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MARKETERS OF THE YEAR

JASON DOOLAN'S BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS



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This Cheerios spot showed us "#HowtoDad."
Read about the marketer behind it on p. 16.

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ON THE COVER: General Mills' Jason Doolan was pretty excited when he woke up to discover he had won Marketer of the Year. Cossette, working with photographer Shin Sugino, channelled that elation with a cheeky cover shoot that "caught" Doolan making the discovery, as he enjoyed his morning bowl of Cheerios (naturally). For the inside shot on p. 16, they took inspiration from the movie *American Beauty*, replacing the famous rose petals with the little breakfast O's. Is there anything more beautiful than winning Marketer of the Year? We don't think so.

Serving a higher purpose

At *strategy*'s Agency of the Year awards last month, the shortlisted agencies presented videos that were, as always, a highlight of the show. Many of those videos have not only gone viral (like Zulu Alpha Kilo's "no spec" manifesto, see p. 60), but they also pointed towards trends from the past year. Among them were marketing to millennials (aren't we all tired of that term?), ever-shrinking budgets and, well, saving the world. Ogilvy's video perfectly summed up the latter when it humorously pointed out that advertising is expected to cure cancer, save lives and even eliminate the possibility of death – okay, it hasn't quite gone that far... yet.

In September, Karen Howe wrote a column for *strategy* that lamented the fact that a lot of advertising doesn't just sell products anymore. Ads are suddenly expected to have a higher purpose (at least if it's going to win awards) – it must rid young girls of their self-esteem issues, tackle social injustices or bring estranged families together. A recent ad for German supermarket Edeka stars a grandfather who fakes his own death to bring his children together – I repeat: fakes his death! I can't help but picture a lonely frozen turkey, wondering, "Did you forget about selling me?"

I agree with Howe, who believes we're reaching a saturation point. We live in a cynical society, and thanks to the internet, our cynicism has reached light-speed.

All this is not to say that there isn't room for purpose-driven marketing. I happen to think that a lot of it is brilliant. But going forward, it will have to tie even more closely to the brand to avoid the inevitable eye-rolls and avoid being seen as a grab for video views and Cannes Lions.

Our Marketer of the Year overall winner, Jason Doolan of General Mills, has proven that purpose-driven marketing can also be about the product (see p. 16). "The Cheerios Effect" might feature diverse people talking about coming together, but it's based on the fact that Cheerios actually attract each other in milk. And the "#LuckytoBe" campaign for Lucky Charms was about acceptance during Pride, but it also prominently featured the product, especially the little rainbow marshmallows that incite so much nostalgia for cereal eaters. Doolan has a knack for really tying products to their campaigns, and that's what it will take to remain authentic in the eyes of the skeptics going forward.

To get to these insights, it starts with a brilliant strategy. That's why we've been working hard on defining the parameters of our newest awards – the Strategy Awards – which will debut next year during Agency of the Year. It celebrates the oft-unsung heroes of the marketing world – the planners and strategists, without whom a lot of brilliant creative work would never be born.

I look forward to the year ahead – to the genius ideas that haven't been thought up yet, the great Canadian work that will win on the world stage and how marketers and agencies will adapt. See you in 2016.

Emily Wexler, editor



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Tel: (416) 408-2448 Fax: (416) 408-0249. PO BOX 369 Beeton ON L0G 1A0.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

STRATEGY IS PUBLISHED EIGHT TIMES PER YEAR BY BRUNICO COMMUNICATIONS LTD.

In Canada: One year CA\$80.00 Two years CA\$144.00

(HST included. Registration #856051396 RT)

Single copy price in Canada is CA\$6.95. Please allow four weeks for new subscriptions and address changes.

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POSTMASTER NOTIFICATION

Canadian Postmaster, send undeliverables and address changes to: Strategy, PO BOX 369, Beeton ON L0G 1A0 strategycustomer@brunico.com

U.S. Postmaster, send undeliverables and address changes to: Strategy PO BOX 1103 Niagara Falls NY 14304 Printed in Canada. Canada Post Agreement No. 40050265. ISSN: 1187-4309.

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.



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2016: less shiny?

There are signs that the quest for shiny spectacle is reaching saturation and we're settling into a period of being hard-boiled and gimlet-eyed about what actually works. There's been enough testing and learning to take us to space and back, and now folks are less awed by the innovation of their social/mobile/VR/content programs. Now it actually has to work. But that's just my tea-leaf reading, so I asked some experts for their thoughts on the year ahead.

Queen's marketing professor Ken Wong says that as content and mobile continue their roll, human interaction and service will make a comeback: "After a decade of change to catch the next shiny object, cost concerns will cause marketers to ask, 'What really works?' and, 'Do we need that?' Expect casualties...but also a better, more rational customer experience."



That dovetails nicely with what CIBC's VP marketing communications Jennifer Davidson sees ahead: "2016 will be all about measurement. The ability to measure, optimize and capture ROI by channel will be increasingly important in a world where marketing budgets are flat to declining and every dollar counts."

SampleSource founder Rob Linden, a CPG innovator who works with brands across North America, confirms the refocus on plans that deliver a straight line to the bottom line: "The last few years have been marked by tremendous dollars shifting to digital and social. Some of that is slowing down, with many calls for a return to

the tried, tested and true, as well as measurement. In 2016, brand builders, particularly in Canada, will be ensuring that what they deploy is not just 'test and learn,' and demand that programs deliver sales."

Maxus Canada president Ann Stewart also sees greater accountability ahead: "In the era of the internet of things, the logic and the processes of digital media are finally entering the space of traditional media. This will include real-time data, closer link with measurement – and hopefully – similar currency."

ICA CEO Gillian Graham predicts a more magical melding of tech and storytelling: "In 2016, our industry will realize the opportunities inherent in the interplay of stories and systems, which up to now, have been challenging to reconcile."

So things are settling into the new norm, and the old norm – ROI – is king. So is content, of course. We're starting 2016 off with a focus on all that – the CASSIES, followed by our branded content deep dive, BCON, and all things shopper marketing at the Forum and Shopper Innovation Awards in April. And as Emily mentioned (p. 4), working with APG Canada and our advisory board, we now have the categories for the new Strategy Awards wrestled to the ground, and they speak directly to the challenges ahead, so stay tuned for the big reveal.

Cheers, mm

Mary Maddever, publisher, *strategy*, *Media in Canada* and *stimulant*

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CASSIES



BEST BUY'S HOLIDAY POINT OF VIEW

By Josh Kolm

Best Buy took a novel approach to its holiday marketing this year, one that left the actual products out of the picture.

The store's holiday ad is shot from the point of view of a gift, from the moment a staff member and shopper take it off a Best Buy shelf, to being snuck into a house, to being unwrapped. Created by Union, with media buying by Media Experts, the spot is running nationally on TV until the end of December.

Unlike past holiday spots (like last year's featuring a grandmother learning about GoPro cameras for her grandson to highlight the ease of finding a gift), at no point in this year's video is any product shown.

"We aim to bring some magic back into the season by focusing less on the capabilities of a product and more on the fun and excitement they bring to a consumer's life," says James Pelletier, director of marketing at Best Buy Canada. "We want Canadians to understand that's the difference between giving a tech gift, versus giving the gift of technology."

Other tactical elements, like flyers and digital ads, will be more focused on products, deals and overall lower prices. But Subtej Nijjar, president of Union, says the brand was going for an emotional connection with the main spot, recreating the excitement of opening an unexpected gift, something lost in a time when most people direct gift-givers to specific URLs and wish lists.

He adds that not showing products also helps differentiate the spot from other holiday ads, which tend to highlight the hot tech that year.

"I don't think it's the job of the retailer to focus on individual items anymore," he says. "People find out on their own what the hottest gifts are, and the Apples and Samsungs of the world are going to be advertising as much as you are to sell the individual, must-have item. As a retailer, you want to show why you're the best place to find that item."

OLG GOES BEYOND GAMES

The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) wants to remind Ontarians of the good it does with its "All For Here" platform.

As part of a campaign led by The Hive, OLG has been releasing short pre-roll videos spotlighting individual events, facilities, community organizations and athletes its programs support. Featuring everything from libraries and hospitals to skate parks and Winterlude, each one ends with a yellow-topped push pin, showing how the OLG's funds work in communities every day.

In addition to print and OOH elements in smaller markets that feature local organizations, footage from the event videos is being brought together into one cinema spot airing during the holiday season.

"It's an opportunity to tell a broader message and maybe get a little more emotion, because you have a captive audience sitting around, waiting to be entertained," says Simon Creet, CCO at The Hive, of using cinema.

The new platform is built off OLG's campaign around its sponsorship of this summer's Pan Am Games, showing how the facilities it helped build



would later be used by local communities. Creet points out that while Pan Am is a high-profile event, OLG also supports little things that are just as important to people's lives "almost invisibly."

"When we started talking about where the money goes from our Pan Am sponsorship, it seemed like a logical extension to remind Ontarians of where else in the province OLG's money goes," says Jeffrey Corcoran, executive director of marketing at OLG. He says most of its advertising in recent years has been around things like jackpot sizes and entertainment options, which may have led to fewer Ontarians knowing where the dollars go. "OLG was created to make sure the proceeds went to good causes and good outcomes for Ontario. We haven't done ourselves justice when it comes to talking about what we do." **JK**



PUTTING ONEMETH ON THE MAP

By Jennifer Horn

The Slinky, penicillin, and, now, OneMeth's clothing lookbook have something in common: they were all born from blunders. An engineer knocked a spring off a shelf, a scientist forgot a pile of dirty petri dishes, and in the clothing brand's case, its owner, Toronto agency OneMethod, forgot to change its location on Google after moving across town.

Had one of its clients not gone to the wrong spot for a meeting with the shop, ACD Max Sawka might not have had to reclaim its office listing on Google. As he was doing this, Sawka came across an ad from the search engine, suggesting he add a virtual tour. It just so happened to be the same week the team was discussing lookbooks for OneMeth (a clothing label that came out of the agency's MethLab, an informal division encouraging creatives to pitch business ideas, like its La Carnita restaurant).

This prompted the team to kill two proverbial birds with one stone, immortalizing its workspace with a virtual tour, and at the same time, creating a 360-degree digital lookbook by planting staffers in OneMeth threads in the hallways.

The happy accident led to one of the few cases of Google's Street View being used as a marketing tool (beyond promoting the interior of

a restaurant/store). M&M's "Find Red" treasure hunt and Mentos' "Amazing Journey" contest with 3D candy hidden in maps are two other Canadian examples.

It usually takes about two weeks to shoot and show up on Google, but the photographers at Virtuo360 turned the images around in seven days, says Sawka. The original plan was to have a traditional digital lookbook for its website, which the agency had already shot one week before the fall/winter collection (in collab with streetwear brand Faded) was to launch. He says the team was "electrified" by the idea to reshoot the lookbook with the virtual tour, as they had some regrets not having done something unique.

But that's usually the case with projects like OneMeth, says Sawka. "Everything happens so fast, and we're playing catch-up all the time," he says of the quick decisions they've had to make as they become clothiers and restaurateurs, which is helping raise the shop's profile, bring in new revenue and experiment with media. "For a bigger client, you can't just spend \$2,000 on [testing] influencer marketing, because if it doesn't work, then that's \$2,000 of the budget gone," he adds. "[For OneMeth], I just spent \$45 on an Instagram ad. It did terribly, but I got to see how video ads work."

SPORTS EXPERTS' NEW DIRECTION

FGL Sports-owned retailer Sports Experts is attempting to build on its brand affinity in Quebec with its new "It Starts Here" platform.

Led by a new spot in English and French created by Rethink, the campaign shows everyone from Olympians and spokesperson P.K. Subban to local joggers, youth teams and an aerobics group for moms, demonstrating how they live active lifestyles.

The campaign also features OOH, in-store and social elements, with social handled by North Strategic and media by Touché!

Frederick Lecoq, SVP of marketing and e-commerce at FGL Sports, had Sports Experts added to a purview that also includes Sport Chek earlier this year. Much like Sport Chek's "Your Better Starts Here" platform, the goal is to move from transactional ads to more of an emotional connection. But for Lecoq, that's where the similarities end.

"[Sports Experts] stores are strong based on their longevity in their communities, but we never did much work around the brand identity," he says. "We need to say who we are and what we stand for, but in a very Quebec way. We can't copy and paste Sport Chek's 'Your Better Starts Here' because it's different customers with different expectations."

Sports Experts runs on a franchise model, which Lecoq says gives the stores more of a connection to the communities they operate in.

"Sports Experts has a 47-year legacy of being the destination for every kind of athlete in Quebec," Lecoq says. "So the banner has equity, but so do the names of individual franchisees."

This is why much of the screen-time in the spot is dedicated to the non-pros, and Subban doesn't make his first appearance until after the halfway point of the 60-second spot. Going forward, Lecoq says much of the OOH and social creative will spotlight "local heroes," from athletes to customers to store owners, with a connection to the communities the ads appear in.

Lecoq adds that, within Quebec, sports retailers are seen as part of the lifestyle category, which is also why the campaign is focused more on day-to-day healthy living, as opposed to training to become the absolute best, as Sport Chek's has been.

"Quebec's not as performance-driven as the rest of Canada," Lecoq says. "We're over-indexing in lifestyle, and see great room for growth in sports. Under Armour, for example, is one brand that's having a massive run in Quebec. But the important distinction we're making is that it's [about] being active for your well-being." **JK**



ON TREND IN 2016

Consumer behaviour is constantly changing, and that affects all brands. Are you ready for what's to come in the new year? We chat with experts from DDB, J. Walter Thompson and Human Branding about the biggest trends on the horizon.

By Megan Haynes



ingredient beauty buys to chemical-free tampons to sustainably sourced candy – and apps that encourage balance (like ones that track carbon emissions) will boom in popularity, she says, all helped along by chic, urban packaging and branding.

And it's not just young adults, adds Tony Johnstone, chief brand officer at DDB. Boomers, too, are realizing their health limitations, and have the discretionary funds to spend on balanced products. "Boomers don't want to compromise, but their bodies are making them aware that they need to live better," he says.

Uber's one-day kitten delivery is just the tip of the sharing economy iceberg.

FULFILLING BASIC NEEDS

Next year, the sharing economy is going to get a lot more basic, says Johanna Faigelman, cultural anthropologist and president of Human Branding.

Hyper-digitization has left a void for some basic needs, like social interaction (in Japan you can hire someone to wipe your tears, while a Toronto woman is offering to be the little spoon in a cuddle-for-hire), cooking (strangers can make you a meal in your own home) and even petting puppies and kittens.

Rather than be disruptive to a business, savvy companies can help fulfill these fundamental needs, she says. After all, if Uber can deliver a crate of puppies and kittens to a person's workplace for an hour as a marketing stunt, why can't other companies take it even further?

FINDING A BALANCE

Consumers want to have their quinoa cake and eat it too, say Lucie Greene, worldwide director of the innovation group at J. Walter Thompson.

Millennials and generation Z are more likely to balance a night of binge drinking with a heavy dose of yoga; eat a generous helping of a calorie-laden cheesecake, as long as it was made with avocado, coconut oil and unrefined sugars; or go vegan during the week to justify a massive greasy burger on the weekend, says Greene.

As a result, good-for-you products – from single-

MONEY (KIND OF) MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND

With mobile wallets on the horizon and apps taking care of our payments, Faigelman says consumers' relationship with currency is going to change.

The process of paying takes consumers out of the experience they have with brands, she says. It makes interactions with companies feel like transactions. But seamless payment (through apps and mobile wallets) takes the thinking out, making it more of a relationship.

Need more proof? Just look at Disney's MagicBand system, a bracelet that does everything from unlock hotel doors to pay for food, which has received rave reviews from the media, CMOs and agency presidents alike.

ALL AGES ACCESS

Society is going ageless, and marketers are following suit. A study by Hotwire PR found that in 2016, marketers from more than 22 countries plan to market "age agnostically." This jives with JWT's trend report, which found that globally, boomers are a diverse group and need to be treated as such, rather than just as a gray wave of zoomers. It's not a totally new concept – Kraft has been targeting psychographics for years – but it's growing in popularity. After all, since "millennials" encompass a wide age range, with the youngest just starting adulthood and the oldest likely with a family of their own, why does everyone continue to try and market to them in the same way?

