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Media Profile's Fashion Santa brought the PR agency more than Christmas cheer, helping earn it PRAOY Gold.



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Agencies of the Year

The industry's a labyrinth of change. Here's how the top creative, digital, media and PR shops are finding their way through

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ON THE COVER: What has blue and white stripes, likes honey and paint swatches, and can ho-ho-hold its own with top fashion designers? This year's agency of the year winners, of course. Rather than dedicate this issue's cover to one agency, we decided we would try to do it all. Artist Dave Murray's illustration incorporates one of the winning campaigns from each of this year's four gold winners (Cossette, FCB, PHD and Media Profile). Read the stories and check out the cases (pages 33-65) – Fashion Santa's showboating on his AOY sled will become clear.

What's propelling Canada's top agencies?

It's the most secretive time of the year. So this year we doubled the Agency of the Year covert fun with the new Strategy Awards, remaining so stealth that not even a shortlist was announced – blasphemy in ad circles (where everyone likes to know exactly what the ROI of showing up is)! However, we like everyone to be genuinely surprised.

Both competitions deliver on that. *Strategy's* Agency of the Year is unlike any other competition. By assessing a body of work, and by asking marketers to be a major contingent of the juries, AOY provides a very different lens than most award shows. The AOY winners have to prove bench strength across brands and categories. One buzzy campaign won't get you through.

The Strategy Awards, developed with the Account Planning Group of Canada, also assess advertising from a different perspective – the strength of the insight. It's about ideas that open the door to a unique, ownable new direction for a brand, and influence change. The Grand Prix winner, Leo Burnett's sexual violence awareness work for the Ontario Women's Directorate – which hinged on the insight "if you're not helping the victim, you're helping the abuser" – certainly delivered on that (see p. 16).

A close read of all the winning AOY stories shows that beefing up on strategy remained a widespread goal this year, across all types of agencies, from media to PR. The first crop of Strategy Award-winning campaigns (p. 15) prove why that's a smart priority.

In addition to deepening insights and planning bench strength, the AOY agencies had a few other goals in common: more data, used across more departments, with more data whisperers.

The other not-so-secret sauce is content skills. Winners bulked up on in-house content creation talent and spread the gospel of everything-needs-storytelling by imbuing all corners of their agencies with a hack-the-newsfeed mentality. That shift fuelled Media Profile's Gold PR AOY win (p. 44).

Which leads to what the agencies of the year all had in common: rebooting culture to be more collaborative, nimble and innovative. Gold Media AOY PHD did it with a game (p. 40). Gold Digital AOY FCB did it by listening closely, acting fast and checking in often (p. 36). And the Gold AOY, Cossette, did it by nesting start-ups in its midst, hoping that fresh entrepreneurial spirit would rub off (p. 34).

One other thing that crops up in this issue is exporting Canadian ideas to other markets. From Silver PR winner Citizen Relations' insights and innovation group solution being adopted in other offices, to Strategy Award winner Ritz Cracker Cutters getting picked up in new markets on the brand side (p. 31). Not to mention all the candy fans in other countries clamoring for a local Skittles Holiday Pawn Shop (p. 18).

Everyone from CMOs to media agency CEOs tell me the bar-raising and team-inspiring effect of awards – both winning and just absorbing the body of work – leads to aiming higher. And that is definitely needed to succeed. So thanks to everyone who's participated in our efforts to curate the best work and congrats to all the winners.

Cheers, mm

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



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GIVING AN OLD BRAND A BOOST

By Mark Burgess

Lately, more brands targeting older consumers are ditching the walkers, slippers and high-waisted pants and depicting a younger-spirited, healthier consumer. Boost has joined that club.

Two years ago, the Nestlé energy drink was sold in a bland burgundy package, marketed to the over-80 crowd and commonly associated with hospitals. Its chief competitor, Ensure, was gaining market share through aggressive discounting.

But Nestlé saw an opportunity in a new kind of aging person: the active boomer, focused on aging well, entering a new stage of life with an empty nest and money in the bank. The brand's repositioning began in 2014.

"The way we were talking to an older or aging consumer was pretty out of date," says Ryan Hughes, the product's marketing manager. "We all had this perception of people retiring, joining walking clubs, going to the malls early in the morning, going down to Florida. The reality is that's not a 55- or 60-year-old consumer today. There are people out there running marathons in their late 70s."

To reposition itself with lifestyle messaging, the brand moved from showing the problem to creative that skipped ahead to the solution, says Rodrigo Mendes, director of consumer care. Where previous campaigns showed someone struggling to eat properly or overcome an ailment, the new creative has focused on healthy, active consumers.

The first creative launched in June 2015, with spots featuring active boomers – the owner of a landscaping business; a couple travelling the world; people paddle boarding, bowling, riding roller coasters with grandchildren. OneMethod, which took over the account in 2014, handled the creative, with Group M on media and EnviroNics on PR.

Boost saw 3% growth in the second half of that year, and 10% growth so far in 2016. The creative has also contributed to a 110% increase in purchase intent, and was picked up for use in U.S. and European markets.

The brand relaunched its Boost High Protein product in September using an integrated campaign, with the knowledge that protein is a top concern for older people. Next year it will release a new protein powder, Just Protein, with heavy investment in another 360-degree campaign.

U BY KOTEX MAKES A MOVIE

By Regan Reid and Mark Burgess

Fan favourite web series *Carmilla* is getting the feature-length treatment.

The popular piece of content executive produced by U by Kotex, which reimagines the gothic vampire novella of the same name, will get an extended cut next fall when Shaftesbury's branded entertainment agency, shift2, and its digital studio, Smokebomb Entertainment, release a scripted, feature-length film.

The 36-episode series of four-minute videos launched in 2014 with the product subtly integrated into the show's storyline.

Set in a college dorm and targeting millennials with fan communities and social media, it racked up 50 million views and more than 170 million minutes of watch time, according to Smokebomb and shift2.

While Kotex's exact involvement in the feature is still being worked out, Jay Bennett, SVP, creative and innovation at Shaftesbury/Smokebomb, said the brand will be involved in some capacity.

"If *Carmilla* lands on the moon, Kotex will be involved. In the sense that they were the whole reason we got to begin this storyworld and they will always be a part of it," he said.



He added that the company is open to bringing new partners onto the feature as well, which will be produced in the \$700,000 to \$2.5 million budget range.

The yet-to-be-titled feature is in development and is scheduled to shoot next spring. It will first be made available online on VHX next fall. Smokebomb is negotiating digital distribution partnerships and will also explore a targeted theatrical release.



LEON'S IS MAKING A WEARABLE FOR YOUR COUCH

By Josh Kolm

Leon's has come a long way from "Ho Ho Hold the Payments." The furniture retailer is now enlisting new tech in its mission to bring families together.

Using technology developed by ad agency Taxi, a small receiver can be attached to any piece of furniture in the home, be it the living room couch or dinner table. "Together time" is recorded when two or more family members wearing a small, rubber tracking bracelet are within close proximity of the receiver. Simple LED lights will let people know how their family time is tracking: green if they're on pace for more time together, red for less, with more detailed stats on a tablet display.

In March, Leon's and Taxi launched the retailer's new "Part of the Family" brand positioning aimed at being more relevant to consumers under 45. Diversifying its previous focus on promotions and discounts, the insight was that furniture is where families come together.

"We want to continue to build that emotional connection with our audience, but, you have to find new and interesting ways to reach customers if you want to do that," says Andrea Graham, senior marketing executive at Leon's.

Graham says the brand's insight work revealed that even though Canadians are increasingly using wearables and apps to track activities, they struggle to find time to spend together. The average time a working adult in Canada spends with family has been declining for 30 years.

"If we make them more aware of how much time they are spending together, they may make a change, the same way someone tracking their diet or exercise would," Graham says.

The connected furniture will likely not be sold in stores, instead being given away as part of a promotional campaign in the new year, the details of which are still being planned.

THE YEAR IN CANADIAN ADVERTISING

We compiled *strategy's* most-read stories from the past 12 months to see what created the most buzz in the industry in 2016.



CURIOSITY CARRIED THE CAMPAIGN

"The Sudbury Incident" was a Coffee Mate campaign by McCann that involved mysterious TV spots featuring coffee-drinkers whose coffee preferences suddenly changed and a documentarian investigating why on Instagram. Our piece on it became *strategy's* most-read online story. Not for the year – the most-read

ever. We suspect many of those hits were from amateur sleuths trying to solve the mystery themselves, but given the nature of the campaign, that's probably a sign of success.

AN ANTHEM FOR ... A BANK

Tangerine's "Hard Work" by John St. had the digital bank move away from driving awareness to establishing an emotional brand positioning around the bank putting the same effort into handling a customer's money as Canadians put into earning it (see pp. 28 and 57). It's been a while since powerful film work took centre stage, and the anthem spot made watching someone stick their arm inside a cow more entertaining than we ever thought it could be.



GO BIG OR GO HOME

Budweiser has earned love from hockey fans over the years with WiFi-connected goal lights and pint glasses that go off when their favourite team scores. But this year it went bigger (and further) than most brands would ever dream, working with Anomaly to send a 20-foot tall version of the goal light to the North Pole, stopping at hockey events across Canada along the way.

TASTE THE SUCCESS

Strategy had many stories feeding the industry's obsession with innovation, but the most exciting one for our readers came on the product side: Lays teaming up with Swiss Chalet to create a chip flavour based on the Canadian favourite "Chalet Sauce." The lesson? Even the coolest tech is no match for old-fashioned Canadiana.



DENTSU GETS A GRIP

After the flurry of mergers, acquisitions and closings in 2015, things settled down significantly in the agency world this year. One exception to that was the acquisition of Grip by Dentsu Aegis. The agency looked to expand (without compromising its independence or structure) and the holding company wanted to diversify. It seems to be working so far: the agency has brought on 30 new employees since the deal was announced. **JK**

SCENTS AND MARKETABILITY



Do you smell that? It's cake, courtesy of a sensor releasing a vanilla scent into this Montreal bus shelter to promote cooking show *La Relève*.

Montreal commuters have been experiencing a new sensation in recent months. Standing in a bus shelter, minding their own business, they would be forgiven for feeling a sudden and undeniable craving for cake.

That was the case in October when Elixir Marketing Olfactif included a special dessert recipe in a transit shelter board for Quebecor, promoting cooking show *La Relève*. Equipped with sensors that detect commuters nearby, the shelter released a cake scent to enhance the OOH ad and improve recall.

Christine Chamberland-Beaudoin, founder and president of the Montreal-based agency, says there's a dramatic difference between how the brain processes visual, auditory and olfactory sensations: it remembers sights and sounds for a much shorter period than smells.

Having previously worked at Cossette and Rogers Media, Chamberland-Beaudoin and partner Audrey Bernard founded Elixir last year to cater to a largely ignored niche in Canadian marketing: the nose. The Quebecor campaign was the agency's first. In November, it took over another Montreal transit stop with an orange tree for Oasis juice. The month-long activation incorporated orange and tree scents, with a makeshift tree growing out of the bus shelter and accompanying forest sounds.

The goal is a lasting impression that acts as a trigger in the grocery store, Chamberland-Beaudoin says, so the consumer will say, "I don't know the specific reasons, but my emotions tell me I should take the Oasis juice."

Mark Lee, an associate professor at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Retail Management, agrees that we're more likely to remember an ad that uses smell. It's also about the "semantic association." Congruency is important.

"Research has shown that it increases our memory comprehension if scent is associated with visuals," he says.

Given the potential for offensive smells, especially as

some governments ban scents in public buildings, what are the risks of creating a lasting negative association?

Chamberland-Beaudoin, who studied fragrance at the Clarisse Monereau perfumery school, described a focus group involving cheese. When participants were given the cheese scent accompanied by images of cheese, they loved it; the same smell presented with images of vomit garnered an altogether different reaction.

Prof. Lee says an offensive or even incongruent scent can throw off an association entirely and damage the perception of a brand.

That's why Elixir goes to great lengths to ensure its scents have wide appeal (*La Relève* went with vanilla, and all the products are natural). The agency works with a U.S. lab to create the scents, instructing the certified "noses" on what they're looking for based on the marketer's brief, target and message. After receiving the scent from the lab, it's rigorously tested in focus groups and tweaked again.

Prof. Lee says sensory marketing has been used for ages to "subtly influence behaviour." Hollister would pump out perfume in its stores; Target used lighting to give the impression of purity and cleanliness; retailers and restaurants routinely use music to create a desired mood, and music likeability has been shown to reduce perception of wait times and increase shopping behaviour and visits. But new technology, particularly VR and the internet of things, has created new possibilities.

To promote the new South Park video game, called "South Park: The Fractured But Whole" (give that one a second to sink in), Ubisoft launched an olfactory assault that incorporated VR and the game's crude theme (the superhero spoof features a character whose farts are his special power). At gaming events across Europe and North America, Ubisoft introduced the game with the *Nosulus Rift*, a VR "nose-set" that releases a specially designed "fartgrance" whenever the game's character uses his power.

The Quebecor execution for *La Relève* has an internet of things component, with sensors that detect the number of people in the shelter and release the proper amount of scent accordingly.

So what can consumers expect from sensory marketing going forward?

Marketers are always looking to customize to their target, Prof. Lee says.

"If sensors are able to realize not just that a person is walking by but who is walking by, they could potentially tailor that to the type of people that are inside the store," he says, selecting music or fragrances based on personal tastes. **MB**



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Globe Media Group has partnered with *Marketing* magazine, Rogers Insights and the Canadian Marketing Association to release the Context Matters research study. The study quantifies, by category, how context impacts the way in which consumers perceive your brand, and in particular, the benefits of advertising in premium digital environments.

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CONSUMERS ARE DEFINING BRANDS THROUGH EVERY INTERACTION, SO DESIGNING EXPERIENCES THAT CATER TO USER NEEDS – AND TACKLE BUSINESS CHALLENGES – IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER. BY JOSH KOLM

It can be difficult to think of the term “user experience” without also thinking of “user interface,” its partner in the “UX/UI” combination. It’s mostly been a techie phrase, describing the way people interact with a mobile or web platform.

But that perspective has obscured the traditional definition of user experience design as a practice, which is to ensure every interaction users have with a brand is designed to cater to their needs.

“Brand experiences are defined now by your interactions with them,” says Derek Vaz, group director of experience design at Huge Toronto, a digital agency that does a great deal of work in UX. Advertising isn’t the only thing that establishes what a brand stands for anymore.

“It’s how easy it is to book a flight, or how easy it is to return a product to a store when you bought it online,” he says. “All of those little things really define a brand. There’s a misnomer of UX only being about designing the interaction with an interface or device, but that’s just one facet of it. It’s looking at what you’re capable of as an organization, what people believe

you can do as a brand and what they need that isn’t being fulfilled anywhere else.”

Some companies – like Clearly, GoodLife and Tangerine – have found that focusing on user needs in certain interactions can also be an effective way to solve business challenges.

“Reimagining the creation of products and services holistically and with the user’s needs at the centre has always been the definition of UX design,” Vaz says. While the tech space used to be the easiest place to apply that kind of thinking, the concept is coming up in everything now, he says.

Adhering to that definition of user experience is part of the reason online retailers like Frank + Oak, Indochino and Clearly – which established brand identities and customer bases through digital experiences – are investing heavily in bricks-and-mortar locations. It gives them the opportunity to connect with consumers on a more personal level.

For example, earlier this year, Huge worked with online eyewear retailer Clearly to revamp its e-commerce site, which had been purely transactional. But looking at customer behaviour in its new retail environments revealed that there were a range of consumer needs that weren’t being fulfilled by the site, like seeing how glasses look when worn, finding gifts or the peace of mind of getting frames fitted by a professional.

Part of the redesign is MyFit, a setting customers can toggle on or off while browsing. When it’s turned on, the site helps consumers find accurate eyewear measurements (the little numbers inside the frame’s arm) on an existing pair of frames, which are then used to filter search results.

A challenge all online eyewear sites have faced has been eye doctors warning consumers that products

Opposite page: Tangerine has sought to make customer interactions as simple as possible, while online eyewear retailer Clearly revamped its e-commerce site to help consumers find the right fit.

purchased online can potentially be harmful to a person's health and eyesight if frames aren't properly measured, something a service like MyFit begins to address.

"A marketer's dream is for their brand to be in every part of a consumer's life," Vaz says. "But our role as UX practitioners is to lean back, take a view of the market and what a brand is capable of, and then single out the exact places where it's most appropriate and most valuable for a brand to play a role."

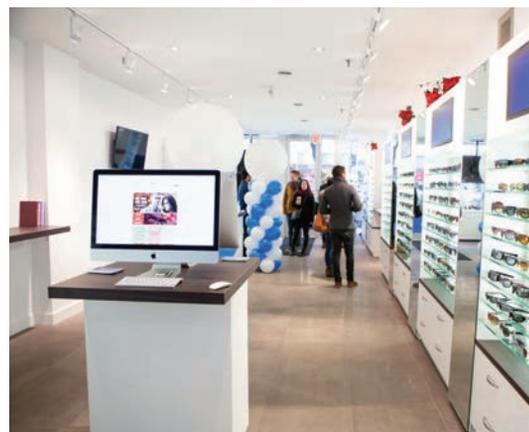
A UX approach can be especially effective when one of those needs aligns with an ongoing business challenge. As the leading chain of fitness clubs in the country, GoodLife Fitness is built around providing thousands of Canadians an experience that will help them live a healthy life. The biggest hurdle to that is helping its members find the motivation to stick to their fitness routine at the club.

Melissa Maloney, senior divisional manager of operations at GoodLife, says the company addresses this in numerous ways, like having new members commit to a series of meetings to set fitness goals, encouraging them to do personal training sessions or participate in group fitness classes, which have resulted in higher retention rates.

"People who feel connected to the club are more likely to stay," Maloney says. "You don't get a personal connection to a treadmill, so any tool we have that can create a connection is going to improve the experience and make people want to stay a member for longer."

To that end, GoodLife partnered with fitness tech company MyZone in the fall, giving members exclusive

access to the MyZone MZ-3 fitness tracker. The device is similar to other fitness trackers – measuring things like heart rate and calorie burn – but once that data is sent to the MyZone app, it is turned into an "effort score" relative to their own fitness levels and displayed on screens located throughout the club. Using effort points puts all participants doing different exercises on an even playing field,



which makes the MyZone experience more accessible – a key element of GoodLife's brand promise – and prevents members from getting discouraged if they fail to measure up to more experienced users.

