

Retroviral crowned Africa's PR Agency of the Year at the 2023 EMEA Sabre Awards

By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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Retroviral has been crowned Africa's PR Agency of the year at last night's 2023 EMEA Sabre Awards, held in Frankfurt, Germany. The agency also won four awards, two for its Checkers Sixty60's *Sixty60 Swindler* campaign and two for Lil-Lets for its *Be You. Period* campaign, which was also the third-best campaign overall in the EMEA Platinum Sabre Award.



Source: Provoke Media [Provoke Media](#) The Retroviral agency team. The agency was named African agency of the year last night's 2023 EMEA Sabre Awards

In February both campaigns won innovation Sabres. Last night Lil-Lets won in the Practice Areas category, under Marketing Communications, and Checkers Sixty60 in the category Industry Sectors, Consumer Goods, Retailers.



Retroviral takes the double at the EMEA Innovation Sabres

22 Feb 2023



Two other South African PR consultancies also won on the night.

In the Diamond Sabre Awards Razor - M&C Saatchi Group was awarded the Sabre Award for Superior Achievement in Reputation Management for its *500 Tonnes Light* campaign for Anglo American, while Shoprite with KAMuses won for its campaign *The power of a storyline* to highlight existing products in the Africa category.

See all the category winners [here](#)

A zig to the agency's world zag

Mike Sharman, founder of Retroviral expressed his joy at the wins, saying he was very "chuffed and insanely proud".

"Last night's successes at the Sabre Awards really emphasise the work we are doing and how we are punching above our weight as a small agency on the tip of southern Africa, competing with the best of the best on a global scale, especially as we consider ourselves as a challenger agency for challenger brands," he says.



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Lauren Hartzenberg 14 Feb 2022



Since the agency started just over 13 years it has been doing things differently, which really came to the fore in 2020 with its *My Kreepy Teacher* campaign.

"Since then we have been doing it our way, telling branded content and developing our stories in a way that is a zig to the agency's world zag," he explains.

The result is campaigns such as the Checkers Sixty60 *Sixty60 Swindler* and the Lil-Lets *BeYou. Period.*

"The Lil-Lets work cuts through menstrual taboos and the platform we built for Lil-Lets helps regular South African women every day to have a conversation about the fears, the scary and taboo topics all around menstruation, something that is very close to the entire agency's heart," says Sharman.

He adds: "The effort, craft, insights, understanding, and nuances from those various customer segment levels are not only resulting in impactful bottom lines for our brands but also metal winning success for our agency."

2023 EMEA Consultancies of the year

Regional Consultancies of the Year (Large):
BCW
Edelman
FleishmanHillard
H+K Strategies
Weber Shandwick
Regional Consultancies of the Year (Midsize):
Allison+Partners
Golin
Hanover
Porter Novelli
WE
Geographic
Africa Consultancies of the Year:
BlackHouse Media
Clockwork
Irvine Partners
Razor
Retroviral
CEE Consultancies of the Year:
Grayling
MB Communications
MSL
Seesame
United Partners
DACH Consultancies of the Year:
Farner
Ketchum
MSL
Schwartz Public Relations
WE
France Consultancies of the Year:
Fabrig
Jin
LaFrenchCom
Monet + Associés
Weber Shandwick
Iberia Consultancies of the Year:
Canela
Edelman
LLYC
Marco
Torres y Carrera
Mediterranean Consultancies of the Year:
Action Global
APCO Worldwide
Bpress
INC
OPRG Italy
Middle East Consultancies of the Year:
APCO Worldwide
Asda'a BCW
Brazen
Four Communications
H+K Strategies
Nordic Consultancies of the Year:
BCW

H&H Group
Spotlight
Trigger Oslo
UK Consultancies of the Year:
Brands2Life
Ketchum
Ogilvy
W
Weber Shandwick
Specialist
Consumer Consultancies of the Year:
The Academy
Frank
Manifest
Splendid Communications
Taylor Herring
Corporate Consultancies of the Year:
Blurred
FieldHouse Associates
Headland
MHP
Third City
Creative Consultancies of the Year:
Circle
Hope & Glory
The Romans
Tin Man
Trigger Oslo
Digital Consultancies of the Year:
Coolr
The Digital Voice
Jin
Lynn
Financial Consultancies of the Year
Drofa
FGS Global
Folk
Lansons
Vested
Healthcare Consultancies of the Year:
Evoke Kyne
GCI Health
Golin/Mrgo Health
Real Chemistry
Weber Shandwick
Public Affairs Consultancies of the Year:
Grayling
PLMR
Rud Pedersen
SEC Newgate
WA Communications
Technology Consultancies of the Year:
Axicom
CCgroup
Harvard
The Hoffman Agency
Milk & Honey

New Consultancies of the Year:
3Thinkrs
Espresso
Stirred

All the winners are marked in bold.

See the list [here](#)

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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