Kyle Norrington



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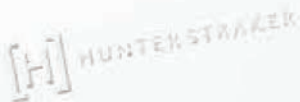


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TEACH ME TO DRINK

Beverage brands are getting consumers to sip from the fountain of knowledge.

BY HARMEET SINGH



"An Evening with Johnnie Walker" brings the brand's various Scotches into consumers' homes for private tastings with friends.

Ever feel jealous of those people who can order the right vintage or pour the perfect drink to pair with a meal?

Turns out many consumers are thirsty for that type of knowledge.

Going back to the basics of seeing, smelling and tasting has been a strategy for several brands of late, helping average drinkers among us become connoisseurs and elevating their products against those with similar taste profiles.

It's all to stand out in an age of information overload and forge deeper connections between brands (and often, their longstanding heritages) and their target consumers.

Diageo-owned Johnnie Walker is focusing on brand heritage with its "mentorship" program, "An Evening with Johnnie Walker." Originally

conceived by the brand's marketing team in Spain, the program has now launched in several Canadian cities and offers free, in-home tastings to influencers and whiskey-lovers (or would-be ones).

Along with educating drinkers about the difference between single malt and blended Scotch, the evenings give the brand a chance to talk about its history and connect with consumers on a deeper level than mass advertising usually allows.

The events were pushed via social media with help from Grip. Creative for the program, including the website, were led by Strada, with A&C managing media relations and host recruitment and Vibrant leading tastings and ambassador training.

Meanwhile, this year, whiskey brand Jack Daniels launched its "Midnight Manager" program in

Montreal, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. Expert mixologists visit bars and restaurants at night and educate bar staff on the brand's history and drink menu development, as well as conduct tastings, so that they may, in turn, educate their customers.

"Think of the same things a vintner would do talking about wine," says Rick Shaver, president and CEO at The Hive, which represents Jack Daniels.

"There's just such a pent-up interest in brands and particularly in spirit brands," he notes. "Millennial consumers [in particular] want to know how it's made, where it's made, who makes it."

And this education focus isn't just for alcohol brands. Starbucks in the U.S. recently launched a new coffee blog called 1912 Pike (the name refers to its first-ever address in Seattle). The idea is to share useful information about coffee, from how it's grown to how to enjoy it, and includes multimedia content featuring employee tips on how to grind and brew the best cup of joe.

And Canadian brand David's Tea has done experiential work, such as a truck tour this fall, aiming in part to teach Canadians more about loose-leaf tea and how to enjoy it through a multi-sensory experience.

"Educational content has been around since the baker decided to start baking in an open window so you can see what's going on," says Rob Levy, president of BrandFire Marketing Group, which has a specialty in activations.

"We don't just want to be told about product features, we actually want to be able to connect with brands," he says. "Educational content is a way of connecting with

consumers without being overt about the features and benefits of the product itself.”

It’s not a new concept, but it is one that is accelerating these days. And one of the biggest drivers of that taste for learning has been social media.

“We’re in the age of over-information,” says Natasha Koifman, president of NKPR. “At the same time, we’re not really learning anything. I think people are now taking a step back and want to understand what they’re drinking,” she says.

Providing easily digestible online information, like what Starbucks has done, has been a growing trend in the non-marketing world for a while now, Max Valiquette, VP of strategic planning at Publicis, points out. Khan Academy, for example, has short videos online that explain concepts succinctly.

“Educating people in the way

something works through an online mechanism is something that brands aren’t inventing, but brands are able to [now] do,” he says.

For alcohol brands specifically, educating means being able to stand out in a crowded category, with dozens – if not hundreds – of similar products with similar taste profiles available. “You want to talk about history...you want to show how a brand actually means more than simply being a product on a shelf, and alcohol’s a fairly natural fit for this,” Valiquette says.

On a more practical level, education experiences are a way for alcohol brands in particular to stay creative and relevant in the face of often restrictive regulations or legislation that don’t allow for inciting consumption in Canada.

“On the one hand, they’re being forced to create interesting content to stay relevant to consumers,” BrandFire’s Levy says. “On the other hand, it’s just good strategy for any

brand, alcohol or not, to create a connection between the brand and what’s important to the consumer.”

But it’s not to say that mass advertising doesn’t still have its place. The payoff for an education program is longer, but the best strategies are still a mix of earned, owned and paid, says Veritas Communications president Krista Webster.

“Brands aren’t just educating, they’re actually taking the time to do sustaining programs,” she says, adding that longer-term investments had, in recent years, been displaced in favour of marketing programs with more instant results, but now we’re seeing a re-emergence of those longer-term programs.

“Education allows for a deeper relationship, it allows for an ongoing relationship,” she says. “If you don’t educate, you’re all essentially the same.”

TASTEFUL EXPERIENCES

Beyond education, alcohol brands have been upping their game by creating immersive, sensory-driven food experiences. Here are just three recent examples.



BACARDI'S PALADAR

To launch its Gran Reserva Maestro de Ron double-aged white rum in October, Bacardi teamed up with Narrative PR to create a two-day pop-up restaurant and rum bar

in Toronto. Aimed at transporting consumers to old-world Havana, Cuba, the bar came complete with Cuban food, décor, live music and dancing. It also involved a collaboration between Toronto-based chef Matty Matheson and Miami-based third generation Cuban chef, Eileen Andrade. The activation garnered more than 25 million impressions.

SLEEMAN'S SPEAKEASY

Capitalizing on its “notorious” history, including bootlegging, the beer brand worked with Vibrant on a national contest where winners were invited to the Sleeman



Speakeasy party in Old Montreal last month. With a goal of engaging young males in particular, the execution took winners back to the Prohibition era with a party that included a “sultry Madame host,” gambling stations, live music as well as burlesque, and the underground event was only accessed with a secret knock.

STELLA ARTOIS' SENSORIUM

During this year’s TIFF, premium beer brand Stella Artois created a sensory dome where consumers could be fully immersed in the

tasting experience. Inspired by the insight that Stella consumers are more about experiences than material things, the goal was to provide an elevated multi-course dining experience inspired by the five senses. Veritas Communications worked with key Canadian media and influencers to generate consumer



interest to buy tickets, attend, write and talk about the experience. The event completely sold out of its 2,360 tickets.



Doolan

He loves to connect great brands with a great idea. That's the Doolan effect.
Congratulations Jason Doolan on being named Marketer of the Year.

cossette



2015

marketers

of the

[BY EMILY WEXLER]



year

IT'S NOT EASY BEING A MARKETER THESE DAYS, with so many brands to compete with, and so many media avenues to choose from. Survival comes down to taking a long, hard look at the status quo and questioning whether there's a better way to reach your target. Our winning marketers this year threw out the playbooks in favour of risky strategies that paid off.

Overall winner, General Mills' Jason Doolan, recognized that the old way of marketing cereal just wasn't connecting with consumers anymore, and took a few big chances with emotional campaigns that also spoke to social issues, like diversity and dieting messages. Meanwhile,

Natrel's Caroline Losson, Kimberly-Clark's Denise Darroch and Samsung's Mark Childs created new experiences to connect people to their brands – namely cafés, a web series and sensory-rich activations, respectively. Interac's Andrea Danovitch wasn't afraid to challenge the big credit card companies, while Labatt's Kyle Norrington took his wide portfolio of beer brands in new directions.

After research and industry feedback, the Marketers of the Year were narrowed down from a long list of potential candidates. The industry then voted for the overall winner through the annual Marketer Survey (see p. 34 for those results).

Read on to learn how this year's winners' risky business paid off.



OVERALL WINNER

THE DOOLAN EFFECT

A purpose-driven approach by General Mills' director of marketing has brought new relevance to some of the country's oldest brands.

BY JOSH KOLM

Cereal marketing tends to conjure up images of cartoon leprechauns and bees stealing bowls of breakfast. But if you're working with brands that have been around for 60 years, there's also an emotional connection at play beyond cute characters.

"When a brand has been around that long, there's something in its DNA that's already working for the consumer," says Jason Doolan, director of marketing at General Mills. "We don't have to walk away from what's made us successful in the past, and taking a modern lens to that and putting values that had been hidden out front is what's really exciting."

In a category that has alternated between modest gains and single-digit losses year-over-year since 2011, General Mills had five points of share growth since Doolan took on marketing for cereal 10 years ago, thanks in part to a "purpose-driven" approach.

"With so many options, any advantage you have based on features and benefits isn't going to last long, so what makes a difference with today's consumer is they want to reward brands that share their values," Doolan says. "This allows us to truly take a stand and live our values as a brand. It comes with a lot of risk, but when you get it right, the consumer will reward that."

Nowhere is that guiding principle better exemplified than with "The Cheerios Effect." It was the company's first masterbrand campaign for the family of Cheerios products and explored the different ways real people – from a gay couple and their adopted child, to a mixed-race couple, to a marriage between a disabled and able-bodied person – were

able to come together and form family bonds, based on the scientific principle that objects floating in liquid (like Cheerios in milk) are attracted and come together.

"This is a brand that is multi-generational, so we had told those stories about people making connections in all our past creative in some way," Doolan says. "[But what was] the modern, contemporary way to show that those values are still meaningful and important? That's when we realized we



need to help people see that same topic in a fresh way by showing it in relationships they weren't used to seeing in a commercial."

The campaign's inclusivity did attract some derision as the world took notice. But the voices on social media claiming they had bought their last box of Cheerios were a minority.

"If you take a stand based on principle, it doesn't matter what people say, they can't touch you because it's what you believe in and it's ultimately the right thing," Doolan says. "It's when you don't take a firm position that you're just flapping in the wind."

"The fact that you're standing for something means you're going to have

people that disagree with you," adds Wendy Morgado, VP and client lead for the General Mills account at Cossette, which worked on the campaign. "But to do that work, you need to have clients that are willing to be okay with that happening and stay true to the values of the brand, because connecting with the consumers that share those values is ultimately what you're trying to do."

"The Cheerios Effect" not only provided a 5% lift in brand volume in its first three months, but earned 90 million social impressions, 3.7 million video views, 670,000 visits to the campaign microsite and double the normal TV ad lift.

Morgado says that working with a client willing to take risks opens up creative possibilities and prevents a brand's purpose from becoming watered down to appeal to everyone. Campaigns that Doolan led for Lucky Charms, Multi-Grain Cheerios and Peanut Butter Cheerios also demonstrate this risk-taking.

During World Pride celebrations in Toronto in 2014, the "#LuckyToBe" campaign encouraged young adults, many of whom saw the brand as representing their childhood idealism, to share on social media why they were lucky to be the person they were. The campaign, by Diamond Integrated Marketing, resulted in 1.1 million impressions and a 6% sales growth during Pride on only a \$125,000 budget.

This summer, an anti-"dietainment" campaign for Multi-Grain Cheerios refreshed an anti-dieting platform (originally launched in 2013) by shining a light on how often young girls are exposed to harmful messages about how they should strive for the "perfect body." The platform has resulted in a double-digit lift in sales since it launched.

And for Peanut Butter Cheerios, Tribal Worldwide's "#HowToDad" showed the weird things dads have to put up with, which might not have been as socially disruptive, but was certainly a departure in the typically mom-focused cereal category and got away from the "dad as stumbling buffoon" trope often used in marketing products to women.

"Jason is willing to take risks and do things he knows not everyone is going to agree with, and with big brands," Morgado says. "Sometimes clients are only risky when they're using small brands with small

Above: Multi-Grain Cheerios' anti-diet mission showed just how harmful "Dietainment" is to young girls.

PHOTO BY SHIN SUGINO

Jason, we raise our spoons to you!

**We're #LuckyToBe
working with such
a charming team.**

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT
DIAMOND INTEGRATED
MARKETING



[moy¹⁵]

budgets, but he's doing it with Cheerios."

"We were doing really decent, by-the-book campaigns for a lot of years, and we were getting no further than second base," Doolan says. "If we've learned anything in CPG in the last few years, it's when your brand is caught somewhere in the middle, you're just going to be ignored. When you're big and you've got a lot to lose, and consumers start saying, 'Yeah, you're reliable and you give good value, but I don't know what you stand for,' that can be scary. Especially when, more than ever, entrepreneurs can launch products that compete against us by taking that stand right out of the gate."

To compete, the brand had to go back to the beginning. In 2014, the marketing team at General Mills embarked on what Doolan calls a "mining exercise," which involved looking at the company's entire marketing history to discover what values it has been putting forward, plus examining the ways consumers were interacting with the brands.

The company has facilitated this by shifting the majority of its research dollars from the back end (confirmatory research and performance measurement) to the front end, creating a tool kit that allows the marketing team to develop fuller consumer insights from the outset. That way, strategy development is guided by the consumer's intuition, instead of by the results of the previous campaign.

"You're not testing the execution, you're trusting that the execution will be true to the strategy that you developed from more fleshed-out consumer learning," Morgado says. "For Multi-Grain Cheerios, it's been almost three years and we've never tested the creative. We monitor ROI and how digital is performing to course-correct, but we're not testing the creative itself, which is unusual in big CPG. That's because [the client is] making sure we're understanding the consumer and then spending the right amount of time coming up with the strategy."

Morgado also says Doolan is highly collaborative with those he works with, while still giving them the time to develop and "get excited about" what they're creating. In particular, Doolan credits Amanda Hsueh, associate director of marketing, as being vital to General Mills' recent cereal campaigns.

"I'm a bit of dreamer, she is a consummate pragmatist, and it takes both to get great work," Doolan says. "She is relentless about delivering transformative work, and she was critical in

creating each of these campaigns."

Doolan, who began his career at General Mills, led the cereal portfolio up until July, when he traded spots with Emma Eriksson, who was running snacks and meals. His new portfolio includes a similarly well-established roster of brands, such as Nature Valley, Old El Paso and Fibre One.

He has also been tasked with digital marketing and brand design duties for the company's entire portfolio. While his efforts on that front are still in their early days, Doolan says he wants to increase the skill level around digital tools in the company's marketing department to ensure it stays leading-edge and, true to his record, find more efficient ways to make more personal and thoughtful connections.

Old El Paso presents a familiar opportunity for Doolan to create a new platform, as the idea of a family gathering around a shared plate of Mexican food is another kind of "warm connection" he is figuring out how to express.

On Nature Valley, he is inheriting a platform that positioned it as a snack with a connection to nature. This summer, a "#RediscoverNature" video showed parents and grandparents reliving memories of the outdoors and expressing dismay when their children describe their favourite pastimes as ones revolving around videogames, phones and computers. The campaign, by Cossette, earned over three million views online.

"I think it's the most successful campaign General Mills advertising has ever done, and damn I wish it was on my resume," Doolan says of wanting to build on the platform, developed during Eriksson's tenure. "The tension point about the next generation not having a connection to nature is so real, and it was always there. We just put a spotlight on it and moved it from the back of the brain to the front. That's a powerful thing to be able to do for consumers."

Even as General Mills launches new options in both snacks and cereals that look to cater to more health-conscious tastes (the company released 11 in the last fiscal year), it doesn't seem like Doolan will be resting on the appeal of trendy products to get by.

"When you've tasted campaigns where you feel like you made the world a better place, you never want to go back and waste your time with features and benefits. When I meet with consumers, I know our products' privileged spot at the table is being put to good use by making their lives better."

Here's to always thinking outside the box.

Congratulations to Jason Doolan on being
named Strategy Marketer of the Year.



CHEERS!



Congrats on your nomination Caro!

MODERNIZING MILK

How Agropur's **Caroline Losson** is on a mission to make Natrel more than just a milk brand. BY HARMEET SINGH

If you think of your favourite lifestyle brand, your mind probably doesn't immediately go to milk.

But perhaps soon that won't be the case, if Caroline Losson has any say in it. Following a rebrand last year to highlight Natrel's more premium positioning, the VP marketing at Agropur is using her passion for creativity to help push the 25-year-old brand into the modern era, especially as milk consumption in Canada has been on the decline.

Take the brand's recent Latte Art challenge in Montreal. Working with Quebec coffee chain Java U, Natrel brought together 10 local baristas to compete by creating masterpieces in their mugs.

"It is our role to reinvent the relationship between people and milk, and have them think about milk differently," Losson says. "One of the key pillars is to reposition, to have people think about Natrel being the best milk for coffee."

Hosted by local TV celebrity Pénélope McQuade, the contest was judged by an international panel and the winner was given a trip to Japan to help perfect their latte art technique. Digital videos featuring some of the judges also provided social media content long after the event.

