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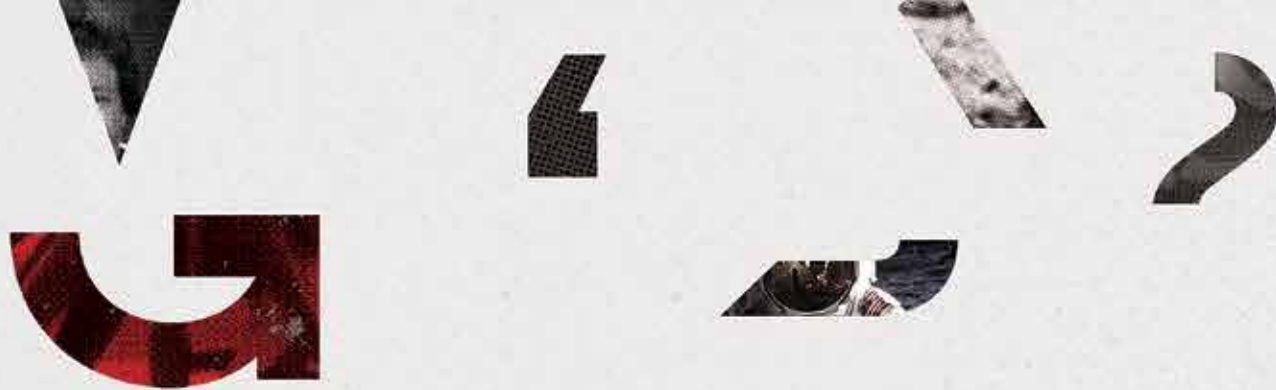


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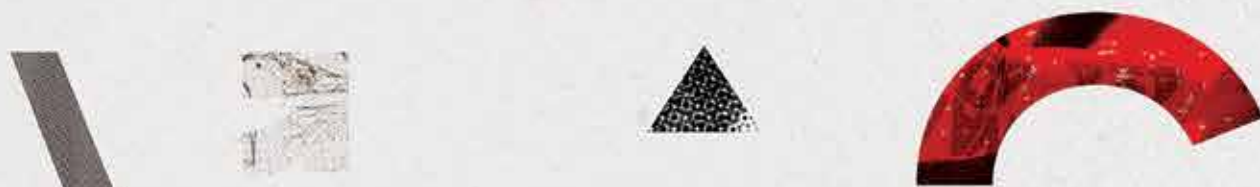
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Cossette's "All In" spot, for SickKids, is a playful-turned-gritty piece that picked up big prizes at this year's AToMiC Awards.

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ON THE COVER: The machines are sorting through our most complex consumer data. They're also crashing autonomous vehicles and occasionally laughing at us when they think we're not listening. So... friend? Overlord? A bit of both? Brands are investing either way and closing the gap between robots and us humans as they go. Illustrator Yarek Waszul presents his take on this uneasy alliance.

A long ways to go

In case you missed it, the internet lost its marbles recently when a member of the AI family did the most terrifying thing a subservient virtual being could ever do: laugh.

Not on command, and sometimes just before bed (*shiver), Alexa has been reported to casually cackle at its owners. And not that awkward robotic “ha-ha-ha,” mind you, but with an eerily human chortle. She’s since caused a commotion on Twitter, a revival of *Terminator* memes and BuzzFeed headlines that reek with paranoia: “If My Amazon Echo Starts Randomly Laughing, I’ll Leave Earth.”

OK. So we’re nowhere near Phillip K. Dick’s apocalyptic *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* world. Bounty hunters aren’t being paid to track androids that have gone violently rogue (yet). However, the Alexa glitch – which Amazon quickly corrected with a language command tweak – could serve as a cautionary tale for marketers investing in tech.

AI, big data, and all the Next Big Things are a work-in-progress. Bugs are fated. And all parties (developer and user alike) are in a seemingly perpetual test-and-learn phase. According to a PHD book, we’re actually still in the “Extraction” stage of a great and mighty “Merge” – the beckoning age (taking place in about 40 years) when “technology and humanity will, both symbolically and literally, fuse together.” We haven’t even begun to scratch the surface of the impact, writes PHD. That will only really begin to unveil in 2020 when “deep learning AI technology starts to understand us, our context, our routines and it even starts to run our lives for us.” Perhaps slow and steady is what wins the race, anyway.

In this issue, StrategyDaily editor Josh Kolm investigates a subset of business issues marketers

should consider when exploring AI and blockchain in our cover story on p.12.

The story is a much-needed reality check on all the questions you should be asking: from infrastructure (are your tech stacks up to snuff?) to ethics (are you being responsible with that data?) to the growing paradox of choice (do you really need all the shiny new toys?). These are some of the foundational questions, writes Kolm, that need answering before technology can begin to deliver what’s promised.

And with regulations in Europe tightening, as GDPR calls for more transparent collection of data and comes into effect this May – potentially carving the path for Canada’s own privacy laws to follow suit – laying the groundwork for responsible AI has never been more vital.

In the meantime, as you ponder these questions and concerns, kick back and read the pages filled with cases from our AToMiC winners (p. 17) as their biometric-tracking and hyper-targeting ways play their own role in “closing the gap between technology and us” (seriously, look up the *Merge* book, it’s well worth a read).

Jennifer Horn, editor



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CHANGING LANES

By Josh Kolm

For Jordan Doucette, being a judge in Cannes last year made her look at what else she could achieve in a career that's so far included major campaigns for brands like Canadian Tire, Telus and Pfizer.

"I was exposed to all these amazing judges doing interesting stuff," the former Taxi CCO tells *strategy*. "It motivated me to take a good hard look at my portfolio and what was missing. For me, that was a big global piece of business."

In January, Doucette found that opportunity in Chicago, joining Leo Burnett to lead creative on its Kellogg's account. Months into her new role, she spoke with us about what she's learned (and what everyone really thinks about Canadian creative).

Don't be too precious with creative ideas.

Last week we pitched something, but hadn't decided all the ways it could come to life. Our planners were like, "That's amazing, here's what we can do to light it on fire." There's nothing more motivating than someone figuring out how to get your idea a bit more pointy so more people are going to see or engage with it.

Being focused on business results



BEER WITH A HIGHER PURPOSE

By Justin Dallaire

Above: Been a Slice OOH postings will tell the brand's "resurrection" story when it launches later this year.

Bob's Your Uncle has been positioning itself as an agency for "thoughtful food and beverage brands," working with charity Second Harvest and organic brand Yorkshire Valley Farms. However, the shop wanted to mark its move into the "thoughtful" space in a more visible way.

So it created Been a Slice, a beer label that's launching later this year to support Second Harvest's mission to reduce food waste, while also building its own brand affinity. Been a Slice is made entirely from old bread that would usually get thrown out, and funds from beer sales will go directly to the organization.

Debra Lawson, executive director at Second Harvest, says the project fits the org's model of a "circular economy," while generating awareness among younger audiences, which the non-profit is looking to add to its older-skewing donor base.

"There's definitely something here way beyond selling a can of beer and making a couple of bucks in order to give back," says Bob Froese, the agency's CEO. "[If you] want to own a category, create your own. That's what we're trying to do in that space."

Froese says the idea was inspired by the U.K.'s Toast, which has been making bread-based beer since 2015. And while there's no shortage of exotic craft beer names – many hinting towards origin, heritage or quality – the agency chose Been a Slice for its ability to tell the beer brand's "resurrection" story, he says. Been a Slice has "shelf-stopping power" and is a nod to its "higher purpose," adds Froese.

Been a Slice will be supported with digital ads during pre-launch, followed by OOH postings with taglines like "Beer brought back from the bread." Media buys are to be determined, but Froese says they will be focused downtown to capture a younger demo, with some OOH outside the core. Merchandise featuring the brand's bread slice with angel wings logo will also be sold.

While the Toronto agency is still negotiating with the LCBO on placement and signage, the plan is to launch in time for Thanksgiving, when a lot of bread goes to waste. It will be soft-launching in June during Toronto Taste, an annual fundraising event for Second Harvest, and will eventually be served in downtown restaurants and bars.



doesn't always mean over-engineering. You just need good leadership to guide the baby and make sure it's getting input from impressive people.

Canadians shouldn't sell themselves short.

Whether it's talking to my client or people at Leo Burnett, the perception of Canada and its work is really great. We're known for being nimble.

Sometimes I was hard on myself and thought, "Oh, it's little old Canada and we're coming up with ideas just for us." I shouldn't have felt that way. We don't have the same budgets, but that doesn't impact the idea as much as we let ourselves believe. In fact, I think it makes our ideas work harder.

Support for women in the industry needs to come from both sides (as well as the top).

When I came to Chicago, so many women from other agencies reached out to congratulate me. It made me think, would I have done that if I knew a woman was taking on a new leadership role?

I realized you also need to support women who are doing the job, and they can help the ones trying to elevate themselves.

I want more men to advocate for us, instead of us pushing our way in. Why aren't they figuring this out at an offsite? Why aren't they demanding our presence because they believe our voices and leadership are important?

I don't believe men don't want women at the top with them; they just don't have our perspective. They don't get that women who don't see other women in a job like theirs feel like it's never going to be available to them. It's one thing to say you're not against women leaders, but if you're not actively changing the opportunities women have, they might not pursue that job. Without action, it makes well-meaning initiatives feel like lip service.



IT'S ALL IN THE GENES

By Lisa Bucher

Altruism, ambidexterity and arachnophobia all have one thing in common: genetics. They're skills, traits and even fears inherited from our ancestors, right next to the blue eyes and freckles from mom/dad.

But the "giving gene," in particular, is what the Easter Seals is interested in capturing as it looks to attract new donors (beyond its roughly 40- to 50-year-old core demo) with a modern cause campaign that reimagines traditional peer-to-peer fundraising.

After stumbling upon an Oxford study that shows evidence that the COMT Val 158Met polymorphism gene contributes to a person's likelihood for altruism, J. Walter Thompson Canada proposed the idea to sell gene-testing kits to drive donations. (According to the study, people can inherit one, two or no copies of the gene. The more copies of the gene, the more inclined that person is to give.)

The "Giving Gene" kit, which launched in early March on Givinggene.ca, includes a postage

paid return envelope, instructional brochure and information about how Easter Seals is helping those living with disabilities. The kit's cotton swab can be mailed to a team of geneticists to be processed, and a user can track their DNA and test results on the Easter Seals website.

"Around 70% of Canadians are aware of Easter Seals by name only, but don't know what the charity stands for or who they help," explains Ari Elkouby, VP and CD at JWT. He says the charity has been exploring unconventional fundraising tactics (like getting people to raise money by scaling a skyscraper in a "DropZone" event) to increase that awareness.

Giving people something in return for their \$70 donation (the cost of the kit) creates an appealing value exchange for the org's target of socially conscious adults aged 18 to 34, Elkouby says. And even if test results come back negative for the "giving gene," he adds, the act of purchasing the kit from the charity helps relieve any feelings of self-reproach.

NEW TRICKS FROM AN OLD BRAND



A polka dot motif is used in OOH and transit ads to promote the AGO's "Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors" exhibit.

Today, Rayment says exhibition campaigns are developed through the lens of creating “meaningful experiences through great art, access and learning.” For example, advertising for “Guillermo del Toro: At Home with Monsters” (which celebrated the filmmaker’s work) gave the exhibit its own look and feel while adhering to that goal of making art accessible, says Sean Barlow, CCO at Cundari.

The approach, Barlow adds, is about “bringing in a layer of branding that won’t compete with the exhibit, but rather elevate the offering.”

The del Toro campaign incorporated broader notions of creativity and fandom as an underlying

Faced with aging audiences, some Canadian arts and culture institutions are turning to pop culture-inspired and millennial-friendly programming in a bid to attract new ones. But if they build it, will the right audiences come?

Few have been as successful as the Art Gallery of Ontario at getting people to notice what’s going on behind its walls. Since Cundari was named AOR in 2015, the AGO has adopted a research-led approach to developing campaigns that add a layer of branding to its exhibits.

The “Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors” exhibit, running until May 27, is an example of this new strategy. Research showed that, while only 5% of people in the GTA knew of Kusama, desire to attend the exhibit went “through the roof” when focus groups were shown her work, Steve Rayment, the AGO’s director of marketing tells *strategy*.

So the gallery crafted its media strategy accordingly.

Although the AGO’s paid campaigns usually begin a month in advance as tickets go on sale, it went with a “front-loaded approach” for “Infinity Mirrors,” says Rayment, promoting the launch on social three months ahead of its March 3 debut. When member-only tickets went on sale in December, the response was unprecedented. Many waited up to eight hours for phone/online orders. In January, thousands flocked to the AGO’s website, hoping to claim one of 30,000 tickets.

idea. Barlow says brand insight was based on “broadening the definition of art,” while cultural insight, as evidenced by the popularity of shows like *Game of Thrones*, was that “fantasy is a way of coping with reality.”

The exhibit’s “Inspiration is a Monster” campaign (which helped the AGO surpass single-ticket attendance goals by more than 67%) featured monsters from del Toro’s work, such as *Hellboy* and *Pan’s Labyrinth*. The characters delivered a wider message about the nature of creativity, and were seen across platforms, including cinema pre-show ads. The gallery also personally invited members of horror and science fiction fan clubs online.