MyZone users can use their workouts to reach new fitness goals and accumulate points (whether they are working out in the gym or somewhere else) that contribute to a ranking, which can be shared on an

Instagram-like social feed (complete with the ability to add photos, as well as like and comment) or in a group with friends. Users who reach certain point levels can also be entered into contests that GoodLife launched in October and November.

"Some people need things [like a challenge] that appeal to their self-esteem to motivate them," says Emmett Williams, co-founder and president of MyZone. "For others, it'll come from the social feed, which is more personal to them. In either case, there's a sense of community and belonging, of people seeing how you are doing and using that to push yourself."

MyZone is still new to Canada but has over 3,000 partner gyms in other markets throughout the world. A survey by one partner in the U.K. showed users who were given a MyZone tracker added an average of three months onto their memberships, while a club in New Jersey found users who went to the gym four times or less per month started going 11 times once they used MyZone.

Tracking data through the MyZone app extends the GoodLife brand outside of the fitness club environment for the first time, connecting members with the brand

when they go for a jog outside or exercise elsewhere.

"There's an added bonus if we can help get members to live that kind of lifestyle when they're outside our four walls, especially if we use our rewards and community to motivate them to do it," Maloney says.

Thinking in a user-centric way also paid dividends for Tangerine. A direct bank founded in the 1990s around the idea of not having

branches was completely unfamiliar to consumers used to doing their banking in person. But today, the Scotiabank-owned Tangerine uses the benefits of being online-only to address two of the most common pain points in banking, offering lower fees due to low overhead and accessibility at all hours by phone, email or chat.

While lower overhead helps Tangerine offer lower fees, it also means it isn't able to offer face-to-face advice for sometimes complicated financial products.

Peter Aceto, president and CEO of Tangerine, says it has addressed

voice recognition to sign in. Staff in its service centre are also available for consultation at any hour.

"If you want to create an experience for people that makes them feel confident in the decision they have to make, you've got to make your products and processes simple and easy," Aceto says. "That's still true, but it's also not good enough anymore. Now we've also got to provide an experience that is engaging and smart."

Beyond having best-in-class security measures, these methods are part of what makes the experience of using a digital bank

enjoyable, he says. According to a recent study by Google and Starcom, that's what companies investing in fintech should be striving for. It found that some kind of emotional connection was required to drive fintech's long-term adoption, instead of being something users try once for the novelty.

"People don't have time to waste, and they perceive changing banks or getting new products as being difficult," Aceto says. "We've been showing them that it isn't, and when you do that right, the experience is not just easy, but engaging and fun."

The company launched a new innovation centre in February where it has been experimenting with things like robots that instantly recognize a user's voice to interact with them and give them information on their accounts, as well as video chat that puts a human face to its service centre. Aceto says we're on the edge of a "tipping point."

"Canadians are telling us they are willing to do more with a bank that

has no branches," he says. "Maybe not everything, but more every day, so long as we keep using our tech and relationships and trust to create these experiences."

To make banking with Tangerine as simple as possible, it only offers one version of each of its products, instead of multiple versions with different fee structures like its competitors, something Vaz points to as an example of how UX thinking can permeate every element of a brand's business model.

He adds that applying UX thinking to marketing, communications and product design has trickled upwards and become infused in things like management consulting and business organization, as well as ensuring internal systems like customer service, inventory management and e-commerce are built around the customer's needs.

Before user-centric companies like Apple became market leaders, Vaz says there was a degree of "empathy" from consumers, who might expect some disconnect between a large company's different departments, or that they wouldn't be able to return an online purchase in-store, for example. Now the entire company and all of its departments need to be organized around the user, their needs and the market forces that are influencing them.

"The emphasis has been down at the interaction level between humans and a product but that same philosophy applies to a systematic level, like how users are shopping in store or how they react to certain kinds of messaging," Vaz says. "Sometimes you just need to listen to consumer feedback to do that. But sometimes you need to dig a bit deeper to have a full view, and think if there's something really foundational about the way your company is operating that can be changed or utilized to meet that need and solve that problem." ❧



Above: GoodLife partnered with fitness tech company MyZone this fall.

this barrier by making interactions with the bank simple and instilling confidence through things like "Digital Onboarding," which launched in July.

Customers can now sign up within minutes through digital identification methods like e-signatures. This is not only more convenient compared to the time-consuming processes and paperwork new customers previously had to go through, but it also reminds them of Tangerine's security measures. The launch of a revamped mobile app earlier this year brought a secure chat platform, as well as a host of new security features, including using biometrics like fingerprints, retinal scanning, or

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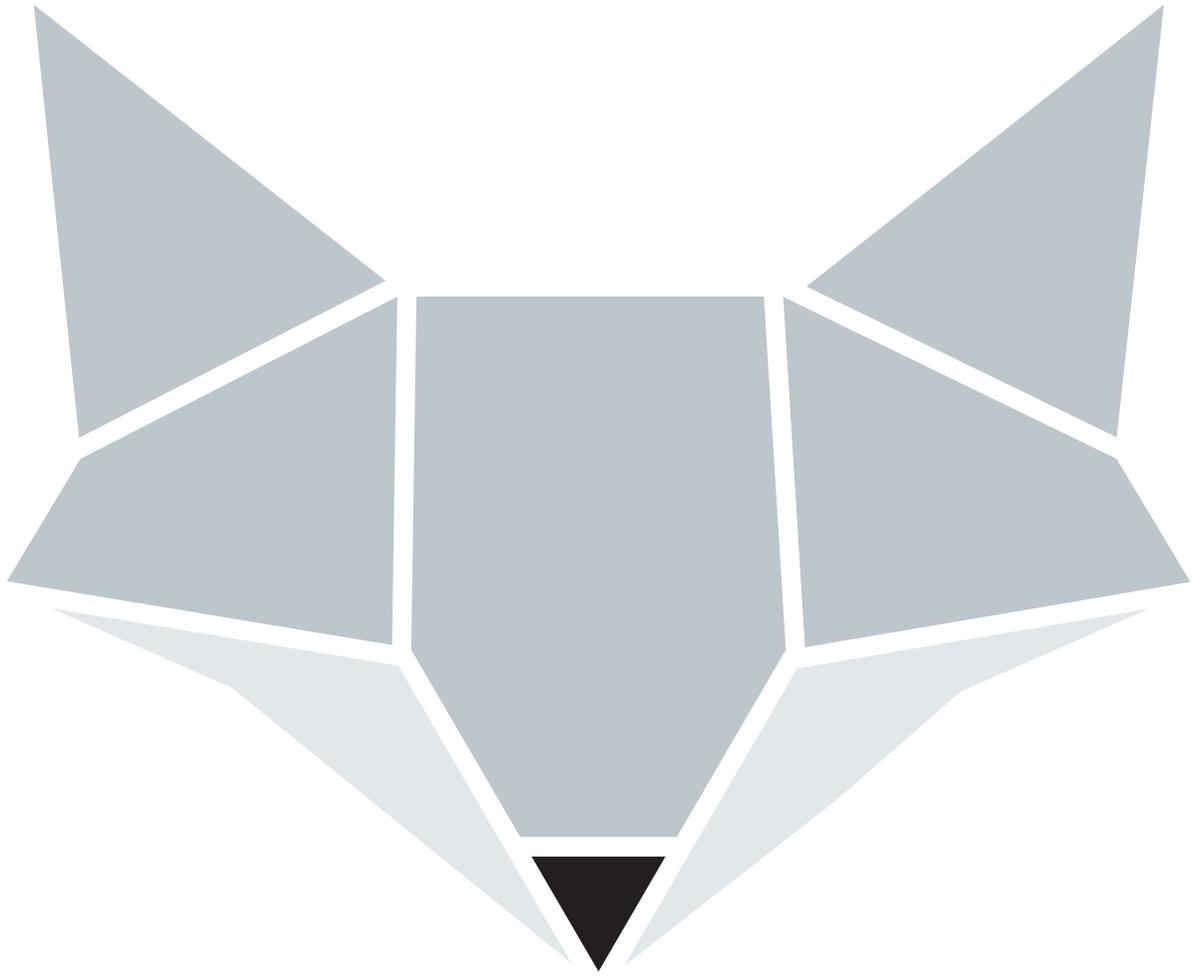
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strategy awards

“STRATEGY WITHOUT TACTICS IS THE SLOWEST ROUTE TO VICTORY,” military strategist Sun Tzu mused more than 2,000 years ago, adding the important clincher: “Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.” Simply put, you can’t have one without the other, which is why the Strategy Awards now exist — to recognize the best-laid strategic plans that led to equally effective creative.

Developed in association with the Account Planning Group of Canada, and under the guidance of an advisory board comprised of senior marketing execs, the awards celebrate the insights and ideas that strategists contribute to a brand’s blueprint.

The jury of strategists and planners, from both agency and brand sides, judged the strategy departments’ ability to lead a brand shift in thinking and positioning based on a set of deep insights. Turn the page to read more about the 18 campaigns that received an inaugural Strategy Award.

2016
BY JENNIFER HORN

Ontario Women's Directorate takes action



Sexual violence and harassment against women is typically ignored, yet it is shockingly prevalent in our society: 67% of Canadians personally know someone who has been sexually or physically assaulted.

Assault can come in many forms, such as an uninvited touch: a neck massage or squeezing of the leg. It can also take place when someone has had too much to drink and didn't say "no" to sexual advances.

An Ipsos Reid study found many Ontarians perceive these actions as a "grey area," prompting the Ontario Government to launch a plan called "It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment."

The plan included a provocative advertising campaign for the Ontario Women's Directorate that aimed to remove the ambiguity around what constitutes sexual harassment and help people understand when they should intervene. It was also meant to encourage Ontarians to speak out.

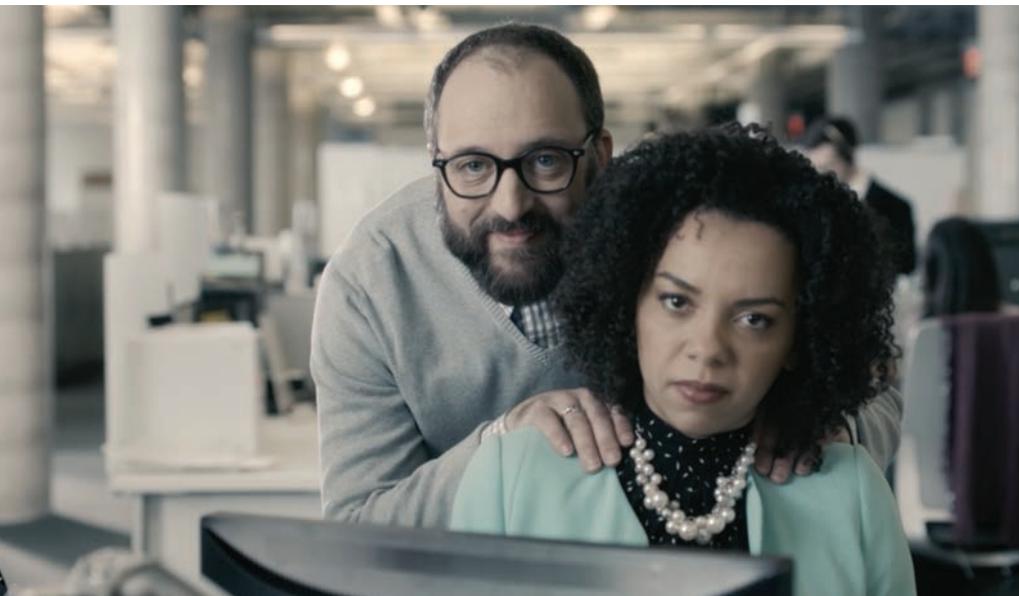
The key insight was that: "If you're not helping the victim, you're helping the abuser."

While most Canadians believe sexual assault and harassment of any kind is unacceptable, many believe they could be doing more or are unsure when and how to get involved. Only 37% of respondents said they would actually take action and get involved when witnessing violence or harassment.

People often avoid helping because they aren't sure if what they're

witnessing is in fact sexual harassment or violence, or how to intervene. This uncertainty and inaction increases the likelihood that the perpetrator will repeat their behaviour. If every bystander actually spoke up, there could be a societal tipping point that could change cultural and behavioural norms.

Rather than focusing on the plight of the victim, as previous campaigns have done, the Ontario Women's Directorate and Leo Burnett decided to empower witnesses to act. The approach was to directly target bystanders – the largest group – to show that doing nothing was actually aiding the perpetrator and perpetuating the behaviour.





The integrated campaign maximized awareness and inspired conversation through provocative TV, contextual print ads and social media.

The TV portion of the campaign launched in March 2015 with a spot called “Thank You,” depicting “grey area” scenarios where perpetrators thanked the viewer for not getting involved, highlighting the culpability of the bystander.

The spot then re-aired after the government’s action plan announcement but with a different ending – in this spot, the victims thanked the viewer for saying something or getting help.

Print advertisements were placed in bars, near college campuses, and adapted for both the general population and the LGBTQ community. The print ads were translated into 23 languages and picked up by more than 80 publications globally.

The creative also included the hashtag #WhoWillYouHelp to drive organic reach, conversation and participation through social media. In the end, the

hashtag reached 85 million people on Twitter.

Post-campaign research indicated that #WhoWillYouHelp significantly impacted public opinion toward sexual assault, violence and harassment.

There has been a notable strengthening of understanding and attitude about intervening when witnessing sexual harassment amongst Ontarians who saw the ads (60% versus 30% pre-campaign). The gap is narrowing for certain acts previously considered a “grey area” – for example, 81% (up from 71%) now consider it to be sexual assault when “someone is physically active with another who is very intoxicated.” In addition, 58% now say “I have an obligation to intervene if I witness sexual harassment,” versus 37% before the campaign.

CREDITS

Advertiser | Ontario Women’s Directorate; Agency | Leo Burnett Toronto; EVP, chief strategy officer | Brent Nelsen; VP, group planning director | Tahir Ahmad; Strategic planner | Garrett Olexiuk

Strategy Awards 2016 | JURY

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Zulu Alpha Kilo

One man's trash is another man's Skittles

The holidays can be a challenging time for any brand (much less a candy brand) to stand out. With candy canes, gumdrops and marshmallow Santas filling the shelves of every store, Skittles is upstaged by other sweets.

To drive sales over the holidays, the brand needed an idea that could not only compete against other candy, but also cut through the clutter of holiday advertising. The main objective was to increase Skittles' brand share by 2% during the most competitive time of year.

Working with BBDO, the brand found a universal insight: while people love the holidays, there is one thing they don't love – getting an awful gift they'll never use. Research shows that nearly 75% of Canadians have been disappointed by a bad holiday gift at one point in their lives.

Based on this insight, the agency gave Canadians the opportunity to trade those unwanted gifts for something they did want: Skittles.

The insight led to the creation of a Skittles Holiday Pawn Shop, designed to generate social engagement and buzz for the brand. The campaign twisted the classic pawn shop by using Skittles as currency – an idea that aligned perfectly with the brand's strategic positioning as an object of desire.

BBDO created a parody video of the typical low-budget pawn shop ad featuring Dale (Skittles' very own dealmaker) on 15 December, 2015. The video was supported with an interactive website, print, social posts and PR.

The website (Skittlespawn.ca) allowed consumers to engage with the brand online and upload images of the items they wanted to exchange for Skittles. Real time “appraisers” would instantly provide a certificate that could be redeemed for candy at the Skittles Holiday Pawn Shop. For those unable to make it to the shop, the appraisal certificate gave them \$2 off a bag of Skittles anywhere in Canada.

On Boxing Day, the brand opened the pawn shop. In addition to daily social posts, it partnered with YouTube influencer and Skittles fan, Lilly Singh, who visited the store and drove a major spike in traffic.

Over five days, more than 52,000 bags of the candy were exchanged for unwanted gifts.

Sales increased 4%, doubling the target. There were also 98.8 million earned media impressions (394% over target), with coverage on CTV, CBC, City, CP24 and Global. The shop saw 2,700 visitors (317% over target), and the brand tracked nearly 16,000 website submissions (85% over target), 51,800 site visits (20% over target), 4.4 million video views and 503,000 total engagements. What's more, consumers from around the world have asked the Skittles Holiday Pawn Shop to come to their city.



CREDITS Advertiser | Skittles; Agency | BBDO



GOLD CONNECTION STRATEGY

The Media's Big Food Drive changes the face of poverty

CREDITS

Advertiser | La grande guignolée des médias
Agency | TAM-TAM\TBWA
Strategic planning director | Simon Lusinchi

La grande guignolée des médias (The Media's Big Food Drive) brings together members of the media industry from across Quebec for a moment of solidarity in December. Thousands of media professionals and volunteers get together to collect non-perishable items and cash donations to support food aid organizations. The difficult socio-economic landscape over the last few years has increased poverty and reduced donations. The Centre d'étude sur la pauvreté et l'exclusion (Centre for poverty and social exclusion studies) found that poverty in Quebec has been rising since the 2008 financial crisis.

"The new poor" are families with low income and insufficient funds to meet housing and food needs but do not necessarily live on the street. To stand out amongst the other 46,000 charitable organizations in Quebec, La grande guignolée des médias and TAM-TAM\TBWA needed to address this new phenomenon of poverty in a realistic way.

In a television spot, the team decided to show the new face of poverty as it is. A hyper-real docu-drama put a spotlight on a Quebec family in a difficult situation. The film shows a single mother who loses her job, struggles to make ends meet and is finally confronted with housing and food problems. The spot shows how poverty can happen to anyone and a lot faster than many think. It was narrated by someone who has experienced and bears witness to this new reality.

The campaign also included OOH, print, social media videos and radio spots. The team posted a fake ad on Kijiji, showcasing an almost new car, on sale for a ridiculously low price. Callers were left with a message about how the car owner has to sell the vehicle to make ends meet after losing her job. At the end of the recording, people were invited to make a donation over the phone.

The stunt went beyond Kijiji, generating awareness and endorsements from celebrities and media. More importantly, there was an increase of \$600,000 in donations (35% more than the year prior), the highest amount in the organization's history.

Spotify spots music-friendly neighbourhoods

In late 2014, Spotify was finalizing its plans to enter Canada. Research revealed that most Canadians were unfamiliar with the music streaming category, let alone Spotify. Subscribers of other streaming services already had established preferences and behaviours. There was also a high degree of consumer inertia: even if a consumer was dissatisfied with their current streaming service, trial (let alone a permanent change) was considered just too great a hassle.

Spotify's objective was to introduce itself to Canadians and win users by showing that it knows how music fits into their lives.

Research showed that music is transformative and that it had the ability to change a person's experience of the world around them, help them focus, tune out or feel better.