The challenge was an extension of the Natrel Milk Bar in Montreal, a branded café also in partnership with Java U, featuring Natrel's products, a full food offering made with dairy and even selling its Montréalait clothing line.

"That's a long-time dream of mine," Losson says of the Milk Bar, which opened in April and was designed by Lg2boutique. "I really wanted to...have that live interaction with people."

The Milk Bar's opening led to more than 8.2 million media impressions and sales are up at the café by 47% over last year, when it was a regular Java U. Lg2 handled creative for the print and OOH campaign promoting the Milk Bar, with DentsuBos on the media buy.

Natrel now has plans to open two more Milk Bar locations next year, in Toronto and Vancouver.

The café also serves as an innovation hub for the brand, where Natrel can test out new products (Losson's team of about 30 includes both marketers and research and development staff).



In part, the Milk Bar idea was inspired by Chobani's Greek yogurt bar in New York City, Losson says. Danone and Nutella have also done similar initiatives.

Claude Auchu, partner, VP and creative director at Lg2, says that attention to trends is a strong point for Losson, who he says is constantly sending links to her partners.

"When she sees stuff and she travels, it helps her to be ahead of the game and it helps us, as the creative agency, to be able to see a bigger picture," he says.

For the Milk Bar, the team at Lg2 and Lg2boutique had more of a brand cooperation in mind between Natrel and Java U, not the full takeover that resulted, complete with product-inspired décor and menu.

"It was one of the rare moments when the client is saying 'You haven't worked hard enough, you have to push further...and build something that's really a new experience,'" Auchu recalls.

That drive is part of Losson's strategy to make Natrel about more than just milk. "Give people a product and they're just getting into

30% of total marketing dollars goes toward digital and social. Since then, its Facebook followers have grown from about 4,000 to more than 149,000.

Part of its digital strategy includes driving to a slick website, featuring recipes and lifestyle content. It also has a Natrel Boutique, featuring the Montréal T-shirts and accessories for sale. Overall, the brand is hoping to speak more to the coveted millennial target, many of whom happen to be foodies, Losson says.



of August, roughly a year into its rebrand, it was the number one premium milk brand in Canada (which includes filtered, organic and lactose-free), according to Nielsen. It has also been voted as the most trusted premium Canadian dairy brand in the Gustavson Brand Trust Index, which is based on an online survey of about 3,000 Canadians.

It has also been combatting a changing milk market through product innovation, and a focus on its lactose-free line, which has a patented process and is touted by Natrel as the only lactose-free option in the market that tastes like fresh milk. With about 40% of Canadian households having some degree of lactose intolerance, it's an important segment for the brand, she says.

In September 2014, Natrel worked with Lg2 and DentsuBos on a targeted digital campaign around the superior taste of the lactose-free option. Featuring 12 different 30-second messages, the campaign led to 17.5 million unique views, with 66% of coupons redeemed. As of November, Natrel Lactose Free had 60% market share in that segment, a 6.9 point increase from last year, according to Nielsen.

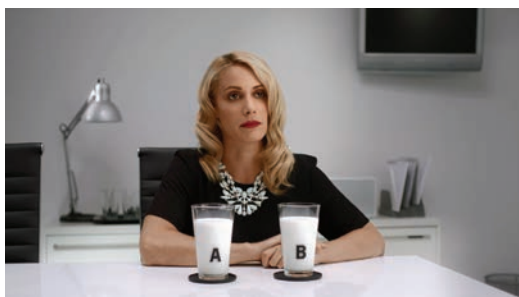
The brand has also introduced new flavoured milk options like Maple, Caramel Latte and Dark Chocolate, that can also be used in cooking (again, going after that millennial foodie target).

Losson is now looking at new strategies to keep the brand relevant. Going forward, Natrel will also be developing new cream products and continuing to tap into the foodie movement with its marketing.

It's also working on ways to go after Canada's diverse ethnic population. For example, it created online recipes specifically for the Chinese New Year and the Jewish holidays in September.

Natrel does engage deeply with data analytics, pre- and post-testing all of its marketing campaigns, tracking trends and using syndicated market research. But it begins by just engaging with people, according to Losson.

"I encourage people to just go, stay in a store, observe people, talk to people, understand what our product, what our brand means to them," she says. "I am a firm believer that it starts with listening to people."



the product, but if you let people know how this product will enhance their lives, then they're hooked [on] your brand," she says. "That's what we're trying to do with Natrel – really make it relevant in people's lives."

Building a brand is something Losson picked up from previous positions with Molson and Coca-Cola. "Coca-Cola was great in terms of being ruthless when it comes to branding guidelines and positioning and making sure that you're consistent," she says. Meanwhile at Molson, Losson learned to bring brands to life in a relevant way.

For Natrel these days, that's being done through digital. Five years ago, when Losson came on board, Natrel had virtually no digital media spend, and now about

Natrel is aiming to be a lifestyle brand with clothing products (top), lactose-free options (left) and a Milk Bar in Montreal (right).

"Everything that we do, we try to make sure that it's integrated," Losson says. "We avoid doing one-offs."

These latest initiatives stem from the repositioning that Natrel underwent last year, aiming to make it a more innovative brand "inspired by nature." Prior to that, it was just too similar to its competitors, Losson says. "It was always a premium product, it was just not perceived as such."

To begin, the brand worked with Lg2 to revamp its packaging with a new look and stronger materials.

"I felt it would be the first and the most important step in the deployment of the new brand positioning," she notes.

Natrel's strategy seems to be working. As



GETTING INTERAC USERS BACK IN THE BLACK

Andrea Danovitch has made it her mission to help Canadians get the monkey off their back, transforming the brand from familiar face to financial liberator.

BY JENNIFER HORN

I remember the first few times I used my credit card for a coffee under \$5. I carefully kept my chosen method of payment hidden from peering eyes. I thought, "Why does the barista have to ask 'debit or credit?' Can't they just leave me to fumble over the card machine as I try to hide that I'm not using my own money?" I just wanted the travel points. But I convinced myself that my onlookers thought I couldn't afford a cup of joe.

I wasn't alone. Paying for small purchases with credit was once generally frowned upon, but as more people got wind of the increasing rewards programs attached to those cards, the stigma started to lift. Good news for the credit card companies, bad news for Interac. That's because the company depends on Canadians using debit to purchase (for the most part) everyday goods, from gum to groceries. But because it wasn't able to lure shoppers with similar

aggressive rewards programs, Interac was starting to lose ground. The brand and its agency Zulu Alpha Kilo decided to fight back by helping Canadians liberate themselves from credit card debt.

Enter Andrea Danovitch, Interac's director of marketing and brand. She led the "Be in the Black" platform, which was born out of necessity in 2014, and has steadily evolved over the past two years to include comical characters like "Holiday Bill" (a human personification of the post-holiday credit card bill) and more practical programs like the "21 Day Credit-Free Challenge" (a web series featuring a reality TV host teaching viewers how to curb credit card spending).

Essentially, the idea behind "Be in the Black" is to show Canadians that using their own money can lead to an anxiety-free life. TV spots glorified the act of making debit purchases with regular people being likened to rock stars, and OOH creative featuring taglines like "Reduce stress by 19.7% a month." It struck a nerve with a lot of people. Interac recorded 5.2% transaction volume growth within the first three months and a 24% increase in growth compared to the same period the previous year.

Danovitch came to Interac from CIBC in 2007, where she had spent 17 years – a surprising fact considering she originally wanted to become the next great Canadian author, having studied English literature in Montreal where she grew up. But Danovitch learned to parlay her creative writing skills into the corporate world. She would write and edit campaign-related materials for CIBC in Toronto, and eventually moved up to become brand manager.

She later landed at Interac in a more modest department than she was used to. In fact, there was only one other person. They were structured as both the marketing and communications team, reporting to Interac's VP of client management and marketing. Today, that department has grown to a team of five: Danovitch, plus a senior marketing manager, marketing manager, specialist and coordinator. And while her budget has remained relatively flat over the years, she's learned to be creative, stretching media resources (with the help of agency Media Experts) to give Interac a sustained brand presence throughout the year. Instead of

pooling its spend into a fulsome, one-time-only campaign on TV (as it has in the past), she's getting the brand to consistently hit retail, OOH, radio, digital and social media with creative that's a continuation of the original launch platform.

"We feel, to do justice to our product suite and to really cast a wonderful halo across our products, we wanted to be more consistent [across platforms and throughout the year]," explains Danovitch.

For example, the "21 Day Credit-Free Challenge," which followed the aforementioned 2014 "Holiday Bill" TV and radio campaign, launched in the spring of 2015 with 23 social videos. The brand had personal financial expert Gail Vaz-Oxlade invite people to set their credit cards aside for a full 21 days. Interac then sent a video a day to over 2,000 people who signed up for the email-based program, with Vaz-Oxlade giving tips to help them beat bad spending habits. The average completion rate of those videos was 93%, and the emails had an open rate of 40%.

Beyond this program (which was later extended with spots in Cineplex cinemas), Danovitch and her team have been working with merchants to cater to reward-hungry Canadians. Through partnerships with Cineplex, the Beer Store, Pizza Nova and Couche-Tard, among others, the brand made using Interac Debit more rewarding. It offered to upsize popcorn and drinks at cinemas, as well as coffee at convenience stores, for free. Interac also had its pizza restaurant partner throw in free dipping sauce, and at the Beer Store, it donated to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada in exchange for debit transactions.

The increase in store transactions, from 5% to 8%, reinforced that the merchant programs were winning over consumers.

"People love getting something that's more immediate gratification," says Danovitch. "Not everyone likes to collect points over a long time...When we did this for a certain period of time, we started to see stickiness in people actually shifting and continuing to pay with their debit card."

The current competition for Interac is credit card companies, but the brand could potentially face losing its monopoly of the debit network category. Today, it's the only physical network in Canada, but that could

money is with you"). "It was warm and fuzzy... and we did see some incredible results," she notes. "But while people loved the brand we weren't necessarily seeing the pay-off in the bottom line and share of payments."

Even so, Danovitch still wants to see some of that "magic" in the creative that's being produced today. "We don't want to lose the things that are inherently great about the brand," she says, pointing to Interac's recent "Merry January" holiday spot, which launched in November. In it, the brand puts a holiday spin on the "Be in the Black" platform and brings toys in a store to life, having them sing a debt-inspired version of the "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" to a customer wrestling with her decision to use credit or debit. Danovitch believes it's the brand's best work to date and sets the stage for 2016, when she plans to evolve the platform further and "start looking at a higher purpose and what we stand for" because, "now that we've made those points [around being debt-free], we want to show why life is better now that you use your own money."

Personally, Danovitch says she is motivated by the potential of being an "enabler for something that's adding to people's lives."

"It's very hard to turn on the news these days without hearing about Canadians' debt," she says, adding that the team witnessed the issue up close, having interviewed people in focus groups about anxiety, panic attacks and sleep issues because of their debt. "And that's what makes this platform so gratifying. You know that you're doing something that makes a difference...It's something that I can teach and instill in my own children."



Canadians are likened to rock stars for using debit in the brand's "Be in the Black" platform.

change with the growth of Visa Debit (which is currently only used online in Canada, and in stores in the U.S.). To compete, Danovitch is relying on reinforcing the brand's heritage, and reminding people that, for 30 years, it's been the "trustworthy, reliable brand that people have come to know and feel comfortable using."

The brand has always ranked high in likeability scores, she says, thanks to its previous signature yellow truck, which, in TV spots, was shown following people around as they go about their day (indicating that "your



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Congratulations **Andrea Danovitch** of Interac on being named one of *Strategy Magazine's* **Marketers of the Year!**

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**“What’s the next
thing we can’t do?”**

Congratulations, Kyle, on changing the game.



BOTTLING BEER SUCCESS

You won't find one of Labatt's brands to be like the others. **Kyle Norrington** is giving them each a unique personality to set them apart, even within their own family.

BY JENNIFER HORN

Kyle Norrington is a chip off the old block. His father is a self-starter who moved his family across Canada, from Ottawa to the Okanagan, owning businesses (and interestingly, one of the first to sell Apple products). The now-retired entrepreneur shared the "ambition gene" with his son and it helped motivate the VP of marketing to climb the ranks at Labatt Breweries of Canada, being promoted seven times in roughly 15 years.

"From being a sales guy with targets, trying to sell as much beer as possible, to leading a marketing team for many different brands – that entrepreneurial spirit has stayed with me throughout my career," says Norrington. The story of how he arrived in Toronto, after growing up in Manitoba and studying at the University of British Columbia, is itself a clue to his get-up-and-go mentality.

The day he came to the Big Smoke was the same day he told his parents he wouldn't be coming home after a six-month vacation in Europe. He changed his plane ticket, while standing in Heathrow airport, to include Toronto as his final destination because, at the time, there weren't many large CPG companies out West. He would arrive with barely a cent in his pocket, sleeping on couches, scrounging subway coins together

to get to job interviews, and finally landing a merchandiser gig at Mosaic (where he would frequently be found putting up posters in pubs for client Labatt).

Today, he oversees a portfolio of 60-plus brands and manages a marketing team of 32 people. He currently holds the title his mentor Harvey Carroll (now CEO at IPG Mediabrands) held a few years after he asked Norrington to join the Labatt team in 2000. And over the years, he has helped market and grow a portfolio of Labatt beer brands, from its biggest, Budweiser, to one of Canada's top imports, Corona, to top specialty beer Alexander Keith's.

But it's the past couple of years that have been particularly sublime for Labatt, thanks to Norrington's hand in campaigns that tap into human behaviour and push the limits of traditional beer marketing (once synonymous with ads featuring men at sports bars or surrounded by bikini-clad women).

His outside-the-box thinking is especially prevalent in campaigns for Corona. Norrington has helped sell the beer over the years as the go-to thirst-quencher of summer. In 2014, he and his team got

Canadians thinking about how Corona Extra can help them escape the daily grind, placing contextually relevant creative on the street and in subways (think bus boards with copy reading "Please move to the back of the bottle" and billboards with the tagline "Isn't it a nice day to be out?" during gay pride festivities).

The team, with Zulu Alpha Kilo on creative, even fashioned a "Sun Beam" device with a telescopic arm and reflector to deliver sunshine to shaded patios. The sheer domination of campaign creative resulted in a 17% share lift versus the previous year (effectively doubling the share gap between Corona and competitor Heineken).

Stella Artois, like Corona, is a premium beer. However, while Corona flaunts its accessible image with creative targeting the masses, Stella recently took a more niche (though certainly not more subtle) approach. During the past summer, the brand introduced a first-of-its-kind dining experience, but only for a finite amount of people over a short period. For 20 days, those who purchased a \$150 ticket to visit the Stella Artois "Sensorium" dome were



Far right, from top: A Kokanee campaign involved scaling mountains for fresh water; Budweiser's Red Zepplin takes to the skies; diners enjoy the sights and sounds of Stella's Sensorium.



treated to a meal that tapped into the five senses. Michelin star chef Richie Farina served five-course meals, while colourful projections danced across the white tent walls, live music played in the background, and aromas were released into the air. The event completely sold out of its 2,360 tickets, and led to more than 90 stories in the press, generating 45 million earned media impressions.

Norrington has made a conscious decision to sign off on creative ideas – such as the aforementioned Corona “Sun Beam” and the Stella Artois “Sensorium” – that give each of the brands in his portfolio a unique competitive edge. “It’s a very cannibalistic sort of category,” he says. “Even within the portfolio, I need to see a level of competition.” That’s one reason why Labatt partners with up to 10 different agencies, from creative (Anomaly, FCB Toronto, Grip, Zulu Alpha Kilo) and PR (Media Profile, Veritas) to experiential (Desperado, Mosaic) and digital (The Hive). The company also works with UM on media.

Also, he adds, it doesn’t hurt “to spread the love” as “there are so many creative talents and agencies in the country, we’re fortunate to be in a category that has a gravitational pull...so we get to appease the creative thirst for working in the beer world.”

Many of Labatt’s marketing campaigns are based on behavioural science, which has been taught to Norrington and his team of marketers at institutions like Stanford University during week-long courses.

Norrington embraced ideas like the now-famous “Red Light” platform for Budweiser (a light that lit up when the user’s favourite hockey team scored) when he gained a better understanding of how to tap into moments that can influence consumer behaviour. “We, as marketers, always want our brands to light up in moments when a person is filled with positive emotion,” Norrington says. “We identified this space in hockey [of scoring goals] where the brand [can be associated with] optimism and celebration, and that is a perfect place for us to play.”