Paid promotion was largely the same as other exhibits. However, the AGO directed additional resources towards programming: talks, art courses, workshops and two film-screenings – one focused on del Toro films, the other on the filmmaker’s top horror favourites. While capacity for the events was limited, Rayment says it was part of a “total engagement package.”

For institutions like the AGO, Luke Moore, EVP and managing director of media at Cundari, says a “test and learn” mindset helps leverage new channels and apply learnings to future campaigns. Rayment adds: “to understand where art lives in people’s lives, nothing does that better than research.” **JD**

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IN THE KITCHEN WITH BOB PARK

HOW THE GE MARKETER IS WHIPPING UP A DIGITAL-FIRST STRATEGY THAT EVEN THE U.S. ARM OF THE APPLIANCE BRAND HAS ITS EYES ON.

BY JUSTIN DALLAIRE

Bob Park doesn't consider himself a "digital-only type of marketer." Although, leaning that way has worked for him before, and he's banking on making it work again.

As the newly appointed chief of brands at GE Appliances in Canada, Park has crafted a digital-first strategy for a company that once held the opposite mindset. The new approach, he believes, is a necessary adjustment at a time when big-ticket purchases are heavily researched online.

Park was appointed to his new role in November 2017, with a mandate that includes marketing, design and PR, as well as developing the identities for each of GE's individual brands as the company transitions to a "house of brands" strategy. Following the US\$5.6 billion acquisition of General Electric's appliance division by China's Haier in June 2016, GE Appliances' brand portfolio now includes the GE sub-brand, Monogram, GE Café, GE Profile and Haier.

Park calls GE Appliances' shift from a prior strategy both in the U.S. and Canada the biggest philosophical or global market change that they've made. Part of that involves driving greater differentiation between GE brands and aligning its individual marketing efforts with consumer lifestyles.

While Monogram is GE's luxury line of products, the Haier collection is meant for urbanites who expect tech innovation from their appliances; the GE and GE Profile lines include modern, but more simple everyday



As GE Appliances looks to differentiate its global brand portfolio, Canada's Bob Park (top left) is building a case for more digitally-led programs, such as the Monogram partnership with interior designer Sarah Richardson (top right) to create branded kitchens for Toronto design shows (far right).

appliances. Meanwhile, the company is relaunching GE Café – which includes refrigerators, ranges, stoves and dishwashers – as a standalone brand under the label Café and targeting style-conscious consumers whose primary consideration is aesthetics. Going forward, Park says, “a huge focus for us will be marketing from the consumer in, rather than from the product out.”

In January, the company named No Fixed Address (which has shown to have a bit of a digital bent) as its new agency partner in Canada. The brand also recently added an in-house digital team. But Park says GE's evolution extends beyond running online marketing campaigns. “Anything that can be improved by digital, that's what we're trying to grasp,” he says. “It's really not just a brand marketing exercise; it's actually a corporate exercise.”

Prior to joining GE in 2012, Park worked in marketing at Samsung, first for its information technology division, then as head of strategic marketing at a time when the brand was trying to establish itself against major competitors like Apple and Sony. Park earned greater category experience consulting at Deloitte in early

2012. “It really added to my philosophy of consumer-first,” he says. “That's really the basis of digital-first.”

But he says his experience as director and general manager at Monogram is “the best case study” for the company's current strategy.

Under Park's leadership, Monogram recently revamped its website and focused on social and video content. Now a year into Monogram's digital push, site traffic has increased five-fold and year-over-year sales have increased by around 30%, he says, making it the fastest growing luxury appliances brand in Canada.

He achieved some of that growth through a partnership with Canadian interior designer Sarah Richardson, who created three branded kitchen concepts that were displayed at the Monogram Design Centre and the Interior Design Show in Toronto. One of them was constructed as a pizzeria to support the launch of Monogram's indoor pizza oven, for example.

Working with Faulhaber Communications, Monogram created content around Richardson's designs, which were then amplified through digital.

Over the next two years, Monogram in the U.S. will base its efforts on the Canadian model, bringing on fashion designer Zac Posen to create a unique Monogram design, and Park says he expects the brand will have a “far greater digital presence” in the U.S. this year than before.

Park is hoping to replicate that success with other GE products, as company figures reveal roughly 70% of Canadians do online research prior to purchasing large kitchen appliances. For now, the team at No Fixed Address is working on digital marketing for the GE sub-brand, which was identified as needing the most support. And GE Appliances will soon be announcing partnerships with Canadian celebrities, influenced by Monogram's success with Richardson.

“We're not going necessarily all-digital, but digital will flow from everything that we do,” says Park. Broadcast ads will be adapted for Facebook and Instagram, he says, because “it's all about driving content.”

According to Jennifer Siripong, chief digital officer at NFA, the focus is on “offering more channels, smarter



**“ANYTHING THAT CAN BE
IMPROVED BY DIGITAL,
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TRYING
TO GRASP.”**

- BOB PARK, GE

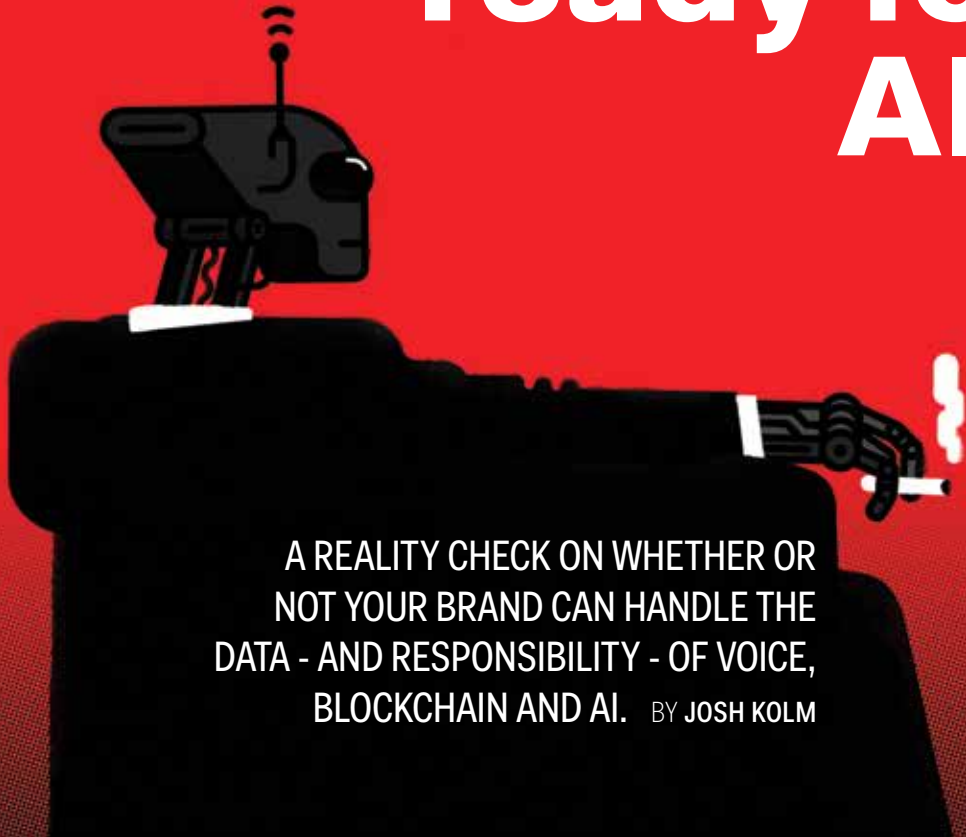
remarketing and contextually relevant content” to increase consideration for GE products. The team is also creating stronger landing and campaign web pages, as well as lifestyle content that demonstrates time-saving product features.

Park says compelling video will play a bigger role in the company's media strategy,

because it can best demonstrate product utility.

“Bob understands that, especially in the appliance world, we can't just be touting our products and our features, we need to be thinking about the consumer,” says Siripong. “He's realizing that consumers are not just focusing their major purchase decisions on a television commercial or a billboard. They're putting huge energy into digital research, and the digital channels of awareness are so much more influential than they have been in the past.”

Are you (really) ready for AI?



A REALITY CHECK ON WHETHER OR
NOT YOUR BRAND CAN HANDLE THE
DATA - AND RESPONSIBILITY - OF VOICE,
BLOCKCHAIN AND AI. BY JOSH KOLM

Marketers have kept themselves well-informed about the futuristic possibilities artificial intelligence, blockchain and voice-powered platforms can bring to their business. But before this technology can live up to what's been promised, marketing departments will need to address a few nagging issues.

At the beginning of March, digital agency FCB/Six spun out its own consulting division in response to clients' technology stacks not being set up to handle the agency's creative or strategic ideas.

"We quickly realized they weren't ready for [the ideas] we were recommending," says Jacob Ciesielski, SVP of data and technology at the shop. "So we started going [down] a different path, trying to understand some of the challenges and work directly with their tech team to make recommendations."

One issue, Ciesielski says, is that clients aren't using their existing tools and systems to their fullest potential.

A common way marketers can access AI is through CRM platforms and marketing automation technology – either directly from companies like Salesforce or by integrating with AI platforms like IBM's Watson. The link between AI and CRM is a clear one: artificial intelligence can be used to automate and predict the most effective personalized, one-to-one communications. But Ciesielski says, in his experience, most clients aren't ready for AI. In fact, many of them are still struggling to structure their data to provide an accurate picture of consumer behaviour.

"Everybody is talking about delivering the right message on the right channel at the right time, but there's a lot of systems still working in silos," he says. "That isn't giving them the full view of the customer across different platforms. Trying to deliver an experience based on a fragmented view is going to impact the quality."

Adobe's Digital Trends report found fully integrating their technology stack is a

problem for even the most successful companies. Among the nearly 13,000 marketing professionals surveyed globally, only 25% of the top-performing businesses described their stack as being fully integrated, with 9% of the remaining businesses saying the same. In another survey by Accenture, 82% of Canadian executives expect their staff to be working with AI systems within the next two years. However, 84% of those same executives don't believe they are doing enough to verify the accuracy of the data sets that power their AI systems.

An artificial intelligence platform will only work as well as the data it is "trained" on. Machine learning algorithms are fed data, helping them "learn" how to classify pieces of information and associate them with an action through constant reinforcement. The system is further refined after it's put out into the world and

interacts with people, giving it more information to base its processes and decisions on.

But if a system is given an inaccurate or incomplete picture of consumer behaviour at the outset, any learning built on that is going to be flawed.

"If you put garbage in, you get garbage out," says Andrew Lo, CEO and president of online insurance platform Kanetix. "We have data going back to 1999, but we still spent weeks cleaning up our data and turning it into something that made sense before we began our pilot with AI."

In September, Kanetix launched a project with Integrate.ai, a company building an AI-powered platform to optimize consumer engagement. Targeting auto insurance customers in Ontario, Integrate.ai used Kanetix's consumer behaviour data to assign site visitors a score based on how likely they were to pursue a quote. The data included anonymized sales information, on-site behaviour, the amount of savings offered and user information (like their car model and driving history). That provided Kanetix with suggestions for who would be most likely to convert after being given a gift card, allowing the company to be more targeted with its offers.

"The surprise was we had to really roll up our sleeves to develop the actionable insights," Lo says. "There was still a lot of back-and-forth to make sure we had the right operating metrics and that the data was responsive and actually delivering business value."

And data is about to become even more complex with voice-powered platforms like Amazon's Alexa and Google's Assistant increasing their penetration, both through sales of devices like Echo and Home and by integrating those assistants into connected products made by other companies. In the conference hall at CES this year, what was once a prestige feature is now being made compatible with hundreds of new products from companies of all sizes.

Damien Lemaître, SVP of media at digital agency Isobar, says the ubiquity of voice platforms will give brands access to data they might not have had before and change the way they speak with consumers. "But

only if marketers make sure they understand what that data actually says about their consumer; structure it so it's accurate and doesn't drive people away with a device they think is always listening."

RESPONSIBILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND ELIMINATING THE "CREEPY FACTOR"

A survey by Sklar Wilton and Associates found 75% of Canadians are concerned with the impact AI will have on their privacy. When asked to describe how they feel about the adoption of AI, 40% of those in the same survey picked words that can be best described as

negative: "concern," "fear," and "anxiety."

The issue isn't that companies are collecting more data than before, says Jodie Wallis, managing director for artificial intelligence at Accenture Canada. It's that good AI uses data more effectively, and to a degree that makes it more apparent to consumers how much of their information has been collected.

"There is a regulatory framework around responsible use of data, but what's more important for marketers is the 'creepy' factor," she says. "If a marketer is using data I didn't expect them to have, whether it's compliant or not, it may make me feel uncomfortable."

Beyond ensuring your data comes from a trusted source and is collected with consent, Wallis suggests marketers fully understand what they are collecting and how it fits into the consumer's life. She also recommends a simple "human test" – if you do something with AI that creeps *you* out, chances are it will do the same to your customer.

