Guest Editorial

17th International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) symposium

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On 27–29 August 2014 the 17th International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) Symposium was held at the Graduate School of Business, University of Cape Town in conjunction with the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of the Witwatersrand and the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. The symposium represented a significant milestone in the annals of the ICIG since it marked the 20th anniversary of the first ICIG symposium that took place in 1994 at The Department of Marketing at the University of Strathclyde Business School, Glasgow, Scotland.

The conference theme was ‘The Big Five: Corporate Identity, Corporate Branding, Corporate Reputation, Corporate Communication and Corporate Marketing’. Participants were invited to consider submitting papers for a Special Issue of the *Journal of Brand Management*.

Following a process of double-blind refereeing, six articles were selected that reflected some of the main themes of the conference and that had a specific corporate brand focus. The Guest Editors are delighted to include three papers from Africa and we believe this is the first time so many articles originating from Africa have been included in a single *JBM* publication. This is, we believe, testimony of the quality of scholarship emanating from Africa and it is hoped many more articles of this quality will subsequently appear in this journal.

The guest editors are most grateful to the expert team of reviewers for this special edition and also congratulate the authors whose papers have been included in this special edition. Professor John M.T. Balmer (Founder and Chairman of the ICIG) also wishes to express his thanks to his South African colleagues (Professors Abratt, Bick and Kleyn) for hosting this symposium in South Africa: it was a truly memorable event.

SYMPOSIUM THEME: THE NEW BIG FIVE

Drawing from African inspiration, the theme of the 17th International Corporate was *The Big Five*. Elephant, buffalo, lion, leopard and the ever-dwindling African rhino population were supplanted with a focus on the scholarly domains of corporate identity, branding, marketing, communication and reputation.

Just as the original big five each took their place proudly as a species but cohabited in a complex ecosystem, not only did presentations and robust discussions focus on the important contribution made within each domain, but fertile time was also spent exploring and evaluating the relative contribution of each of the five areas to the strength of corporate ecosystems.

As guest editors we believe this special edition not only reflects the best traditions of scholars of the *Journal of Brand Management* but of the ICIG¹ too.

Read on and enjoy!

NOTE

¹ The International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG)

The International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) was founded in 1994 and formally launched at the House of Lords in London in 1995. Its purpose is to provide a collegial forum for academic and practitioner insight on the domain where research, scholarship and best practice is focused upon an integration of the inter-related corporate-level concepts of corporate identity, corporate branding, corporate communication, corporate image, corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility. Such integration represents a relatively new phase of marketing thought which has been termed *corporate marketing*.

The ICIG, although proud of its British roots is interdisciplinary and international in scope, membership and ethos. Professor John M.T. Balmer is the ICIG Chairman and Founder and has individually and collaboratively organised annual symposiums with ICIG colleagues since launch including: London, Glasgow, Brighton, Bradford, Edinburgh, Slovenia, Switzerland, Spain, Denmark, Malaysia and South Africa.

For further information about the ICIG see: www.corporate-marketing.org/index.htm.

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