

"The most audacious campaign will not convert if your target audience can't relate" - Oje Ojeaga

 By [Leigh Andrews](#)

2 Aug 2019

With the year's biggest international award shows done and dusted, I chatted to the regional jurors ahead of the upcoming Loeries Creative Week. Next in the series is this year's Digital Communication juror Oje Ojeaga, also CEO/CCO at Up in the Sky, Nigeria.



Oje Ojeaga, CEO/CCO at Up in the Sky, Nigeria and Loeries 2019 Digital Communication juror.

A lawyer by training, Oje Ojeaga has more than a decade's experience as a creative professional. His gift for words and the ideas they inspire is clear to see, as he's won over 50 advertising awards in Nigeria, Africa and the United States for work done for clients across a distinguished professional career as a copywriter.

Now serving as both CEO and chief creative officer for Up in The Sky Nigeria, the young agency that's been listed 11th on the Loeries 2018 ranking of agencies in the Middle East and Africa region excluding South Africa, Ojeaga has twice been on the jury for the Pitcher Awards, West Africa and will serve on the 2019 jury panel for Ad Stars in Busan, Korea.

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Even the Stingiest Man in the World knows a good deal when he sees one. 💎💎

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Ojeaga clearly understands what drives the creatives who thrive in this industry and has been coming to SA since 2007 – mostly for work but also a few holidays and says he has always had an excellent time here.

So who better to judge on the 2019 Loeries’ Digital Communication work, under Google Digital Communication Category jury president Tara McKenty?



#Loeries2019: "The responsibility to use creativity and craft for social good" - Tara McKenty

Leigh Andrews 17 May 2019



I chatted to Ojeaga about regional differences in creative work, his judging expectations, and more...

■ **Let's start off with an overview of your professional achievements thus far.**

A key achievement for me has been leading a small team of starry-eyed professionals to launch Up in The Sky in 2016. Starting the agency during Nigeria's first recession in 25 years was a struggle indeed.

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Alexa, play “Staying Alive.” 🎧💎💎 . #upinthesky #flightteam #quoteoftheday
#startup #friday

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But braving the challenges that come with a new business and creating winning campaigns with global recognition has been a professional achievement for me.

I would also say, being the only Nigerian agency to win at the Loeries in 2018 – in what was essentially our second year – was quite fulfilling for the entire agency.

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All shades of happy. 💎💎💎💎 . . . #upinthesky #flightteam #squad #winners
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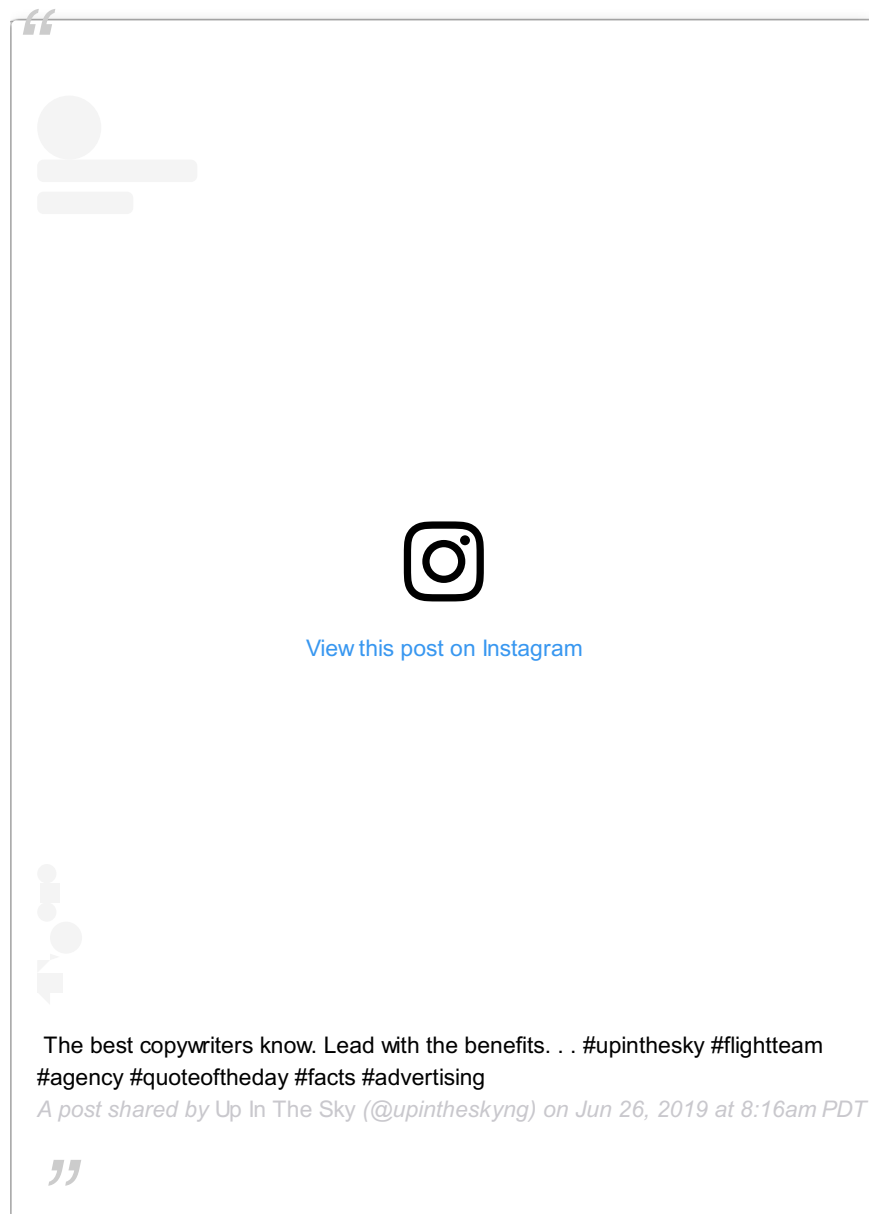
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🔴 **We can imagine! Let’s extend that theme of excitement to what makes you excited about brand communications? What new skills and technologies do you see coming through in media and advertising right now?**