Bias is another ethical issue. AI could be used to analyze resumes to fill an open job, but if it's trained on data related to who previously filled similar roles, the system could be biased against candidates that are women or people of colour. In a marketing context, that bias could impact who a targeted message is delivered to – which works if you're trying to reach people you've historically performed well with, but less so if you don't want other groups to feel alienated from your brand.

"That is the difficulty, because historical data is all we





HARLEY-DAVIDSON, MEET ALBERT

To reduce seasonal overstock when it's chilly and hitting the open road isn't a priority, motorcycle dealership Harley-Davidson NYC engaged AI-powered marketing platform Albert.

Using the dealership's KPIs, past campaign data and intelligence about existing customers, Albert identified effective combinations of creative and messaging; found new target audiences; and changed the marketing mix on the fly.

The implementation resulted in a 2,930% increase in leads per month crediting 40% of sales over six months to the project. Prior to this, the most bikes Harley-Davidson NYC sold over a weekend was eight; during the first two-days of working with Albert, it sold 15.

have," Wallis says. "We don't have future data. But at least we can understand the problem, and be mindful of the types of biases we need to look for."

That's partly why transparency and accountability are big factors for those looking to use AI responsibly. This means knowing exactly how AI comes to a decision, and who is on the hook if something goes wrong.

Wallis says understanding decisions in a low-stakes situation like automated product recommendations in online shopping may be less essential than when a customer demands to know why they were denied an insurance claim.

As an insurance company, Kanetix is subject to regulations that prevent an AI system from automatically performing an action based on its analysis, requiring a human to actually "push the button" (so to speak) and send an offer. But Lo says he'd recommend that kind of stop gap to any company, even if they aren't mandated to.

"Automakers are not thinking about getting autonomous cars on the highway right now," he says. "They're thinking about integrating them into a 'smart city' where pedestrians won't be walking in places autonomous cars are driving.

"You can't just let AI face the customer and have it tackle moral issues or potentially do harm. There should always be a layer of abstraction. We do the same thing with chatbots, because we don't just let it advise customers on decisions. We can see what the responses are and intercept a conversation at the right moment."

THE COMING BLOCKCHAIN WAVE

Think of it as a scoreboard at a baseball game. Everyone in the stadium can see when a run is added, and once it's on the board, it cannot be taken down. Now imagine using

a special code to see which players scored each run.

Transparency is becoming an issue on marketers' minds as the hype around blockchain continues to swell. First developed as the backbone of cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, blockchain is a digital ledger of information and transactions. The ledger is encrypted, but also decentralized, with the same information stored across multiple systems and tracking every change made to it. This makes information stored on blockchain secure, but also accessible.

Businesses in sectors beyond cryptocurrency are finding useful ways to incorporate blockchain. Financial and insurance companies, for example, can give customers faster approval for new products and services because blockchain makes it easier to securely access, share and verify private information with third parties.

In marketing, a fully transparent ledger of info is seen by some as a solution for ad fraud – a driving force behind Unilever's partnership with IBM to develop its own blockchain solution. It also has implications for CSR activities, giving industry watching groups and private citizens the ability to verify corporate donations and supply chain practices to ensure a company's activities match their socially-conscious messages.

ATB Financial has been experimenting with applications for blockchain

since 2016. It was the first to use the technology to make real-time payments over international borders; has experimented with Alberta's oil companies to make transactions faster; and partnered with non-profit Sovrin Foundation to store people's personal information and combat identity theft.

While ATB is ahead of some of its competition in exploring blockchain, Wellington Holbrook, chief transformation officer at the company, says it's playing a "wait and see" game.

"We can experiment with it, but until our customer or other businesses start to embrace it, it's kind of like being the only person with an email address," Holbrook says. "But once the tide turns, it will go fast. It's just a question of when, and that's what everyone's trying to be prepared for."



"What's more important for marketers is the 'creepy' factor. If a marketer is using data I didn't expect them to have, whether it's compliant or not, it may make me feel uncomfortable."

Jodie Wallis, Accenture

He adds that once blockchain reaches mass adoption, its capabilities could result in a shift in consumer expectations. People might want more transparency and easier access to secured private data from companies, whether they are using blockchain or not. Holbrook likens it to the Beta versus VHS format war, consumers are demanding security and convenience around their personal data, but it might not be blockchain that provides it.

TAKING THOSE FIRST STEPS

Regardless of the tech, it's important to ensure it addresses your needs before investing. Ciesielski says most data and CRM platforms are "about 80%" the same.

"The challenge our clients are facing is they're being sold products based on features and functionality," he says. "What they're not realizing is they are just buying a shiny new box, and it's not always one that will solve their problems, because their infrastructure is not set up in the right way. Sometimes a tune up or reconfiguration of something they already have might solve the problem."

Wallis says forethought is especially vital for a company to keep in mind before using AI. Having a sense of the problems AI is being used to solve can help marketers create a data infrastructure that helps the system work towards the right goal. And to do that, be ready to roll up your sleeves.

"What people stumble on, especially in larger organizations, is wrangling all of the historical data you have about your customer into your new data infrastructure," she says. "You need all of the data to be clean and readable, and sometimes you've got different

"You can't just let AI face the customer and have it tackle moral issues or potentially do harm. There should always be a layer of abstraction"



Andrew Lo, Kanetix

versions of old data and have to fill in gaps. That's hard and expensive and there's no way around it."


Blockchain and AI require a great deal of computing power, and both Wallis and Holbrook agree using a cloud-based solution from a trusted partner is the best way to avoid spending on your own servers. However, that solution needs to be integrated with other systems. As fundamental as having an integrated data set is for setting up AI, it's just as important to be able to feed the insights it creates back into an organization.

"Even if you get to the point where you generate really interesting insights using machine learning

algorithms, unless you can embed action from those insights into your processes, you haven't gained anything," Wallis says. "A lot of traditional businesses still struggle with this."

Ciesielski says another issue that can contribute to not having integrated tech is a lack of communication between the marketing and IT departments.

Holbrook says ATB has had success addressing this by having members of the marketing team embedded within his tech and transformation division.

"What we're talking about now are solutions where data and business processes are inextricably linked," Wallis says. "It's important that both teams recognize that working together is the way to gain a competitive advantage. We're starting to see organizations that are fantastic at using technology in their marketing functions have been the ones with very tight relationships with marketing and IT." 



UNILEVER AND IBM FIGHT AD FRAUD WITH BLOCKCHAIN

When Unilever CMO Keith Weed announced his company would work with IBM to adopt blockchain, it gave credence to an idea for combating online ad fraud. Using a secured, transparent ledger provides the ability to see where impressions

come from and verify that ads are actually being seen by the intended audience. The fact that data cannot be tampered with or added to the ledger without all parties – brand and agencies – agreeing to it means it also resolves discrepancies and brings trust to the relationship.

That might seem arduous in

an online world where speed is paramount, but IBM has said it's committing to a principle called "smart contracts" in its work. Smart contracts can instantly initiate a digital media buy after views are confirmed as coming from a legitimate source weeks or months after the buy already happened.

strategy



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FEATURING:

Don Mayo, IMI (left)

Tried and true marketing works
– shiny and new isn't always the best

ALSO ON THE AGENDA:

Susan Salib, IBM

What does AI mean for retail?

Daryl Porter, Walmart

The future is in flux: How Walmart is
building out its omnichannel strategy

Dominic Smith, Martin Williams, Idea Couture

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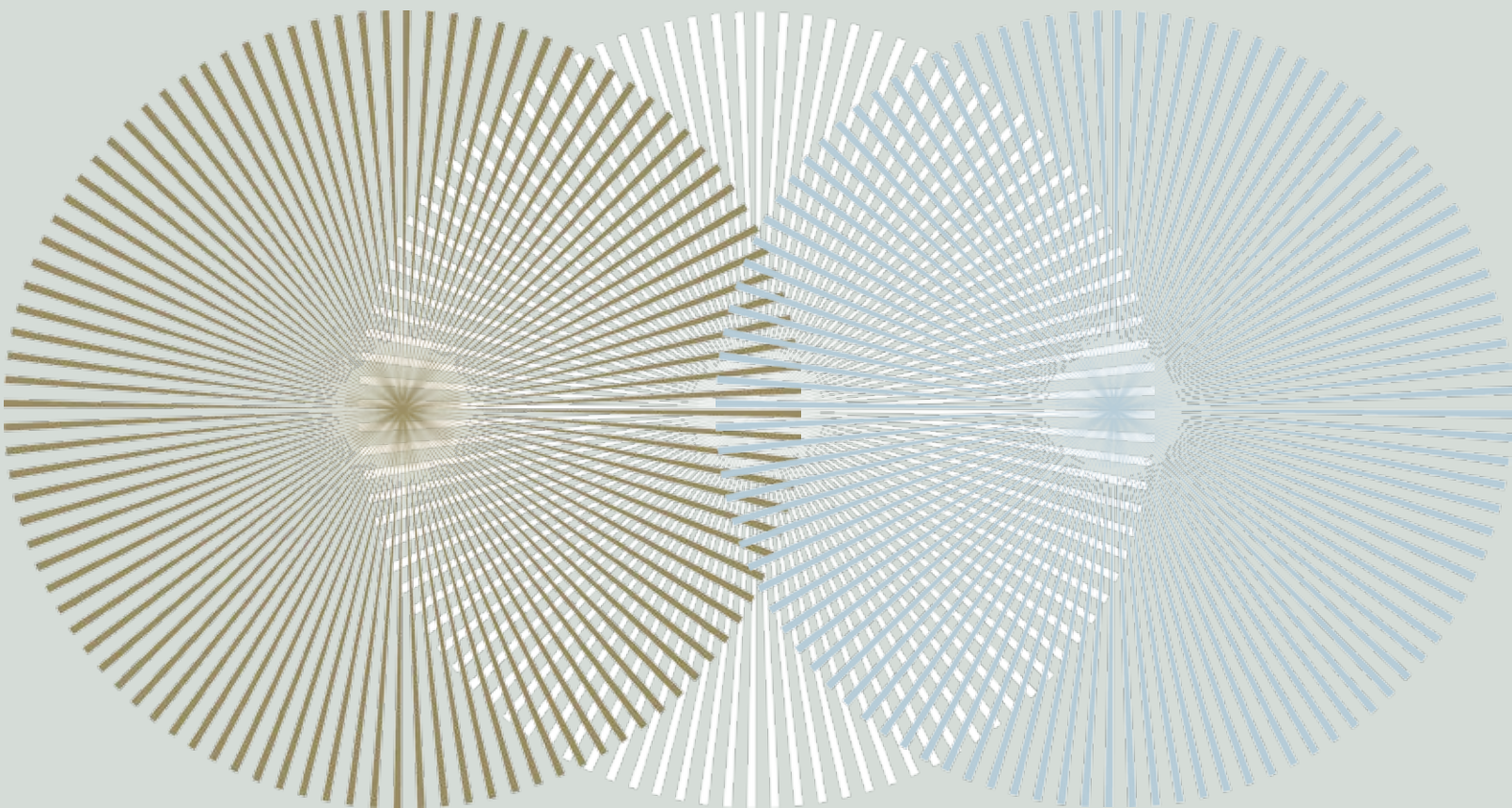
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2018 A+OMIC

BRANDS ARE TALKING TO THE DEAD. They're tracking eyes and sweat glands. And hijacking television channels. Never has marketing been so personal. And weird.