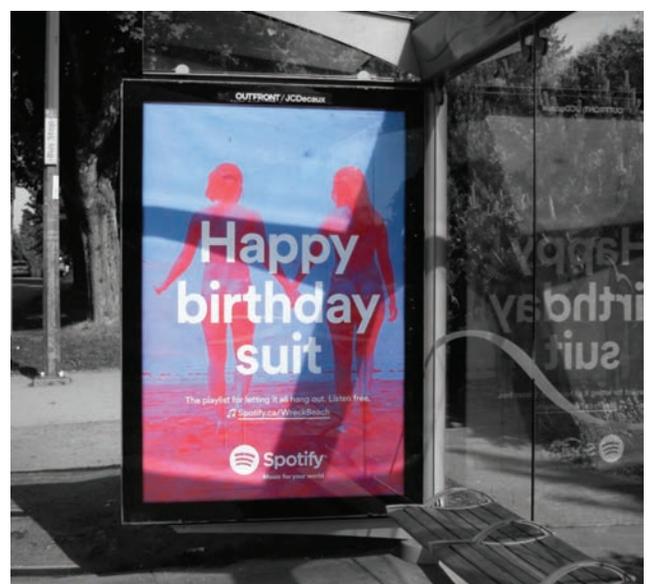
Through the platform, Spotify identified what each of its users was listening to, when they were listening, how often and where (right down to the neighbourhood). From student hangouts to financial centres to hipster enclaves, Spotify and Anomaly mapped listening habits to create the "Music For Your World" campaign, which held a mirror to people's lives.

Thirty-plus playlists were created to match Canada's highest-streaming neighbourhoods, based on the actual music being listened to by the people who live there, including the most streamed and the most distinctive tracks.

The campaign increased daily registration to Spotify by 21% and moved the app from #3 to #1 (among music streaming apps) in app store downloads across both iOS and Android. The campaign also delivered a 20% increase in brand awareness (from 38% to 58%) versus the previous period and generated over 30 million impressions nationally.

CREDITS:

Advertiser | Spotify Canada; Agency | Anomaly
Strategist | Jon Daly





JURY PRIZE RESEARCH MASTERY | BRONZE TURNAROUND STRATEGY

Nature Valley rediscovers the outdoors

CREDITS

Advertiser | Nature Valley
Agency | Cossette
Chief strategy officer | Jason Chaney
Director of strategy | Kevin McHugh

Youth are increasingly losing their connection to nature, opting instead for artificial experiences indoors. Research showed that this disconnection is not just a phenomenon associated with the current digital generation, it keeps happening with each passing generation.

Nature Valley and Cossette decided to shock consumers into a very important conversation about what would happen if we completely lost our connection to nature. An online film featured interviews with three generations from three different families and asked each to answer the same question: "As a kid, what did/do you like to do for fun?"

Each generation had less outdoorsy fun and adventure than its ancestors, and kids offered a jarring contrast by listing video games and mobile

devices. The video prompted a conversation about whether the increasing disconnect was good or bad.

Cossette then created a park finder, which helped consumers find activities near their home. The agency also geo-targeted moms to promote natural events, like a meteor shower and blossom festivals, that would inspire them to go outside and enjoy their surroundings. Simultaneously, the brand ran 15 product spots on TV that prompted people to "Rediscover the Joy of Nature."

The video has been viewed 25 million times, and the campaign received coverage in media outlets from *Time* to *Fast Company*. In the end, Nature Valley saw a 35% increase in sales year-over-year.



SILVER GAME CHANGER | SILVER TURNAROUND STRATEGY
SILVER NICHE STRATEGY

Liberal Party gets Canada ready for Justin Trudeau

CREDITS

Advertiser | The Liberal Party of Canada
Agency | Bensimon Byrne
President and strategist | Jack Bensimon
Strategy and research | David Herle, The Gandalf Group

Justin Trudeau started the 2015 Canadian federal election as the third-place candidate, trailing in every poll. Voter intent had been slipping for a year while the ruling Conservative Party's high reach and frequency campaign framed him as "Just Not Ready." When the writ was dropped, there was no time for a conventional campaign of incremental gains. Trudeau had 78 days to change public perceptions and show that he was more than ready to be prime minister.

Research showed Canadians liked Trudeau's plan for fairness, but they also said he just wasn't ready to be prime minister (thanks to the Conservative media assault).

So Bensimon Byrne created a campaign where "fairness" had to take a back seat to "readiness." The agency created communications that were atypical of political advertising. The campaign didn't rely on the negative politics of division. Instead, the message and tone were positive, with Trudeau responding to Harper's attack directly, telling Canadians exactly what he wasn't ready for.

"This is what's happening to millions of Canadians," Trudeau said in a follow-up video, as he walked up a down escalator. With this visual metaphor, the Liberal leader explained Keynesian economic theory, the need to invest to kick-start the economy, and why he stood apart from his opponents. The video received more than three million views.

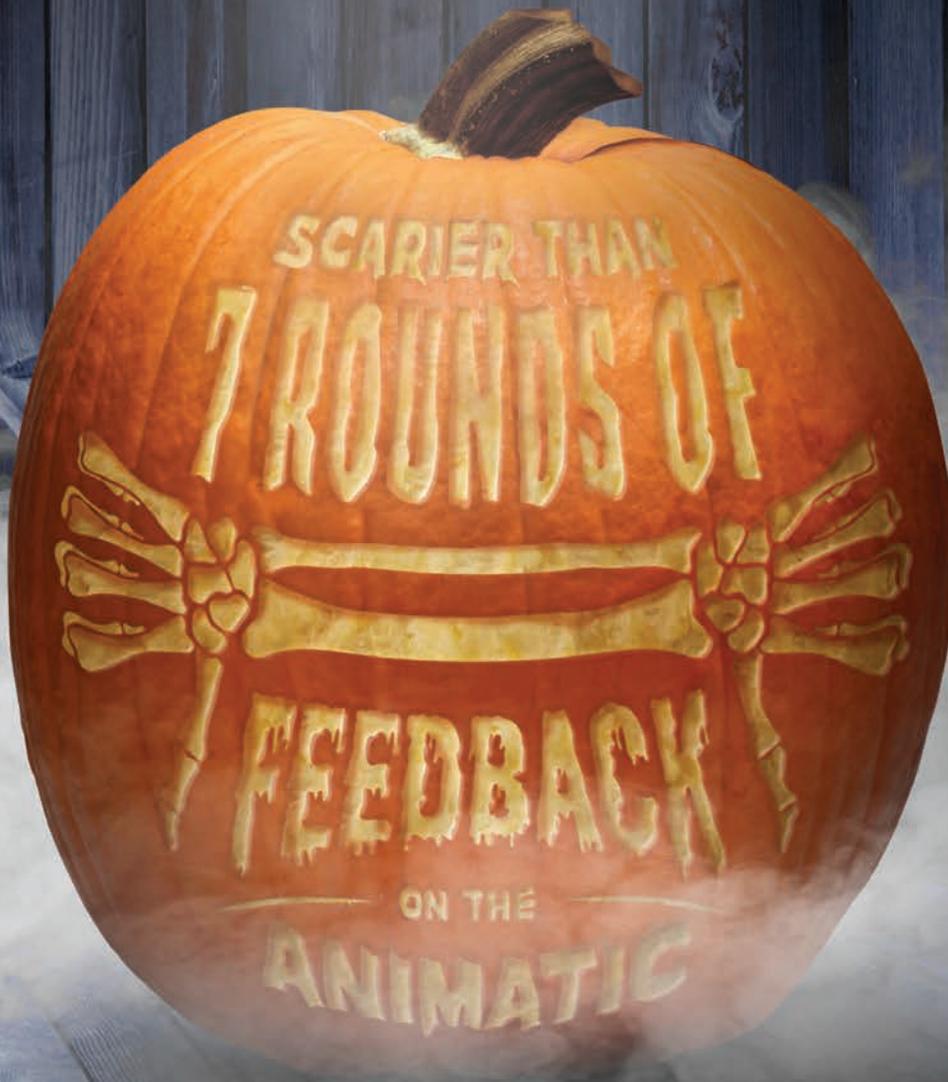
In the final days, Harper started saying that Trudeau would cut a popular tax-saving program for seniors (which was not true). So the agency enlisted 94-year-old former Mississauga mayor, Hazel McCallion, to set the record straight in a humorous online spot. That video received more than four million organic views. It also turned around the seniors' vote with a massive 19-point swing in just one week.

The final piece of content was a rallying cry that conveyed positive and hopeful momentum. The word "Ready" was used in the spot to encapsulate the positive 78-day journey, with a nod to the negative attack ad that started it.

Trudeau won a 184-seat majority, the first time a third-place leader rose to the Prime Minister's Office and the largest-ever seat gain from one election to the next in Canada, adding 150 seats to the Liberal's 34. The party doubled its share of the popular vote.

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SILVER CONNECTION STRATEGY | SILVER EVOLUTION STRATEGY:
KEEPING IT FRESH | BRONZE GAME CHANGER

Raising the Roof's faux shelter causes a frenzy

CREDITS

Advertiser | Raising the Roof
Agency | Leo Burnett Toronto
Chief strategy officer | Brent Nelsen

A staggering 235,000 Canadians experience homelessness every year. Raising the Roof, a non-profit supporting those without homes, needed to show people that short-term solutions (such as homeless shelters) are not the answer. Instead, the focus should be on long-term measures (including changes to government policy) that put an end to homelessness for good.

The organization and Leo Burnett decided to connect people to the problem in a new way. The team created a clever hoax that forced people to experience the negative side of short-term solutions to homelessness for themselves.

The idea was born out NIMBYism: the notion of "Not In My Back Yard."

The agency found a property for lease in an affluent area (and one of the last places anybody would expect to see a homeless shelter) in Toronto and covered it with a plywood façade. It featured a

sign announcing a homeless shelter was coming soon and encouraged people to contact the shelter for more information. It created an immediate uproar among those who saw it as a long-term problem for the community. People called in and left messages saying they did not want a shelter in their "backyard."

Within hours, the team revealed that Raising the Roof didn't want a shelter in their backyard either, with a sign that read: "You told us you don't want a shelter here. Neither do we. Support us in creating long-term solutions. Let's end homelessness."

The "hoax" caused a media frenzy that saw the issue covered by every major Toronto news outlet, as well as other parts of the world. The result was an estimated 7.7 million unique impressions with zero dollars invested in media. The video earned 52,000 views and donations to Raising the Roof increased 506% versus the previous year.



This sweater is so gay (and that's OK)

The marginalization of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth is a society-wide problem. Everywhere, from mainstream media to the classroom to the workplace, homophobia leads to painful forms of discrimination. At its mildest, this discrimination can leave LGBT people feeling like outsiders. At its worst, it can lead to mental distress, physical assaults, and even thoughts of suicide.

Acceptance of those who identify as LGBT starts when people have a deeper understanding of how offensive the misuse of terms like “so gay” can be. Many people have used the word “gay” to describe something in a negative way (for example, “That movie was so gay” or “Those shoes are so gay”).

The Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity (CCGSD) wanted to change this behaviour and use the widespread misuse of “gay” to its advantage. To get the public to think about how psychologically damaging that language can be on gay people (and gay youth in particular) the CCGSD set out to show how silly calling things “gay” really is, and ultimately get people to use it the right way.

Working with Saatchi & Saatchi, CCGSD created the world’s first and truly gay object: the “Gay Sweater.” The jumper was made entirely of human hair donated by gay men and women. The entire process was filmed and used in an online video.

The “Gay Sweater” launched during Toronto Fashion Week with the hashtag #thegaysweater. The organization worked with influencers both inside and outside the gay community to spread the word about the project. All of the campaign elements were housed on a microsite, where the public could watch films about how the sweater was made, the meaning of the word “gay” and how damaging its misuse can be. The site also included downloadable education packages on gender diversity for teachers to use.

The “Gay Sweater” received media coverage worldwide, generating over \$1.1 million in earned media (more than five times the initial

goal), and over 165 million impressions in the first week (more than six times the initial goal) – including 45 million mainstream media impressions in the first three days. These mainstream media mentions led to a quality score of 94% (versus the initial goal of 75%).

The fact that #TheGaySweater generated nearly 16 million impressions on Twitter and more than six million on Facebook indicates the message was received.



CREDITS

Advertiser | Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity
Agency | Saatchi & Saatchi



SILVER EVOLUTION STRATEGY: KEEPING IT FRESH

Cheerios gets behind a buzz-worthy cause

CREDITS

Advertiser | General Mills (Honey Nut Cheerios)
Agency | Cossette
Chief strategy officer | Jason Chaney
Director of strategy | Kevin McHugh

Honey Nut Cheerios is a top performing cereal brand for General Mills. However, in an increasingly competitive environment and changing consumer attitudes towards cereal, the brand was at risk of losing significant ground.

To reach millennials, the brand needed to find a way to show that it cares as much about the world as it does about selling cereal. The rapidly declining honey bee population, which is responsible for pollinating one-third of fruits and vegetables, became the cause the brand positioned itself around.

As iconic as Honey Nut Cheerios' Buzz the Bee is, the brand decided he needed to disappear to make people feel the impact of a declining bee population. So Cossette removed Buzz from the cereal box, drawing attention to an important cause, as well as to the Cheerios brand.

However, it wasn't enough to raise the issue without providing a constructive solution. So the brand invited consumers to #BringBackTheBees

by registering online to receive a wildflower seed pack (which also included a coupon for the cereal and a lawn sign). They could then plant the seeds to provide a food source for the honeybees.

To drive awareness, the agency created an online video, which featured popular clips of people saving animals, and asking the viewers to start thinking about saving the bees. The video launched at garden show Canada Blooms, and though not in the original plans, it also aired on TV based on the online success.

Baseline sales increased 11.8% and the brand exceeded the initial goal of 35 million seeds in the first week, distributing a total of 115 million seeds. The video garnered 10 million views online.

And as planned, Cheerios' #BringBackTheBees became part of the social conversation. Children created videos discussing the campaign while sometimes eating the cereal. Adults also posted pictures of their cereal boxes, seed packs and flower gardens on Instagram.



SILVER CAUSE/PUBLIC SERVICE

Unpausing SickKids' lives

Last year, SickKids created 45 stories about 45 kids over 45 days for its “Better Tomorrows” campaign. Cossette was asked to build on that campaign with very little budget and drive direct donations.

Millennials are more likely to donate if they believe that their donation will have a direct impact. They also don't respond well to delayed gratification and require immediate response to their actions. So, the agency decided to leverage the content in a way that potential donors could affect the children's story, or the outcome of their story, immediately.

When a child enters a hospital, it's as if their life is put on pause: birthdays, recess, hanging out at home – everything comes to a standstill.

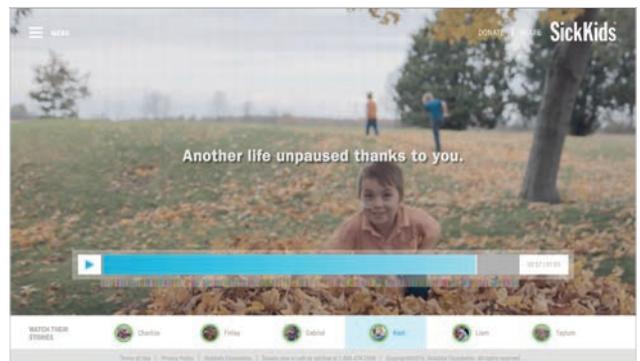
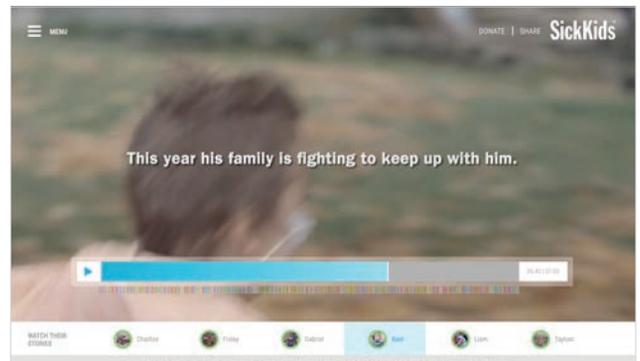
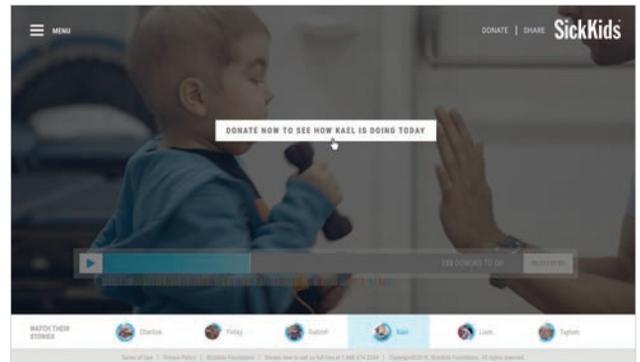
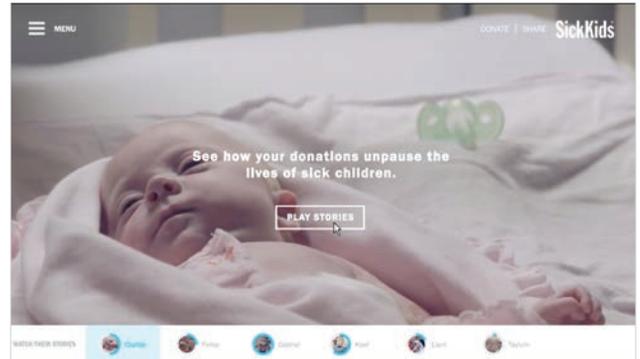
For the “Life Unpaused” campaign, the foundation and Cossette revisited six of the patients from the prior year's videos and added new endings depicting their current state of health. Once the video hit a critical point in the narrative, it would pause with a message asking viewers to donate to unpause the child's life and see how the kid is doing today. As they donated online, their name was added to the video timeline, registering the individual's donation exactly when they made it.

Each video had a target number of donations. Once that target was hit, the video was unpaused and released via social media.

The campaign increased online donations by 370% versus last year's campaign, and all six stories were unlocked in five weeks. The foundation tracked a total of 2.7 million video views and the campaign garnered 74.5 million media impressions.