Sorry, Kyle. We know that these types of “congratulations” ads are supposed to be witty. As well as concise. And this one is certainly neither of those. We apologize. You see, when we heard that you had been nominated as Marketer of the Year, there was so much more to say than just “congratulations”. First and foremost, the honour is richly deserved. We have been privileged to work with you over the past decade, and in that time we have seen you grow into the person worthy of being called Canada’s Marketer of the Year. Of course, we have known that you are deserving of this recognition for some time. You challenge us to push the work. And you take the risks required to create remarkable programs (including a movie!). You are truly a champion of great work. And for that, we are forever in your debt. So congratulations on this achievement. We couldn’t be happier for you. We look forward to celebrating with you over an ice cold Kokanee. **Congratulations, Kyle. GRIP Your friends at Grip.**



Corona Extra helped Canucks escape the daily grind with its witty, contextually relevant ads.

The original platform, spearheaded by Anomaly, has continued to exist in various forms over the years, such as the Red Light Helmets that were handed out to fans in Calgary and the giant Red Zeppelin that flew over cities and lit up during NHL games in 2014. The most recent extension of the lights is Budweiser's "Goal Lab," which launched this fall and gets fans involved in the ideation process, asking them to submit ideas for new innovations, such as an ice hockey table made with real hockey rink ice or a beer pitcher that lights up when goals are scored.

As for other innovations, this past year Norrington helped Labatt's parent company Anheuser-Busch InBev launch two new beers in Canada: Bud Light Apple, which was

introduced in the Canadian market before any other and is currently leading the apple beer category, as well as Modelo Especial, a premium beer from Corona's brewer Grupo Modelo, which has since become one of the LCBO's top-selling imports. The marketer believes he was able to launch the two lines with "solid execution and a huge amount of speed" this year thanks to a tweak that he made to Labatt's internal structure.

At one point, the company had the innovation and insights department working together, under a single senior marketer. But he recently rejigged this to split it into two different functions. He then built out the two teams, bringing in more staff and creating opportunities for current members to grow into bigger roles, and had them focus 100% on their respective areas. This allowed the right amount of focus required for breakthrough product launches, he says.

Norrington adds that he is also starting to get the insights department to "focus on future [methods of gathering insights]

versus how we've been performing in the past" so they can start to identify and take advantage of new growth opportunities going forward.

Norrington started out as the guy who marketing managers would call to give a tour of their brands in action at pubs. Now, he's the one making the calls. Never having lost his passion for marketing, Norrington still signs off on every brief that goes out the door and is intimately involved in the creative process, even down to tissue sessions (a daunting thought considering he handles more brands than weeks in a year). While others of his generation have jumped careers, he's remained loyal to the field he initially studied for, and even moved provinces on a whim to ensure he would guarantee being able to feed that passion.

"I spend an hour walking down the cereal aisle looking at packaging. I'm that guy. It drives my wife crazy."



Denise Darroch, Brand Manager U BY KOTEX®

Kimberly-Clark congratulates our own Brand Manager for U by KOTEX®, **Denise Darroch**, on being nominated for **Marketer of the Year by Strategy!**



Throughout our 143 year history, Kimberly-Clark has pushed the boundaries – innovating essential products such as **KLEENEX®**, **COTTONELLE®**, **HUGGIES®**, **PULL-UPS®**, **U BY KOTEX®** & **DEPEND®** that make life better for our Canadian consumers. Kimberly-Clark's values of accountability, authenticity, caring and innovation are the foundation for our engaged and empowered team.

For more information about our company or careers, visit us at www.kimberly-clark.com.

Where people who
think differently
think together™



QUEEN OF THE CREAMPUFFS

Denise Darroch is now leading a loyal fandom for U by Kotex, after her risk-taking moves paid off.

BY HARMEET SINGH

“

I'm all about a good story," Denise Darroch says.

That's a suitable way to sum up both the U by Kotex brand manager's biggest success to date and the project itself.

We're talking, of course, about *Carmilla*, the web series based on a Gothic vampire novella that had "creampuffs" (as the young, mostly female fans call themselves) screaming – and tweeting – for more.

It's pretty understandable. The branded content series, now with two seasons under its belt, has a lot going on: mystery, a lesbian love story and a bit of danger all wrapped into easily consumable episodes about five minutes long.

Noticeably absent, though (at least for the marketing community), was any discernible U by Kotex branding or product placement in the primary content.

It may have been an odd strategy for some. But for Darroch, adapting and looking for new ways to engage with young women – and keep them coming back – was, quite simply, necessary for survival.

"There are a lot more boomers, so a lot more people are exiting the category," she says of the main challenge that feminine care is facing in general. In other words, more menopausal women means fewer periods, resulting in a tough category, where standing out is crucial.

"U By Kotex has always stood apart from other femcare brands because we look at the category a little bit differently," Darroch says. "We call out those stigmas, we

kind of play on and make fun of the traditional ways of talking about periods." Basically, it tries to "make periods suck less," she says.

Darroch teamed up with agency Geometry Global, branded entertainment co Shift2 and prodco Smokebomb Entertainment on what became a massive, modern hit (despite its source material from 1872), premiering in August 2014 on Vervegirl TV on YouTube, along with *Carmilla*'s social media accounts.

"If you look at the market right now, everybody's doing the same thing to gain millennials," Darroch says. "Nothing's really changed, marketing is still pretty traditional."

Darroch knew that product shots and branding to a millennial is basically like garlic to a vampire.

"The last thing I wanted to do was put content out there and then inundate it with branding and messaging," she says. "We really wanted to provide that content, let people enjoy it, build that fan base and then come in from a different perspective and do our own thing on the side."

The project wasn't entirely without any recognition for the brand. In the first season, five integration videos, including "Do vampires get their periods?" and menstruation mythbusting, complemented the show.

The strategy paid off, with season one gaining 28.4 million minutes of watch time and 9.2 million views on YouTube by the end of the year.

U by Kotex then saw major engagement with the "#SaveCarmilla" movement among the series' creampuff fandom who shared photos of themselves with the brand's products on social media, all in an effort to lock down the series' second season (which it did).

By the end of season two, the entire series gained 38.7 million views and 73.2 million impressions globally.

Clearly, the creampuffs have some power. And leading the "#tamponfandom" is Darroch herself.

"She's one of the biggest creampuff fans we have," says Kaaren Whitney-Vernon, CEO at Shift2. Take a recent season two viewing party held in Toronto, where Darroch arrived decked out in *Carmilla* clothing.

"She sees the growth with the fan base and I think she's very protective of the fan base," Whitney-Vernon says. In other words, Darroch knows not to let the creampuffs down with an overly-branded series, even now that their loyalty is somewhat assured.

"I think the biggest challenge marketers have is they instantly want to start pushing



An international fandom of "creampuffs" helped propel the *Carmilla* web series into a second season, which debuted early this year.

MARKETER OF THE YEAR DENISE DARROCH

*It's bloody fun
working with you!*

*Thanks for believing in a
300-year-old vampire.*



CONGRATS

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT

shift2



and they aren't listening," Whitney-Vernon says. "[Darroch] doesn't want it to become a commercial," she adds. "She's about a conversation."

Darroch also acted as any executive producer should, Whitney-Vernon notes. "It really involves a dedication to creating content on an ongoing basis." Specifically, she wasn't seeking a one-off, viral success.

"Not only does she have a passion for her brand, and she truly does, but she now has a passion for *Carmilla* and the storytelling process," adds Whitney-Vernon.

Robyn Dalley, account director at Geometry Global, echoes that opinion. "Throughout the script development in particular, some of the notes that came back from [Darroch] were really great," she says. "It wasn't just concentrated on, 'How can we inject the brand in here?'"

Rather, Darroch was committed to the characters and ensuring the show remained entertaining for the fan base. "She understood how much impact we could gain from a good storyline," Dalley says.

It's also not as though Darroch and her team have sat back and watched the views roll in after creating the story. Being responsive on social media, understanding how viewers want to engage and how often to post were a key part of making *Carmilla* a success.

"Fandoms are a little bit different from your average consumer set," Darroch says, so understanding the right language to use is crucial.

In particular, it was important to acknowledge what fans were saying about the series and their theories about characters and storylines, then adding in winks and nudges as it progressed to show fans that the creators were hearing them.

In terms of keeping the show fresh, Darroch and her team are always thinking of what's next, Dalley says. "She's staying close to her agency partners and we're constantly questioning and thinking on the go."

For example, for season two, U by Kotex moved away from the separate integration videos, instead creating another mini-series, dubbed "season zero," a 12-part prequel all about a mysterious lack of periods on the university campus where *Carmilla* takes place. Unlike the primary series, season zero (which premiered in late October) more prominently integrates U by Kotex into the setting and storyline.

Despite that, the response has been strong, with many of the videos gaining more than

100,000 views and sparking comments like "Me having a meltdown that season 2 is over but leave it to Vervegirl and Kotex to switch my mood completely :)" and "IVE NEVER LOVED TAMPONS MORE IN MY LIFE."

While plans for a third season weren't yet announced at press time, Darroch and her partners remain committed to the world of *Carmilla* and continuing to break new ground with its content.

Outside of *Carmilla*, Darroch has been working on keeping U by Kotex as relevant to its target as possible, including in Quebec, a market she calls a "cultural cocoon," that needs its own attention. This year, for example, she led the adaptation of the "Save the Undies" campaign for the French-language market, partnering with Bell Media and influencers such as TV host and *Hockey Wives* star Maripier



Morin on an online contest and PR event.

Brand marketing is Darroch's passion, but she notes that having a well-rounded background has helped her gain perspective. She has experience in sales and worked with top retailers to develop as a marketer. Before joining Kimberly-Clark in a shopper marketing role focused on the Walmart relationship, Darroch worked with Nestlé Canada in both brand and shopper marketing roles.

Then a little over a year ago, Darroch took on her role with U by Kotex, a position where she's brought her passion and risk-taking attitude.

"Ideas come to blossom, they really come to grow, when you're willing to take a chance," Darroch says. "If you're not taking a risk, if you're not trying something new, you're never going to be a leader in the market - you're always going to be a follower."



Of course we used this opportunity to showcase a product.
Congratulations, Mark Childs and your Samsung team,
on being nominated for Marketer of the Year.

Cheil



North





MARK CHILDS BRINGS SAMSUNG TO LIFE

The Canadian CMO has strengthened the brand's position by focusing on the experience and benefits of tech and tapping into a global network.

BY JOSH KOLM

Guiding the Canadian image of one of the world's biggest consumer tech players might have seemed like an unlikely role for Mark Childs, CMO at Samsung Canada, nearly three years ago.

Childs joined the company in the summer of 2013 after more than 25 years of marketing for legacy CPG brands, including stints as VP of marketing at Kellogg and Campbell. His hiring at Samsung came at a time when it was trying to market itself less as a tech company (focusing on specs and product features) and more like the household brands he was used to.

"The human side of technology is

increasingly important, especially as we head into the internet of things and devices become the main things that connect us in our lives," Childs says of the similarities between tech and CPG marketing. "So that foundation of consumer marketing remains true: cracking a great insight and making an authentic connection with somebody."

Childs and Samsung's marketing team took a new approach to its work, zeroing in on a clearer picture of the audience it was speaking to, and identifying the best way to connect innovation with day-to-day life.

"Because of that, we know this 'young-minded' audience so intimately now, whether they're millennials, moms, men or

new Canadians who are interested in what's new," Childs says. "What we concluded was that we really had to bring the product benefits to life much more than we had – going away from speeds and feeds to what those benefits look like in real life."

For example, the campaign for the recently released Gear S2 smartwatch featured social videos created by Cheil Canada and showed how it could seamlessly fit into one guy's daily activities, from working out, to preparing for the work day, to rescheduling a date.

"When we launched the first Gear, it was very much about the functionality of your smartphone on your wrist. Today, everything

we know about the S2 is wrapped up in a whole integrated campaign that shows the experience of wearing one of these is not about knowing the time, it's about what we do with it."

Childs has also placed a greater emphasis on events and public activations to show consumers first-hand how a product can fit into their lives, working closely with Cheil, Mosaic and North Strategic.

"The physical experiences may reach less people, but it's a fuller and deeper experience," he says. "So it's been about how we find that balance between reaching and communicating, and delivering the human experience no matter what."

For the Gear S2 launch, the company brought the Global Galaxy Studio to Toronto's Sherway Gardens in October. The installation featured all of Samsung's latest tech, from phones to tablets to speakers to VR, but was centred on the watch, showing its features, customization options and how it could connect with other devices consumers were already using. It also provided a preview of the company's newest flagship store located in the shopping centre, its fourth in Canada and its biggest retail footprint to date, which allows customers to be hands-on with the newest Samsung products.

The Galaxy Studio concept had previously been done in Seoul, London, Singapore and New York, one of many ways Samsung Canada has benefited from being part of a global network. Its offices collaborate through an internal system that allows Childs and his international counterparts to see what kind of marketing activities are launching in all of the company's markets.

"Canadian business can't create everything uniquely when they're part of a worldwide structure, and ideas from Australia or Germany or the U.K. share really quickly," Childs says. "If great work is happening elsewhere and it will resonate here, we'd be crazy not to take the opportunity to build on that in a way that connects it locally and starts the conversation we want."

A prime example of that collaboration is the Look at Me project. Developed by Samsung's home office in Korea, along with university researchers, the app features games that help children with autism do

things like sustain eye contact and recognize emotions based on facial expressions. It's based on research showing that autistic children interact more easily with digital devices than with people. Canada was the first international market to adapt the project, working with non-profit Autism Speaks to identify 200 Canadian families to receive Samsung tablets loaded with the Look at Me app last December. The brand also released a video in the spring showing how one family benefited from using it (the video earned over 3.5 million social impressions, among the highest the brand has seen from paid media).

Samsung Canada has adapted global work in its traditional ads as well. With a range of new tech being built into its home appliances, Childs and his team were looking to educate young parents on these features, while maintaining its principle of connecting them to the realities of their lives. Then, Samsung debuted a campaign in the U.S. featuring actors and real-life couple Kristen Bell and Dax Shepard using things like ActiveWash washing machines to deal with the day-to-day issues of raising a child.

"We were developing a whole campaign platform, but we looked south of the border and there was an amazing spot that was bang-on to what we were already talking about and we knew would connect with our audience," Childs says.

From there, the company added a local touch with social videos showing slices of real life, focusing on the messes and crises that come across a parent's table. They're the kind of thing Childs says Canada has been more immersed in than its global "peer group." It also launched Samsung Innovation Home, a pop-up in downtown Toronto, where Canadian celebrity designers hosted visits and dinners in a room equipped with the company's latest appliances. The event brought in 2,450 visitors for 26,000 demos, exceeding targets by 169%.

Childs has also been keen on tapping into points of Canadian pride and passion. He's pursued partnerships with festivals like NXNE and TIFF, and with the NHL. At TIFF, Samsung put its newest smartphones in the hands of filmmakers participating in the festival's Emerging Directors Showcase to create short films with mentorship from director Jason Reitman. It also let

festival-goers create their own 15-second social videos with footage of TIFF's biggest moments and stars cut together with their own content.

"Yes, we got to be part of an event that is about Canada's passion for film, but Torontonians also had the chance to experience content they wouldn't have without us," Childs says. "When I can get you inside access or give you a social video you could only create with us, we hope you feel a little more special because of that relationship with Samsung. And the filmmakers became advocates for us, showing their peers what our tech enables them to do. Letting someone



Above: A social campaign for the Gear S2 brought the smartwatch's features into the real world.
Opposite page: Childs introduces the band the Arkells at the launch of the Global Galaxy Studio.

meet their full potential connects with Canadian pride in a big way."

Today, Childs says Samsung Canada's biggest strengths are brand awareness and preference, cracking the top 10 of Ipsos Reid's Most Influential Brands for the first time this year.

The challenge he sees now is keeping up with the pace of change and fostering consumer relationships with products that aren't even in market yet. Which is why connecting with consumers through brand experiences, instead of product features, is going to be all the more important for Childs in the future.

"The question we see ahead of us is, 'How do we create more pride in owning and being part of the Samsung brand?' Building loyalty or affinity is going to be the most important, because that's what moves us from not just building momentum, but insulating us for the future and whatever that next new product is going to be."