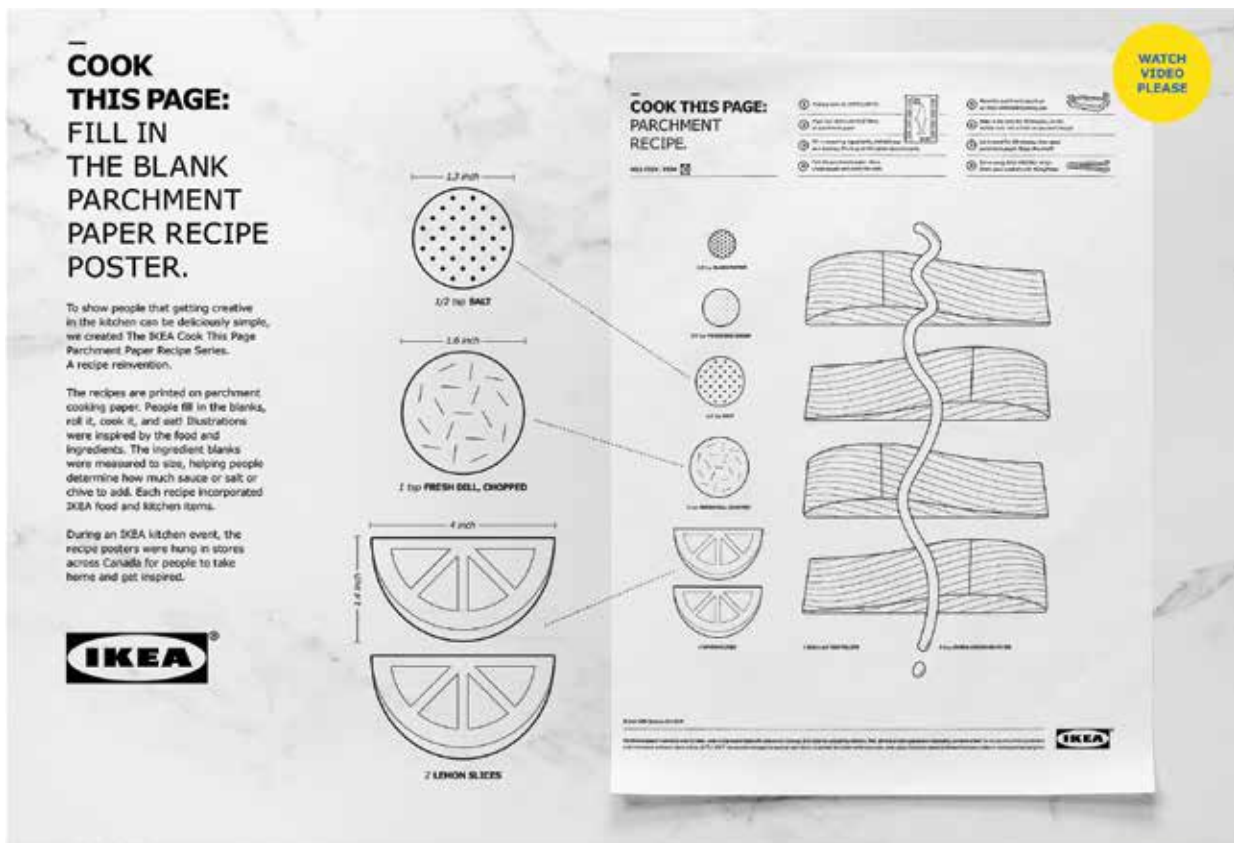
This year, we saw a barrage of intimate, hyper targeted, and technologically innovative campaigns come out of the AToMiC Awards. The work stretched across themes from biometrics to branded content.

And there were two big toppers. IKEA and Leo Burnett took a Grand Prix for the "Cook This Page" poster, while SickKids and Cossette took the Public Service GP for their "All In" campaign.

Strategy developed the AToMiC Awards, in consultation with a pan-industry advisory board, to identify groundbreaking ideas and programs across Canada's mediascape. The winners, chosen by a jury of digital, TV, agency, marketing and media execs, offer innovative examples of how to engage audiences with fresh ideas, on multiple screens and in new environments.

The following stories are a highlight reel of ideas that challenge our expectations around advertising and the way we consume media. Read on to learn about some of the best work from the past year.

BY JENNIFER HORN



Utility in small packaging

THE WINS:

IKEA "Cook This Page" by Leo Burnett
Gold AToMiC Idea / Gold AToMiC Design / Gold Best Print Out/Out-of-Home / Bronze Best Experiential Engagement

Going beyond the dissemination of brand platforms to create something wonderfully utilitarian – that's the type of marketing that gets an AToMiC award. And in IKEA's case, the Grand Prix. The retailer's "**Cook This Page**" parchment paper, by **Leo Burnett**, snagged one of two top awards given out this year (see p. 22 for the Public Service GP), plus a trio of Golds and a Bronze, for making cooking as easy as 1-2-3.

The "fill-in-the-blanks" page gave new meaning to fusion cuisine. The idea was to make cooking both fun and painless for those who find it less so. And what's easier than rolling, baking and eating a meal from a sheet of parchment paper?

The retailer's made-to-measure cookbook was made up of four recipes, from baked salmon to meatballs and spaghetti, with ingredients illustrated as blank spots where a user could place the right amount of

chives, salt or fish, for example.

For anyone looking to break the cycle of their regular meal plan, "Cook This Page" took the intimidation out of trying something new. And not with just any ingredients, but with IKEA products that could be found in its refrigerators and shelves – getting shoppers to consider the Swedish retailer as a source of kitchen inspiration and try its food items (and cooking utensils, too).

During a nationwide kitchen event inside 18 different stores, 12,500 of the oven-ready cookbooks made their way into people's homes. While it took no time for people to snatch a cookbook of their own, the creation of the page was a long and taxing process, with the team spending months searching (even beyond Canada's borders) for a printer that met government and legal approvals for ink-safe paper, and a minuscule budget to make it all happen. The campaign went on

to win myriad awards across local and global stages in 2017.

From the centre of the kitchen to the centre of the ice, **Molson Canadian's "Virtual Front Row Seat"** put hockey fans right at the heart of the game. Just as IKEA made cooking more accessible, Molson made watching live hockey games more attainable for those who could not afford to purchase a front-row seat at an arena.

With an aggressive demand for tickets, most people can't attend a live game, let alone sit in the front row. To bring that experience to them – even as they sit at home or while on-the-go – the brand and **Wavemaker** repurposed beer packaging to create a cardboard VR device. Anyone who purchased a six-pack of Molson could transform the case into a viewer, insert their smartphone, and watch hockey games from a virtual front row without having to shell out



THE WIN:

Molson Canadian
"Virtual Front Row
Seat" by Wavemaker
**Bronze Virtual
Reality**



THE WINS:

McDonald's Canada
"Boombox" by DDB
**Silver AToMiC ROI
/ Bronze AToMiC
Design**

hundreds of dollars.

The team worked with the hockey league and Sportsnet to identify games that featured Canadian NHL teams, which were then live-streamed via multiple cameras stationed in the front row of those games.

Traditional pre-game promotional items like t-shirts and beer koozies are a dime-a-dozen: the brand went beyond traditional marketing tactics to create something more useful, giving fans a unique visceral experience that then led to a 10% increase in purchase intent. On average, people spent about five minutes at a time with their makeshift viewer, and a brand lift study showed an 80% lift in ad recall.

While beer packaging was being retrofitted to augment a personal experience, **McDonald's** was tinkering with its own disposable drink trays to amp up communal fun. The brand and **DDB**

worked alongside the University of Waterloo and design firm Stacklab to ensure it was at the centre of Canadians' summertime rituals, creating a "**Boombox**," which was essentially a tray-turned-speaker that could be used at social events.

The teams worked together to make design tweaks to the tray (which is already inherently social – you don't need one for a single drink) until the optimal sound quality was achieved. With only \$5,000 to promote the product, which was given to beachgoers on a day in July (along with free McFlurries), the campaign went beyond the shores of Lake Ontario. It was picked up by news sites, from Mashable to HypeBeast, as well as popular influencers like Unbox Therapy. Media outlet Mobile Syrup said: "Once in a while, you come upon a commemorative marketing ploy that truly changes the game. McDonald's Boombox is one such accessory."

A PRODUCT THAT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

There is a fine line between preachy and persuasive when it comes to the consequences (and stigma) of drinking and driving. **Arrive Alive** didn't want to fall into the trap of being overly moralistic, so it created a physical mnemonic that would speak for itself.

On St. Patrick's Day, when over-drinking is celebrated, **Rethink** helped put the effects of impaired driving into the hands of drinkers. The "**Crash Coasters**," were constructed from car parts collected after an accident and placed in bars for people to rest their drinks.

The crumpled, scratched and torn coasters were simple in execution and in its message, with copy lacking a call-to-action, simply stating: "This coaster used to be a car. That car never made it home."

The strategy was to put **Arrive Alive's** message in front of drinkers just as they ordered their first drink – not before, when



THE WINS: Arrive Alive "Crash Coasters" by Rethink **Gold Best Print / Silver Best Experiential Engagement / Silver Cause and Action**

the message would be forgotten, or much later, when they may be too inebriated.

Over the March 2017 weekend, the coasters, racked up four million free media impressions online. The organization's spokesperson was asked to conduct dozens of TV, radio and online interviews, which helped drive 600% more traffic to the Arrive Alive website. Requests for the coaster were made by more than 50 cities worldwide, from Germany to Israel.

THE WINS:

SickKids "All In" by Cossette **Grand Prix Public Service / Gold AToMiC Engagement / Gold Cause and Action / Gold Online Video / Silver Best Print / Silver AToMiC Idea / Bronze Audio Branding**



THE WINS:

SickKids "DadStrong" by Cossette **Gold Online Video / Silver Niche Targeting / Bronze Audio Branding**



THE WINS:

SickKids "MomStrong" by Cossette **Gold Online Video / Silver Niche Targeting**



Bold and brazen hits the mark

Tormented mothers fighting meltdowns against the backdrop of industrial rock, exposing intolerance through ballsy stunts, unmasking the cavalier in combative ads – we're not in (cause) Kansas anymore.

There's been a seismic shift in cause marketing that's been developing over

some time. The most impactful cases are documented in several of this year's AToMiC winners, namely **SickKids**, with its "VS" platform that includes "All In," "MomStrong" and "DadStrong" – all winning pieces that brought grit and more raw emotion to the foundation's marketing.

After winning more industry medals than Team Canada in PyeongChang, SickKids now adds an AToMiC Grand Prix to the mix. Won in the Public Service category (after IKEA snatched the Commercial GP on p.20), the **Cossette**-created "All In" spot is a playful-turned-gritty piece shot in black and white, a contrast to the original "Undeniable" film's sharp colours. In it, child patients (of whom some are real) are shown in the streets of Toronto, stripping homes of materials required to build a new hospital.

It'll take \$1 billion for the foundation to successfully construct the new building, with the spot and its characters demonstrating the need for the entire community to chip in. Contextual and personalized murals called out to residents in different neighbourhoods, imploring them to donate to SickKids.

In keeping with the fearless and raw tone of "All In," the hospital's AToMiC Gold-winning "MomStrong" and "DadStrong" spots show the courage it takes to be a parent with a sick child. Both celebrating family figureheads on Mother's and Father's Day, each with a slightly different creative approach, the spots show the heartbreaking and lonely experiences they endure daily. Moms in the one spot are featured in a montage of intimate moments (crying in the shower), while a dad in the other piece goes about a gruelling construction workday in the rainy, dreary streets of Toronto. Both end with them winning the battle for hope.



THE WIN:

Assaulted Women's Helpline "Domestic Abuse Exposed" by Giants and Gentlemen **Bronze Best Experiential Engagement**

EXPOSING THE VIOLENT TRUTH

Many don't realize how rampant domestic abuse is in Canada. Thousands of women and their children sleep in shelters simply because it isn't safe at home. Even more shocking, every six days a woman is killed by her partner.

These numbers are on the rise, so to get people to realize the gravity of the problem, the **Assaulted Women's Helpline** and agency **Giants & Gentlemen** put the issue right at people's feet.

The team created a video projection that showed a scene (recreated by actors) of a violent spousal assault. The video played for pedestrians to witness in Toronto's affluent Yorkville neighbourhood, and aimed to shift the preconceived notion that domestic abuse only happens to certain societal groups.



THE WIN:

Casey House
"Break Bread
Smash Stigma" by
Bensimon Byrne/
OneMethod/
Narrative
Gold AToMiC
Engagement/Gold
AToMiC Idea/Gold
Best Experiential
Engagement/Silver
AToMiC ROI/Silver
Cause and Action

Another multiple Gold-winning AToMiC campaign, "**Break Bread Smash Stigma**" for **Casey House** by **Bensimon Byrne**, **OneMethod** and **Narrative**, makes a case for cause marketing's recent reputation for being bold and brazen.

It's no secret that HIV stigma still exists. It's seen in the actions and mentality of Canadians today, 70% of whom said (in a survey conducted by the agency team) they would be ashamed to tell anyone if they contracted the infection. What's worse, half of them admitted they wouldn't eat a meal that was made by someone with HIV.

The astonishing findings led the team to launch the first-ever HIV+ eatery – run entirely by an HIV+ kitchen staff, who were trained by chef Matt Basile to develop the menu. Open for three days, June's (named after the founder, June Callwood, of Casey House) invited diners to #smashstigma and the permeating fear that keeps HIV a taboo subject. To get the media's attention before its opening, the PR team sent jars of soup made by the cooks with labels that read, "I got HIV from soup. Said no one ever." The media gift acted as a visceral test of their beliefs and biases. And the reaction was noticeable, with stories in 10 countries generating 834 million impressions.

The in-your-face creative approach was also adopted by the **Canadian Down Syndrome Society** (CDSS) when it revealed the **FCB**-created "**Anything But Sorry**" campaign late last year. It, too, was antagonistic and candid, provoking people to reconsider what they should say to new parents of Down syndrome babies.



THE WIN:

Canadian Down
Syndrome Society
"Anything But Sorry"
by **FCB Canada** **Gold**
Online Video

The cheeky campaign revolves around a hero piece called "The S Word," which initially warns viewers of "inappropriate language." However, it's not a curse word that the CDSS is cautioning. Rather, the word "sorry" is being blamed for making parents feel uncomfortable when friends and family use it to show their condolences (instead of congratulations) when hearing the news of a Down syndrome child's birth. "There goes your sex life" and "Congratu-f#\$%-lations!"

are much more appropriate responses, the video suggests.

Not only did the piece get major attention on YouTube and Facebook (almost 350,000 views with only \$1,200 in media investment), it also led to 1.29 million unpaid media impressions, which actually exceeded its uber successful (and equally cheeky) "Down Syndrome Answers" campaign.