CREDITS

Advertiser | SickKids Foundation
Agency | Cossette
Chief strategy officer | Jason Chaney
Director of strategy | Kevin McHugh
VP, product and technology strategy | Joe Dee
VP, experience strategist | Tara O'Doherty



SILVER CHALLENGER STRATEGY

Tangerine works hard for your money

Since 1997, Tangerine has worked to give Canadians an alternative to the Big 5 banks for its nearly two million clients. However, the direct bank found that there was a large and growing population of “direct-ready” Canadians – people who were already comfortable with online and mobile banking, but who still did business with one of the traditional banks.

Research showed that while existing clients adore the brand, prospective customers lacked familiarity with Tangerine’s purpose. They recognized that the brand is innovative and progressive, but also viewed it as somewhat cold and ethereal.

Ultimately, this lack of familiarity with the human side of Tangerine meant that prospects didn’t believe the brand’s intentions were different from the Big 5’s, even if its products were. So Tangerine worked with John St. to reinforce the purpose behind its offering and to inspire Canadians to view banking in a new light.

Research suggested that most Canadians view banks as identical to one another, creating inertia around switching. Canadians perceive banks as large, profit-oriented institutions that are in the business of making money. The brand and agency decided to show Canadians that Tangerine is actually in a different business than the traditional Big 5 banks.

The “Hard Work” campaign was created to reframe what people should expect from their bank. It launched in January 2016 with a 60-second anthem video that showed how hard

Canadians work to make a living, before asking viewers whether their bank puts in similar effort on their behalf. An original recording of an Army Marching Cadence track set the backdrop for the hard-working Canadians portrayed on screen. The “Hard Work” anthem was supported on TV, in cinemas, OOH and online.

In just one month following the campaign’s launch, Tangerine saw a 3% increase in unaided brand awareness and a 7% increase in overall brand opinion. The bank has seen a 21% increase in new clients since the launch, putting it well ahead of its target.

CREDITS Advertiser | Tangerine; Agency | John St.; Chief strategic officer | Brenda Rideout; Planning director | Jason Last; Strategic planner | Naomi Blackman



SILVER NICHE STRATEGY

Penningtons takes on fat-shaming

Being overweight has a serious social stigma. Many plus-size Canadians suffer from low self-esteem triggered by an environment that constantly reinforces a negative perception in both direct and subtle ways.

People often perceive plus-size women as fat people who eat too much junk food and who don’t tend to move much. Penningtons aims to offer fashion products that make plus-size women feel their best, so to break the stigma, it made people aware of how heavily their fat-shaming words, gestures, looks and thoughts weigh on plus-size people’s self-esteem.

The brand and Lg2 used a clickbait-approach, creating a video entitled “Why Plus-Size Women Shouldn’t Do Yoga.”

Inspired by online conversations revealing the widespread prejudice that plus-size women are overweight because they are not active, the offensive took the form of a one-of-a-kind yoga video.

It featured a bad-ass plus-size yogi who deconstructs the prejudice shot by shot, before urging women to not compromise and to practice whatever activities they want without fear of prejudice.

Thousands of plus-size women felt empowered and inspired by the brand’s message. The campaign reached 30 million people, tracking 18.6 million views and two million engagements. The video received a 23% view rate. Celebrities such as Ashton Kutcher and Melissa McCarthy shared the campaign, and it received coverage by Canadian and international media such as *Cosmopolitan*, *People* and *Chatelaine*. Penningtons’ yoga brand, ActiveWear, saw its entire new collection sell out in less than a week.

CREDITS Advertiser | Penningtons; Agency | Lg2; Strategic planning | Anne-Marie Leclair; Social and digital strategy | Sabrina Côté





SILVER CONNECTION STRATEGY

Cineplex prioritizes pleasure

Cineplex faced a fundamental challenge: the entertainment company had strong functional awareness, but it was surprisingly weak on brand affinity. It needed to build an emotional connection with consumers and stand for something beyond its utility as a movie screener.

All the stress that comes from keeping up with the demands of life leaves little room for fun. Cineplex set out to remind Canadians of the joy that comes from watching a movie together.

Zulu Alpha Kilo used the power of storytelling to create a short film that was as entertaining as the films that Cineplex plays on its screens. “Lily and the Snowman” is an animated, two-minute film about a young woman and her magical snowman, which encourages viewers to “make time for what you love.”

Cineplex released online trailers and in-theatre movie

posters prior to its release. A blogger outreach program helped seed the film via editorial-style, curated blog posts and organic peer-to-peer sharing. The film’s in-theatre debut was timed to coincide with the new *Star Wars* film, playing before the feature presentation. In addition, the film and a “making of” video were shared on social.



In the first 12 days, with an online media budget of only \$150,000, the video received 21.8 million views and over 300,000 shares on Facebook and YouTube, while surpassing objectives

for visits to Cineplex.com by over 300%. The film has exceeded 30 million views and Cineplex’s brand tracking shows a 37.5% increase in brand affinity. Its success contributed to a record month for Cineplex.

CREDITS Advertiser | Cineplex; Agency | Zulu Alpha Kilo
Strategic planner | Ebrahim El Kalza

BRONZE CHALLENGER STRATEGY

Interac gets consumers back in the black



Despite enjoying near universal brand recognition, Interac’s share of mind was declining, thanks in part to relentless marketing by Visa, Mastercard and American Express. The credit card companies had convinced Canadians that even paying for tiny purchases with a credit card was a good idea. As a result, Canadians racked up a record amount of debt.

Interac needed to fight back and define its role to consumers. The “Be in the

Black” brand platform, created by Zulu Alpha Kilo, launched in spring 2014. Its goal was to position the brand as an ally in financial health and to convince Canadians to pay with

Interac Debit instead of racking up debt on credit.

During the holiday period, Interac partnered with retailers such as Cineplex, Pizza Nova and Tim Horton’s to stop eager shoppers in their payment tracks. The programs were designed to trump the delayed gratification of credit card rewards with the instant gratification of gifts with purchase. For example, consumers received a free donut at Timmies if they paid with their Interac debit card.

The brand surrounded retailers with outdoor boards that included headlines such as, “Credit cards are a pain in the assets,” “Don’t borrow from tomorrow” and “Travel points can’t help you escape debt.”

Interac also provided tools to help people change their behaviour. It takes 21 days to break a habit, so the brand teamed up with

financial reality TV star Gail Vaz-Oxlade to create “The Interac 21-Day Challenge” – a video series to help Canadians wean themselves off credit card addiction.

And finally, to help Canadians avoid the January blues after a huge post-holiday bill, Zulu Alpha Kilo created the “Have A Merry January” holiday campaign, which also included OOH, print and digital executions with headlines like “Debt is a real nutcracker” and “You’re a foul one, Mr. Debt.”

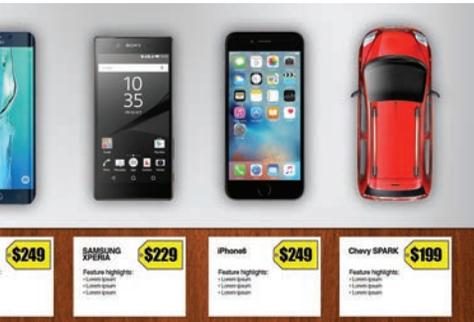
Awareness increased by 50% from pre-launch levels and 9% over the previous year. Interac maintained a top-of-mind leadership position in spite of being grossly outspent, with a score of 63%, eclipsing its main competitors Visa (57%), Mastercard (52%) and AMEX (49%).

What’s more, Interac achieved a 5.47% lift in transactions over the previous year.

CREDITS Advertiser | Interac; Agency | Zulu Alpha Kilo; Strategy team | Emma Brooks, Ebrahim El Kalza

BRONZE LAUNCH STRATEGY

Chevrolet's techy car sparks interest



In 2015, the automotive category was beginning to emerge from a years-long slump, with millennials starting to purchase cars. However, research also revealed that this growth was happening mostly among suburban millennials. Young urbanites remained resolutely uninterested in cars.

Chevrolet and McCann Canada developed a deeper understanding of millennials, doing a full contextual analysis and examining how they felt about technology. Mobile technology was a consistent topic of interest among millennials, and research showed they wanted to talk to their cars, just like they talk to Siri.

With this insight, Chevrolet decided to focus on the Spark model's advanced technology and promote the vehicle as if it were a new smartphone.

The brand launched an online, social and traditional

media teaser campaign, with a countdown in the form of a giant box placed in high-traffic mall locations across the country. The box looked like the packaging for a new smartphone. Chevrolet also worked with Canadian tech celebrities and bloggers to host a public "unboxing" live-streamed on YouTube and Periscope.

Once the secret was out, the brand encouraged people to try the Spark's Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and experience why Spark is "The Ultimate Mobile Device." It also parked a Spark vehicle amongst the smartphones inside a Best Buy store.

The campaign generated almost 250,000 website views, and #SparkMobile trended on Twitter, exceeded only by #DonaldTrump.

Vehicle sales significantly over indexed against aggressive forecasts – 22% ahead of the goal.

CREDITS Advertiser | Chevrolet; Agency | McCann Canada; Chief strategy officer | Mary Chambers; Strategy director | Ryan Roberts; Strategist | Jenny Hwang

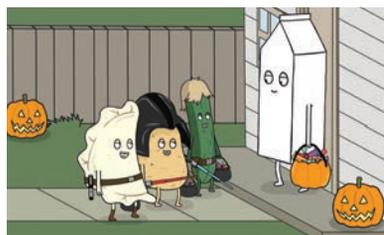
BRONZE NICHE STRATEGY

Milk West's snackable content

Milk consumption declines heavily with teens age 13 to 17. Milk West and DDB Canada needed to convince teens to drink an extra half-glass of milk per month in order to positively impact milk's declining consumption rate. At the same time, they wanted to improve the perception of milk among young people.

Advertising to teenagers can be tricky. They spend more time consuming content online than any other media, and they hate being forced to watch ads. This meant Milk West's approach needed to be less disruptive than traditional marketing.

The team researched the types of websites, content and humour that appeals to teens. Instead of forcing them to watch an ad about milk, the organization created a branded content series that they would want



to watch while relaxing after school – while also reminding them how milk pairs well with their favourite snacks.

"Snack Time" features a carton of milk named Carlton and friends who all happen to be snacks that taste great with milk. Every two weeks, starting in March 2015, Milk West introduced a new "Snack Time" episode on YouTube, as well as Tumblr content like animated GIFs and static cartoons.

The series was unbranded to engage with

teens on their terms. DDB pushed it through promoted YouTube videos and YouTube skippable pre-roll.

The team also ran special episodes in theatres during the three biggest teen films of the year – *Avengers*, *Jurassic World* and *Star Wars* – creating 20,000 Carlton-shaped USBs with additional content to hand out to teen movie-goers.

By the end of March 2016, Milk West had built an online community of over 25,000 YouTube subscribers and 8,000 Tumblr followers. It's also tracked more than 11 million episode views and over 7.4 million Tumblr impressions.

Carlton delivered. The "Snack Time" audience reported consuming 13 servings of milk per week, versus 10.6 for teens not watching the series.

CREDITS Advertiser | Milk West; Agency | DDB Canada; Strategist | Rob Newall; Media strategist | Alex New, OMD



BRONZE TURNAROUND STRATEGY

Ovarian Cancer Canada fights back

By the time ovarian cancer is detected, it's often too late to save a woman's life. With no screening test, vague symptoms and little understanding even in the medical world, it's been named "the silent killer," one that sadly takes five Canadian lives every day.

Ovarian Cancer Canada and Grey needed to get women to care about a disease they know nothing about, so that they would then talk to their doctors and each other about it.



The agency explored how to talk about ovaries in a way that was comfortable and culturally relevant, and not just clinical. Research showed that people weren't very comfortable with the term "ovaries." However, when talking about the male equivalent (gonads, or balls), people associate the term with courage, audacity and chutzpah. So what if women's ovaries are positioned as female "balls"? What if they represent the same bravery as their male counterparts? And the same bravery it takes to fight the fatal disease?

It takes grit, courage and strength to battle women's most fatal disease. It takes "Ladyballs."

Grey created a powerful spot that showed situations a modern woman might find herself in – such as a business meeting or a social gathering – where she was forced to make brave and bold decisions. The conversation then became, "Do you have the ladyballs to do something about ovarian cancer?"

To support the video, a series of print and digital ads showcased the faces of strong and assertive women.

With more than \$9 million in donated media space, the campaign resulted in an average increase of 22 donor calls per week and a 118% increase in medical inquiries from women across the country. Social engagement increased by 220% and calls to OCC regional offices went up by 35%.

CREDITS Advertiser | Ovarian Cancer Canada; Agency | Grey; Strategy | Lauren Scapillati, Andrew Carty



BRONZE EVOLUTION STRATEGY: KEEPING IT FRESH

Ritz artfully cuts through the clutter

Mondelēz was looking for a way to get Canadian millennial moms to see Ritz as part of their everyday. In a well-established category, the brand's goal was to improve purchase intent and increase consumer conversation around usage.

Social listening and qualitative interviews show that millennial moms look for easy and time-saving recipes, so the brand decided to help by creating simple, quick inspiration to help them prep food for their kids.

Working with FCB, Ritz created a social post inspiring moms to hack snacks. The post featured a "Cracker Cutter," which moms could use to create round, scalloped and perfectly sized toppings (for example, sliced luncheon meats or cheeses) for Ritz crackers. That post generated 1.1 million impressions, 1,145 shares, 1,038 comments, 11,620 clicks and 8,031 likes.

After the post was shared, Ritz followers asked the brand to actually create the cutter – so it did. And with the Facebook community's help, the brand created a recipe series, called the "Cracker Cutter Cookbook," to spark new ways to use the cutter.

The online posts generated 16 million campaign impressions on Facebook and 56,000 engagements (an average of 1,500 per post). The Cracker Cutter helped drive purchase intent, with a brand effect study showing purchase intent by 63% of Canadian women (age 25 to 54) exposed to the social campaign.

Due to consumer interest, an additional 80,000 Cracker Cutters were produced for in-store promotions and the concept is being considered for distribution in the U.S.

CREDITS Advertiser | Mondelēz; Agency | FCB Toronto; VP, director of strategic planning | Heather Segal; Digital strategists | Anastasia Tubanos, Mona Chammis

COSSETTE

Agency of the Year?

we're lovin' it!

XOXO

McD's





2016 AGENCY OF THE YEAR

TO WIN ONE OF STRATEGY'S SIGNATURE AIRPLANES, it's not enough to just have a handful of strong campaigns. Agency of the Year judges demand work showing diversity across brands and categories. There are no one-trick ponies here.

AOY winner Cossette's campaigns placed Canadian summer athletes on Georgian Bay's icy shores, and removed the iconic bee from a cereal box. The winning work sounded the alarm about young people's unhealthy media habits and play, while showing formerly sick kids prosper.

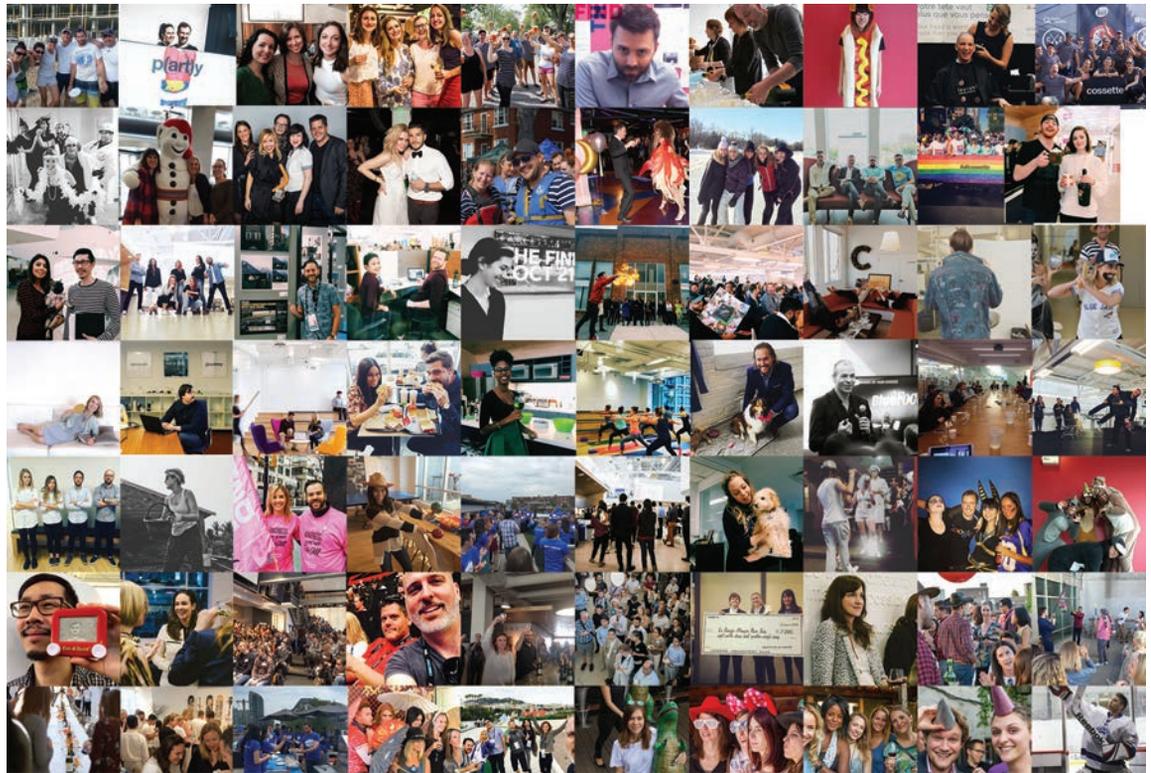
Digital winner FCB used a mix of design savvy and real-time

digital chops to earn the judges' approval. On the media side, PHD employed VR to help students fall for a far-off university campus, and decorated a Montreal park with LED paint swatches. In PR, Media Profile hosted journos at a cottage and got Justin Bieber tweeting.

The agencies were judged on their exceptional work (see the criteria on p. 42 and the judges on pp. 64-65), but these articles – covering the 12 agency winners – go beyond the campaigns to get at the strategy and agency culture from which the work was conceived.

The winners picked up their trophies at a Nov. 8 gala in Toronto. Read on to learn how they did it.

BY MARK BURGESS



Cossette's startup strategy

BY HARMEET SINGH

AS THE PROVERB GOES, WHEN THE ROOTS ARE DEEP, there's no reason to fear the wind.

The ad world can be fickle, but Cossette, founded in Quebec in 1972, is nurturing its entrepreneurial roots to stay competitive – and it's working. The national agency has clinched Agency of the Year Gold – its first win in the category since 1990, when it took home Silver.

"Entrepreneurship really runs in our veins," says Melanie Dunn, president and CEO of Cossette Canada.