2015 MARKETER SURVEY

BY EMILY WEXLER

The more things change, the more they stay the same. This year's survey of marketers revealed that budgets continue to shift towards digital and social media, and away from television and print. ROI pressure is still the biggest issue for most marketers, and work-life balance is still causing stress. When it comes to changes, marketing departments are shrinking, media agencies are increasingly important and certain social platforms, like Pinterest and Vine, are losing appeal.

Graphic designer **Sandra Tavares** helped sum up this year's results in this handy infographic. Read on to get an overview of the Canadian industry this year.

BUDGETS AND GROWTH

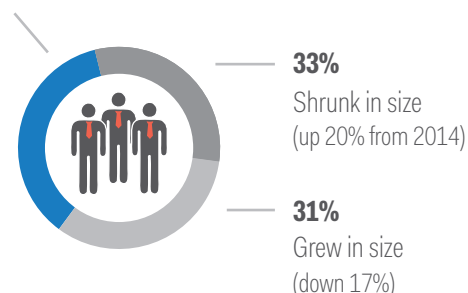
Marketing budget

42% Increased



Department size

36% Remained the same



Where does your company spend the most when it comes to advertising?

49% Television

19% Digital advertising

7% Sponsorship

Noteworthy:
only 3% said print,
down 21% from last year.



Spending more on:

43% Digital advertising

13% Social media

11% Television

8% Sponsorship

7% Branded content

6% Experiential

3% or less Print, OOH, radio, PR, in-store, mobile, shopper marketing, innovative tech, predictive analytics

Spending less on:

31% Television

25% Print

11% No change from last year

6% Radio

6% Sponsorship

5% Out of home

4% PR

3% or less Digital, social media, experiential, branded content, in-store

This year, over 300 marketers responded to a poll about the state of the industry, conducted from Oct. 19 to Nov. 6, 2015. Respondents skewed female, at 64%, with 39% being between the ages of 26 and 35, followed by 32% being 36 to 45. They mostly held marketing manager (33%) or VP/director of marketing (28%) positions. The majority of respondents (59%) made between \$76,000 and \$150,000 per year. Most of them have also been with their companies fewer than five years (68%), with 40% having only been with their companies two years or less.

DEVELOPING FOR THE FUTURE

Branded content

83% Invest



48% Are working with a creative AOR

14% Are working with a digital agency

14% Are creating it in-house

Big data

49% Utilize



38% Analyze it in-house

24% Use research companies, like Ipsos (up 6%)

16% Rely on their media agency

12% Rely on their creative agency

Top 3 priorities for brand development

Strategic partnering to expand reach 24%

Media innovation/earned media

20%

Social strategy

14%



Brands on social media



93% Facebook



78% Twitter
(down 7%)



68% YouTube



60% Instagram
(up 8%)



35% LinkedIn
(down 15%)



26% Pinterest
(down 11%)



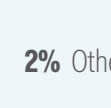
15% Google+
(new for 2015)



8% Tumblr



6% Vine
(down 11%)



2% Other

2% Not on social media

Controlled in-house

25% All social media

(down 20%)

29% More than half

21% Less than half

25% None, all is outsourced (up 19%)



If outsourced, handled by:

47% Creative agency

(up 26%)

29% Digital agency

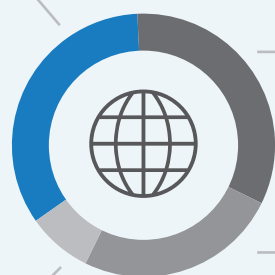
12% Social media agency (down 12%)

8% PR agency

4% Other

Marketing strategy coming from global HQ

34% None



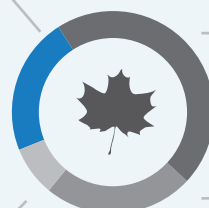
33%
Less than half

25%
More than half

8% All

Canada-created strategy/creative

24% It is on the rise



46%
Staying the same

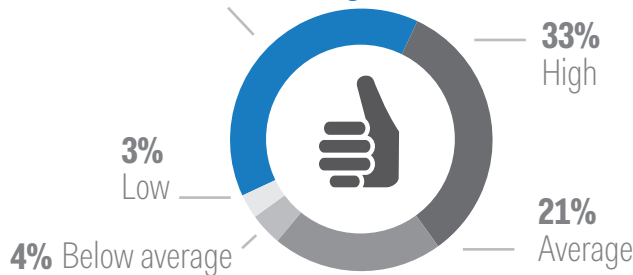
22%
Don't know

8% Decreasing,
less scope for Cancon lately

WORK SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction

39% Above average



New employment opportunities

53% Not looking but open to them



Length of work week

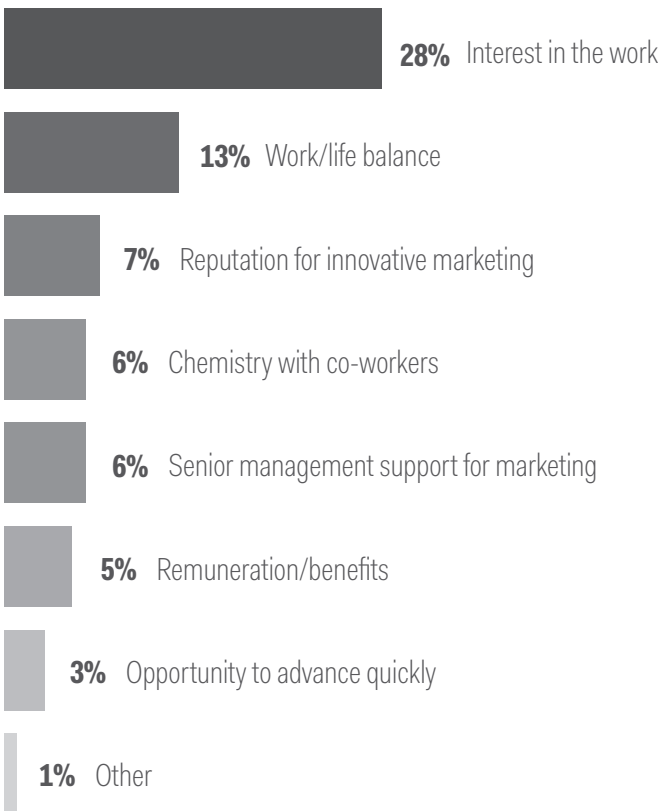
44% 41-50 hours



Attractions when planning a career move



Professional development 31%



Greatest job stressors

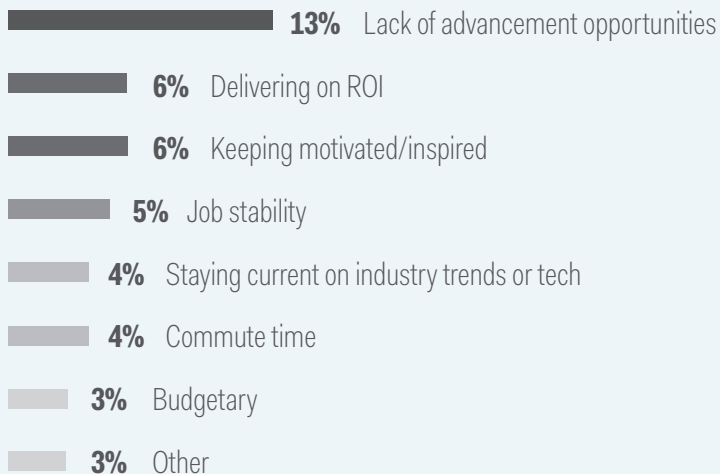
Work/life balance 21%



Workload/time to complete tasks 19%

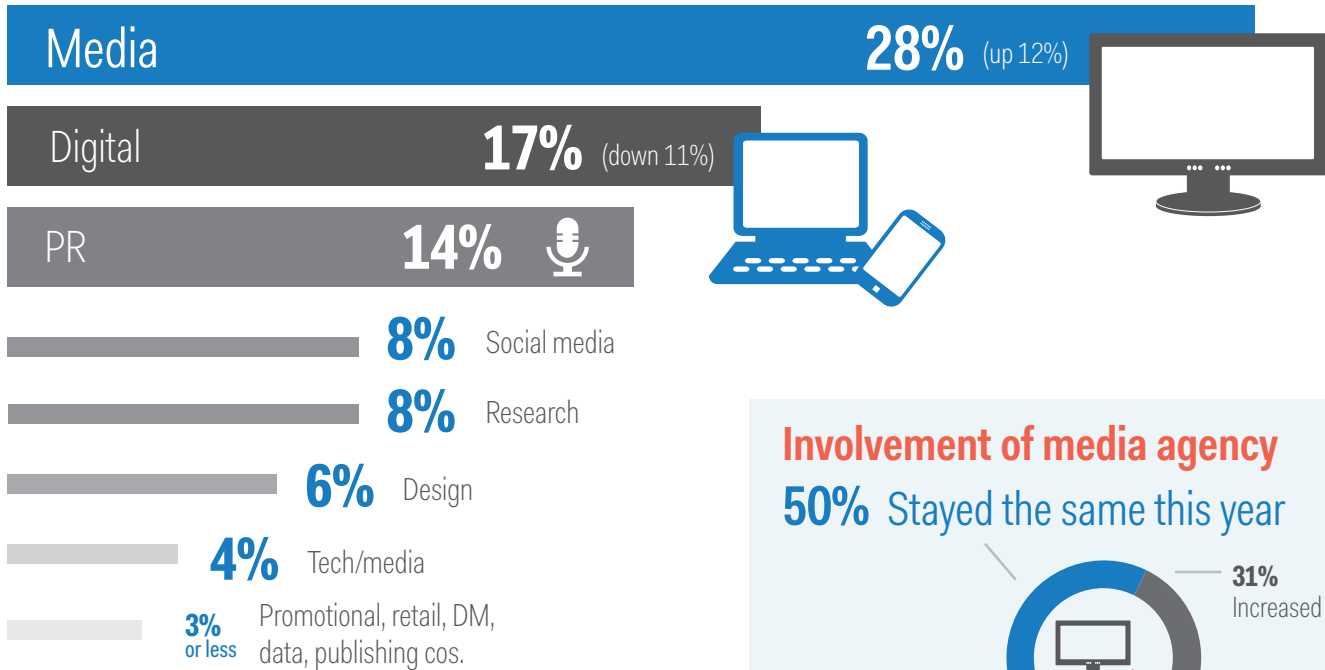


Internal politics/problems with management 15%



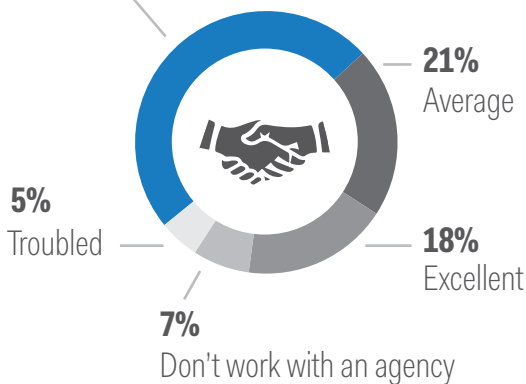
AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

Increasingly important agency support



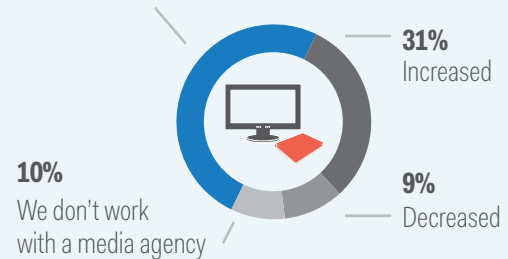
Relationship with creative agency

49% Very good



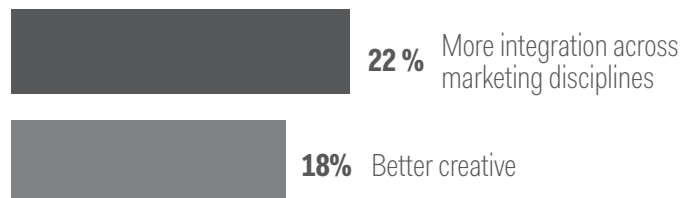
Involvement of media agency

50% Stayed the same this year

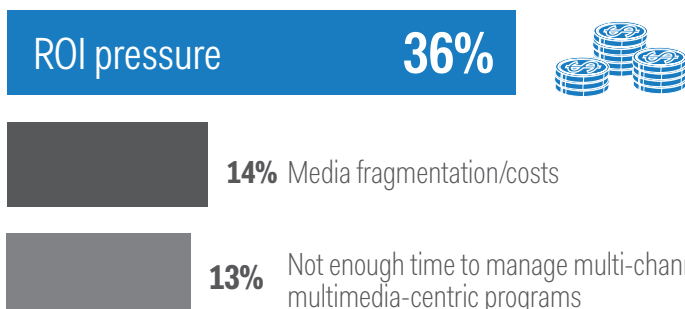


Wanted from creative agency

24% More strategic insight

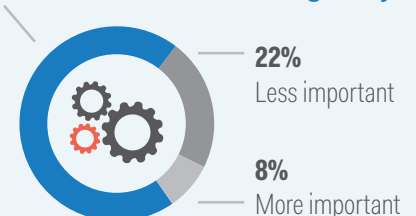


Top 3 issues facing the industry



Media agency's strategic input

70% As important as creative agency





AGENCY SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

HOW THREE CANADIAN SHOPS ARE PARLAYING A U.S. CLIENT STRATEGY INTO GROWTH AT HOME.

BY MEGAN HAYNES

Do it faster. Do it better. Do it cheaper.

In today's hyper-connected, fast-paced, content-loving digital world, it can be difficult to be an agency.

This year, a number of events rocked the Canadian advertising landscape – including the closure of Lowe Roche by Interpublic Group, WPP's folding of Y&R into Taxi, not to mention Juniper Park's absorption of TBWA\Toronto. Major agency roles have shuffled, with top-ranked execs having shifted from successful shops to struggling ones, while the client-merry-go-round continued to circle.

So what's going on in the agency world these days?

For starters, the need to constantly update the myriad social channels with content is an added pressure (and cost) on brands, which gets passed down to agencies. In fact, in a recent survey conducted by *strategy*, agency folks said the biggest issue facing the industry is that there's not enough time or resources to execute and manage multi-channel, multimedia-centric programs (26%), followed by ROI pressure (24%).

There's also an increased demand for adapted global versus Canadian-led creative. Chris Gokiart, president of Calgary-based Critical Mass, says there is a natural pendulum that swings between global and Canadian content, and right now we're on the global-first side of the swing. Inevitably, things will shift back, but for now, it means less work for agencies with Canadian clients, he says.

There's also the ongoing issue of procurement, which many agency executives have argued places emphasis on cost-savings versus long-term value-add for the client.

But of course, it's not all doom and gloom. Plenty of agencies continue to thrive – just look at *strategy*'s Agency of the Year roster: Leo Burnett's work for Always has swept the world, JWT's senior executives are being tapped to also lead U.S. offices and Taxi has brought in at least 12 new accounts over the past year.

But you've likely heard those success stories. Here we delve into a few more under-the-radar growth strategies from Canadian agencies looking beyond their borders.

TANK GOES FROM NICHE TO MASS

Tank can thank its pharma past for its present success, says president and founder Marc Lanouette.

The Montreal agency, which picked up the Canadian Heritage, Corus Media and Reitmans accounts this year alone (not to mention the

Left: The Tank exec team: EVP health Christian Roy, chief strategy officer Valya Kruk, president Marc Lanouette, GM Mathieu Cloutier and CCO Benoit Pilon.
Centre right: Tank's strategy for Reitmans includes a new spokesperson, actress Meghan Markle.

French Telus business in 2014), is opening its second office in New York – a direct result of its growth over recent months.

The shop was originally founded in 1999 as a B2B agency (then called Sky Communications), geared at speaking with people in the medical community on behalf of pharma companies. It was a big opportunity in the '90s, Lanouette says, with few shops operating in that niche space.

But, with the rapid rise of the internet (and thus, all the information/misinformation around health), there became a greater need to speak directly to consumers.

More innovation was needed in the health care space and it wasn't coming from pharma-focused agencies, he says. In 2007, the shop merged with the more traditional creative shop A&M and rebranded as Tank. Through partnerships with English agencies, such as Zulu Alpha Kilo, the shop started attracting non-pharma clients, often the French work of national accounts. Soon, it was picking up clients on its own, bolstered by its ability to navigate the highly regulated world of health advertising.