THE UNTHINKABLE

Did you know that the **Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity** hosts mathematicians to crack codes? Or that it is an incubator for innovative art forms? If you didn't, you're not alone. Few people knew the going-ons of the meeting venue, think tank and educational institution – that was until **Cossette** created one of the most disturbing and provocative pieces of content ever to grace advertising screens.

The "**Things You Can't Unthink**" campaign included an online film that began with an old emaciated man on all fours. A tall man enters the room wearing a tuxedo, cracks his knuckles and lifts open the back of the old man so that he can play him like a piano. The old man makes strange sounds and glances creepily at the camera.

The film tracked one million views, and additional ads showed images of a man listening to a headphone made from two halves of his head, and a conch shell with a tongue and some teeth.

THE WINS: Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity
"Things You Can't Unthink" by **Cossette** **Bronze**
AToMiC Shift

THE WINS:

Sports Experts "The Thermal Discount" by Rethink **Bronze Best Experiential Engagement/ Bronze Best Print Out/Out-of-Home**



Big (biometric) data

THE WINS:

Festival de Magie de Québec "The Mind-Reading Billboard" by Lg2 **Silver Best Print Out/Out-of-home /Bronze Tech Breakthrough**

So you decided to take the four flights of stairs? Well done. Did you know your temperature would be tracked by a brand-in-hiding and then rewarded with discounts? If so, then you were joined by hundreds of enthusiastic commuters in Montreal's steepest Metro stations (seriously, it's four stories and almost 200 steps deep) last year when **Sports Experts** set up a thermal imaging station to measure hot bodies.

Essentially, when a person reached the top of the subway stairs, an infrared camera (which was radiation-sensitive and used a heat-analyzing algorithm, if we want to get technical) measured body temperature changes and then rewarded discounts that matched. So, a 13% temperature measure translated to a 13% savings at Sports Experts. The discounts were printed right from the booth, and went as deep as 78%.

The "Thermal Discount" stunt, by **Rethink**, continued for eight hours, encouraging casual and aspiring athletes to sweat for sweet deals. Some initially took the escalator and changed course (taking the stairs again), while others did push-ups and extra burpees to raise their temperature. Even police officers and Metro employees joined in. The stunt was filmed and placed online, where it achieved a half a million views and more than 10,000 comments and shares.

And Sports Experts wasn't the only brand engaging in (arguably creepy) tactics that use technology to track biometric data or intercept bodily functions. Facial recognition, heart rate sensors, eye tracking, voice modifiers, you name the computer application and there's an AToMiC winner that's tried it.

Amazon Studios' "Sneaky Like Pete"

installation is one of the more complex cases, where facial reactions, heart rate, perspiration, and skin temperatures were tracked for marketing purposes. The brand worked with **Thinkingbox**, **Initiative** and **Rapport** to create the OOH lie detector booth for its show about a con artist, Sneaky Pete. What better way to translate the show's premise than by testing people's abilities to lie like its main character?

The booth was set up inside a shopping centre and analyzed people's responses to questions. Each participant, who took on the role of the show's anti-hero, was given a score based on their confidence, persuasion and control. Taking this even further, the team extended the experience online with a website that tested people's abilities. In all, 25,000 fans interacted with the mall booth,

THE WIN:

Amazon Studios
"Sneaky Like Pete
Lie Detector Test" by
Thinkingbox **Bronze
Best Experiential
Engagement**

and the campaign tracked more than 300,000 digital impressions.

Facial and eye tracking technologies were also employed by the **Festival de Magie de Québec** (Québec City Magic Festival) in a billboard that claimed to "read minds."

The festival of magicians, which has its own school of magic, naturally decided to wow people with a magic trick. Working with **Lg2** a few weeks before the event, it created a transit



shelter that displayed several cards (the classic card guessing trick). The board detected a person's eyes to determine which card the person had chosen after tracking where their eyes stopped.

Not surprisingly, the "**Mind Reading Billboard**" was a media favourite, with news spreading and the festival gaining visitors as a result. More than 5,000 people filled the venue and the website tracked a record 25,000 unique visitors.

THE WINS:

Branch Out
Neurological
Foundation
"Stranger's
Voice" by Rethink
**Bronze AToMiC
Engagement/
Bronze Technical
Breakthrough**



EMPATHY BORN FROM EXPERIENCE

When the **Branch Out Neurological Foundation** wanted to raise awareness of the devastating memory loss that comes with Alzheimers, it decided to use voice modulation technology to get people to experience the ill-effects first-hand.

"**Stranger's Voice**" made people sound unrecognizable to

show what the disease does to the mind. It intercepted calls that were made by phone cards given to people on Family Day. The calls (made anywhere in the world for free) were routed through a hacked server, which modulated a person's voice so that the receiver could not recognize the caller. After the call ended, they were sent a pre-programmed text that explained what had just happened. Some of those confused conversations were then used in PSA radio ads (with the callers' permission).

Another twist in the campaign came when the organization, which worked with **Rethink** on the idea and execution, intercepted and modulated the voices of podcasters. Hosts became unrecognizable to listeners, but were enlightened at the end when the host's voice was unmodulated and they explained the stunt, with a call for people to visit Branch Out's site and donate to the cause.

The team's tampering worked. During the campaign, website traffic grew 1,100% and first-time donors rose 56%, while donations jumped 432%. It was recorded as one of the most successful campaigns in the organization's history.

In a similar experiment to get people to feel empathy through experience, **Klick Health** and **Klick Labs** created the "**SymPulse Tele-Empathy**" device.

Patients with Parkinson's experience tremors as a result of the neurological disease. Most of the already-existing technologies that mimic tremors tend to focus on the mechanics of the symptom and fail to replicate the root cause of the tremor.

Instead of recreating the vibrations, Klick looked at the data and found that muscle contraction and spasms were the actual culprits. The team recorded the muscle activity of a person with Parkinson's and digitized it to be used in an arm band. The device was then worn by non-patients so that they could experience the tremors first-hand.

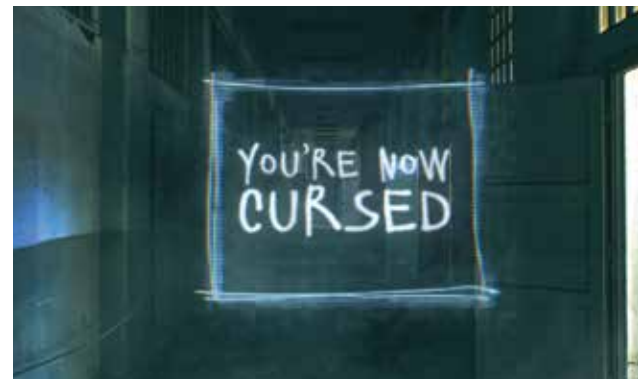
Next up, Klick is looking to create a live transmission of data, so that a non-patient can experience the muscle contractions and tremors as they are being experienced by a Parkinson's patient in real-time.



THE WIN: Klick
Health "SymPulse
Tele-Empathy
Device" by Klick
Labs **Gold Tech
Breakthrough**

THE WIN:

WestJet Plus
"Premium Economy
for All" by Media
Experts **Bronze**
Best Broadcast
Engagement



Media-jacking on the rise

We interrupt this story to bring you a new kind of marketing tactic. It's a disruptive one, filled with pesky weeds, stalker banner ads, interjecting ads, and pre-roll masked as unskippable content.

Media-jacking was a marketer fan favourite in 2017, with brands from alcohol to air travel slyly interrupting TV and digital content with their messaging. **Scotts Canada's Weed B Gon**, for one, took the traditionally passive television format and made it interactive.

While viewers mostly change channels to escape commercials, Scotts and agency **Rethink** encouraged them to do the opposite. The insight behind the "**Prickly TV Scavenger Hunt**" lay in the fact that, when left untreated, weeds start to spread annoyingly fast. The team aired a 30-second commercial that featured Prickly, a puppet dandelion that delivered an obnoxious monologue, before daring viewers to use their TV remote to flip to specific channels where they could watch him multiply, and then die.

In a similar hunt-based campaign, this time online, **Svedka** and **Bensimon Byrne** used the creepy effects of retargeting banner ads to haunt consumers before Halloween. The seasonal campaign began when a person watched a "cursed" pre-roll. The video delivered a cookie to their browser, which then enabled contextually relevant banner ads to be present wherever their web browsing took

them. The brand could follow a person's whereabouts, and then insert their location in the relentless "**Banner Ad Curse**." Browsing incognito? Svedka knew that too, and would let them know they were being naughty.

WestJet took a much less disruptive approach, though still sneakily edging into content with a media-first execution. To promote **WestJet Plus**, **Media Experts** negotiated with Rogers to insert the brand in the dead (and untapped) air that exists in the "fade to black" transition between TV content and commercials. The team repurposed the editing technique (before a show entered a commercial break and as it came back) during shows and added a three-second ad. News travelled fast and the idea caught on. Soon after **WestJet** claimed this previously unused space, 15 more advertisers called Rogers to do the same.

When the **YWCA** wanted to warn young people of the effect of sexualization in popular media, it worked with **Rethink** to hijack YouTube's advanced ad retargeting. It chose illicit music videos to deliver warnings disguised as unskippable six-second pre-roll ads. The "**Six-Second Ambush Advisories**" ran before videos objectifying women across all musical genres, and aimed to shift attitudes and actions that perpetuate the sexualization of women.



THE WIN:
Scotts Canada's
Weed B Gon "Prickly
TV Scavenger Hunt"
by Rethink **Gold**
Best Broadcast
Engagement

THE WINS:
YWCA "Six-second
Ambush Advisories"
by Rethink **Silver**
AToMiC Idea / Silver
Cause and Action
/ Bronze AToMiC
Social



THE WIN:
Svedka Vodka "The
Svedka Banner Ad
Curse" by Bensimon
Byrne **Silver Global**



IT'S A TENOR TAKEOVER

Modern-day marketing met classical Italian tradition when **Weston Foods' D'Italiano** hired the services of three tenors and had them belt out Tweets in a rich baritone.

When the bread brand decided to go back to its Italian roots with the "Live Large" platform, agency **Union** helped it perform a "**Tenor Takeover**" that would connect with millennials where they consume content: YouTube.

For one day only, the brand dramatized the ways people can bring the passion of Italy to the everyday by taking over YouTube's masthead and having real tenors sing users' Tweets in real-time.

People could submit 130 characters or less, talking about bread or simply how they like to "Live Large," either from the YouTube banner or directly on Twitter. Then, the singing would begin.

The biggest challenge for the team was figuring out how to work seamlessly with



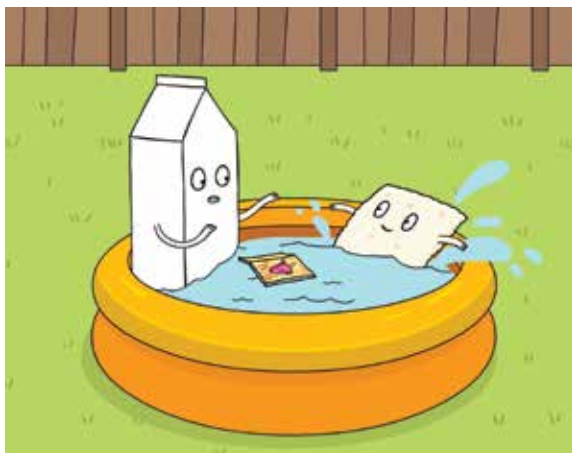
THE WIN: D'Italiano "Tenor Takeover" by Union **Bronze AToMiC Collaboration**

Google and Twitter. Responses needed to be quick, and not only did the agency have to respond in real-time, it also had to weed out any inappropriate Tweets.

Overall, the "Tenor Takeover" activation resulted in 33 million impressions and more than five million unique impressions. The

brand received two Tweets every minute, and users spent a total of nearly 25,000 hours watching the broadcast. Google Canada even called it "one of the most clever uses of Live Streaming in a Masthead to date."

THE WINS:
Milk West "Snack
Time" by OMD
Canada/ DDB
Canada **Silver Niche**
Target / Bronze
Brand Content
/ Bronze Online
Video



THE WINS:
Drug Free Kids
Canada "The Call
That Comes After"
by FCB/Six **Silver**
Best Digital
Engagement
/ Bronze Tech
Breakthrough



Targeting tactics with a digital bent

Aloof and fickle, teens are a tough nut to crack. Brands are seemingly on tenterhooks with this cynical group, wary not to bore them with advertising that, well, feels like advertising. To get through the walls adolescents put up, marketers must align themselves with their interests and go where they go.

There are two things to know about teens: (1) their "chill" time is mostly spent consuming content on the web, and (2) they're essentially glued to their phones. Two AToMiC winners each tackled one of these insights, creating hyper-targeted programs that got young adults to tune into their messaging.

First, **Milk West** and **DDB** padded the insight around teens' content-consuming ways with further research that showed they enjoy milk the most when paired with their favourite food. The team also found that the school-going group likes to snack in front of the computer, where they watch shows on YouTube, typically in the

afternoon after classes break. That window gave rise to the "**Snack Time**" web-series, a noticeably unbranded cartoon that revolved around a milk carton-shaped guy named Carlton (get it?) and a cast of snacks that go with milk (like cookies and cake).

