in agencies and publisher's operations departments being able to work more cleverly, or will they eventually be replaced by AI?

De Stadler: The prospect of AI taking over some of the more mundane parts my work. As long as they don't take over too much!

How's that for digital food for thought? Here, Severins, De Stadler and Murray let us in on what they're most looking forward to from the fourth IAB Digital Summit, the crux of what attendees can expect from their individual summit sessions, and their

favourite digital innovation over the years.

■ ***This year marks the fourth IAB Digital Summit. Share your favourite digital innovation, whether new or old.***

Severins: Artificial intelligence is not new, but it keeps on innovating and is here to stay. From IBM's question-answering machine Watson; to Google's AI technology beating a human at playing Go; to Sophia the robot, who is now a citizen of Saudi Arabia.

“ *Artificial intelligence, in a nutshell, means that a non-human computes a response based on data and this will result in unbiased analysis and advanced problem-solving.* ”

Murray: Without a doubt, Audible from Amazon is by far my most exciting digital innovation. I'm always travelling, and I don't have much time to sit down and read a book. Our industry requires for us to always be on top of our game and there is nothing I enjoy more than to connect my phone to the car system and drive around listening to books. I can finish up to three books in a week, depending on how heavy the content is. It's changed my life.

De Stadler: At the risk of being a bore, I love LinkedIn. The ability to chat to like-minded people from across the world has facilitated change in the legal industry.

■ ***Elaborate on the importance of celebrating digital creativity and innovation in 2018.***

Severins: Creativity is related to so much more than just the campaigns themselves. You can serve the most beautiful or intelligent-looking advertisement ever, but if you simply book it on a CPC, platform it will not be leading to innovative results. In 2017, more agencies and clients were creative with the ads they served than ever before. In 2018, I expect that trend to continue, but I also expect the industry to make some more moves in shifting away from last-click attribution.

Murray: Celebrating digital creativity and innovation is so important.

“ *We tend to only hear about innovations once they become successful, but nothing happens overnight. We sometimes assume it was a one-hit-wonder and forget that there was a long process and a cocktail of persistence, sleepless nights, revisions and prototypes to get to the success.* ”

It is crucial that we celebrate the individuals and businesses who put their heart and soul into the business and not only create work to look creative, but also to solve problems and improve customers' lives. It's a long journey.

De Stadler: I'm excited to see companies that innovate with data analysis and profiling without creeping out their customers. It will take every ounce of our creativity to come up with ways to give customers back control over their personal data, without losing the ability to use the data altogether.

■ ***Share the crux of what attendees can expect from your summit session.***

Severins: This year, Gumtree wanted to emphasise the female talent we have in our industry, who will be discussing the ins and outs of data in our current industry. How do we use it now? How do we predict we'll use it 5 or 20 years from now? By attending, you'll find out exactly how these women in programmatic are using data to manipulate us.

Murray: I am super excited to speak at this year's summit. This year marks a very important time for our industry, and it's a privilege to be part of the IAB Digital Summit and celebrate with the incredible trailblazers.

I'll be talking about the new emerging trends and the demand for a new type of marketer. Mobile is the enabler and catalyst of 'the connected marketer', who creates, develops and maintains a brand that understands and meets the needs of the connected individual.



The modern marketer is a connected one

Jessica Tennant 2 Feb 2018



I have exciting insights to share and get people excited about the future of marketing and how the trends impact on mobile.

De Stadler: I'll be talking about the impact of data-privacy legislation – like the Protection of Personal Information Act locally, and the EU General Data Protection Regulation globally - on digital marketing. We'll discuss challenges and opportunities with a focus on data analytics, profiling and direct marketing.

■ What are you personally most looking forward to from this year's IAB Digital Summit and Bookmarks?

Severins: The Digital Summit is a 'state of the industry' event that never ceases to provide great insights from agencies, brands and publishers alike. Since last year, when the 15-minute slots were introduced, the audience (including me) was really left wanting more! As a judge, I've seen amazing campaigns in the Bookmarks – not just creative-wise, but also execution-wise. The talent in the South African market is amazing!

Murray: Every year when I attend the IAB summit, I find it sets the tone of where our focus needs to be for the year. If I had to choose only one event to attend this year, it would probably be the IAB Summit because of the fusion of excitement, knowledge, glamour, and networking. As for the Bookmark Awards, there is nothing more exciting than to watch the incredible hard workers of our industry receive awards. We should be very proud of the work we produce in South Africa. It is world-class!

De Stadler: I am looking forward to a lively discussion about privacy in digital marketing.



Tickets on sale for the IAB Digital Summit, Bookmark Awards

11 Jan 2018



As are we! Keep an eye out for my interviews with others from this year's #Bookmarks2018 judging panel, and click through to our [IAB Bookmarks and Digital Summit Special Section](#) for all the latest updates. You can also follow the [IAB SA](#), [The Bookmarks](#) and [Severins](#), [De Stadler](#) and [Murray](#) on Twitter.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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