The agency is in its sixth year of an overarching innovation plan, which includes its Cossette Lab startup incubation program that began in Montreal back in 2012 and has since expanded to Toronto and Vancouver. As part of the program, the agency hosts and mentors startups specialized in particular categories, such as tourism and health, as they get ready to go to market.

"What we wanted to do was foster entrepreneurship throughout the whole company," Dunn says.

These days, everyone and their grandmother wants to think or act like a startup. But really implementing agile principles, outside of just working with the Cossette

Lab startups, takes total transformation, Dunn says. In the Montreal office, that change began in 2013 and will spread to Cossette's other offices.

On the operations side, for example, it's included implementing 15-minute daily "scrums" involving clients and the relevant Cossette staff, to boost efficiency and avoid miscommunication.

It's also meant changing the physical space to give every client their own workspace area, where multidisciplinary teams can work together.

And on the financial side, each client has a dedicated team that offers solutions in a prototype manner, getting to a "pay-per-performance" relationship.

In addition, when Cossette was named the digital agency for L'Oréal Paris in Canada last February, it came with a new partnership model where the shop would be compensated for work based on results.

"We're pushing the envelope here to have an even more collaborative model by sharing risks," Dunn told *strategy* at the time. "There are upswings and downswings possible, sure, but at the end of the day, it

NEW BUSINESS
 TD Canada Trust,
 Forty Creek
 Whisky, M&M
 Meat Shops, La
 Roche-Posay,
 L'Oréal, Loto-
 Québec, Tourism
 Montreal, Tourism
 Yukon, Eagle
 Energy, Sports
 Maska (CCM),
 Bombardier,
 Sephora

KEY HIRES
 Daniel Shearer,
 EVP and GM,
 Ontario & West;
 Simon Poitras,
 SVP, Quebec;
 Nadim Kiani;
 VP, digital CRM
 technology; Lynn
 Chow, VP, client
 leader; Nicolas Roy,
 VP, technology;
 Sarah Thompson,
 VP, strategy; Adam
 Collins, VP, head of
 strategy; Michelle
 Perez, VP, brand
 director

STAFF
627

makes us more accountable to the KPIs and to delivering real results.”

Aside from the benefits to the internal culture – encouraging disruption and agility – of having tech startups incubated within its walls, they also bring fresh thinking to clients. Entrepreneurs sometimes sit in if their particular technology is relevant to the business.

Fostering Canada’s risk-taking entrepreneurial community is a priority for the shop, which, in addition to providing office space, invests in startups and offers access to major clients.

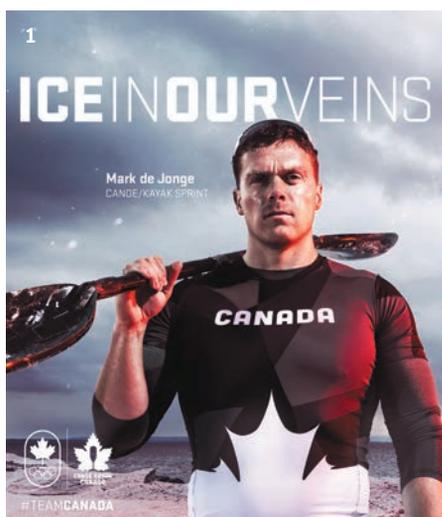
It’s been nearly two years since the shop’s parent company, Vision7, was purchased by China’s BlueFocus Communication Group, but that didn’t take away Cossette’s “Canadian signature,” since it’s been able to

operate independently, Dunn says. In fact, it has been growing its team and solidifying its leadership. In February, former Taxi exec Daniel Shearer took on the EVP, managing director role for Cossette Ontario and West, including the operations in Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Dunn described Shearer as the “final key person” for the agency’s national executive team.

The agency didn’t slow down its hiring after that. From the beginning of the year to April, it brought on a dozen new creatives and the following month, it announced several new faces on the strategy side.

Each of those hires has been made with principles such as collaboration and creativity expressed through innovation in mind, Dunn says – in other words, all the things that drive a startup forward.

CASES



1. Turning summer into winter
 To transfer the pride Canadians feel toward winter athletes to the Summer Games in Rio, the COC had to adjust its slogan from the 2014 Winter Games, “We Are Winter.” It conveyed the idea that athletes were headed to Brazil with ice in their veins and fire in their hearts by filming videos of athletes preparing for the games in the dead of winter, wearing their summer gear, on the shores of Georgian Bay. Some northern animals were thrown in for good measure.

The video led to the roll out of OOH, social and experiential events where the cold imagery contrasted with the warm summer, with larger-than-life athletes appearing frost-kissed and powerful.



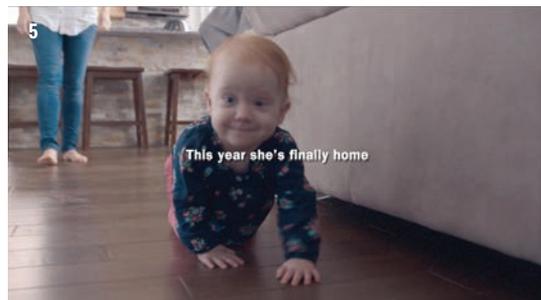
2. Nature Valley’s “3 Generations” showed how young people are losing their connection to nature (see case on p. 21).



3. Honey Nut Cheerios lost its signature mascot as part of “#BringBacktheBees” (case on p. 26).



4. “Who’s Following Your Kids?” showed the dangers involved when kids share too much on social media.



5. SickKids’ “Life Unpaused” (the Campaign of the Year) updated the stories of patients who had grown familiar to Canadians (see case, p. 27).

► For full cases, go to daoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016



FCB bets on transparency

BY HARMEET SINGH

TWO YEARS AGO, FCB BROKE DOWN A WALL. Literally.

When Tyler Turnbull, then-president of FCB Toronto, and Jon Flannery, the CCO, took their respective leadership roles in 2014, they were paired together in a fishbowl – a central spot in the office with a glass wall, but a wall nonetheless.

Shortly after beginning their jobs (Turnbull came from Proximity Canada, where he was president, and Flannery from FCB Chicago, where he was ECP and EVP), they undertook an impromptu staff survey to find out how things were going.

A common response reverberated: “Jon and Ty have a lot of closed-door meetings.”

That was a Friday night. By Monday morning, the wall was no more.

The move speaks to what Turnbull – now CEO for FCB in Canada – says has helped this year’s Gold Digital Agency of the Year winner be successful: “total transparency.”

“I think giving everyone an ongoing update as to the health of the business, the priorities of the business and

the overall strategy that we’re pursuing – not in a town hall once a year, but consistently – was a big, big change for us,” he says.

Transparency helps everyone feel energized and as though they’re part of something bigger, Turnbull says. And it’s working.

Each year, the FCB network undertakes a comprehensive engagement survey of its 8,000 staff across 109 offices globally, asking questions like whether staff has confidence in CEOs to win new business and if they believe the leaders are aligned with the agency’s vision.

Two years ago, the Toronto office’s scores were among the lowest. By 2015, it was among the most improved but still in the middle of the pack.

This year, it was at the top.

Regular transparency is now a key tenet of how the agency operates in Canada, holding a half-hour, all-staff meeting every Monday morning to talk about how all things FCB are going.

“If you’re serious about creating a great culture, you

NEW BUSINESS

BMO, Michelob Ultra, Anheuser Busch, DSW, Dole, Ritz, Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure, Johnson, Ontario College of Teachers, Irving Oil

KEY HIRES

Andrew MacPhee, Jeremiah McNama and Angela Sung, ACDs; Sasha Ortega, Tayler-Lee Resar-Teese and Alisa Sera Garcia, art directors; Zachary Richman, Morgan Wroot and Lindsay Eady copywriters; Alana Dyer, shopper marketing manager, licensing and promotions; Shelagh Hartford, strategist; Kristy Pleckaitis, experience planner

STAFF 150

have to measure it," Turnbull says.

That's not a surprising statement from the leader of a shop that's been vocal about using data and improving work by folding what was once a distinct digital team into its strategy department.

Turnbull was also a member of FCB's global "digital transformation team," a task force developed by global CEO Carter Murray in 2014, shortly after he came into the role.

Among the changes in Canada this year, FCB rebranded its Rivet division to FCB/Six (named for six proprietary customer engagement moments), and expanded that business to Montreal.

The name change was a distinct move to bring the data-focused digital arm under the FCB name and align it more closely with the other offices. It's a collaborative strategy that's been important for Turnbull as the agency grows, picking up new clients such as BMO in 2015.

Some of its work for the bank elevated it to the Gold Digital Agency of the Year win this year. Ahead of the NBA All-Star Game in Toronto in February, for example, it created a remote-controlled talking basketball called the BMO BallStar (see case study on right).

Perhaps another gold star for the agency's cultural shift to an open and collaborative model is that when Flannery left his CCO position in Canada to return to FCB Chicago in September, Turnbull was fully confident in the creative team left in his wake, promoting Nancy Crimi-Lamanna and Jeff Hilts to co-CCOs.

"If you're trying to build the agency you've always wanted to work for, you need to support the people who've made it that agency."

CASES



1. Look who's talking, hoops edition

To show basketball fans that BMO understands the game, FCB created a fast-talking basketball – one controlled by a remote and equipped with a mic – for Toronto's hosting of the NBA All-Star Game in February. The character was teased ahead of All-Star weekend in pre-roll ads, and it took over the bank's Twitter account once the festivities kicked off. An agency war room, staffed for 20 hours a day, produced social content and secured client approval in real time. BMO also had a 10-foot tall ATM installed at its flagship branch to correspond with the height of a basketball hoop.

The BallStar campaign achieved 28 million earned impressions in just seven days (more viewers than the game itself), and engaged the bank's young, diverse, tech-savvy target.



2. FCB elevated snacking with its Ritz Cracker Cutter (see case on p. 31).

3. The agency's work with the Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses and Yellow Brick House drew attention to domestic violence with a provocative window display.



► For full cases, go to daoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016

ThisAd.SUCKS
ThisMagazine.SUCKS
YourBrand.SUCKS
YourClient.SUCKS

In June 2015, the governing body of the internet, ICANN, made the top-level domain .SUCKS available, which means anyone can buy anything – any name, any person, any company, any brand, any product – with the extension .SUCKS on the end of it.

This new reality has created quite a bit of fuss.

Now on the one hand you have some people saying that selling .SUCKS domains is incredibly offensive, which seems a bit extreme. And on the other hand you have some people saying that owning .SUCKS domains is the key to unlocking the healthy debate and discussion required to make things better and create progress. Which might be a bit ambitious.

No matter where your POV falls on that spectrum, we think one thing is for sure: It shouldn't be ignored.

So GetYour.SUCKS domain today.

(and maybe give your clients and your brands a heads-up to do the same).



PHD's winning strategy

BY VAL MALONEY

RECENT YEARS HAVE SEEN MODERN MEDIA AGENCIES take a pretty low-tech game into their boardrooms: the limbo. The rules? Bend (but don't break) your back in order to reach ever-lower prices and win the prize of a new client.

Fred Forster, president at PHD Canada and CEO at Omnicom Media Group Canada, is calling a time out. He says PHD, *strategy's* 2016 Gold Media Agency of the Year, is differentiating itself the way it always has – with strategy.

"If you look at where the business is today, we have kind of hit rock bottom in terms of being able to get things as cheap as we possibly can," says Forster. "Let's not kid ourselves: so much of the pitches are still based on price and are procurement-led. We are at a point and time where a lot of the agencies are at the same level in terms of how cheap we can make it. Strategy starts to play a more important role in how agencies can win when the field has been levelled in terms of price."

Strategy is built into PHD's strategic planning framework, says Forster. That has been expanded most recently with the introduction of global online gamified planning tool Source, which allows PHD staff

to contribute to country-level projects in other regions. At the end of the third quarter, PHD Canada was sitting at the top of Source's global leaderboard, says Forster, an impressive feat considering the size of the team compared with larger markets like the U.K. and U.S.

"Source is unique in allowing us to put together very strong channel plans, but also something that is easily understood by clients and sets us apart as we pitch new business," says Forster. "It's now the linchpin of the organization in many ways."

This year PHD hired 73 new staff in Canada, and won clients including the CPA, Government of Ontario, Intact Financial Services and University of New Brunswick.

Matt Devlin, managing director, communications planning, says those wins are partly thanks to the agency collaborating more with Omnicom's business units — which include search and social practice Resolution Media, programmatic arm Accuen and data marketing service Annalect.

Forster expects Omnicom's business units to become increasingly involved with existing clients and new business as data continues to inform strategy. Working



NEW BUSINESS
CPA, Government of Ontario, Horse Racing Alberta, Intact Financial Services, Ontario Power Generation, Responsible Gaming Council Ontario, University of New Brunswick, Groupe Sportscene, Ministère des Transports du Québec

NEW HIRES
73 new hires in the past 12 months

STAFF
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more closely with the growing business arms has allowed the agency's culture to remain intact while also rapidly expanding. Most recently, he says, that growth has included working programmatic directly into client plans rather than keeping it on the fringes.

"The growth of programmatic and the growth of our data and analytics teams are the two most pronounced changes we are seeing," Forster says. "We are moving into a world where most media will be biddable and digital in some form. The key is to try and stay ahead of it, because it always tends to happen faster than you think."

According to RECMA's overall billing activity statistics for 2015, PHD ranked #3 in the market.

The agency had an 11.3% share of the Canadian industry for the year, bringing in \$917 million in billings. That's up from \$673 million for 2014.

But don't expect the team to rest on the laurels of this year's performance.

"This business is evolving so fast that we can't be satisfied with the structures or skill sets we have," he says. "It has to be constantly in motion and we have to think down the road as we try and make decisions today. And hopefully we have another good year next year."



Royal Roads
UNIVERSITY

CONGRATULATIONS TO
COSSETTE
MEDIA

on being shortlisted for Media Agency of the Year! And thanks for being our AOR for over 15 years!



CASES



1

1. Making Kold hot

For the launch of its Kold drinkmaker, Keurig targeted the innovative and highly critical audience of first adopters. The entire campaign budget went to digital, targeting technology influencers. Lewis Hillsenteger from YouTube channel “Unbox Therapy” was the first to receive the device in Canada. His six-minute video connected with the target and beyond, with more than four million views and 125,000 likes.

The agency also used a social strategy with custom videos and articles on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, again focused on innovators.

The campaign generated more than 270,000 visits to Keurig.ca, increasing traffic by 20%, though the product was discontinued.

2. Sico's “The Power of Colours” campaign found innovative ways to put colour swatches in consumers' hands.

3. The University of New Brunswick targeted Ontario students with a guerilla campaign featuring virtual guided tours.



2



3

► For full cases, go to maoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016

Agency of the Year | Process & Shortlists

Strategy's 2016 Agency of the Year awards began the same way as in prior years, with an open call for Canadian agencies to submit their best campaigns from the past 12 months.

All eligible creative, media, digital and PR agencies entered with comprehensive case studies (five for AOY and three for MAOY, DAOY and PRAOY) for campaigns they had executed over the past year. From there, separate cross-industry and cross-country judging panels marked the work online and in isolation.

Each campaign for the agency, media and digital competitions was given two marks from one to 10 based on strategic insight and

creativity, while judges scored the PR campaigns using the same criteria, as well as an additional score for impact.

Judges who declared conflicts were omitted from the scoring process on the applicable cases or agencies. The top-scoring agencies in each category made up the shortlists, based on a natural drop-off point in the scoring. The MAOY jury also chose the Media Director of the Year (announced in *strategy's* October issue).

The scores were totalled and averaged with equal weighting, and the agency with the highest final score was the winner. The shortlisted agencies, in winning order, are listed below.

AOY	DAOY	MAOY	PRAOY
Cossette	FCB Toronto	PHD	Media Profile
Leo Burnett	Rethink	OMD	Citizen Relations
John St.	Taxi	Starcom Mediavest Group	North Strategic
Zulu Alpha Kilo	DDB/Tribal Worldwide	Jungle Media	Veritas Communications
BBDO	BBDO	Touché	Edelman
Grey	The Camps Collective	Cossette Media	Paradigm Public Relations
J. Walter Thompson	John St.	Maxus	GCI Group
DDB/Tribal Worldwide	Grip Limited	MEC	Narrative
Taxi	Critical Mass	Carat	DDB PR
Rethink	J. Walter Thompson	UM	
Lg2	Cossette		
Bensimon Byrne/OneMethod	OgilvyOne		
Bleublancrouge	Lg2		

Congratulations to Bensimon Byrne and PHD Canada

Your forward-thinking strategic insights, award-winning creative and next-level media solutions are in a league of their own. With powerful partnerships like these, we truly are richer than we think.



B E N S I M O N B Y R N E

Shortlisted for Strategy Magazine's
Agency of the Year



Shortlisted for Strategy Magazine's
Media Agency of the Year

You're richer than you think.®





Media Profile puts storytelling at the heart of PR

BY MEGAN HAYNES



NEW BUSINESS
Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, Crosslinx, Foodora, Ontario Ministry of Energy, Ophea, Real Estate Council of Ontario, The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

STAFF
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WITH THE BARRIERS BETWEEN CONSUMER and brand eroding (not to mention the rise in native advertising), storytelling is becoming an important aspect of integrated PR campaigns.

So Media Profile has been beefing up its content creation skills in-house, while also looking for opportunities to put storytelling at the heart of the push, says John Thibodeau, VP at the 31-year-old agency. And the approach is working, skyrocketing the Toronto-based shop to the podium as this year’s PR Agency of the Year. The shop picked up Gold this year, up from its Bronze in 2015.

Over the past year, Media Profile has been working with a team brought in solely to focus on content creation. The team – a creative director, web designer and videographer/motion graphic designer – work with the agency on a full-time basis, while also maintaining their own clients on the side (its a model the agency also uses in Quebec).

Since bringing them on board, the shop has significantly upped the amount of content created internally, Thibodeau says, adding that they’ve produced

content for nearly half of their clients.

He says the agency also works with a “curated” network of freelancers around Canada that specializes in all areas of content creation, from animation and voiceover work to actors and set designers.

Media Profile has also prioritized basic content creation skills as necessary for new hires, he says, with the expectation that anyone who enters PR these days needs to have video editing, graphics and web management skills. The shop has also increased training for existing staffers.

In addition, Media Profile is going outside its walls to create content, increasingly working with influencers and exploring paid media options, such as native ads.