The milk association created the YouTube-housed show with zero traditional product placement, nor any calls-to-action. It was complimented with a Tumblr page for shareable GIFs and memes, while ads for the show included pre-roll (skippable, of course), in-game mobile creative and native content on BuzzFeed. Milk West also went to the social platform of choice for Gen Zers – Snapchat – and placed geo-filters in high schools, rec centres and cinemas. With 26 episodes released in 2017, the brand has seen 40,000 teens subscribe to its channel and counted 21 million episode views. The real clincher: milk sales are up 20%.

Research also shows that, if you want to talk to teens, a good



THE MANY VIEWS OF QUÉBEC

"**A Room with Many Views**" was a **Tourisme Québec** campaign where analytics and creativity worked in tandem, as each piece of content was informed by search trends and online behaviour.

Québec has a lot to offer. The idea was to show exactly what. Speaking to potential tourists from the U.S., France, China and Ontario, the tourism board worked with **Lg2** to show the province's rich diversity through a hyper-targeted content campaign.

The centrepiece was a social documentary about an American tourist couple who agreed to be the protagonists in a travel adventure. In videos, they were shown visiting the four corners of Québec by air and by land while inside a mobile room. The portable bedroom was transported on a trailer and hung from a chopper, and each morning, the couple woke up somewhere new.

The room's itinerary was determined by what people were searching online, and the campaign also included a retargeting strategy where content was created and delivered according to audience interests. The province also invited travellers to share their favourite locations.

THE WIN: Tourism Québec "A Room with Many Views" by Lg2 **Silver Global / Bronze Brand Content**



place to start is on their phone. That's where **Drug Free Kids Canada** went with "The Call That Comes After" by **FCB/Six**. The organization needed to convince teens that the danger of driving high is real. So it launched a digital experience that sent unexpected text messages to teens to coincide with the plot points in a story being told through video.

First, a parent sent a video to their kid. That video showed teens casually smoking marijuana, getting into a car, driving high, and then experiencing a horrific car crash. The final shot revealed frantic text messages from a parent not knowing where their child had gone. At the exact same time, the teen watching the spot received identical messages from their mom or dad. The idea was to create a real-time connection to the unthinkable trauma of a car accident, and get the teen viewer to pay attention to the issue.

Data collection was key to making this happen. When parents signed up for the custom video, they provided the teen's name, email address, and phone number – all isolated data that helped create an overwhelming emotional experience. In the campaign's first 60 days, site traffic to Drug Free Kids Canada increased almost 2,000%.

The slightly older millennial audience can be just as hard-nosed towards advertising as teens. And in today's world of oversharing, almost anything can be openly discussed by this group when it comes to sex. Except how to clean up before and after, nobody wants to talk about that dirty deed – unless you're **Cottonelle** and you're not afraid to get graphic.

The brand worked with Ogilvy over the summer last year to create the explicit "Strokeable Billboard" for its FreshCare Cleansing Cloths, a solution for a better clean after "getting busy." The board was built around two classic sexting emojis: the eggplant and the pussy cat. It was placed in an LGBT-popular restaurant during Toronto's Pride event, displaying the emojis and encouraging curious pedestrians to "work them over" in exchange for FreshCare samples. Playing with the kitten's nose just right turned her eyes into hearts. Stroking the eggplant caused the green top to pop right off. The experience was then mimicked on mobile, through dating app Grindr, where coupons were delivered to those who engaged in the 17-second interaction.

THE WIN:

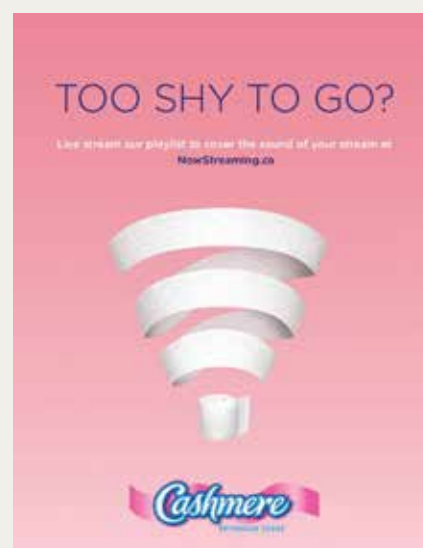
Cottonelle "Strokeable Billboard" by Mindshare Canada/Ogilvy & Mather
Bronze Niche Targeting

TO GO OR NOT TO GO

Even the most socially active and ambitious females have a bladder that gets shy. It happens when they sit in a quiet bathroom stall, and someone is sitting quietly next to them just two feet away. The body freezes and, suddenly, they can't go.

"Shy bladder" happens to two million Canadians, according to **Cashmere**, a bathroom tissue brand that decided to help deflect people's anxiety by installing a device in bathrooms that live-streamed music to cover up any tinkle sounds.

The brand was very specific in where these boards would live, working with **Wavemaker** to



THE WIN: Kruger-Cashmere "Now Streaming" by Wavemaker **Bronze Audio Branding**

place them where high-power business women work and dine, in office towers and urban, upscale restaurants.

The team, which also included **John St**, even created a "Now Streaming" playlist on Spotify for anyone on the go (so to speak). And after only eight weeks in market, the installation was used more than 2.17 million times, which equated to 38,500 Cashmere branded experiences each day.

THE WIN: Sports Experts "Ghosts of the Forum" by Rethink **Gold AToMiC Social**



THE WINS: WestJet "Desert Roulette" by Rethink **Gold AToMiC Collaboration / Silver AToMiC Engagement / Silver Best Experiential Engagement**



Marketing on a grand scale

Making contact with the dead so the Habs can win the Stanley Cup. Breaking two Guinness World Records in a single day. It's all in a marketing day's work, folks.

Those who go to great lengths to wow crowds win AToMiC Gold, just like **Sports Experts** when it arranged a séance of sorts to ask the "**Ghosts of the Forum**" to bring luck to the Montreal Canadiens. Or when **WestJet** built a giant-sized "**Desert Roulette**" wheel that could be seen from 12,000 feet above. Ridiculous? Maybe. Compelling enough to draw millions of clicks? Most definitely.

Legend goes that the Habs haven't won a championship since 1993 because the team's home is no longer at the Forum. That's where the lucky deceased players' ghosts led to steady wins. In 1995, the team moved to the Bell Centre. Since then,

there's been a dry spell. So, Sports Experts and **Rethink** brought in paranormal experts to contact and convince these mystical helpers to visit the new stadium and bring the team some much-needed luck.

The hunt was documented via 20 infrared and thermal cameras, with some of the footage then edited into a three-minute video. This lived on an interactive site, where visitors could watch testimonials from famous (living) hockey players about their Forum memories. The content piece was launched at the start of the season, not long before Halloween, and relied on a very small media push. In the first 24 hours, the video tracked half a million views. And just as it was intended to do, the campaign helped Sports Experts surpass other sponsors' (like Coke) share of voice, with less than a tenth of the budget.

Another extravagant stunt by Rethink, WestJet's gigantic wheel in the desert outside of Las Vegas was meant to remind flyers of the airline's frequent service to the city, as well as celebrate its 21st birthday.

Working with Westbury, the team built a prize wheel made up of 164 of the largest and brightest moving lights. Passengers flying in a WestJet plane above looked out the window to watch the wheel spin, and saw it stop to display a seat number, indicating the winner of a flight, hotel and entertainment package from the brand.

The stunt was filmed, with the video being watched more than 1.5 million times and tracking 15,000 social reactions.

The event even set two world records: one for the "greatest light output for a projected image" and another for the "largest circular projection."

Rethinking social apps

Since the dawn of social, brands have flocked to feeds with carousel ads, sponsored stories, organic posts, you name it. But what if they took those ad formats and tweaked the formula?

Pushing the parameters of Snapchat and Instagram posts and filters is what earned **Dove**, **Kids Help Phone** and **Toronto Silent Film Festival** each an AToMiC feather in their cap. While others saw box ads, these brands saw the antithesis – hacking filters, creating faux posts, even turning apps into puzzles.

Social media can create an illusion of perfection. Snapchat filters, for one, distort society's perception of beauty. When we apply its "beauty" filter, we tint, lighten and change the shape of our face. The filter has been linked to a rise in self-consciousness, and so Dove decided to step in and create a **"Real Beauty Filter"** that didn't change a thing.

Working with **Mindshare** and **Ogilvy**, it completely stripped the original "beauty" filter of its intended use. Instead of adding a blue tint, thinning the face, lightening the skin and adding lip colour, it did nothing – reminding people to let their real beauty shine. In just 24 hours, the hacked filter had more than four million plays and 1.3 million story views.

Meanwhile, on Instagram, where teens tend to hide their true feelings of anxiety and depression, burying their issues beneath a glossy "perfect" profile, Kids Help Phone decided to confront the issue head-on.

To shine a light on real-life problems, the organization and **JWT** developed **"Unfiltered Posts,"** making the videos appear as real Stories, but with audio that actually told sobering stories touching on issues from abuse to suicide. In one video, for example, a young girl is shown enjoying a day at the beach, smiling and blowing kisses to the camera, while the audio is of her calling a help line to talk about her eating disorder. Each post ended with the call-to-action: "Share with us what you can't share with anyone else."

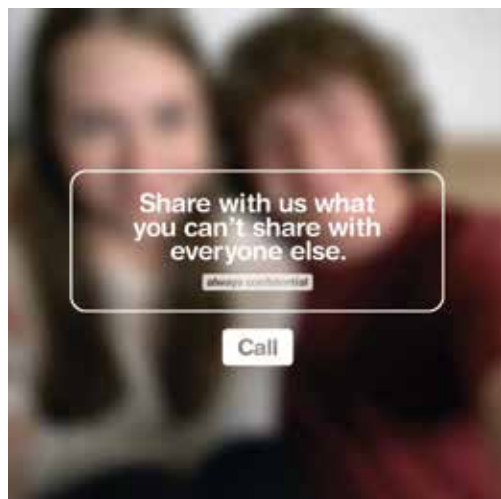
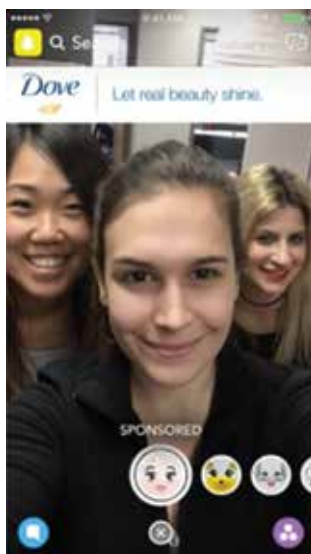
Within just one month there was a 146%

THE WINS:

Right: Unilever, Dove "Real Beauty Filter" by Mindshare Canada/Ogilvy & Mather **Bronze AToMiC Engagement/ Bronze AToMiC Social**

THE WIN:

Far right: Toronto Silent Film Festival "The Instagram Jigsaw Puzzle" by Red Lion Canada **Silver Best Digital Engagement**



THE WINS:

Above: Kids Help Phone "Unfiltered Posts" by J. Walter Thompson Canada **Silver Niche Targeting / Bronze AToMiC Social / Bronze Cause and Action**

increase in calls received, compared to last year. And more than 10 million impressions were tracked, with the ads reaching over 200,000 youth.

While Dove and Kids Help Phone used novel social tactics to restore people's perceptions of what's "real," the Toronto Silent Film Festival and Red Lion used Instagram features to restore lost films.

People tend to learn better through experience. The festival wanted more people to get excited about silent films, so it gave them the ability to experience the puzzling



task of restoring one for themselves.

The world's first **"Instagram Jigsaw Puzzle"** began with an account that was filled with scrambled puzzle pieces made from the original posters of films. Users could search through the pieces, and then using Instagram's "save" feature, they could bookmark them in the correct order and, essentially, restore the image.

The first seven people to send a screenshot of a completed puzzle won a ready-to-frame art print of the puzzle poster. Surprisingly, fans from Brazil, France, Italy, Portugal, Indonesia and the U.S. sent in their masterpieces, essentially bringing the Toronto Silent Film Festival to an international audience for the very first time.



Let's get integrated

THE WIN:
GoDaddy "Itty Bitty Ballers" by Wavemaker Bronze AToMiC Idea

There were banners in the sky, their message colossal and undisguised. Door hangers were fastened to the entrances of Toronto's duplex homes; while theatrical earmuffs and earplugs were given out like candy. You couldn't even read a newspaper, listen to the radio, watch television or browse online without being assaulted with apologetic creative from Montreal as it celebrated 375 years.

Tourisme Montreal's "Sorry" campaign had La belle province shouting from every media touchpoint imaginable, making it one of the most aggressive (and effective) integrated pieces of work to come out of this year's AToMiC Awards. **Lg2** took the creative concept around apologizing to Toronto for all the ruckus Montreal would make during its milestone year, and stretched it as far as it could go, reaching all

corners of the city, above and below.

