



Dear Respected Members of IAB,

I am delighted to recount my recent participation in the IAB Global Summit, where the prevailing sentiment was one of enthusiasm and anticipation. The swift pace of change in the digital industry mirrors lightning, requiring us all to catch our breath. As contributors to the digital growth in our sector, it is imperative that we wholeheartedly embrace these changes to effectively address the evolving needs of consumers—a significant undertaking!

It is undeniable that, as members of the global IAB community, including yourselves, our path forward is paved by diligently collecting and analyzing data, gaining insights, and fostering creativity. The road ahead is undeniably paved with a combination of insights, data, and creativity.

As IAB South Africa entered 2023 with a strategic plan, we acknowledged the importance of looking beyond the immediate future, focusing on the next five years of customer evolution. Examining the brand economy reveals various facets monitored by the IABs. While the Brand-to-Consumer connection is closing the gap, a pivotal space exists in between—an area crucial for engagement.

Products/services, omnichannel/retail, agile production, social responsibility, marketing automation, customer satisfaction, 1st party data, data analysis, profitability, and more—we must prepare for the evolved customer through a long-term approach. Our councils are geared up for this journey, working closely with you or representing you.

Our objectives for this year centered on key areas, augmenting key projects to foster growth and align us all in a cohesive direction—north, driving digital forward. Successfully, we have delivered on these objectives, in collaboration with you.



Regarding the Constitution, a special member meeting on May 10th resulted in the approval of the new constitution. We have eliminated the Code of Conduct, incorporating its key obligations into the Constitution to remove inconsistencies. Types of members within the IAB have been clarified, aligning with the US IAB Constitution.

Our Public Relations efforts have been substantial, highlighting our work through thought leadership pieces, interviews, media releases, and editorials. Collaborating with industry bodies has been a key focus, evidenced by joint submissions on regulatory instruments and participation in various committees.

Projects aimed at enabling growth for publishers have expanded, including the [Industry Measurement Dashboard](#), led by Basil Fortuin of the Publisher Council and Clare Trafankowska of the newly merged Research and Measurement Council, and ongoing efforts to bridge publishers to the buy side.

The Bookmark Awards, led by Robyn Campbell of the Agency Council, have significantly evolved, showcasing our industry's growth. The introduction of the Finalist Showcase Day has garnered positive feedback from the industry. Our panel spotlighted intriguing trends, emphasizing effective work. Work that works. Attendees found valuable insights into what defines digital excellence, including perspectives relevant to the evolution of Publishers.

Candid discussions on digital marketing transformation within the Trusted Round Table, under the guidance of Audrey Naidoo from the Brand Council, have generated increased interest from brands seeking involvement in the digital sphere. This is evident in the expansion of our Brand Council. The Round Table has evolved into a preferred forum for brands to collaboratively

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address challenges, leveraging a diverse industry perspective to pave the way for effective solutions.

The Internet Advertising Revenue Report released, a key project led by Paula Hulley, in early September underscores the digital economy's contribution to economic growth, with post-COVID stabilization.

The pandemic fast-tracked digital growth in South Africa and around the world and industry experts did foresee digital growth stabilizing or slowing down post-pandemic.

This is clearly visible when we look at the YoY growth in 2021 which peaked at 43% and then stabilized at a 10% growth which we see in the latest IAB / PwC Online Advertising Revenue Report released in September this year. Total Internet advertising revenue in 2022 was R14.5 billion, up from R13.2 billion in 2021. Whilst digital revenue will fluctuate for economic and other reasons, confidence in digital platforms remain positive looking at the ongoing upward trajectory of digital growth in the analysis provided in this report. The overall market movement to digital technology and solutions has created a long-term, sustainable environment for consumers and audiences to remain at the forefront of a growing digital economy. We've seen a big shift in the balance between traditional and digital advertising investment, where digital has become more prominent in the marketing and advertising mix.

The IAB *Insight Series* has addressed crucial topics, allowing us to index locally on global consumer trends, therefore providing you with actionable take-aways for your strategic and planning sessions. My sincere gratitude to our expert speakers from our member organisations for sharing their expertise.

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We have recently released the *Influencer Marketing White Paper*, led by Pierre Cassuto of the Influencer Marketing Committee. In an ever-evolving digital landscape, marketing strategies continue to adapt and transform to meet the demands of a dynamic consumer base. One approach that has risen to prominence and made a profound impact on the marketing world is Influencer Marketing. It is my privilege to witness the continuous evolution of the advertising and marketing industry. Influencer Marketing, a technique that was once considered an experiment, has now solidified its place as a vital component of any comprehensive marketing strategy. It has given rise to a new generation of digital celebrities and has, in turn, created an entirely new landscape for advertising. This resource reflects the deep expertise and thought leadership that the IAB is known for, and it will undoubtedly serve as a valuable resource for marketers, advertisers, and influencers looking to harness the full potential of this dynamic field. I would like to express my gratitude to the authors for their dedication and expertise in producing this comprehensive guide. I am confident that IAB Members will find it to be an invaluable resource and that it will serve as a beacon to guide them through the ever-evolving world of influencer marketing. May this white-paper empower you to create meaningful connections and tell compelling brand stories that will enable growth for all involved.

In our efforts to focus on diversity, equity and inclusion; projects like *Front Row* has seen significant augmentation, led by Su Little of the Education Council, to provide young individuals with “*Front Row Seats to the Industry*” through first-hand experiences, supported by Industry Partners.

The IAB holds two seats on the MAC Charter Council to advocate for the digital industry. The South African MAC Charter Council has suggested revisions to the SA Marketing and Communications Charter of South Africa, and these proposed changes directly impact your

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business operations. While we supported ACA's submission in February with the limited time available, we are committed to ensuring your input is considered. To facilitate this, we have initiated a [survey to gather your feedback](#). We strongly encourage your active participation in this survey, and the deadline for submission is November 30, 2023.

In June of this year, I engaged with the Board to delve into the purpose of the IAB. This session provided us with remarkable insights into the extensive accomplishments of the IAB in previous years and guided us on focusing key pillars for the years ahead.

Looking ahead to 2024, numerous initiatives are lined up to provide data, insights and education to you, and we commit to keeping you updated and involved throughout the journey. Remember, you are not alone in navigating the digital landscape—our Councils are here to collaborate with you and act on your behalf.

I want to emphasize that your active participation is essential for your IAB membership. We have opportunities for you to share your voice and to access the resources provided specifically for you. The IAB is further working on establishing more committees to tackle new areas of growth and we invite you to participate. Look out for call to actions on the IAB Channels (specifically [LinkedIn](#), and the IAB [mailer](#) and the [IAB website](#)). We're also on other social media channels.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Board and the Councils for their invaluable contributions in 2023. The Board's agreement to be re-elected for 2024 demonstrates their commitment to the digital economy's success and enabling growth for our members. I am particularly thankful for their unwavering support.

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I am delighted to highlight a significant development: Fahmeeda Cassim-Surtee will now serve as Vice-Chair as a Publisher.

Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to the continued success and growth of IAB South Africa.

We continue on our purpose to enable growth for our People, Brands, Agencies, Publishers, Platforms through Measurement, Education and Acknowledgement to propel the digital landscape forward. We look forward to working with you in 2024.

Access all IAB resources on the [IAB Members Assets Portal](#).

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Pillay', written over a horizontal line.

Razia Pillay

CEO, IAB South Africa