Our industry is in a season of flux that can make even the brave worry. However, massive change is usually a harbinger of

opportunities.

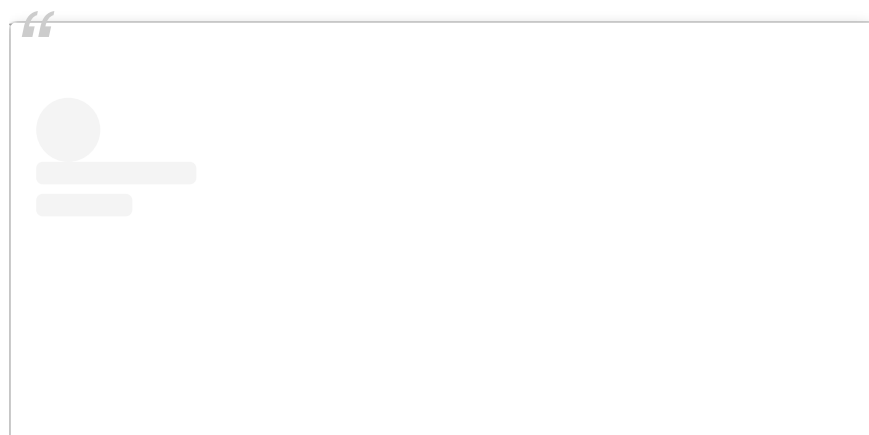
The takeover of traditional media platforms by all things digital will require us to think and create with a digital-first consumer in mind. I find this quite exciting. Being comfortable with technology should be the default response for a true creative.



The most important skill today is being present. With shorter attention spans in the consumer's world, we the practitioners need to be ever more adept at listening and absorbing. As for technology, AI is showing a bold new future, filled with amazing learning opportunities.

🔴 **Let's drill down a little further: What is unique about brand communications in Africa and the Middle East?**

We're becoming more confident in our own voice, telling human stories within commercial messaging in ways that call back to our roots as storytellers.





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Radio is hard, you guys 💎💎 . . . #upinthesky #flightteam #advertising #naija #funny

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From modern day parables to emotional films, the world is discovering a distinct voice that sets us apart.

It's an exciting time to be a brand communications professional from Africa and the Middle East!

■ **How does work from your region differ to what you've seen from SA?**

I'd say the work is quite similar. Nigerian creatives continue to evolve and discover new ways to include cultural nuance in campaigns for brands.

■ **That's for sure. What kind of innovation and creative work will you be then looking for as a judge of the Loeries 2019?**

I'm looking out for work that shows a team went beyond the obvious in solving a communication challenge.

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Creativity that serves a purpose. Creativity that tackles big, bold themes or shows brilliant simplicity. I want to see work that not only challenges me to be a better creative, but work that sets a new standard for any festival, anywhere in the world.

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I think that is every judge's dream.

■ **Do you think the tenets of a successful media campaign are universal? What makes a campaign work in your country?**

I believe the most important core element of a successful media campaign is relatability. The most audacious campaign will not convert if your target audience can't relate.

This is just as true in Nigeria, where messaging is often analysed and dissected, both online and off.

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The never ending loop. Creatives get it. 💎💎 . . . #upinthesky #flightteam
#agencylife #creativity #hustle #instagood

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Spectacle isn't enough anymore, neither is rooting your campaign message in entertainment value. It must be relatable in that way the best campaigns often are – comfortingly familiar, while dazzling us with something new.

📺 **What are you most looking forward to from Loeries Creative Week 2019?**

The unexpected! The beauty of the Loeries is you never quite know what you'll see, and it's that spark of the unknown that is often the most memorable part of the festival.

Here's looking forward to the unknown! Excellent insights on the power of telling better regional stories. If you can't wait for Loeries Creative Week Durban, taking place from 22 to 24 August 2019, keep an eye on the Loeries' [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) feeds and stay tuned for my interviews with more of the regional jurors and all the latest updates in our [Loeries' special section](#). You can also follow Ojeaga on [Instagram](#) and Up in the Sky on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#)

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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