The campaign was deployed in two phases: first in Toronto, then in New York. The tourism board went after those two cities directly, using their proximity as "neighbours" to ask for forgiveness and rouse them enough to consider visiting. The province chose the apologetic route as a nod to Canadian courtesy. While in Toronto, the team dominated the streets with ads and brand ambassadors invited folk to join the party, some even handing out complimentary flights from Air Canada so people couldn't refuse.

Then, when the campaign moved to New York, the team tapped Montreal-born actor William Shatner in videos where he apologized directly to New Yorkers for the bedlam that was about to ensue. This phase of the campaign also included a microsite,

GIFs and videos that were developed according to online browsing interests.

After all of that, the tourism board saw Google searches for the destination skyrocket, tracking more than 10 times the average number of queries. Visibility for the Toronto phase was at an all-time high, with more than 50% organic PR than the previous year.

Budweiser's "Goal-Synced Arena" was another integrated program that stretched the limits of a creative idea.

Working with **UM** and **Anomaly**, the beer set out to put the thrill of the goal in fans' hands. It had already distributed Red Light glasses in stores, but this time it took those clever drinking receptacles and gave them to thousands of fans during Vancouver Canucks and Calgary Flame games. By doing so, it would allow Budweiser to cloak stadiums with its branding.

Starting with the singing of "O Canada," lights were dimmed and thousands of the

RFID-triggered glasses flashed red when the lyrics “with glowing hearts” were sung. Then, when Canadian teams scored a goal, the arena lit up with the Budweiser colour.

What made this program integrated wasn't just the coordination of Red Light glasses in arenas, it was also how Budweiser synchronized the experiential stunt during live broadcasts of the games. The brand worked with Rogers to air branded footage in highlight reels during Sportsnet programming. It was also promoted by local radio celebrities, who let Westerners know that the Red Light glasses were also available in-case. Even Don Cherry of *Hockey Night in Canada* talked about the program on air during the Coach's Corner segment, where he raised a Red Light glass to millions of viewers. All of this helped the brand boost relevance by an impressive 10.4% in Western Canada.

While Bud focused on covering all the touchpoints for hockey, **Interac** had an even broader challenge of reaching women at point-of-purchase. The brand targeted women (in their 30s and 40s) who were “change- and tech-averse.” They run a household with a below-average income and have a strong preference for cash to help control spending. **Zulu Alpha Kilo** decided to use this to the brand's advantage, and create a far-reaching campaign that would show how Interac Flash (which uses tap technology) can help keep her life in balance.

The “**Story of Flash**” campaign kicked off with a long-form video called “Life in Beeps,” which told the story of a woman's journey through the different “beeps” and sounds from life's little moments, from childhood to motherhood.

It then moved offline, when the team built and installed a “Flash Box” in different parts of the city. Created to look like an Interac Flash-enabled debit card, the box gave streeters free gifts depending on the time of day, from a morning coffee to a lunchtime sandwich. The interactions were then captured and edited into an online film.

While offline, the brand also created co-branded OOH boards and TSAs that coupled small purchases with the tag “Flash It” near merchants where they could buy the items. And finally, inside Cineplex, the brand reminded people to use Flash at ticket

THE WINS:

Interac Association
“Story of Flash”
by Zulu Alpha Kilo
**Silver AToMiC
Engagement,
Bronze Niche
Targeting**

THE WINS:

Ontario Ministry
of Health and
Long-Term Care “Be
a Failure” by BBDO
Gold AToMiC Shift



THE WIN:

Tourisme Montreal
“Sorry” by Lg2
Bronze AToMiC ROI

THE WINS:

Budweiser “Goal-
Synced Arena”
by UM Canada
**Anomaly Gold
Best Experiential
Engagement**



and concession counters. All of which led to a 15.1% growth in Flash transaction volume.

Communicating across multiple touchpoints can certainly help create awareness for a new product that sits among an array of others. **GoDaddy**, for example, needed to get small business owners to try its website building tool. So, working with **Wavemaker**, the brand discovered through research that many “go-getters” have an affinity for sports. Basketball, in particular. So it did what any brand looking to reach business-owning sports fans would do, and partnered with the Toronto Raptors. The team then enlisted player Jonas Valanciunas (JV) to let GoDaddy help him pursue his passion for little things (ironic, considering the man stands seven feet tall).

The brand got another real GoDaddy client, Selftraits, to create **Itty Bitty Ballers**, which were mini 3D-printed versions of JV. It then developed a fully integrated campaign that announced his “business venture” online. The business was also supported with OOH, TV spots, video, and paid social, which led to all of his figurines being sold out in the first 10 days.

And finally, in a category filled with “seen it all before” messages that use every scare tactic in the book, cross-platform campaigns with fresh insights can lead to behavioural change. **Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care** wanted to curb smoking among millennials, so the government body worked with agency **BBDO** to create an integrated campaign that would encourage (repeated) failure.

Smokers who intend to quit will often fail, multiple times. Rather than see failure as a weakness, the team decided to present it as a normal, necessary and noble part of the quitting journey. Enter “**Be a Failure**,” a campaign that focused on reaching 18- to 34-year-olds where they typically engage in smoking: while browsing on their smartphones and at restaurants and bars.

The creative called for people to embrace failure, with ads spread across video, display, Facebook and Twitter, as well as through influencers and in posters at restaurants and on campus. Eighty one per cent of those who saw the creative said it made them seriously consider quitting.



THE WINS:

Top: Innocence Canada "Living Logo" by KBS Canada **Gold AToMiC Design, Bronze AToMiC Idea**

Left: The Design Exchange, EDIT: Expo for Design, Innovation & Technology, by Astound Group **Bronze Cause and Action**

Right: Plan International "Sharpen Her Mind" by DentsuBos **Bronze AToMiC Design**



Convictions Day" and had each of them use a personalized paintbrush to add a black paint stroke to the growing tally that would make up the "Living Logo." The 21-stroke tally was then photographed and digitally captured to create the new logo, which will be updated each time someone is exonerated. Along with the logo, the agency also created striking white umbrellas, designed to attract attention at courthouses on dreary days.

While design can get simple ideas across fast, it can also be the solution to the world's most complex challenges. That was one of the key messages behind **EDIT**, an Expo for Design, Innovation and Technology from the Design Exchange.

Set in a 150,000 square-foot abandoned factory, the 10-day fest took place in Toronto in the summer of last year, with the space filled with projects that are making a difference. For instance, the "Shelters and Cities" exhibit created by **Astound Group**, revealed how architectural innovations are bridging the gap between city and nature, showcasing shorelines that are being redesigned to protect coastal communities from changing climates.

The immersive event put Canada on the international design news stage. Its participatory experiences, talks, installations and workshops were attended by 35,000 people from a diverse demographic set.

And finally, **DenstuBos** and **Plan Canada** designed a set of pencils that would aim to bring education to girls in poor nations. "**#SharpenHerMind**" was a thought-provoking piece that saw the agency create custom No.,

2 pencils, engraved with the "barriers" that imprison young girls' minds: violence, illiteracy, child marriage, poverty and HIV. Each time a person uses and sharpens the pencil, they remove the negative impacts that plague uneducated girls.

The pencils were distributed to media and donors on International Day of the Girl, as well as supported by TV, online videos, social, digital display and outdoor ads, raising awareness of the fact that, when girls are educated, they lift themselves (and everyone else around them) out of poverty.

Cause for design

There is great power in simple design. Just look at **Innocence Canada's** logo.

A forever-evolving brand mark, the "**Living Logo**" by **KBS** marks the 21 victims who were exonerated of crimes they did not commit – 21 strokes representing 21 reasons why the organization requires more funding to advocate and free innocent people behind bars.

The process of overturning a wrongful conviction can take up to ten years. Each one is a monumental (and sadly infrequent) victory. They're the reason the organization exists, and so the team celebrated each and every one.

It brought exonerees to the Ontario Court of Appeal on "Wrongful

Mobilizing Canadians

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Activist Helen Keller's words ring true among some of the best cause work to come out AToMiC, from collaborations among Canadians and artists, to mobilizing people to talk about serious issues.

Teamwork is the cornerstone of **The CanadaSound Project**, a program by agency **Cleansheet Communications** that encourages everyone to pitch in. Launched in early 2017, it began as an effort to capture Canada's soundscape: from the roaring thunderstorms in Cobourg to the vibrations of train tracks.

Sound is a powerful trigger for memories, and so with the idea to capture life in Canada, the shop created the digital platform for people to submit sounds and sentiments about what they love about the country. From there, the sounds are archived and added to the CanadaSoundbank, where musicians can become collaborators. The agency partnered with the JUNO Awards, CBC Music, SOCAN and Heritage Canada to curate the sounds and make them available to artists.

In addition to online submissions, the team also approached Canadians on streets with an experiential booth that invited them to record memories of their favourite sounds. Only one year in and the sound bank has seen close to 100 artists join. Visits to the site average almost 140,000 per week.

While Cleansheet created a movement that captured the heart and soul of Canada, **No Fixed Address** helped mobilize the public to fight an issue of global proportions.

The **Canadian Centre for Child Protection's** "Don't Get Sextorted, Send a Naked Mole Rat" campaign urged Canadians to create awareness of sextortion, where young boys are lured by men pretending to be girls, asking them to

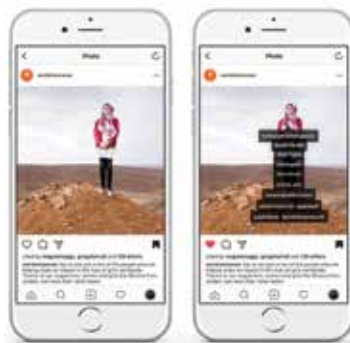


THE WINS:

Top: Canadian Centre for Child Protection "Don't Get Sextorted, Send a Naked Mole Rat" by No Fixed Address **Bronze Best Digital Engagement / Bronze Cause and Action**

Centre: Cleansheet Communications "CanadaSound Project" **Silver AToMiC Collaboration**

Bottom: World Vision "Tags with Impact" by KBS Canada **Gold AToMiC Social**



send nude footage and then blackmailing them for money or sexual favours.

The best way to prevent sextortion is to be aware that it's happening. But kids don't want to talk about sex with their folks, and they've become desensitised to messages about online safety.

Bearing an unfortunate resemblance to male genitalia, the long, veiny and fleshy mole rat was used as a humorous way to get teens to listen to the Canadian Centre for Child Protection's message. The team kicked the program off with a Sextortion-Ed video with a cheery school teacher asking boys to send naked mole rats instead of nudes. Memes, GIFs, stickers and a custom keyboard were offered to spread the word, while a digital toolkit was used in classrooms

by teachers and downloaded online.

The campaign had countries outside of Canada creating their own local version of a mole rat: from naked wombats in Australia to kiwis in New Zealand. And the program did what it set out to do, driving social conversation around sextortion 649%.

Finally, **World Vision** brought global issues closer to home in a more personalized way by recognizing those who support the organization on social media.

While "clicktivism" may not have immediate impact, it does lead to a tangible difference, eventually. World Vision wanted to show the causes it supports, as well as the impact of social engagement.

KBS began by selecting images from World Vision, all of which depicted human rights adversities. To spread the message of the type of work the org does, and thank its social followers, the team tagged people on Instagram and configured the name tags to create a new image on top of the photograph. Each depicted the solution to a problem, with the idea that each follower is a piece of the puzzle.

"**Tags with Impact**" generated a surge in social engagement, with three out of four posts out-performing the monthly average for engagement.

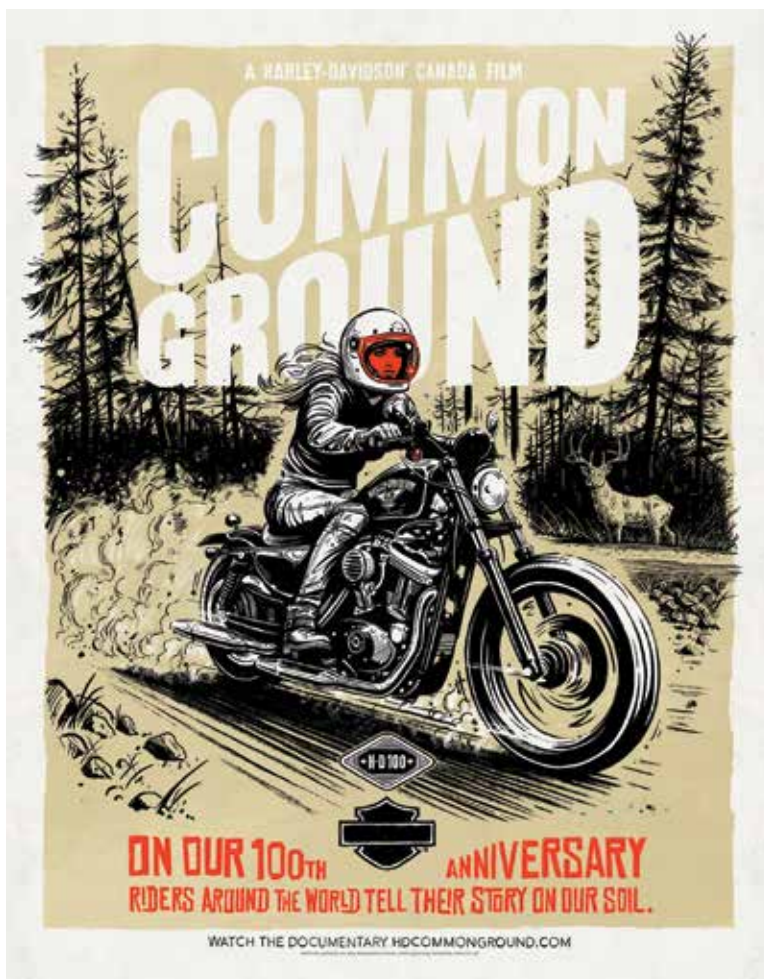


THE WINS:

Above: Take Note "Notes" by BBDO AToMiC ROI

Centre: Harley-Davidson "Common Ground" by Zulu Alpha Kilo **Silver Brand Content**

Top right: Canadian Centre for Diversity & Inclusion "Free AF" by Rethink **Bronze Online Video**



While a motorbike brand resonated with Canadians by highlighting differences, the **Canadian Centre for Diversity & Inclusion** told the story of what it means to be yourself (no matter religion or race), without the fear of persecution. It did this with branded content that entertained audiences through the power of song.

