

Outdoor: Key to integration

Outdoor was the most popular category at Cannes this year with a total number of 5367 entries. Out of this 127 Lions were awarded, and interestingly enough, many of the winners were part of a campaign that cut across a number of different platforms, showing that not only are integrated campaigns the order of today, but that outdoor is an integral part of the media mix.



Margie Carr

This is no surprise, says Margie Carr, MD of In Touch Media, who quotes this year's main sponsor of the Outdoor Category, William Eccleshare, chairman and CEO, Clear Channel International, on this subject: "Another record-breaking year for entries to the Outdoor Lions category, reflecting the fact that Outdoor is growing faster than any other traditional medium around the world and has never been a more relevant part of the media mix. I have been particularly impressed with the increased number of smart and creative digital out-of-home campaigns entered this year."

Outdoor Category is showing not only huge innovation, she says, but is also being viewed as an imperative part of integrated campaigns. "This demonstrates what everyone is saying, that the industry needs to work together and that we need integrated campaigns."

However, this does not mean they always get it right she adds. "The issues that are leading to failure are not new and include, for example, creative unsuitable for Outdoor. Long the bug bear of Outdoor companies because we know what works for this medium. You cannot just plonk your television or print advertisement on Outdoor. But we all know this... and have been saying it for years."

Outdoor companies have been crying out to assist clients and agencies in this regard and Carr urges agencies and clients

to bring Outdoor companies and their strategists, designers and copywriters into the room when a campaign has an Outdoor element from the beginning.

So what makes a great Outdoor integrated campaign? Carr quotes this year's Cannes Grand Prix for Outdoor in the category 'Integrated Campaign led by Outdoor', winner, the Brewtroleum campaign by Colenso BBDO in Auckland, New Zealand.

The campaign comprised 300,000 litres of biofuel made from the by-products of producing beer. It was made available at 60 gas stations across New Zealand and also sold at a gas station custom built for the brand, as part of the advertising campaign for DBExport Beer (this installation won another Gold Lion under the category 'Special Build - Outdoor'). The campaign booked various Outdoor Advertising displays and branded gas tankers as well. The outcome was that 300,000 litres of biofuel sold, 8,6 million DB Export Beers sold and sales of DB Export increased by 10% in a declining market.

The Outdoor Jury awarded the campaign to Brewtroleum based on solving a real business problem for the client, which was to get people to drink more beer and giving them a good excuse to do so. "These guys managed to do this, to claim that if you drink more beer you can save the world," said Riccardo John, Cannes Outdoor Jury President.

"The campaign is a great example of the role that Outdoor can play in an integrated campaign," says Carr. "Cannes has shown that integration is fundamental to your success today. In South Africa we are still experiencing a great divide between the disciplines and channels."

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