Thibodeau points to a recent Honda execution (one of the winning case studies) as an example. The brand wanted help selling the full suite of Honda products, he says. Unlike other car makers, Honda is unique in that it not only sells cars, but also ATVs, boat engines, lawnmowers and power tools.

As a result, it can be difficult to create a holistic picture of the brand, he says. Based on that background,



the agency found the one place people are most likely to use all the different Honda products: the cottage.

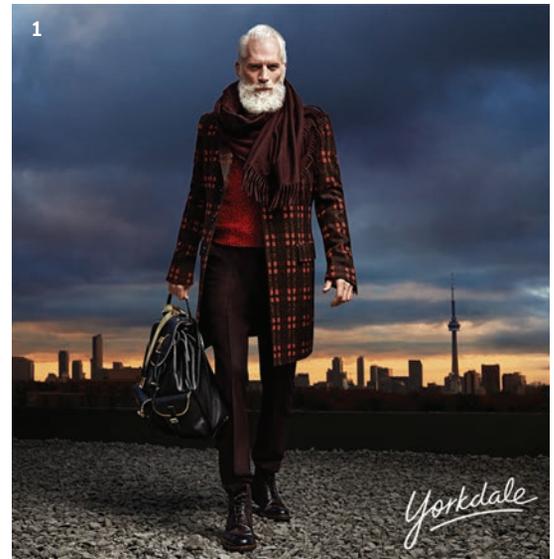
“The brief was basically, ‘Let’s tell the totality of the story in a way that’s compelling and interesting,’” Thibodeau says.

The brand invited eight independent journalists and their families up to the Honda-run cottage, where they played with various products, from the Honda-generated lights to the Honda-run boat.

The brand also sent up a *Cottage Life* reporter, as part of a paid branded content deal with the magazine, for the same experience, Thibodeau says. The published content included videos that had the reporter and his family playing with ATVs and lawnmowers under the Honda banner, and generated more than 4.3 million impressions, including a quarter of a million YouTube views, two million social tweets, and 300 new followers for the brand (from a single weekend).

“PR used to be one thing: pitching stories to reporters/editors,” he says. “Now [it’s the] same idea – but it means helping clients tell stories in so many more channels, which means [we need] so many new skills.”

CASES



1. Santa wore it better

To generate buzz around the holiday season, Yorkdale Shopping Centre created a Santa with a twist: a trimmed-down version of jolly old Saint Nick decked out in clothes from the mall’s top brands. It also partnered with the Hospital for Sick Children, donating \$1 for every #YorkdaleFashionSanta selfie shared on social media.

The campaign kicked off with a sneak peek for influencers, with Fashion Santa delivering holiday gifts and a release to leading fashion media before appearing in the mall every December weekend. The campaign earned worldwide media buzz and generated more than 1.2 billion impressions in North America. It didn’t hurt that Justin Bieber was among the 5,000 people who shared selfies with Fashion Santa.



2. Camp Honda was a unique way to show off all the brand’s products while generating media buzz.

3. The campaign for Starbucks’ new tea gained traction on YouTube.



► For full cases, go to praoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016



Leo Burnett plays the numbers game

BY MEGAN HAYNES

IT'S BEEN ANOTHER BANNER YEAR FOR Toronto's Leo Burnett, with the agency continuing to dominate the awards circuit, adding countless new trophies to its case. Warc named the Toronto shop the sixth-most awarded agency on the planet (the top Canadian shop on the list), while *strategy's* Creative Report Card ranked it (as well as its top creatives Judy John, Steve Persico and Anthony Chelvanathan) in the top spot.

Leo Burnett is also gaining international notice. It's headlining major global clients (such as the Amazon Super Bowl ad), and leading or providing support for global initiatives and campaigns (such as Always' "Like a Girl"). As if to highlight this trend and parent company Publicis' faith in the Canadian talent, John, CEO and CCO of the Toronto shop, and Brent Nelson, chief strategy officer, saw their remits grow in September as part of a shuffling of the networks P&L system, taking on the North America-wide roles of CCO and CSO, respectively.

While there are a number of factors contributing to the shop's overall growth (not least of which is the aforementioned leadership talent), building out the agency's analytics department has become a linchpin in its future-proofing strategy.

"It's all about the data," says David Kennedy, EVP and COO at the Toronto-based agency, which picks up this year's Silver AOY trophy for its work with Kellogg's, Raising the Roof, Amazon, Ikea and the Ontario Women's Directorate.

"There's an expectation that with all this data, we are going to know exactly where and when to put our message out there – that data is going to make creativity more powerful," he says. "[But] we don't get two or three chances to figure out what is the correct problem – especially with such a strong focus on short-term results. If you don't get it right the first time, everyone is going to be in trouble."

NEW BUSINESS
Ministry of Education, Ministry of Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation, Uniqlo

NEW HIRES
Anthony Atkinson, GCD; Chris Munnik, Mike Lee, Sean Ganann, CDs; Gord Cathmoir, director of print production & studio; Matthew Nelson, digital innovation director

Staff count:
210

As such, the shop has really focused on its strategic and planning group, doubling the size of the team in over three years to a dozen staffers, and bringing in big names like the former president of Taxi Canada, Nancy Beattie, as a senior planner. While not traditionally a planner, Beattie recently took courses in planning, says Kennedy, and her background leading an agency provides a unique perspective that clients appreciate.

The agency also brought on a data analyst to help provide creative insight for marketing efforts, and expanded the remit of two of its community managers to include data science. The end goal is to transition these team members into more full-time analyst roles, Kennedy says. While the entire insights team has grown, the agency's investment in data has grown 100% in the past two years, he says.

Kennedy credits the data/planning investment with a number of successful campaigns, including the recent Yellow Pages "Lemonade Stand." Analyzing Yellow Pages surveys from consumers and businesses, the insight

team found that the B2B community wasn't taking the brand seriously as a potential digital partner, Kennedy says. "Based on this data, we decided that simply telling our audience about all the amazing new digital products and services that YP offered would not be enough. We needed to show them."

To demonstrate that Yellow Pages understands what small business owners go through and to showcase the suite of tools at their disposal, in April, Yellow Pages employees quietly opened their own lemonade stand in Toronto's east end. In the eight-day pop-up, more than 1,000 people ventured into the store. The campaign material garnered from the activation, including two short commercials, are in market now. While it's too early for broader success metrics, Kennedy says the push has so far exceeded expectations.

"The real opportunity is how we can best marry data science and creativity," he says of the overall future-proofing strategy. "And if we can do that, we can demonstrate our value."

CASES

1. Taming the outdoor enthusiasts

To get Vancouverites back to the Ikea store in nearby Richmond, B.C., the brand played off residents' outdoor enthusiasm to encourage them to "Explore the Great Indoors."

The retailer placed contextual executions in high-traffic areas in, or on the way to, the great outdoors. The campaign included OOH installations that showcased the "Textile Kingdom," flyers modeled after field guides and radio spots in the style of classic nature documentaries. It even brought indoor comforts to outdoor moviegoers in Stanley Park, creating cozy viewing stations.

By appealing specifically to Vancouverites, the campaign increased store visits by 67% year-over-year, and sales by 63%.



2. Special K showed that strong is the new skinny in its #OwnIt campaign.

3. The Ontario Women's Directorate's "It's Never Okay" campaign highlighted inappropriate behaviour.

4. Amazon's spots starring Alec Baldwin and Jason Schwartzman promoted the brand's internet-connected Echo speaker.

5. The "Coming Soon" campaign took on NIMBYS and raised awareness about homelessness for Raising the Roof. See case on p. 24.



► For full cases, go to aoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016



Rethink, small and mighty

BY HARMEET SINGH

THERE'S A (PRETTY HILARIOUS) LOOK OF DISDAIN that often pops up on millennial faces when they're scrolling through their phones and accosted by an annoying ad.

It's one Darren Yada and his team at Rethink – which takes Silver Digital Agency of the Year – works hard to avoid causing.

"The amount of content that's vying for attention at any given time is ridiculous," says Yada, partner and national director of digital strategy at the shop, which has offices in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal.

It's not a new problem for brands, but it is one that's getting tougher and tougher to solve.

Still, from big budget beer to niche social campaigns, Rethink has been fighting (and winning) this battle for consumer attention. How? By coming up with creative

ideas that are shaped by the context in which they're being delivered, Yada says.

Take its campaign for streaming site Shomi, playing on the themes of one of its shows, *Mr. Robot*. Tweeting about the show would have been simple enough, but Rethink appropriately played into the show's plot by hacking its own social ads to make it appear as though they'd been digitally defaced by "fsociety," the hacker group from the series. There weren't any calls to action for the rest of the campaign, which included a location-based scavenger hunt for 50 bundles of cash. Instead, it relied on using certain hashtags and letting the most intrigued fans figure things out on their own.

Overall, it's been a year of growth for the agency, building on momentum from 2015, when it picked up

NEW BUSINESS

BuildDirect, Canfor, Coors Banquet, Old Style Pilsner, Earls, Firma, Mio Watch, Oceans, PCI Developments, Penticton Tourism, Robin des Bois, Scotts Lawn Care, Shomi Digital, Sports Experts, Thrifty Foods, Uni-Sélect, Vancouver Canucks (project)

NEW HIRES

30

STAFF
130

14 new client wins and took home the Bronze Digital Agency of the Year.

This year, its growth continued with roughly 30 new hires. On the leadership side, CDs Bob Simpson in Vancouver and Mike Dubrick and Joel Holtby in Toronto were made partners in February, bringing the total to 18.

Those leaders are tasked with working in a way that's seamless and nimble, since Rethink has a single P&L across its offices, says Ian Grais, founder and national CD at the agency.

From a practical perspective, giving senior staff equity and having a broad-based team that can adapt and add new ideas – rather than relying on just one or two top brains – is important for the independent shop's model, he says.

Then there's its physical growth. About a year-and-a-half into opening its Montreal office, that shop is now up to nine people. It was created as a response to Rethink's clients A&W, Molson and Mr. Lube growing in that market, but now the agency is preparing to continue its momentum there, Grais says.

English Canada is, in some respects, ahead of the Quebec market in terms of understanding social media, and the shop is hoping to parlay its expertise in that area

into more growth, he says.

That doesn't just mean going after whales, though, with Grais noting that Rethink has a tradition of pursuing pro bono clients, working on social cause campaigns and investing in work for smaller businesses. "We're actively looking for clients that don't have large budgets but that have ambitious marketing plans and compelling offers," he says.

That's meant that the same shop responsible for bringing a hockey rink to the top of a skyscraper and a beer fridge across Canada for Molson Canadian has also worked with Starlight Children's Foundation to bring fashionable designs to the drab hospital gowns that sick teens are forced to wear.

"As an independent agency, we have that luxury to work with clients and causes that we really believe in and that offer us interesting creative challenges," Grais says.

The shop has garnered awards and recognition for a broad range of its clients and work (this year, it took the number four spot on *strategy's* Creative Report Card).

Not that awards are everything. "We always say at Rethink that it's more important to get on the green than get in the hole," Grais says.

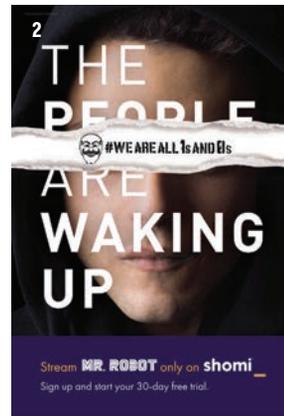
CASES



1. Kill weeds, not pre-roll ads

To promote its Weed B Gon lawn-care product on pre-roll, Scotts Canada leveraged the platform's weakness by incorporating it into the spot. In a 30-second video starring Prickly, an annoying dandelion puppet, viewers were given the standard "skip" option at the five-second mark, with a twist: they could skip the ad or kill Prickly. If they chose kill, they jumped to the point in the video where he is sprayed with Weed B Gon and quickly dispatched.

Rethink leveraged its partnership with Google to customize the annotation technology and allow viewers to navigate within pre-roll. Giving viewers the satisfaction of killing an annoying weed led to a 98% completion rate for the video.

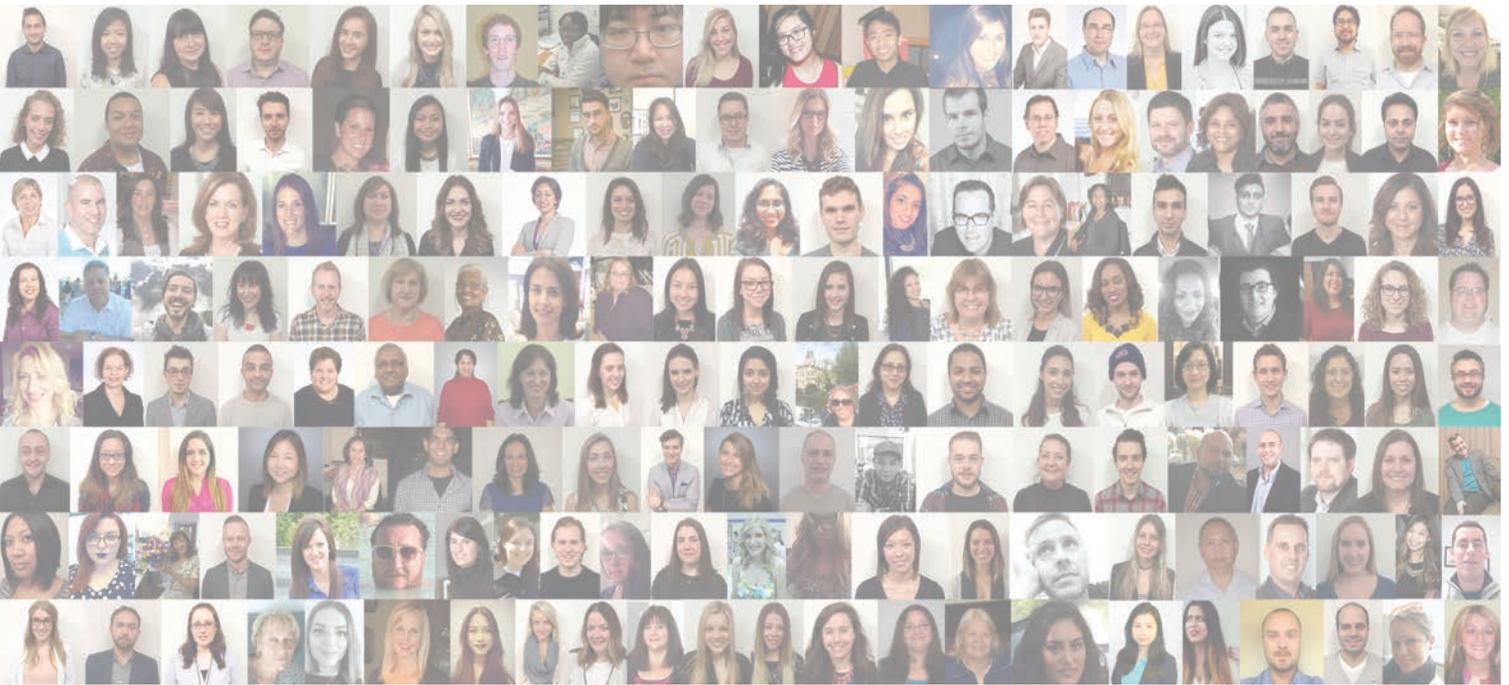


2. A social campaign for *Mr. Robot* on Shomi included defacing its own ads by having them "hacked" by the show's "fsociety."

3. To show Molson Canadian's deep connection with hockey fans, Rethink helped it bring an ice rink to the top of a Toronto tower.



► For full cases, go to daoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016



OMD plans for content

BY JONATHAN PAUL

NEW BUSINESS
RECMA, Allergan,
Ancestry.ca,
Beiersdorf, Leon's,
Mercedes-Benz,
Overwaitea,
SickKids Foundation,
Sonnet Insurance
(Economical
Insurance), Sony
Music, Tourism Nova
Scotia

KEY HIRES
Sean Dixon, group
director, marketing
science; Peter Venus,
director marketing
science; Oliver
Norton, associate
director of marketing
science; Hanny Ali,
marketing science
supervisor; Daniela
Kutleva, analyst,
marketing science;
Jammie Ogle,
business director

CONSUMERS TODAY LIVE IN A MULTICHANNEL WORLD, which is why content has become a huge consideration for OMD, this year's Silver MAOY winner.

"The reality is when you're putting a communications strategy together, it's going to be on more screens and more platforms than at any point in the history of advertising," says Shane Cameron, chief innovation officer at OMD Canada. "We are planning for content and creating divisions to help with that content."

Case in point, last year OMD launched a separate division called Alternator, which now serves the entire Omnicom network of agencies. Led by former Y&R CD and Capital C ECD Tracy Jones, Alternator exists somewhere between the media buying planning and creative agency process. Its goal, essentially, is to create cost-effective content that's integrated into media plans.

"Alternator works at getting the creative process back up into the high level media strategy and planning area to help better connect great creative ideas with new platforms, new technologies, new ways of creating content," says Jones. "What I think [the Alternator team] brings to OMD is a level of additional curiosity and then the capability to actually execute on that curiosity once we come to really insightful content solutions."

Through Alternator, OMD has deals with content producers like multi-channel network Studio71 (which represents close to 30% of all Google-preferred inventory in Canada). The network has channels within a variety of platforms — like YouTube, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter — from popular talent like the Epic Meal Time crew or YouTube star Lilly Singh. OMD, with Alternator, connects its clients with these content creators to craft on-target content.

"We're investing in a fantastic group like Alternator, who can be not only creating some of the [content] ideas, but being that executive producer and bringing in the best [content creators] that the market has," says Cathy Collier, CEO at OMD.

OMD has also worked with media companies such as AOL, Rogers, Bell and BuzzFeed, opting for content deals that provide cost-effective production and distribution capabilities.

"If you're in the world of media in Canada and you have production capabilities, or studio capabilities, our deal structures are starting to shift and include those. How do we make sure when we have a great idea we can go to market with a great media partner who can make that idea better?" says Cameron.

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Success for brands means coming up with central creative ideas that can scale across as many platforms as required. Combined with the creation of a content specialist division like Alternator, OMD now has a more equilateral seat at the ideation table.

“As we bring forward the communications strategy and then the media channels, it becomes incumbent on us to actually have an opinion of what should be in these channels, because they’re becoming much more segmented and specialized,” says Collier.

Of course, that communications strategy is a crucial cog in the content machine, and OMD has been investing in its strategic capabilities as well.

In 2014, the agency launched an operating system called Vision, geared towards structuring strategic

thinking from a clients’ original KPIs all the way through to the investment plan, with guidance for insights, ideas and segments.