"Health care requires you to be very rigorous and have processes internally that are aligned around rules and regulations," Lanouette says. "And I think that has helped us win [other business], whether it's the telcos, which are just as rigorous, or retailers."

Today, only half the shop's clients are in the health care space – though they're continuing to help drive growth at the shop, he says, which has nearly crested 100 employees.

And while business is growing in Canada, Lanouette says the biggest opportunity lies abroad.

The shop has set its sights on the U.S., using existing Canadian health care clients, including Pfizer and Bristol-Myers Squibb, to grow. In these cases, the procurement process often works in Tank's

favour, Lanouette says. It has picked up incremental business from its clientele because it provides the best value.

The lower Canadian dollar and the cheaper overhead (creatives in Montreal aren't necessarily paid as much as creatives in New York, while rent in Montreal is less, for example) means Tank can pass those savings along to its U.S. clients. Lanouette figures companies save between 30 and 40%, compared to when they bring in a U.S. agency.

The growth has necessitated a New York office as there was simply too much business coming out of the U.S., Lanouette says.

Business is good: in 2014, Tank saw 50% growth, while this year it's tracking to be 40%, he says.

Being in growth mode means the shop can be pickier about the clients it wants to work with. Lanouette gives the example of Reitmans, which signed the shop as its AOR this summer. The retailer, which had its account with Taxi for years, had experienced continued declining sales as a result of increased competition from foreign fast-fashion brands.

Lanouette says when Reitmans originally approached the shop, Tank declined to participate in the RFP, worrying it wouldn't be a good fit for the agency.

"Then they called again and I spoke with the VP of marketing for a good hour, challenging her business, saying if we were going to take the RFP on, what we'd put forward would be different, break the mould," he says. "And I got the sense that's what Reitmans was looking for."

In September, the shop introduced actress Meghan Markle as the retailer's new spokesperson, a move

that has helped the brand grow traffic and reach a more youthful demo. Lanouette was mum on results, only saying the campaign has generated huge buzz, with all the success markers pointing in the right direction.

"Two years ago, we were on the phone making the calls," he says. "But right now, we're being invited to all the major RFPs that require a Quebec-based agency or this knowledge [in pharma]. I have to say no to a lot of RFPs coming our way because we've had this crazy, crazy growth."



CRITICAL MASS SAYS GOODBYE TO ITS AOR STRATEGY

Calgary's Critical Mass also built its client base by looking beyond its borders. This approach has helped the agency grow to a staff of 750 across 10 offices, including ones in Chicago, Hong Kong, Toronto and the recently opened New York office. When the shop was founded in 1996, many Canadian brands eschewed a Calgary agency in favour of ones in Toronto, Vancouver or Montreal. U.S. clients, however, didn't have that same need for proximity, which was a huge contributing factor for its success, says president Chris Gokiart. Only about 10% of its clients are Canadian, and the agency has experienced 20% year-over-year revenue growth.

Of course, it didn't hurt that the shop developed a reputation for



The Critical Mass New York offices; its work for the United Nations Mine Action Service.

doing great work: Critical Mass picked up Canada's first-ever Gold Cyber Cannes Lion in 2001 for its Nike ID site, which let people customize their own shoes. More recently, it picked up a Silver Lion in 2014 for its Massey Lecture Series app (which paired the CBC series with additional reading material) for House of Anansi Press, and a D&AD win for the United Nations Mine Action Service campaign, which turned New York's New Museum into a (virtual) explosive land mine experience.

Started as a digital agency, it also built out its reputation by chasing digital agency-of-record titles, Gokiart says, which helped bring a number of big-name clients through the door, including Mercedes-Benz, Nike and P&G. The logic behind its AOR-only approach was that long-term relationships help build trust between the brand and agency, he says.

However, there's been a recent shift in the industry, forcing it to adapt its strategy. Gokiart admits pure-play digital agencies have had a hard time, considering the increased competition from all sorts of other

shops. Traditional agencies have made great strides in building their digital expertise (to the point where many question the need for a digital-only agency), with media, PR and big consultancy firms joining the mix.

While it's maintained its focus on digital, Critical Mass realized there was a need to open a new office in New York, where much of the new competition is based.

"New York is a centre of business, and there's so much of an expectation to have a

position and prominence there," Gokiart says. "Calgary is still our headquarters, but New York is our front door."

What's more, the constant need for refreshed content and new, exciting campaigns has changed the nature of many marketer-agency relationships. While they still exist, AOR statuses are becoming fewer and far between, he says. The shop loosened its AOR-only approach a few years ago (allowing it to go after project-based clients, rather than only chasing ones that wanted AORs), as it noticed clients moving away from this model.

While AOR might be going the way of the dodo, that doesn't mean long-term engagements have to. "It's all about the value you provide," he says. "Engagements need to produce great work that produces great results."

A number of its more recent clients started as a single project, but have since expanded to bigger business. Gokiart gives the example of the Clorox brand: Critical Mass was brought on board to redesign its website in 2010, which grew into the social media business, and then the brand's digital campaigns,

followed by the business for other Clorox products, namely Green Works, Pine Sol and Glad.

"There was a bit of concern [that] we are going into a gun fight [for every piece of business]," he adds. "But we realized that's not always the way it is, and it keeps you sharp."

That being said, the majority of Critical Mass' clients are still quite long-term, he says, averaging five years (with a handful of relationships lasting more than 11 years) – a trend he hopes continues, even as it moves towards shorter-term engagements more generally.

And the new approach seems to be working: the shop just picked up two yet-to-be-announced U.S. accounts in the tech and hospitality industries.

JUNIPER PARK'S MERGED GROWTH

Amid news of personnel changes, continued loss of clients and staff (including Infiniti to Toronto agency Union and ECD Allen Oke to Zulu Alpha Kilo), as well as Jay Bertram being mandated to head up only the Canada office (prior to 2014, he'd been leading both Canada and Latin America), news of TBWA's absorption into Juniper Park came as little surprise to many in the industry.

But Jill Nykoliati, president of what is now Juniper Park\TBWA says what was lost amid the negative punditry was Juniper's side of the story: it desperately needed staff to fulfill a huge slate of client wins.

Launched in 2007, Juniper Park originally acted as an independent subsidiary of Omnicom's BBDO Worldwide (technically part of the network, but it wasn't considered a BBDO shop).

Juniper built its business as a boutique agency going after a largely U.S. client base (which now makes up a third of its business). Focus was on helping clients build out strategy, taking them through product conception to launch – an often lengthy process, says Nykoliati. She points to an early U.S. Frito-Lay brief,

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Below: A Tupperware container of product was all Juniper Park received for a Frito-Lay strategic brief. **Centre right:** Juniper Park's CEO Jill Nykoliation with CCOs Terry Drummond, Alan Madill and Barry Quinn.

in which the brand simply sent over a Tupperware container with new, untested product (she can't name which for confidentiality reasons), and simply said "Help us with this."

What's more, a strong design team was crucial, she says, to tie in a client's multiple marketing touchpoints. She points to CIBC as a prime example – the brand has many different marketing avenues, but a strong design element ties them together.

Juniper's model has been a success, with the brand picking up Frito-Lay out of the gate, not to mention a handful of Cannes Lions, CASSIES, Effies and LIAs. This year alone, the shop has picked up 124 trophies, while as of November, it won nine new clients in 2015, including Ecobee, Natural Balance, the Miller Lite design business across the U.S., as well as taking the design lead for another yet-to-be-named

international client.

Back in February, Nykoliation says, Juniper Park execs realized the fire hose of business wasn't going to turn off, so they started looking for ways to help lighten the load.

"And for us to staff up with the people we want, across disciplines we need going forward, it made a ton more sense to merge with a firm and double in size instantly rather than hire one-by-one," she says.

What's more, Nykoliation says even though Juniper Park had built up a strong expertise in design and strategic advertising that drove results, it lacked in digital and creative technology. While once it might have relied on other agency partners or outsourced freelancers to fulfill those requirements – that simply wasn't cutting it anymore.

"Partners are great, but more and more, we're finding you need those

skillsets in-house," she says.

News first emerged in April that Juniper was moving under fellow Omnicom network, TBWA Worldwide, which gave the network two offices in Toronto. Five months later, news broke that both would merge under the Juniper banner.

"We wanted to be part of a network that behaved like a network – but respected us as an individual office," she says of the merger. "Juniper Park has never been a satellite office. It's always

skeptical of the merger. What's more, being part of a network has meant a change in the scrappy small shop. "It's our first time being part of a network," she says. "So letting go of having to always be the lead [was an adjustment]. Every new opportunity we had [prior to the merger] we found it on our own, we carved out the strategy, the creative. And now, being part of TBWA – sometimes we contribute. And that's fantastic."

While Juniper built its U.S. client base, TBWA\Toronto was much




been a stand-alone office that goes out and pitches its own clients. I [wasn't] interested in joining a network that would demote or contain us."

Since the merger, business has been good, expanding the agency's remit with a number of its clients, including CIBC, to tap into the new expertise, she says. In fact, while the agency doubled in size, the new business that came as a result of the merger meant even more positions needed to be filled.

It's not been a completely smooth transition, Nykoliation admits, with a number of industry naysayers

more regionally focused, though Nykoliation says that won't change its approach to finding new clients.

"Our strategy is the same: We're an elite team of high-calibre communications specialists," she assures. "We'll continue to go after the clients that need that level of horsepower – where they are doesn't matter."

Nykoliation says they're a brand new agency. "We said [to employees] 'Don't look back – it's not where we're going. You need to look forward and decide this is about building our agency into what it needs to be.'" 



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MID-SEASON TV CHECKUP

BY VAL MALONEY



The networks are banking on new mid-season shows like DC's *Legends of Tomorrow* and Cooper Barrett's *Guide to Surviving Life* (above).

WE'RE NOW WELL INTO THE TV-WATCHING SEASON, so how have the networks fared?

Baseball and the federal election powered ratings on a few channels this fall, with a jump of 122% in October over the same month in 2015 on Sportsnet alone.

With all eyes on baseball (and also on Netflix, Shomi, CraveTV, YouTube, etc.), non-sports programming didn't fare as well, with Bell Media's CTV and Shaw Media's Global Television seeing dips of between 5% and 10% on its linear channels and Rogers' City dipping 7% over 2014 numbers. Despite those drops, there's been few cancellations so far.

Each year the TV programming slate becomes more all-season than mid-season, with broadcasters vying to reach audiences with new content year-round. This winter there are 12 new shows hitting the conventional channels in Canada – twice as many as last year.

Will the mid-season additions be compelling enough to gain loyal viewers? Read on for what's coming.

WHAT'S WORKING, WHAT'S NEXT

WE CHECK IN WITH THE MAJOR NETWORKS ON THEIR SEASONS SO FAR, AND SEE WHAT'S IN STORE FOR MID-SEASON SHOWS.



City

Above and right: Seth MacFarlane brings us another animated comedy with *Bordertown*.

Top right: Cooper Barrett's *Guide to Surviving Life* courts a millennial audience.

THE BIG STORY THIS FALL was baseball, with the post-season run of the Toronto Blue Jays having a halo effect from Rogers' Sportsnet to its other properties. According to Numeris numbers compiled by MediaCom, Rogers Media posted a 50% increase in average weekly hours this fall.

Baseball programming factored into this fall's viewing so much that Michael Neale, CCO, MediaCom Canada, says it would be "virtually impossible" to find year-over-year growth in TV viewing if

it was excluded from measurement.

Propelled by the success of the Blue Jays, October was Sportsnet's most-watched month to date, with an average minute audience (AMA) of 446,000, a jump of 122% over the same period last year.

Though baseball bolstered Sportsnet and Rogers ratings, numbers on City suffered, with overall ratings dropping 25% from 2014 to 2015.

While none of its new shows have been cancelled, Atreyye Dey, group director of broadcast media at Touché! is surprised that the John Stamos-starring *Grandfathered* and Rob Lowe's *The Grinder* have both been picked up by their producer, Fox, for full seasons. *Grandfathered*, which was created by *The Office* co-executive producer Daniel Chun, had an AMA of 467,100 between Aug. 31 and Nov. 17, while *The Grinder* had an AMA of 423,700.

MID-SEASON LAUNCHES

Continuing its fall focus on building a youth audience on Sunday nights, City's only two current mid-season additions are also going for that target. Two new Fox comedies, *Cooper Barrett's Guide to Surviving Life* and *Bordertown* are being slotted in at 8:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. EST, respectively.

Cooper Barrett, a sitcom about



a 20-something and his group of friends, guides the audience to avoid the pitfalls they're making, like spending a night in jail or getting an ill-advised household pet. The cast is made up of relatively unknown actors, with the most familiar name being Justin Bartha (of *The Hangover* movies) playing the lead character's older brother.



Bordertown, a new cartoon comedy created by *Family Guy* writer Mark Hentemann, features two families living in a Southwest desert town on the U.S.-Mexico border. It takes a satirical look at cultural shifts in America, and the voice cast for the show includes *The Simpsons'* Hank Azaria. Dey says she's looking forward to the show, because it's bringing more of exec producer Seth MacFarlane's brand of comedy to TV.



CTV

Above: *The X-Files* and DC's *Legends of Tomorrow* leverage pre-existing fan bases. **Centre:** *Lucifer* star Tom Ellis.

THOUGH VIEWERSHIP is down overall from 2014 numbers, CTV still has three of the top five new shows this fall. Sunday night drama *Quantico* is the number one new show, and the fourth-rated show overall this season, with 2.2 million average viewers per episode.

Two of the network's other new dramas, *Blindspot* and *Code Black*, rank third and fourth of the new shows so far this fall.

CTV's top-performing show remains *The Big Bang Theory*, drawing 2.5 million viewers an episode from Sept. 21 to Nov. 8, according to data from Numeris. Despite remaining at the top of the heap, Neale says the show has seen a "very worrying" 20% to 25% erosion of audiences from 2014 to 2015.

MID-SEASON LAUNCHES

Stability is key for CTV's mid-season schedule, with several of the new primetime shows coming from existing franchises.

Headlining the January schedule

is the reboot of *The X-Files*. Creator Chris Carter is back at the helm, as are stars David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson. The show starts with a two-night premiere on Sunday,



Jan. 24 at 10 p.m. and Monday, Jan. 25 at 8 p.m., with the following four episodes airing Mondays at 8 p.m.

Next up is superhero show DC's *Legends of Tomorrow*. This spin-off of *The Flash* and *Arrow* follows time-

traveller Rip Hunter who is tasked with assembling a group of heroes and villains to save the world. Do we need another superhero show? Victoria Morris, media director at Mindshare, thinks the market hasn't reached saturation yet, and *Legends* will be a hit. The showrunner is Phil Klemmer, known for *Veronica Mars* and *Chuck*.

Also on deck is *The Catch*, the newest drama from Shonda Rhimes. It follows a fraud investigator who gets tricked by her long-term boyfriend. Inese Korbs, VP of broadcast investments at M2 Universal, believes *The Catch* will be propelled on the power of Shondaland, saying, "With her name on the credits, it is likely to succeed."

Last on the mid-season docket for CTV is *Lucifer*, which is about the devil resigning from his throne and going to live in Los Angeles. It's loosely-based on Neil Gaiman's popular *Sandman* comic book series spinoff *Lucifer*, written by Mike Carey. *Lucifer*'s series creator Tom Kapinos is best known for his work as executive producer on *Californication* and *Dawson's Creek*.

TOP FIVE NEW PROGRAMS TO DATE THIS FALL

1. *Quantico*
(CTV - Bell): 2.2 million average viewers

2. *Supergirl*
(Global - Shaw): 2 million average viewers

3. *Blindspot*
(CTV - Bell): 1.9 million average viewers

4. *Code Black*
(CTV - Bell): 1.7 million average viewers

5. *Limitless*
(Global - Shaw): 1.6 million average viewers

Source: Numeris, Sept. 21 to Nov. 8, final data

Think Millennials don't watch TV? Think again.