Also, in the last 12 months, OMD embedded marketing scientists into every one of its client groups. While not new, the agency also has a programmatic group, a big data company called Annalect, and Resolution Media, a large global social and search player, at its disposal.

“The foundation of all of this work, of content and all the other stuff that we do, is the day-to-day client teams that are working on strategy, that are forming relationships with [companies] like AOL and Studio71,” says Collier. “Having these specialists in the tent has enabled those strategy teams to be super powered.”

CASES



2. Thyme Maternity's "Circle of Maternity" campaign shows off the retailer's products.

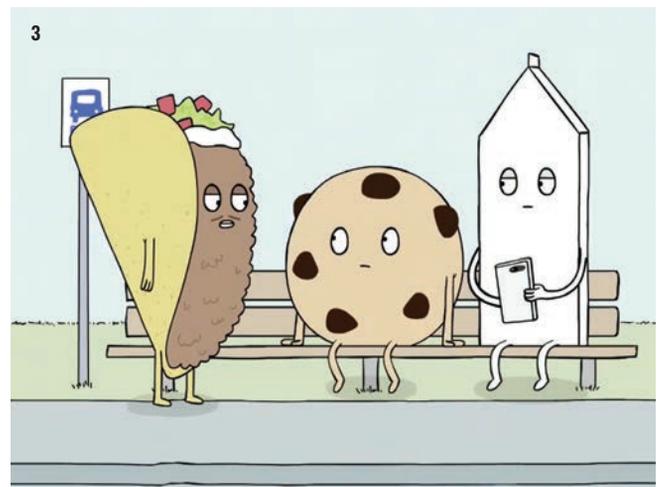
3. Milk West's branded content "Snack Time" series introduced hungry teens to a milk carton and friends. See case on p. 30

1. Creating the virtual test drive

Mercedes-Benz Canada made use of YouTube as a growing resource for car buyers. The brand created a virtual test drive video of the new AMG GT for YouTube Gadget, making the platform the campaign hub with the rest of the elements driving there. Using the keyboard speed control functionality within YouTube's new HTML5 interface, users controlled how fast (or slow) an AMG GT raced around the track in a captivating sensory experience.

TV and cinema ads played key roles in driving traffic to the hub, with cinema seats vibrating to the rumble of an AMG GT on a track in surround sound.

The campaign resulted in more than five million video views with a 90% completion rate.





Citizen's own-the-newsfeed M.O.

BY JONATHAN PAUL

NEW BUSINESS

PepsiCo Foods, Molson Coors, Dyson, Tourism Australia, Western Union, TFO, Intuit, Tim Hortons, eHarmony, Jamieson Vitamins

KEY HIRES

Sarah Crabbe, SVP; Kieran Lawler, VP; Chantelle Anderson, Melissa Legaspi, Stacie Bumbacco, directors; Heidi Mamer, director of strategy; Anik Trudel, GM; Ian Baillie, senior director

STAFF

85

GOING BEYOND HEADLINE-GRABBING TACTICS traditionally used in PR, and focusing on integrated communications, strategic planning and creative, is what propels conversations and earned media today.

For the last two years, Citizen Relations, which launched in 2011 as part of the Vision7 network, has been retooling along those lines.

Those efforts really came to a head with the creation of an “insights and innovations” working group at the agency’s Toronto office in April 2015 (the shop also has offices in Montreal, Quebec City and Vancouver).

The group is transforming the way the agency approaches strategy. More emphasis has been placed on analytics to hone in on target audiences and provide more strategic planning, while also establishing key insights.

It’s an approach that’s working for Citizen’s Canadian operations, and one that’s now being picked up abroad.

Since taking on the mantle of president of North America after running Citizen Relations in Canada, Nick Cowling says he’s been actively exporting the strategic planning and integrated communications functions in Canada to the agency’s U.S. offices. And, so far, they’re seeing similar success rates. Next, the agency will look at doing the same globally.

“It speaks to how Canadian ingenuity can still have a great impact in any market, be it Hong Kong, New York or London,” Cowling says.

Over the past year, Citizen has evolved the practice into a core function within the agency, growing out the “insights and innovations” group into a strategic planning unit with deep strategy and analytics groups within it.

“We’ve trained a number of our staff at different levels to be able to comprehend and work with the data that our [strategic] planning team can pull out so they don’t have to do all the analysis,” says Cowling. “We’re teaching people to be able to look at things differently.”

Citizen tasked three staffers with guiding the practice: Amanda Shuchat to lead the working group; Sabrina Kandasamy to focus on the insight and development process; and Morgan Todd to manage analytics. Shuchat has since moved over to head up Citizen’s new offshoot PR agency, The Colony Project, which launched in February and is focused on helping clients reach new audiences outside their traditional targets.

Bolstering the agency’s integrated communications capabilities has also been a focus. That responsibility was given to VP digital Mark Carpenter when he joined

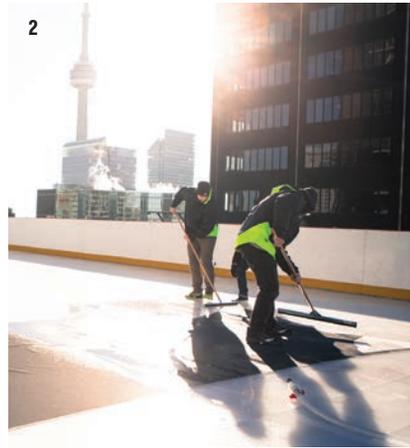
CASES



▲ 1. My Funny Ketchup Valentine

After a successful run in 2014, Doritos Ketchup chips returned in 2015, a couple of weeks before Valentine's Day. The brand gave women the opportunity to express their love with the gift guys (particularly in the 16-25 target) have always wanted: 12 long-stem roses made from the chips. The campaign launched with an irreverent video and social posts encouraging people to order bouquets (which sold out in hours).

Citizen Relations seeded traditional media, influencers and celebrities with Doritos Ketchup bouquets, filling millennial newsfeeds with clever memes and GIFs. Baseline sales grew by 8%, 2.3 times the target.



2. Citizen helped create national buzz for the second iteration of Molson's "Anything for Hockey" campaign, this time with a rooftop rink in Toronto.

3. PC's Babylicious campaign partnered with eight Toronto restaurants to give moms a meal out.



► To read the full cases, go to praoynwinners.strategyonline.ca/2016

the agency in May 2015 from BBDO, where he served as group digital director. Initially brought on to head up digital, Cowling expanded the role, drawing on Carpenter's digital and advertising background for a broader marketing perspective. Carpenter is now also overseeing the Toronto office as its GM, having been given the role back in June along with Kandasamy, who left the agency in September.

The shop has welcomed two new SVPs since. Sarah Crabbe has joined the Toronto office from Edelman as SVP to lead national consumer accounts and help drive growth, and Alain Madgin came aboard as SVP in the agency's Quebec City office to oversee its government and public affairs practice and new business, joining from McKesson Canada. Cowling is currently on the hunt for a new strategic planning lead.

The additions, he says, are a reflection of the agency's double digit growth in 2015 and 2016. The dividends of Citizen's transformation efforts include its second consecutive Silver PRAOY award and new business wins, including PepsiCo Foods, Molson Coors Canada, Dyson, Intuit, Tourism Australia, eHarmony and Tim Hortons.

Carpenter describes the agency's approach as "owning the newsfeed."

This "own the newsfeed" M.O. has led to strategic and earned media work for clients like PC Organics. Recently, Citizen was tasked with raising awareness of the brand amongst Toronto-based millennial moms with toddlers. Knowing that they missed regular social experiences like meals out with friends, it created the PC Babylicious program, which included partnerships with eight Toronto restaurants popular with the target. Each one offered a fixed menu for mom, while PC Organics offered a free fixed menu for babies, as well as baby gear like highchairs and baby-friendly feeding utensils.

Fifteen Toronto-based bloggers acted as program ambassadors, and Citizen engaged Sarah Blackwood, young mom and lead singer of the band Walk Off the Earth, as program spokesperson. Blackwood and her sons were featured in five social videos shared by her and PC's social channels, with a microsite acting as an information hub. The campaign surpassed its impressions goal by 93%.

"We're not just thinking about what that headline is or what the media outlet is saying about us," says Carpenter, summing up the change in PR strategy. "We're thinking holistically about all the different channels that feed into a user's newsfeed."



Megafone Media: Breaking new ground in the multicultural digital space

Since 2000, Canada's ethnic landscape has changed dramatically to the tune of up to half a million immigrants each year. Ethnic is no longer niche but most marketers are still not reaching out to the 20% of consumers in the untapped in-language multicultural market.

As our ethnic communities have grown, so have the digital media options available to them. Mark Wyeth, Canadian media agency veteran and Megafone Media's director of sales, calls it an economic and social gold rush for those marketers who decide to take the calculated risk. "When you're investing for your personal finances, the prudent investor diversifies. The prudent marketer should also diversify. There needn't be a huge investment to start, especially in the multicultural digital world where there is a great pool of premium inventory that is untapped or not tapped to the full extent that it could be."

Three-year old Toronto-based Megafone Media bridges the East and West. The agency is staffed with experienced digital experts and consultants who come from Canada, Colombia, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea. They know what works in the multicultural space and what doesn't. However, Megafone is more than a media partner and is evolving into a digital technology company built by media professionals. It creates campaigns with the language and creative context that reaches and connects with target ethnic audiences. The agency's primary and third-party data provides insights into target consumers and its studio staffed with language and design experts bring campaigns to life. Megafone

"Our team has knowledge of each culture and the media behaviour on both the traditional and non-traditional side of things"

also helps other agencies and their clients to optimize ethnic engagement.

"Our team has knowledge of each culture and the media behaviour on both the traditional and non-traditional side of things," says Ching Chiu, the agency's managing director. "A lot of advertisers are now aware that they need a multicultural plan because the minority is no longer the minority. Ethnic groups make up about 51% of the population in Toronto. If you're in Vancouver or Toronto, you see different kinds of diversities from Chinese and Korean to Middle Eastern and Greek. That's why it's very important to include multicultural as part of a whole strategy rather than something you might want because a certain festival is going on. It should actually be a big piece of the pie and that's where we see it going forward."

Chiu and some of her team go back to Asia twice a year to stay on top of the ever-evolving digital space and new inventory availability. They search out new products

and applications as well as opportunities in the gaming sector that can be utilized by marketers.

Charles Li, Megafone Media general manager, says, "We don't work against the traditional multicultural media, we work with them. We also work with mainstream and multicultural agencies to support whatever efforts they need to take a campaign to ethnic digital or an in-language audience. More importantly, we have other techniques and tools that enable us to look at the data from the digital side and further investigate campaign results on the traditional media side, like TV and newspaper."

Data and technology are important aspects of what Megafone Media offers clients. The agency does a lot of proprietary research in the ethnic space to help with creative messaging as well as with media planning and strategy. Its big news is a technological breakthrough—the Megafone Emerging Platform (M.E.P), the first self-serve platform in the ethnic advertising space in North America. The platform will feature cross-channel targeting, proprietary research access, intuitive social media management and integrated PR software. Following beta testing, the M.E.P. platform will launch by the end of the year.

To further fine tune the targetability of its technology, Megafone is working on building new partnerships with three blue-chip companies that will make it possible for marketers to more precisely tap into various segments of the multicultural Canadian population.

Chiu adds, "Data is everything. It's easier to collect data for mainstream target audiences but extremely difficult to collect data for emerging markets such as Chinese, Korean, or Indian audiences but that is what we're doing and will be doing in the future. Optimizing primary and secondary data enable marketers to even

more precisely target ethnic audiences in the right place, at right time, in the right context and with the right creative messaging."

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John St. ignites its digital offering

BY JOSH KOLM

NEW BUSINESS

Burnbrae Farms, Sun Products, Ontario Ministry of Tourism/ Ontario150, Ontario Energy Board, Alcon, Scotia iTrade.

KEY HIRES

Adam Spadaro, director of behavioural insights; Andrew Passas and Pearce Cacalda, ACDs; Julie Sheldon, senior digital strategist

STAFF COUNT

134

“HOLY SHIT, WE’VE CHANGED A LOT over the last two years.”

Arthur Fleischmann, the co-founder and president of Bronze Agency of the Year winner John St., has a moment of reflection after describing all the new capabilities his agency has added since the beginning of 2015. Despite all the change, the agency isn’t adopting a new model or restructuring.

“Every time an agency opens and they talk about being a new agency model, my partners and I laugh at that a little bit,” Fleischmann says. “When we opened John St., we said we were unabashedly an advertising agency. But there are air quotes around advertising, because the definition of that is changing, which means John St. has changed pretty much every year since 2001.”

Over the last 24 months, the agency has launched in-house production studio 172 Productions, adding greater capabilities (especially when it comes to social marketing) to its existing integrated digital, print and broadcast production offering. It also opened a Montreal

office, which has been less concerned with French adaptation and more with giving the agency access to talent in that market. Its staff brings a local perspective to the table for national clients – particularly ones that are underdeveloped in Quebec.

On the talent side, John St. hired Mooren Bofill as design director to build up its design capabilities. It also began recruiting talent for that department with experience ranging from packaging to experiential to digital design. Those enhanced design capabilities have been used for projects like creating apparel for the World Wildlife Fund and redesigning the iconic Schneiders logo. All in all, the last year has brought 32 new hires to John St.

The agency also brought on Tom St. John, previously an entrepreneur in the tech space, to lead its “digital ignition unit,” a team of programmers, UX experts, digital designers and online strategists to build out the agency’s digital expertise. The first phase, which began

CASES

1. Showing banking's human side

To reframe what Canadians expect from a bank, Tangerine celebrated the hard work of making a living and asked viewers whether their bank puts in similar effort on their behalf. An original recording of an Army Cadence track set the backdrop for a gritty film with an empathetic, inspiring tone.

The “Hard Work” rallying cry was supported on TV, in cinemas and online, with 30-second and 15-second versions. OOH executions included posters in malls celebrating retail workers (“Folding clothes is an art when you do it 3,000 times a week”) and boards on skyscrapers recognized window washers. The campaign resulted in a 295% increase in net new clients. See case on p. 28.



2. Carly Fleischmann's interview with Channing Tatum was an online hit for her show “Speechless” and showed how people with autism can break out of their shells.

3. “We Are All Wildlife” returned the WWF to mass advertising by showing humans they're more connected to nature than they realize.

4. John St. modernized Schneiders' iconic logo for the “Traditions” campaign, which showed how the past bridges the present and the future.

5. The “It Happens Fast” campaign was a jarring warning about texting and driving for the Ontario government.



► For cases, go to aoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016

But now it's in the midst of the second phase, which is de-siloing the digital ignition unit. So, digital strategists are now working with the broader strategy team, programmers are working with the production unit, and so on.

“We've built up this incredibly high level of expertise in one section, but we don't want to keep them siloed,” Fleischmann says. “This is a best practice in creating and evolving your services. It's too hard to build up a competency when its practitioners are spread throughout an agency. So we consolidated it at the start, and now that it's built up, it's time to diffuse it throughout the agency.”

Having these different services and capabilities integrated throughout John St.'s offering has helped the agency's work that pay off across multiple platforms and environments.

For example, its “Built Over 100 Ways Better” campaign for the 2016 Mitsubishi Outlander created brand differentiation by showing how the vehicle's design had improved. But by using more than 100 pieces of content developed for different channels, the main insight of the campaign – overcoming consumer apprehension about engineering quality – could be addressed on new custom web and mobile platforms, social channels and the in-dealership retail environment to encourage test drives. Mitsubishi's sales were up 23.6% in the first quarter of Q1, driven by particularly strong Outlander sales.

“Clients are no longer satisfied with agencies delivering the consumer to their front door and saying, ‘Here, we've done our job, now you do the rest,’” Fleischmann says. “A purpose-driven brand strategy has always been our DNA, but what's changed is having to build out channel strategies so you can leverage them to move

after St. John's hiring in 2015, was to get digital talent into the office, working as a single unit and consulting as needed with different account teams at the agency.

people through that path. What's the point of building an exciting brand if you haven't thought of how that brand then comes to life in other environments?”



Taxi's past is prologue

BY JOSH KOLM

NEW BUSINESS
Moosehead, Fido, Fempro, incremental Kraft Heinz business (Classico, Heinz Ketchup, Renée's Dressings, Heinz Baby), Miracle-Ear, Pyrrha, Scotiabank More Rewards Credit Card, Danone, Fromageries Bel, Bombardier, various Pfizer brands

KEY HIRES
Haneen Davies, general manager, Taxi 2; Jay Gundzik, CD, Taxi Vancouver

STAFF
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AT THE BEGINNING OF NEXT YEAR, Taxi's co-founder, chairman and CCO Paul Lavoie will become the agency's "chairman emeritus." He will still provide guidance to CEO Rob Guenette and the rest of the management team, but he's effectively handing off leadership of the agency he founded with Jane Hope in 1992.

So the end of 2016 is going to be a turning point for Taxi and will pave the way for its future. But that path looks a lot like its past, and it's by design.

Matt Shoom-Kirsch, who was promoted to North America COO a year ago, says that after the agency's last major turning point (the 2014 loss of Telus as a client) there was a sizeable effort to restructure. What came out of that, though, was the realization that the best way to ensure Taxi's success is to stay true to its roots: being incredibly nimble in its work, with high accountability and strong leadership.

"Other agencies are trying to figure out how to reorganize themselves or revive their model," says Shoom-Kirsch. "We fine tune [our structure] here and there as we go along, sure, but we've done that to preserve our nimbleness, not to create it from scratch."

Taxi has been doing that fine tuning by stripping

away the layers between creatives and clients. Jordan Doucette and Jeff MacEachern, former ECDs at Taxi Toronto and Taxi 2, respectively, were given the creative torch as co-CCOs in Canada. Guenette points to their close relationship to long-term clients, like Kraft and Canadian Tire, as reasons for their selection, adding that there are no plans to fill their former ECD positions. Having been with Taxi for so long, Doucette and MacEachern are deeply familiar with both the culture of the agency and the client business they've been tasked to steer.

"They're going to be working CCOs leaning into the business they've already been a big part of – on the ground with as few barriers between that as possible," Guenette says. "Paul and I and Jane Hope did it together like that. This is setting up the next collection of like-minded people who can collaborate in the same way to take Taxi through its next steps."

There has been the need for some replacements though, as leaders like Taxi 2 general manager Daniel

Shearer and chief strategy officer Mark Tomblin both left this year. But, keeping with the importance of culture and shared values, most of the agency's major vacancies have been filled from within. Haneen Davies, who had been hired the year prior, was tapped to take over from Shearer at Taxi 2. Christine Maw was promoted to head of strategic planning.