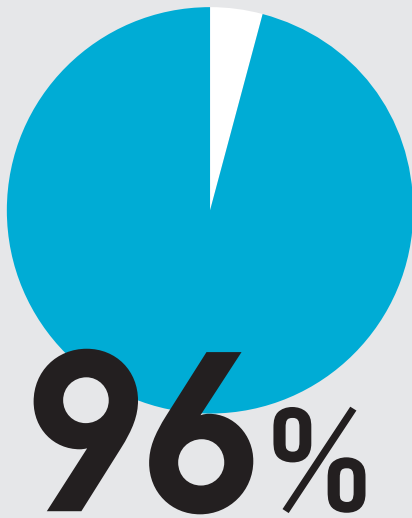
Millennials spend 19 hours watching TV each week: 7.6 times more than they spend on YouTube, 17 times more than they spend with Netflix, and 3.3 times more than they spend on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter combined.

TV is the most effective form of advertising to Millennials. Millennials overwhelmingly pick TV advertising as the most influential form of advertising, and are 6 times more likely to watch an ad on TV over a video ad on their mobile phone.

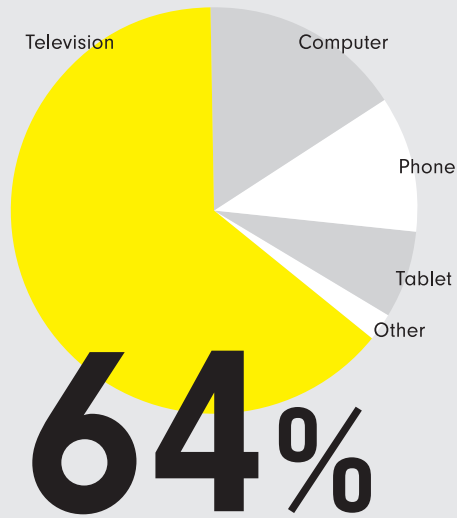
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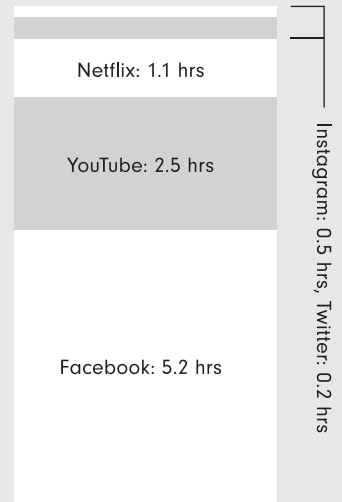
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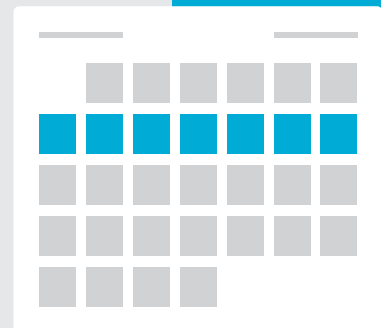


Millennials are far more likely to watch an ad on TV than a video ad on any other platform.



Millennials believe that advertising on TV is most influential.

19 hours per week



Millennials spend far more time watching television than they do with YouTube or Netflix or on any type of Social Media.



Global

Above: Jane Lynch stars as a questionable guardian angel in *Angel from Hell*.

Opposite page: The CBC is hoping for a hit with *Jekyll and Hyde*.

GOING INTO THE FALL SEASON, the average age of Global TV's viewers was 48, a stat that Christine Shipton, SVP and CCO at Shaw Media, aimed to change with the channel's roster of new programming.

Shipton said that the strategy is working, noting the premiere of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* helped boost viewership in the 18-to-49 demo by 50% in its 11:30 p.m. weekday timeslot.

The younger-skewing female-led superhero drama *Supergirl* has also performed well for the channel, with

an average audience of two million viewers per episode overall, enough to rank it the number eight new show for the season.

MID-SEASON LAUNCHES

Four dramas and a comedy are coming to Global's mid-season schedule.

Shades of Blue is a Jennifer Lopez-starring cop drama, chronicling a single mother and detective recruited to work for the FBI's anti-corruption task force. Tammy Gardner, group account director at Touché!, says she will give the new cop drama a shot, but adds its lead-in will determine whether mass audiences follow Lopez to the show. "The cast is really strong but viewers may have a hard time with Jennifer Lopez as the lead given the fact this is a crime drama and it's not necessarily something that's seen as a perfect genre for her."

Shot in Toronto, *The Code* stars Jason Priestley as an ex-pro hockey player turned private investigator. He's partnered up with Angie Everett, played by *Rookie Blue*'s Cindy Sampson. The series is based on the novel of the same name by Canadian author G.B. Joyce. Shelley Eriksen is showrunning and writing

The Code, whose previous credits include *Continuum* and *Flashpoint*, along with Alan McCullough (*Rookie Blue*, *Reign*).

Houdini & Doyle is a co-production between Canada and Scotland, following Harry Houdini and Sir

TOP FIVE SHOWS TO DATE THIS FALL

1. **NCIS** (Global): 2.6 million average viewers
2. **The Big Bang Theory** (CTV): 2.5 million average viewers
3. **Survivor: Cambodia** (Global): 2.2 million average viewers
4. **Quantico** (CTV): 2.2 million average viewers
5. **Grey's Anatomy** (CTV): 2.1 million average viewers

Source: Numeris, Sept. 21 to Nov. 8, final data

Arthur Conan Doyle as they dig into unsolved supernatural crimes with the Scotland Yard. The show stars Michael Weston (*Six Feet Under*, *House*) and Stephen Mangan (*Episodes*). Showrunner David Shore is best known for his work on *House*.

THE STATE OF BUYING

By Sonya Fatah

There's been a lot of talk lately about changing consumer behaviour and ad spend, but what impact has it had on the TV buying model?

The sands have been shifting, says Lauren Richards, founder of Pollin8, with TV media buying adapting to meet the needs of the time.

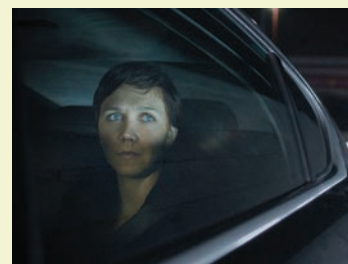
But we're not just talking programmatic buying. Canadian broadcasters aren't fully responding to that call even as their U.S. counterparts begin to open up a tiny percentage of their content for programmatic buys. Where the change is more likely coming is the adoption of addressability (Shaw Media, for example, is currently testing a near-addressability model) and the form and shape of content that is up for media buys.

For example, this year broadcasters announced 12 new conventional channel shows for mid-season, compared to six during the same period last

year. The upfronts saw less radical change with 27 new shows this year in comparison with 24 titles in 2014. With viewers less interested in seeing reruns and broadcasters looking to give advertisers more content for brand placement, the mid-season has evolved into a more content-rich period than before.

The mid-season includes limited-run series like *The Honourable Woman* (pictured) on CBC, a British mini-series with a single season and only eight episodes, and *Outlander* (pictured right) on Showcase, which is currently in its second season. The show had 16 episodes for its first season but was broken up into eight in the fall and eight in the spring.

"Broadcasters now are focused on shorter-run series and on bringing in more content," explains Melissa Kotsopoulos, group director, trading and analytics, broadcast at PHD Canada, noting it's a response to how advertisers



CW's pandemic drama *Containment*, based on the Belgium series *Cordon*, is also joining Global mid-season. The show brings viewers to Atlanta where a mysterious and deadly epidemic has broken out, with survivors trapped within the cordoned-off area fighting to survive. Gardner thinks given the right timeslot, *Containment* will do well.

"The characters are relatable, and they draw you in to want to watch more, showcasing both the dramatic nature of the plot and the emotional side of the characters," she says.

On the lighter side, Global is adding *Angel from Hell*, starring *Glee*'s Jane Lynch as a guardian angel with a penchant for the sinful. Morris doesn't have high hopes for the show's chances. "This comedy is Jane Lynch's usual schtick," she says. "I'm not convinced this will make it to season two, but if *Mom* and *Mike & Molly* can make it then maybe this has a chance after all." But the sitcom might provide relief from the seriousness of day-to-day life, and Gardner thinks *Angel* will do well. Show creator Tad Quill has honed his sitcom skills on other well-known shows like *Scrubs* and *Spin City*.

CBC

OVERALL AVERAGE minute audiences for the pubcaster remained stable this fall against 2014 numbers. Tuesday nights, however, are up over 2014 numbers, with new episodes of *Murdoch Mysteries* up 35% over the previous year for adults 25 to 54, according to Numeris numbers from the CBC. New episodes of *Rick Mercer Report* are up 40% and *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* has seen a 48% jump in viewers this fall over last.

The CBC's Sunday night drama *Heartland* is also up, with new episodes bringing 46% more viewers this fall.

MID-SEASON LAUNCHES

The CBC is bringing two mid-season shows to its schedule, joining returning series like *Schitt's Creek*, *X Company* and *Dragons' Den*.

First up is the factual series *Hello Goodbye*, which follows real-life moments of love, family, friends, immigration, grief and reunions from the arrivals and departures lounge at Toronto's Pearson International Airport. The Canadian show is hosted by Dale Curd, who



has also worked as a co-host on OWN's *Life Story Project*.

Also bowing mid-season on the channel is the new British drama *Jekyll and Hyde*, which will pay homage to the Robert Louis Stevenson novella. Originally airing in the U.K. this October, the show is set in 1930s London and follows Robert Jekyll, the grandson of the original doctor who is on a quest to discover his real identity and family history. *Jekyll and Hyde* stars Tom Bateman (*Da Vinci's Demons*), Richard E. Grant (*Doctor Who*, *Downton Abbey*) and Natalie Gumede (*Doctor Who*, *Coronation Street*).



are buying into content. In the past they would have signed off on a year's investment for a particular show like *Grey's Anatomy*. Today the buy is much more controlled, with advertisers giving their agencies approval for shorter-term weeks-long investments very close to when those shows bow on television.

Broadcasters have also been changing their upfronts and mid-season strategies to reflect changing consumption trends. Mid-season shows are no longer announced during the upfronts, responding to that aforementioned shift in buying strategy, resulting in two distinct buying seasons with diverse content strategies.

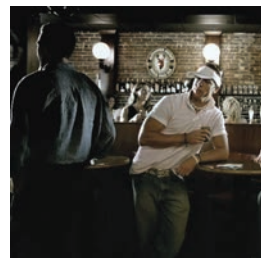
Still, to keep their live TV content more appetizing for advertisers, broadcasters may have to follow in the footsteps of their U.K. counterpart, the Murdoch-owned Sky TV, which can give advertisers far more targeted reach. The broadcaster's Sky AdSmart platform has expanded its access to new, more

local advertisers, for whom the cost barrier for entry was previously too high. Advertisers, of course, want addressability because that kind of access has a direct impact and allows them to measure their return on investment.

But that shift comes at a significant cost. Sky TV is said to have invested £100 million in its ad platform, which it built in-house. Canadian broadcasters could work with third-party vendors, but they also worry about recouping the costs of that investment in markets where there is not enough scale (think Quebec as a French-language market).

Addressability in Canada would definitely impact how and when agencies buy. For now, with the buying seasons selling out, broadcasters are in no rush to invest in expensive, game-changing technology, say buyers. The tests currently underway are near – but not quite – addressable.

Given that dollars are shifting towards digital, which overtook TV in ad revenue last year, buyers worry that traditional methods may not suffice. If they're too slow to change, warns Neil Johnston, chief trading officer for GroupM Canada, it may be too late. "It will be difficult to get people back."



HOW TO TURN 195, THE ALEXANDER KEITH'S WAY

FOR THE LAST TWO CENTURIES, THE LABATT-OWNED BEER BRAND HAS BEEN REFLECTING MARITIME VALUES BACK TO ITS FANATICAL DRINKERS. THAT MIGHT JUST BE THE KEY TO SURVIVING THE NEXT TWO CENTURIES. BY MEGAN HAYNES

For years, in bars across Nova Scotia, clocks on the walls have been counting down. Not to New Year's, or the start of patio season, but to Oct. 5, Alexander Keith's birthday. It's the Nova Scotian equivalent to St. Patrick's Day. People drink from sun-up to sun-down wearing foam antler hats, while listening to big Canadian bands play across the province. Loyal fans don't miss it. Even diehard Moosehead drinkers (Keith's Maritime competitor), don't miss it. More than 1,500 people showed up to the official Keith's party at the famous Halifax bar The Lower Deck (the only attendance the brand tracks of its annual bacchanalia) in 2015. This year, Keith himself turned 220, while the brand turned 195.

In two centuries, Keith's has grown from a small beer only available in Halifax, to the most popular brew in the province, then the Maritimes, and now it's the top-selling domestic specialty across Canada.

While the category itself is suffering from increased competition from craft beers and a changing consumer palate, causing a stagnation in sales, big beer brands could take a lesson from Keith's rich history, which seems to have been a half-step ahead of the trends for most of its existence.

THE MAN WHO BUILT THE KEITH'S BRAND

But first, a history lesson: Alexander Keith, the man, founded Alexander Keith's, the beer, when he first arrived



Clockwise from left: Sir John A. MacDonald made an appearance in this 1993 Keith's ad; Eliza and Alexander Keith; the 2009 "Hold True" campaign by Publicis helped introduce new packaging; a label from an early Keith's varietal; a current Keith's bottle; "Dave" was part of the "Made to Share" campaign from 2011; "the queen" from a '90s campaign by agency CCL.

in the port-city of Halifax. Keith was only 25 when he took over a brewery.

Keith's beer quickly grew in popularity for two reasons, and neither had to do with marketing or taste.

In the 1800s, when Canada was still a British settlement, beer was mostly consumed in pubs, which, by and large, brewed their own beers. In bigger cities, like Halifax, it was easier to distribute beer, thus maintain a centralized brewery that distributed to multiple pubs. This paved the way for mass production of beer, like Molson, Keith's and Dawes, says Ian Coutts in his book, *Brew North: How Canadians Made Beer and Beer Made Canada*. While ads in newspapers were common, they often only listed the price and availability of the beer at local pubs.

The success of Keith's in the early years was also tied to the popularity of the brand's namesake. Keith, who immigrated to Canada in 1817, would

go on to be a three-time mayor of Halifax, head of the Nova Scotia Legislature, as well as a Grand Master of the Freemasons. Upon his death in 1873, "every dignitary of note" attended his funeral, and the flags flew at half mast, writes Peter McCreath, author of *The Life and Times of Alexander Keith, Nova Scotia's Brewmaster*. One reporter wrote "Mr. Keith's name has become almost a household word in Halifax and beyond," which only helped grow the ubiquity of the beer brand.

When brewers started bottling their products, allowing people to drink at home, the need for better branding arose, writes Coutts. Beer labels started being slapped onto bottles, and by the 1870s, thanks to four-colour printing technology, the labels became more elaborate.

A DRY COUNTRY SHAPES A BEER BRAND

Interestingly, you can blame a lack of alcohol for the unique position Keith's ended up taking. As a result of Prohibition around the time of the First World War, provinces (albeit temporarily) started to ban alcohol, and by 1919, Canada was dry. While it was legal to brew beer, breweries couldn't sell their products locally.

When the temperance movement ended in 1921, focus was on limiting

drinking, rather than banning it outright, Coutts says. Following Prohibition, the only place you could drink alcohol was within your own home.

While this regulation loosened in the rest of the country, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick maintained the rule until 1941 and 1961, respectively.

This helped spur the kitchen party phenomenon in the Maritimes. And much like kitchen parties – which were friendly social gatherings – Keith's developed into a social, friendly beer, drank in good company. Consumed in the home, rather than in the pubs, the Keith's brand developed around the people.

In 1928, Keith's was sold to Oland Breweries, makers of its direct competitors, which opted to maintain the branding. And while many of the beers across the country were being consolidated under the Molson, Labatt and Carling banners, Keith's held out on its sale to Labatt until 1971, by which time it had become a regional specialty.

There's little marketing material available from this time – it was neither written about, nor religiously catalogued.

KEITH'S MAKES ITS MARK

By the '90s, despite its unmemorable marketing efforts (with a lot of focus on the brand's heritage), Keith's was the most popular beer in Nova Scotia in particular, and the Maritimes more generally. By 1990, one in three beers drank in the province was a Keith's.

It wasn't until that decade when the Keith's brand started coming into its own from a marketing perspective, says Bill Scollard, key accounts manager in the Atlantic provinces, who joined Keith's in 1990.

By this point, the brand became synonymous with the Maritimes ("It's like when you go to Niagara, you see the Falls, when you come to Halifax, you try a Keith's," says Scollard). The brand reinforced this with a new campaign from agency Corporate Communication Limited (CCL), which was brought on board to handle its more traditional marketing efforts. In 1993, the brand launched one of its most popular and longest-running TV ads, featuring three characters – the Admiral, Roger and Broderick – hunting for "Her majesty's supplies and provisions."

The launch ad featured a British admiral getting the bad news that yet another ship had been lost in Halifax, bringing the total to 43. Of course, they hadn't perished in the ocean, but were simply enjoying a couple of pints.



Harvey Carroll, CEO, Canada, at IPG Mediabrand, who worked on the Keith's brand while at Labatt in various roles on and off between the late '90s and the mid-2000s, remembers the campaign as one of Keith's most successful pieces of marketing. It was everything Keith's was: social, shareable (people became invested in the love affair between the admiral's daughter Elizabeth and privateer Roger), and charming in a down-home kind of way, he says. The campaign also introduced the iconic "Those who like it, like it a lot" tagline, which carried Keith's through the new millennium.

Queen's University marketing professor Ken Wong

says it was a brilliant move on the part of the brand. It recognized that the beer wasn't for everybody, but if you were someone who did like it, you were among the special few. While the ads received little play outside Atlantic Canada, there is still high recall of the campaign by consumers from the Maritimes.

"There was an understanding with Labatt, while there were some wonderful brands [such as Keith's and Stella Artois], they would never be the top focus of the company," says Carroll. "The company was (rightly so) focused on the other 95% of the business – the Bud, Blue, Blue Light, etc."

One of the first things Scollard remembers about the brand was the decision to launch the

Keith's annual birthday bash. While the community remembered Alexander Keith, the man, by placing beer caps on his grave, no formal celebration had been planned before 1995.

But, seeing as it was the 200th birthday of Keith (and the 175th birthday of the brand), hosting a party seemed like the right thing to do, he says.

"The spirit of the birthday has always been a Nova Scotia kitchen party," Scollard says. "It's an upscale, toe-tapping, raise your glass, the-entire-team-in-period-costumes celebration [complete] with Maritime music. We bring the 1800s back to life again."

While the official celebration would take place at

the old brewery, usually drawing a crowd of 300, bars in the province started getting outfitted to host their own Keith's bashes in the late '90s, which helped draw crowds from the neighbouring provinces.

GOING NATIONAL

In the late '90s, Labatt decided to take Keith's national. Alongside plans to nationalize Stella Artois, Keith's would grow into Ontario, then the rest of the provinces. "With its wonderful heritage, we really believed we could take that brand across the country," Carroll says.

So in 1997, Labatt re-introduced the Oland Specialty Brewing Company name to operate as a sales and marketing division with emphasis placed on Keith's and other specialty brand Stella Artois.

The specialty category was fledgling, but Carroll says the company felt it could make a dent. "We thought that maybe the little fish could be a bigger fish in a bigger pond."

The decision was made to position the Keith's brand not as an Atlantic Canada drink (though the Maritime values of social, shareable and approachable were maintained), but as a good ol' beer to enjoy. This was a stark difference from the other beer brands, which focused heavily on buxom babes and being ice-cold.

Under Oland, Keith's focus outside the East was on educating consumers, introducing them to the specific glassware required for the beer (a trend that would go on to be mainstream a few years later), as well as the tasting notes for the brand. The on-premise experience was also a key battleground for the marketing team, Carroll says, so plenty of effort was placed into signage, posters and cards that told the Keith's story. But it didn't want to hammer the "East Coast" historical angle. Rather, it emphasized sampling and tried to win people on taste.

To launch the brand in Ontario, graduates from Dalhousie and Saint Mary's universities were invited to a party on Toronto's waterfront, where the brand tapped the inaugural keg and an Alexander Keith lookalike wandered the crowd. "People were hugging Mr. Keith, hugging the keg, and good times were had by all," says Scollard. "We didn't need more convincing – but that party reinforced that there could be a market outside the Maritimes."

"Consumers were looking for something that wasn't radically different from what they knew," says Carroll. "They still wanted a drinkable beer. Something that wasn't so micro, so niche-y that it wasn't approachable. And [Keith's] made it easy for consumers who were a bit adventurous – but not as adventurous as some – to step out of the norm and try something a little bit different."

People outside the eastern provinces gravitated towards the brand for its embodiment of the "down-home" lifestyle, Scollard adds. They were attracted to the



A KEITH'S MINI-MOVIE

Talk about being ahead of its time: One of Keith's most memorable campaigns also featured an early example of branded content. During



a premiere broadcast of *Austin Powers* in 2001 the brand bought all the air time in the Halifax market and aired its own mini-movie, created by agency CCL. The story follows the admiral's daughter, Elizabeth, on her first visit to Nova Scotia, where she's pursued by the priggish Sir Stephen while falling head over heels for Roger. It aired only once in its 14-minute entirety, and was subsequently broken up into 30-second spots that ran over the next few years.

Fifty-seven percent of consumers who saw the movie liked it while another 88% called the ads "innovative."

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brand because it spoke of “a slower pace, where people had more time to enjoy themselves,” he says.

This was one of the smartest things the brand has done, notes Wong. Take Moosehead – by many accounts, a similar beer story. The brand, which is popular in its home province of New Brunswick, plays up its independence, heritage and cult status. And while it’s a popular beer (and definitely doesn’t have the same marketing might as the Labatt-backed Keith’s), it hasn’t seen the same success as Keith’s has.

By the early 2000s, Keith’s was the fastest-growing

beer brand across the country, and soon shot up to be the top specialty beer in Canada.

It wasn’t all sunshine and roses to the top, of course: in 2006, the Keith’s brand faced a huge challenge when the actor who portrayed its popular angry Scotsman character, who was introduced in ads in 2003, was sentenced on child pornography charges. Carroll says while the team discussed whether the over-the-top character could be portrayed by another actor, it was quickly dismissed and the decision was made to shelve the campaign.

Media followed the story closely – not really what you want your early national marketing efforts

to be associated with – and the follow-up campaign, by Downtown Partners, was deemed not nearly as effective as the Scotsman character, according to major media outlets that wrote about it at the time.

Despite the controversy, the brand was still on the rise, and despite its massive size and national reach, the majority of media still referred to Keith’s as a micro-beer.

“The specialty segment really was responsible for advancing beer culture beyond just the ‘I have the beer I’m used to, that’s the one I always drink,” says Carroll.

A FLAVOURABLE FOCUS

Focus then shifted towards taste, says Becky Lindsey, senior brand manager, high-end domestic brands, at Labatt. The brand was one of the first to introduce wheat flavours in 2009 (which Coutts says, with its massive national ad campaign, was partially responsible for the influx of wheat beers on the market a few years later), as well as alternatives like Cider, Hops and Red.

Keith’s put its brewing on display in 2013 to launch its Hops series, with a mass campaign from Red Urban. Working with Mosaic, the brand introduced a portable brewery that toured the country at Keith’s-sponsored events, which showed off the making of the brand, and educated consumers about the flavours, says Lindsey.

Last year, it introduced promotions like beer infusers, from its shopper marketing agency Hunter Straker, allowing people to customize their flavours.

Chefs have also become a focus for the brand, through a partnership with *MasterChef Canada*, organized by media agency UM, as well as a content play by online food video hub Tastemade, which challenged chefs across the country to come up with recipes that paired well with Keith’s. Video captured the chefs as they cooked at festivals across the country, as well as in their own kitchens, and are being posted online across the brand’s social channels. With three episodes out

THE KEITH’S BREWERY

Think of it like Disney World, but for Keith’s, Scollard says. In 2000, alongside the decision to take the brand national, Labatt and Oland also decided to bring back the original Keith’s Brewery. Working with Shikatani Lacroix, the entire Halifax structure was revamped and turned into a working museum, complete with interactive displays and actors in period costumes.

People were visiting the city and wandering the streets looking for information on the old brewery buildings, and Scollard says Labatt didn’t want to be in a position where it had to turn people away if they wanted more information about Keith’s history.

With more than 500,000 visitors since it opened its doors in 2000, the museum is now one of the most popular attractions in Halifax (with a four-star rating on Trip Advisor), pulling in 35,000 visitors a year.



Keith's introduced its Hops series with a mobile brewery that toured the country.

so far, the videos have averaged 200,000 views on YouTube alone, with minimal media support behind the campaign (it's still a bit too early for other concrete results).

The focus of these campaigns, Lindsey says, is to get consumers talking about the beer in terms of taste, and the emphasis on beer pairings (which is something a number of

brands, including Stella and competitor Rickard's, have done). The brand recognized that beer drinkers might enjoy different flavours for different types of occasions, and the current push is around the idea that Keith's has flavours for everyone, for all occasions.

Taste is a difficult proposition for beer companies, Wong says. In blind taste tests, participants can rarely identify their preferred brew. What's more, beyond

sampling, it's hard to sell "tastes good" in a commercial. But Keith's is doing a pretty good job at selling that angle, and it will help differentiate the brand, he adds. While many beer companies have started to put an emphasis on taste, the majority use "pretty standard language, like 'smooth ale' etc." he says. "Whereas Keith's is coming out and saying "Tell us what you want your beer to taste like."

"These [campaigns] are all designed to say that even if you're not a big beer drinker, when you do drink beer, why not step up and have something that tastes a little better than the average swill?" he says.

Keith's was well ahead of the current taste trend, and its competitors (and even sister beers) are racing to catch up, says Wong.

But it's often been ahead of the trends. Keith's was "approachable, friendly and social" long before it was important for a beer brand (or brands in general) to be so. It was built in the homes of Nova Scotians, and as a result, Alexander Keith's is the embodiment of its consumers.

Is it any wonder that countdown clocks for Keith's birthday bash have migrated out of Halifax and claimed wall space in the rest of the country? **B**

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AGENCY OF THE YEAR | 2015

This year's award show, which took place at the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts in downtown Toronto on Nov. 4, featured repeat winners, colourful characters and the world's longest (probably) selfie stick. Leo Burnett took home AOY Gold for the second year in a row, while DDB/Tribal Worldwide grabbed top honours in digital and MSLGroup and Touché! took the big prizes in PR and Media, respectively.



1. One of the evening's hosts, Steve Mykolyn, takes an epic selfie | 2. Mykolyn's co-host, Jason McCann from AKQA, warms up the crowd | 3. Bartenders from BarChef mix up some special drinks at the cocktail hour | 4. Smoke's founder Ryan Smolkin gives his signature pose | 5. The videos created by the AOY shortlisted agencies strike a chord | 6. The crew from Citizen Relations picks up PR Silver | 7. Touché!'s Karine Courtemanche clutches her agency's Gold Media award | 8. Joshua Stein from Tribal Worldwide accepts Digital Gold | 9. Pocketing a Bronze at the afterparty | 10. FGL Sports' Frederick Lecoq accepts Sport Chek's Brand of the Year award | 11. The J. Walter Thompson team celebrates two wins – AOY Silver and Campaign of the Year.



12. Rethink's Aaron Starkman, Caleb Goodman and Joel Holtby with their agency's Digital Bronze | 13. MSLGroup's Gayla Brock-Woodland accepts the PR Gold | 14. The Media Profile crew pose with their PR Bronze | 15. Alain Desormiers from Touché! keeps the Gold safe at the cocktail party | 16. Grip takes home Digital Silver | 17. The ladies from Starcom Mediavest Group accept Media Silver | 18. Leo Burnett's Judy John says a few words after her agency wins AOY Gold | 19. Cundari's Aldo Cundari chats at the cocktail party | 20. Strategy VP and publisher Mary Maddever presents some Gold hardware | 21. The Taxi folks pose after accepting AOY Bronze | 22. The *Globe and Mail*'s Andrew Saunders celebrates with Media Director of the Year Joseph Leon of Vision7.

Saying no to spec: the aftermath

BY ZAK MROUEH

When I first started Zulu Alpha Kilo, I would always get asked that age-old question: How big do you want to get? In the beginning, my perfect number was no more than 15 people.

Once we had our first client, the number grew to 30. Soon after, when there were 40 of us, I realized our ideal size wasn't tied to a number at all – it was tied to our ability to stay true to Zulu's guiding principles. We'll have become "too big" the moment we compromise these core values.

New business RFPs requiring free "speculative creative" put our core values to the test every day. Five years ago, we made an unconventional decision to say no to spec. Since then, this has become an intrinsic part of Zulu's new business philosophy, centred on the principle of giving existing clients our undivided attention.

When you're trying to grow an agency, it's disheartening to turn down potential clients by saying no. Would we be bigger if we'd said yes? Absolutely. But despite our stance, we've continued to grow, winning some amazing clients along the way.

When we submitted our Agency of the Year shortlist video to *strategy* this year, in which we asked a few local businesses (like a personal trainer and a restaurant

owner) to provide spec services, we knew it would spark a local debate. We had no idea it would ignite a worldwide conversation.

Since going viral, with over 1.6 million views (at press time) our video has hit a

nerve globally even among those outside the advertising world. From contractors to architects, everyone's weighing in from as far away as Singapore and Australia.

Yet on the local scene, few agencies have commented publicly. I don't blame them.

No one wants to be an advocate of spec pitches, because they know it can cost them hundreds of thousands in time and expenses. This old-fashioned practice

actually work on the business (but are too busy to work on the pitch), resulting in a giant smokescreen.

2. It can be a big, shiny distraction. Any agency can seduce clients with dazzling creative work in a pitch. But chemistry and a proven track record of producing brilliant work are much better long-term measures of an agency's capabilities.

3. It has led to an epidemic in the industry where agencies divert resources away from existing clients in order to fuel new business.

That was a recurring theme in the feedback I heard after our video was released.

Paying clients go to the "back of the line" because the pitch becomes the agency's sole focus. This is an industry-wide phenomenon, and should give clients real pause.

4. It can hinder groundbreaking, game-changing ideas. If an agency is investing heavily in a pitch, very few of them are brave

enough to go out on a limb to put forward an earth-shattering new concept. It's way too risky.

Now, some of you reading this may think we're being anti-client. We're not. Clients are the very reason we exist. We believe real client projects should never be handed off to a B-team every time a new pitch is happening. Agencies (and clients) are better served focusing investments on recruiting top talent, not producing a revolving door of spec work.

If we're going to do creative work for free, let's all put that effort behind a worthwhile charity or cause that can change the world for the better.

Let's face it. Our industry is in need of a major overhaul. The excuse that this is the way it has always been done is as antiquated as the spec pitch process itself.

No more excuses. No more spec. We owe it to ourselves.

We owe it to our clients.



is a cog in the increasingly bureaucratic procurement machine.

At the same time, even fewer agencies want to denounce spec work publicly because it would mean potentially turning away new business revenue. And who's prepared to do that?

Back in the *Mad Men* era, clients didn't switch shops nearly as often, so doing work on spec made financial sense. Eventually, agencies could make up the pitch costs. Today, it's a different world with margins squeezed for both agencies and clients.

As costly as it is for everyone, expense isn't my main concern about spec work. After 28 years in the industry, I've seen spec pitches do more harm than good as an evaluation tool for clients. Here's why:

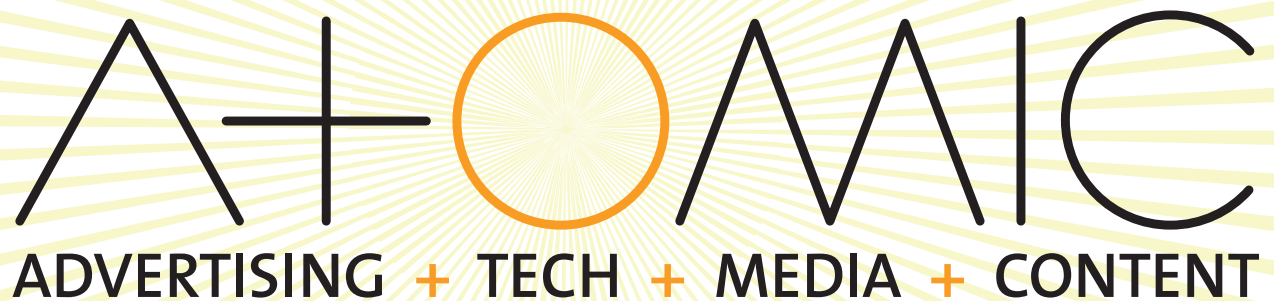
1. It's not an accurate reflection of an agency's creative expertise. Talented freelancers are often hired to do the creative for the full-timers who will



ZAK MROUEH is the chief creative officer & founder of Zulu Alpha Kilo.

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