The president position has been split up as it was in the mid-2000s, with Vancouver GM Mike Leslie taking the role in English Canada and Montreal general manager/ECD Pascal De Decker sharing the role in Quebec with Jacques Labelle, the president/CEO of Saint-Jacques Vallée Y&R, which Taxi absorbed over the summer (it did the same for Y&R Toronto last year).

The agency's client portfolio also has a lot of familiarity to it as it expands. Taxi had already handled Kraft Peanut Butter, KD and Maxwell House brands, but after last year's Kraft Heinz merger, the shop was brought on to lead new additions to the CPG's family, including Heinz Ketchup, Heinz Baby and Renee's Dressings, as well as Kraft mainstay Classico.

Taxi has also returned to the telecommunications category by winning this year's Fido review, as well as

to the beer category after landing Moosehead Breweries.

Shoom-Kirsch says the longevity of its relationships is a point of pride. Taxi has been working with Canadian Tire since 2005 and Pfizer since 2002, and it worked with Telus for 18 years before the account moved. It has been Boston Pizza's AOR for more than six years and joined Kraft's roster in 2011.

"It is so rare these days, and a testament to how we're able to build relationships through our approach to the work," Shoom-Kirsch says. "Our clients are rolling with the changes in their marketplace. They're setting themselves up so they're not abiding by traditional stodgy processes, and want to work with partners who are set up the same way."

Shoom-Kirsch says the values Taxi has re-centred itself around since 2014 align with the demand for quality work delivered "at the speed of retail." Irene Daley, associate VP of strategic marketing at Canadian Tire, says the length of her company's relationship with Taxi has built the trust required to move that fast.

"They know how we work, they get our business model and they get our brand," she says. "Our culture is fast-paced, and they adapt to that because they're fast-paced as well."

CASES



1. An unlikely cause

Nabob's "Respect the Bean" positioning – established by previous agency Ogilvy in 2014 – is all about bucking coffee trends to show the importance of substance over style. To boost that positioning, Nabob and Taxi joined the conversation around a contentious fall trend – the Pumpkin Spice Latte. It was the perfect opportunity to express the brand's point of view by joining a trending topic and reminding people that Nabob believes in quality coffee without the frills.

The "Save the Pumpkins" campaign gave fed-up pumpkins a voice in a 60-second online video that implored coffee drinkers across the country to put an end to the "pumpkin spice-ification" of everything. The video was amplified with promoted tweets, targeted banners, sponsored BuzzFeed articles and even t-shirts.

To reach its target of discerning coffee drinkers – who are passive internet users and skeptical of online advertising – Nabob designed shareable content to help them easily express their frustration at the deluge of pumpkin-spice content in early fall. Traffic to the website went up by 480%, with a 501% increase in unique visitors.



2. Taxi used Microsoft's image recognition tool to show how living on the street makes young people look decades older than they are for Covenant House.

3. The agency turned photos of discarded furniture in Montreal into socially-shared coupons for Leon's to drive awareness for the brand in Quebec.

► For full cases, go to daoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016



Congratulations to our partners at **Zulu Alpha Kilo** on your nomination for Strategy's Agency of the Year award.

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Starcom's year of disruption BY BREE RODY-MANTHA

NEW BUSINESS
Airbnb, Just Eat, Snapchat, VF Corp (The North Face, Timberland PRO), Canada Bread, Uniqlo, Visa

NEW HIRES
Mike Rumble, chief strategy officer; Clare Street, group account director; Fatim Sylla, media director

STAFF
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IF THERE'S ONE MAJOR THEME that Bronze Media Agency of the Year winner Starcom Mediavest Group (SMG) has followed, CEO Alexandra Panousis says it's "dare to leap."

"This year, the industry has probably seen more change than we've ever experienced," she says. "We decided we wanted to think, 'dare to leap,' which is to say: we have to do almost everything differently."

For SMG, that meant organizing more around data, embracing digital and leveraging the interdependence of other companies within the Publicis Group.

But as she chronicles the past year with the agency, another constant emerges: rolling with the punches.

In a year packed with account reviews, turnover and shifting trends industry-wide, Panousis has brushed most of those challenges off not as crises, but as reality. For example, while last year's major of account reviews

across the industry was dubbed by naysayers as "Reviewmageddon," Panousis said her team referred to the frenzy with a more neutral moniker, "Mediapalooza."

"The reality is, public companies need to review their agencies from time to time," she says. "It's part of the business, and we get that."

It's pointless dwelling on losses in an industry packed with change, says Panousis. Like most other agencies, Starcom is up against a media landscape transforming rapidly, faced with implementing new strategies and techniques and embracing the digital era.

"A marketer's needs have changed," says Steve Meraska, Starcom's SVP of innovation, insight and disruption.

"Obviously programmatic and data play a way bigger role, but we also need to look at how that translates into



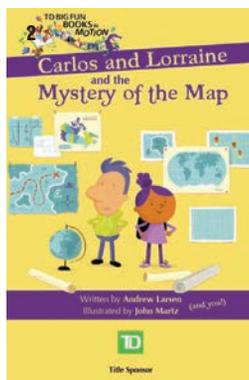
CASES

1. The Ghost in the Machine

To draw attention to its hearing aid batteries, Duracell wanted to pierce through the visual-centric world of content. The most effective way was to deprive people of audio at a pivotal moment: during their favourite TV shows.

A volume bar mysteriously appeared on screens during regular programming (including the *Modern Family* season finale and a Blue Jays game) and began decreasing along with the actual volume. The bar then morphed into a snipe ad for Duracell – reading “Are you having trouble hearing this?” – followed by another Duracell ad calling for a hearing test.

The execution led to unprecedented hearing aid sales: Duracell outpaced the category by 9%.



2. YTV targeted kids under 14 as part of TD's Summer Reading Club, airing kids' book club panels on TV and hosting an online campaign for children to submit story ideas for a new book.

3. Starcom created an OOH campaign for Ritz To Go that used traffic data to let transit users know how long (and how many crackers) until the next streetcar.

➤ For full cases, go to maoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016

television, where they spend the bulk of their dollars, or even programmatic out of home.”

For example, SMG incorporated data from MapQuest and the TTC into its “Ritz to Go” campaign for Mondelēz’ Ritz To Go cracker packs. The campaign issued real-time TTC and traffic updates on digital OOH units, representing time with stacks of crackers.

It’s also taken bigger risks when it comes to traditional advertising, as with its “Audio Deprivation” campaign for Duracel (see case above).

“It was something that would make people start to look for their remote, get worried that something was wrong,” Panousis explains. “At the same time, we knew it was going to make people upset.”

Of all the networks pitched, only Rogers and TVA agreed to the buy. But the end result was a powerful ad that resonated with audiences – for brand recall, it outperformed all other advertisers during *Modern Family* by 66%. “For us, that was really an example of a dare-to-leap moment,” she says.

It doesn’t always pay to be pushy, says Panousis, but it’s a risk agencies have to be willing to take. “We often approach things with the attitude of “This is the angle you should be looking at.”

The agency’s chutzpah might be why so many of its new clients are ones Panousis labels as disruptors, like mobile game heavyweight King Games, millennial favourite Snapchat and short-term rental service Airbnb.

“Five or ten years ago, these companies didn’t even exist,” she says.

Increasingly, the agency is trying to embrace different viewpoints, making a point of challenging one another more and consulting with vendor partners to see how it can do better. And, of course, rolling with the punches.

“Advertising is a means to an end,” says Panousis. “In the end, we’ve always been big advocates for change. It makes everybody better.”



Influencers find true North

BY JENNIFER HORN

GIVE A MAN CONTENT FOR HIS YOUTUBE CHANNEL, and you feed him new fans for a day. Teach him to create his own, and he'll feed you new customers for a lifetime.

We wouldn't be surprised if North Strategic cross-stitches and frames the doctored adage for the walls of its downtown digs. The Toronto PR firm, with its proprietary network of 800 video creators, is already a bit of a content aficionado, and now it's taking on protégés through a new division.

Initially set up as a social agency in 2011, this year's Bronze PR Agency of the Year has morphed into a crossbreed of PR and advertising. Its current business model is the result of efforts to create a community of specialists, introducing services like Notch Video, Navigate and, now, Nfluence.

First, Notch was set up in 2013 for the shop to be able to tap into a national pool of independent content creators, who help ideate and execute on clients' social and digital projects.

Next, North looked into improving the ideation process, and partnered with Ten Thousand Coffees (a networking site that connects millennials with business leaders) to create Navigate, a millennial network that marketers can speak to about ideas for products and campaigns.

Now, the next phase of its evolution is coming from Nfluence, a new offering that's just as much about pairing clients with well-known influencers as it is with up-and-comers.

There's huge value in collaborating with the fan-friendly Lilly Singhs of the YouTube world, says North

co-founder Mia Pearson. However, the same is true of investing in the tastemakers sitting on the front lines, those who have influence in the real world but little experience in the virtual.

“A lot of companies are saying it’s expensive to go to the bigger names,” says Pearson. “And while there is value in that, they’re also asking how we can work with people who already have influence with their target group.”

Co-founder Justin Creally uses Budweiser’s recent beer ambassador program as an example of how Nfluence is working with clients to create social apprentices.

It’s common practice for beer brands to have student “Campus Ambassadors” infiltrate universities to plan and promote events on their behalf. These promoters have strong relationships with fellow students on the ground, but many lack the skills to do the same online, says Creally.

So, instead of giving them a Bud ad to post on their Twitter account, North has been getting creators from its Notch network to teach 20 campus reps how to produce content that’s more in line with their own interests.

It’s even brought in Instagrammers to train them on how to compose shots and properly use social media. The idea is to make them more marketable by building their online fan base and then bringing the brand into the equation with more authentic Bud-related posts.

Through Nfluence and Notch, the 64-person shop is making content the engine of North’s business, says Creally. “It is what separates us from our competitors and distinguishes us from advertising players. It’s what the future of PR is about.”

And it’s this content expertise that’s driving profit and leading the agency to land accounts outside the traditional public relations purview. In its first five years, combined revenues of North and Notch surpassed \$12 million. The shop’s revenue increased 52% (for the year ending March 2016), and North was recently named the social agency of record for Tim Hortons and Las Vegas, among others. It also grew its employee base by 25% across offices in Toronto, Montreal and Calgary, bringing in new directors of social, including former GoodLife marketer Coralie Olson and former Travel Alberta social manager Nancy Smith.

“One of the things that I think is unique in our model is that we create communities of experts,” says Pearson. “Having access to creators has enabled us to get better at thinking. We saw the power that these communities have to make an agency like ours that much more powerful and fresh, and be able to scale and execute on a level that some others aren’t able to.”

NEW BUSINESS
Canada Goose, Tim Hortons, TD Financial, Enercare, Fido, Parkland Fuel, Saint Elizabeth Healthcare, PwC, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, and GoDaddy

KEY HIRES
Coralie Olson, senior director of social; Nancy Smith, director of social; Lorena Cordoba, director of PR; Danielle Eve, manager of social

STAFF
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CASES

2. Cadillac Fairview’s Runway and #MobileCloset brought fashion to the city in a new way.

3. Woods Canada worked with northern navigators and passionate storytellers to create online content featuring the brand’s products.



1. Opening homes and minds

Building off the brand’s global “Belong Anywhere” campaign, Airbnb worked with North Strategic to develop a Canadian PR strategy to position the brand as adventurous, trustworthy and friendly. From transforming an Air Canada Centre (ACC) suite into a sports fan’s dream overnight stay, to hosting influencers at unique Canadian properties – including a Vancouver yacht and ex-NHL star Wendel Clark’s Muskoka cottage – the campaign wrapped Airbnb in the Canadian flag.

The goal was to normalize the notion of opening your home to visitors, so it played up the friendly, polite nature of Canadians and worked with iconic Canucks to list their homes on the platform. There are now more than 60,000 Canadian listings, up 81% from July 2015 (the goal was a 50% increase). The most recent data shows that Airbnb has experienced 100% growth in the number of bookings made by Canadians to more than 930,000.



► For full cases, go to praoywinners.strategyonline.ca/2016



Agency of the Year | JUDGES



ALYSSA ALTMAN,
VP, SapientNitro



ERIC ALPER,
CMO, Frank + Oak



HOPE BAGOZZI,
senior director of national
marketing, McDonald's



DARREN CLARKE,
CCO, McCann Canada



MARY DEPAOLI,
EVP and CMO, RBC



ANDREA GRAHAM,
senior marketing executive,
Leon's



SEAN HAZELL,
VP of brand and innovation
strategy, Idea Couture



SHANNON HOSFORD,
VP of marketing and
communications,
MLSE



LISA KIMMEL,
president and CEO,
Edelman



DIANE LABERGE,
director of marketing,
Unilever



DAVID LUI,
VP of marketing, Mark's



CAROLINE LOSSON,
VP of marketing, Keurig



BRIAN SHEPPARD,
EVP and ECD,
Saatchi & Saatchi



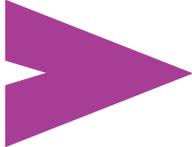
MARTIN SHEWCHUK,
former creative chairman
emeritus, J. Walter
Thompson



ANESTIS VASSILIADES,
ECD, Havas Worldwide
Canada



MILOS VRANESEVIC,
VP and head of
marketing, MasterCard



Digital Agency of the Year | JUDGES



PAUL BURNS,
managing director, Huge



THIERRY BAZAY,
head of industry and media
platforms, Google



RORY CAPERN,
managing director, Twitter



RON CRAIG,
VP, marketing and business
development, The Source



ANDREA DANOVITCH,
director of marketing and
brand strategy, Interac



EKATERINA
DOBROKHOTOVA,
consumer engagement
manager, L'Oréal



JEFF HARRISON,
founder and CD, 123w



SANDRA KENNEDY,
director of marketing,
Harry Rosen



LANCE MARTIN,
ECD and partner, Union



STEVE MYKOLYN,
Principal at Castor, former
Taxi CCO



SCOTT SUTHREN,
VP of planning, Cheil



MARK TOMBLIN,
chief strategy officer,
Juniper Park\TBWA



ANNETTE WARRING,
CEO, Dentsu Aegis
Network



CHRISTINA YU,
EVP and CD, Red Urban

Media Agency of the Year | JUDGES



JUDY DAVEY,
VP of media policy and
marketing capabilities, ACA



DAVE GOURDE,
partner and VP of media,
Bleublancrouge



ROBIN HASSAN,
country lead, digital
engagement and media,
Unilever



KEVIN JOHNSON,
CEO, Mediacom



JONATHAN LEVITT,
CMO, Reitmans



KRISTINE LYRETTE,
president, ZenithOptimedia



NATASHA MILLAR,
senior marketing director,
Kellogg



SUSAN O'BRIEN,
senior VP of marketing
and corporate affairs,
Canadian Tire



STEVE RHIND,
director of marketing,
Nissan



ANGELA SCARDILLO,
VP marketing and
communications, Best Buy



JED SCHNEIDERMAN,
president and co-founder,
Tapped Mobile



PENNY STEVENS,
president, Media Experts



RYAN VAN DONGEN,
director of global media
strategy and planning,
Scotiabank

PR Agency of the Year | JUDGES



DEBORAH ADAMS,
SVP, managing
director, Harbinger
Communications



ADRIAN CAPOBIANCO,
president, Vizeum



SHANNON EMILY
DAVIDSON, VP and
practice lead, marketing,
National Public Relations



PASCAL DE DECKER,
co-president and ECD,
Taxi Montreal



JASON DOOLAN,
director of marketing,
General Mills



SABRINA DUGUAY,
director of corporate
communications,
National Public Relations
(formerly Cohn & Wolfe)



MARIE-JOSÉE GAGNON,
CEO, Casacom



FREDERICK LECOQ,
SVP marketing and
ecommerce, FGL Sports



CONNIE MORRISON,
COO, Chudleigh's (formerly
SVP of marketing at Maple
Leaf Foods)



DANIEL SHEARER,
EVP and general manager,
Cossette



ROBIN SHIMKOVITZ,
VP, Environics
Communications



ALISON SIMPSON,
SVP, marketing and
customer experience, Holt
Renfrew



PROMO! | 2016

Some bold animation won Best of Show at CAPMA's Promo! Awards, held Sept. 22 in Toronto. Juniper Park\TBWA's "If it's not yes, it's no" campaign for Project Consent, memorable for its animated genitals and blunt delivery, took the top prize. The event, which celebrates the best in brand activation, was hosted by marketing consultant Tony Chapman and social media maven Erica Ehm.



1. Co-hosts Tony Chapman and Erica Ehm warm up the crowd. | 2. Anne Marie Al-Borno, Tracy Markos and Andrea Taylor (far right) from Mosaic, with Loblaw's Vanessa Norris (second from right). | 3. Cineplex's Peter Furnish, Andrea Zadro and Melissa Sheasgreen. | 4. CBC's Kirstin Hosick, Noyam Hilmi and Steven Pitkanen (far right) with ZenithOptimedia's Crystal Oxley (second from right). | 5. Interac marketer Andrea Danovitch with Zulu Alpha Kilo's Mike Sutton, Andrew Caie and Noel Fenn. | 6. The crowd mingles at District 28. | 7. Labatt's Andrew Oosterhuis, Anomaly's Dion AraiHalli and Budweiser's Natalie Starszyk. | 8. PROMO! jury co-chair Imran Choudhry of T1 and Free for All Marketing's Christine Ross reveal the Best in Show. | 9. Multiple Gold and Best in Show winners Elma Karabegovic and Sara Nancoo of Juniper Park\TBWA. | 10. CAPMA president and 6 Degrees managing partner Troy Yung. | 11. Cossette CCOs Peter Ignazi and Carlos Moreno pick up one of several wins for Honey Nut Cheerios.

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new media establishment

Strategy and Media In Canada are looking for the next generation of leadership, innovation and enviable talent in the Canadian media industry – the ones to watch – and we need your help to find them.

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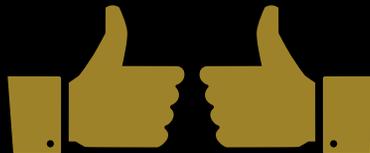
Nominations are open now. Candidates will be judged by the 2017 AToMiC jury, with one winner for each career level awarded at next year's show.

Selected candidates will also be profiled in *Media in Canada*.

Send your nomination outlining what your candidate did that was exceptional to Val Maloney at vmaloney@brunico.com

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