The centre paired up with **Rethink** to create a new national anthem that's steeped in Canadian nostalgia and that reimagines the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom for a modern-day audience. The "**Free AF**" video is an edgy piece that speaks to a younger audience with internet language ("AF," for example, stands for "As F\$#k"). The lyrics were animated in a style reminiscent of vintage Canadian PSAs. It tackled issues from religious expression, gender identity and political alignment with such edgy visuals that it went viral, tracking two million views and 50,000 shares.

The idea of creating powerful stories to rouse audiences is also shared by **Take Note**, a pen and stationery store that believes in the art of handwritten letters (which have waned in the age of texting and social media). **BBDO** helped the brand write a moving love story, one that lives in the digital world but emphasizes the importance of the physical note.

"**Notes**" reminds people of the power of putting pen to paper, taking four minutes to tell a story of man and a woman as they go through the ups and downs of their relationship. The online video chronicles the joys and challenges of their life together, told through handwritten notes on post-its and pads. The tear-jerker content tracked more than 77,000 views across Facebook and YouTube, with zero paid media. And since launching the spot in early 2017, Take Note sales have been tracking 30% above the previous year's monthly sales, proving the power of storytelling.

Riding the branded content wave

Storytelling dates back to spoken word and caves among mountains, where the earliest recorded paintings lay against rock as old as time. Today, storytelling can take a less-than-physical form, and is certainly not limited to human narrators.

Some of this year's AToMiC winners found new ways to tell older stories, from a series of handwritten notes, to an old-timey PSA jingle, and a social docu-soap.

The story of Canada as a country of immigrants was told by **Harley-Davidson** and **Zulu Alpha Kilo** in the 12-part documentary series **Common Ground**. This docu-series was unfolded on Discovery Channel's website and celebrated diversity

as a cornerstone of Canada by inviting riders from New Zealand, Mexico and India to join those from Nova Scotia, Quebec and Alberta. The adventurers travelled for six days, visiting communities and forging a bond through the "common ground" that connects them: riding.

Each episode was promoted with short- and long-form content, which the riders could share online, while the brand looked to Instagram Story promotions.

The series was meant to bring in younger riders who don't necessarily consider the brand, and during its opening weekend, **Common Ground** was viewed by almost half a million Canadians.

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How Canada's
**PRODUCTION
PARTNERS**
are crafting new
brand narratives.

Top Shops

Increasing demand for extended commercials, short films and even longer form brand content have made the importance of storytelling craft and its visual impact a significant competitive differentiator for the industry. Add to that the explosion of new technology and demand for ads with AR/VR, animation and other CG elements and it is evident that a savvy prodco is an essential partner in the creative process.

Creative ideas get brands noticed but it's the vision and flair of production and post-production talent that can turn good creative into great creative. Practitioners of the crafts of editing, film direction, sound design and special effects as well as end-to-end production, are continuing to evolve their skills and offerings as industry needs change. *Strategy* profiles some of the shops that help bring brand stories to life, and how they are adapting to the needs of the new marketplace.



Ursula and Filip Terlecki founded Toronto-based The Creators Bureau in 2012.

emotional connections with viewers. “We’re not just selling a product or idea, we’re looking to help brands create relationships with their consumers – and do that in a really creative way.”

The Creators Bureau stays on top of production technology and whether it’s 360 video, augmented and virtual reality or livestream on Facebook, the shop is ready to use it if it supports great storytelling. For instance, drones were used for the videos shot for Chefs Plate as a way to showcase the sprawling farms supply chain.

“We’re excited about the future and we’d like to do more work developing branded films, pieces that are longer format,” says Ursula, “One of our favourites is one that we created for Union Station working direct to client. It tells the story of Toronto couple Gary and Mary-Lou and how pivotal Union Station was and is in their relationship. At the heart of it, there’s an emotional hook, something that will resonate with the audience.”

The Creators Bureau Branded storytelling

The Creators Bureau came about through the founders’ passion for filmmaking, turning what began as a part time pursuit into a fulltime business. Filip Terlecki, co-founder and head of creative development, started the Toronto-based production house in 2012 after nearly 10 years as head of research for the National Geographic Channel (Canada). The transition to production was smooth; two of his short films as writer/director were screened at the Cannes Film Festival in 2014 and 2017.

Ursula Terlecki, co-founder and producer, honed her skills in promoting content and storytelling as publicist for HGTV Canada and DIY Network Canada. Her expertise in developing branded content and knowing what works in that space resulted in an invitation to sit on the jury of the Brand Film Festival this spring in New York City. She is the only Canadian female on the jury.

“What makes us different is not only our backgrounds but how we function,” she says. “We have a very small internal team. This has allowed us to build a roster of freelancers we use, depending on what a project calls for. We’re nimble and don’t have much overhead, allowing us to put much of the resources back into our clients’ work.”

The Creators Bureau handles production from creative all the way through casting, styling, location scouting, shooting and editing to final product. The scope of work changes depending on the project with the shop sometimes brought in to only direct, shoot or edit. Working directly with clients as well as with creative and media agencies and broadcasters, it has created branded content for Jaguar Land Rover, Air Canada, Elle Canada Magazine, Chefs Plate, Rethink Breast Canada, Grey Goose Vodka and TJX Canada (parent company of Marshall’s, HomeSense and WINNERS).

To raise awareness for Chefs Plate, the shop created videos related to specific meal ideas and the farms where the home meal delivery company sources food. The Creators Bureau also produced Chefs Plate’s first television spot from creative development through to final 30-second spot.

Ursula says what sets The Creators Bureau apart is the ability to make



The Creators Bureau worked directly with Rethink Breast Cancer to promote this year’s annual Boobyball fundraiser. One video was produced for social media platforms and another ‘thank you’ video was shown during the event. The theme for both - 1980s aerobics with the tagline ‘Get Physical’.



‘Redefine Dinner’, the first commercial for Chefs Plate home meal delivery company, was designed by The Creators Bureau to increase awareness of the brand.



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The M&H Toronto team.

M&H

Integrated production solutions



adaptive, integrated, and agile. These qualities, and a strong talent pool, are just a few of the benefits offered by M&H, an all-media creative production powerhouse with a 40-year heritage of high-calibre solutions headquartered in Montreal. The firm is in hyper-growth mode and its Toronto office in the Distillery District will double in size at a new location come this summer to meet demand.

Vahid Tizhouch, general manager in Toronto, says the industry is changing and clients are finding the company's unique business model and cost efficiency it offers quite appealing. "Our model came over 20 years ago when clients used to send their projects to the studio where we would do all the work. The industry has continued to evolve. Clients found they were not optimizing their creative potential and needed to bring experts in to help them." So, M&H built this flexible model providing custom solutions – from a per assignment basis to setting up shop inside clients' offices to complement their in-house talent.

"Both agencies and brands find it attractive to know there's a solution when their existing capabilities are not able to meet all their production needs. They have the option to engage our suite of services at different scales for a higher quality and more efficient output."

The formula works. The Toronto shop opened its doors in late 2015 with a staff of seven. It has since hired Luis Alejandro as manager of marketing and business development, along with a growing staff that has quadrupled and are busy providing end-to-end print and digital production services to agencies and brands throughout North America.

M&H services include a 360-degree gamut of capabilities, including web development, digital experience, 3D illustration, graphic production, design, retouching, animation, art buying, and copy adaptation in various

languages. These solutions can seamlessly adapt to clients' existing infrastructures to address their most pressing needs through a single point of contact.

The Montreal headquarters has a staff of over 100 and Tizhouch believes the Toronto shop has the potential to grow as large, if not larger. Because of M&H's typical volume of work and resources, he says the firm's leaner model with its competitive pricing is a great option to meet clients' budget expectations, while maintaining their creative vision.

M&H continues to grow its footprint. It currently operates over 10 studios including its home offices, satellites, and shop-in-shops servicing several clients within North America.

Tizhouch says that M&H has been around long enough to understand the complexities of the advertising industry and the best solutions the shop can deliver. "We hand-select our talent based on cognitive diversity – everything from producers who have worked at traditional advertising agencies or web/digital design shops to brand in-house teams – so they each bring a wide spectrum of complementary

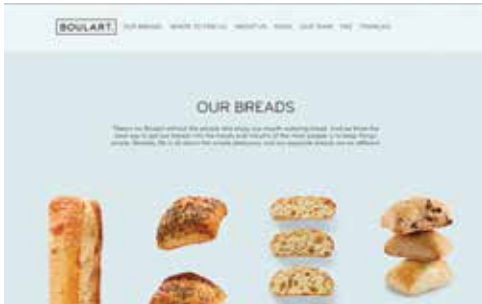
knowledge and experience for our clients."

M&H's composition breeds the innovation necessary to grow alongside its clients. Many long-standing relationships have developed, like the one with Sid Lee for over 20 years through transformative collaboration for solutions to shared challenges. For over a decade, M&H has been executing advertising for L'Oreal Canada's marketing campaigns across all of its product divisions.

Other recent notable work includes a logo design collaboration with KBS for Innocence Canada, where M&H handled all graphic design mechanicals. With Virtue, Vice Media's in-house creative services division, M&H delivered retouched mechanical artwork for Wealthsimple that was adapted for transit, digital boards, wall murals, and mega-posters. The shop has also collaborated with Open. A Creative Company on creative strategy execution for artisanal bread company, Boulart, to build a new WordPress consumer website as well as other trade sales collateral.

Alejandro says there's a real industry paradigm shift happening on all fronts from a cost perspective as well as operationally. Larger agency networks have started to restructure and, in some cases, streamline staffing, in addition to the newer small shops on the scene with strategically agile business models. "We are increasingly working with smaller, independent agencies – typically founded by former legacy firms' executives. They're the driving force behind the current paradigm shift. Advertisers are dipping into more continuous content projects requiring quicker scaling up of integrated production resources."

"It's a great time in the market for us," says Alejandro. "We don't do creative and strategy, so we're the perfect fit for creative teams with production needs at different scales and scopes – from the latest design and post-production techniques to emergent digital capabilities."



M&H worked with OPEN to produce marketing collateral for artisanal bread company, Boulart. This included its website, which won a 2017 Applied Arts Design Award.



L'Oréal Canada has worked with M&H for over 12 years on creative production for brands like Lancôme, Vichy and Garnier across all its divisions.

M&H collaborated with Virtue, Vice Media's in-house creative agency to produce a campaign for Wealthsimple. The work included retouched mechanical artwork adapted to print and digital OOH channels across Canada.



In partnership with Sid Lee, M&H executed the launch campaign for The North Face's XtraFoam™ Technology in pre-production. Rendered 3D illustrations for the creative focused on the layered technology within the boots. M&H's imagery-creation division, Cam&leon, uses applications like Modo and AfterEffects to create prototype visualizations with a high degree of realism.



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MTG edited Mark's 'Well Worn', a campaign shot documentary style, for Taxi.

because there was so much great footage it was hard to pare it down. At one point we had 15 strong edits and had to go shopping for the versions that would make it through."

A good editor can also offer solutions that help agencies and brands save time and money. Ryan Hunt, editor on Sid Lee's 'What's In This' 30-second spot for Maple Leaf Foods believes working closely with director Kathi Prosser enabled him to do that. Hunt says, "There were a lot of moving parts in this piece so the director and I spoke several times before the shoot in order to map out the structure. As a result, she didn't have to shoot a ton of takes and we were able to keep the cut focused because of that."

Married To Giants' focus is on agency-driven creative and Valiquette says, "I believe that if we concentrate on editing and do it as well or better than anyone else in town, we will continue to be in high demand to collaborate and work with agencies. We see ourselves as partners with agencies and their clients to help them do their best work and spend their dollars wisely."

Married to Giants Elevating brand stories

Married To Giants is all about editing video content regardless of length or delivery channel. The shop has been working tirelessly for the past five years to ensure it delivers the best possible creative for every piece of content it works on.

President Ben Valiquette had held several sales and marketing positions within the production and post-production sector of advertising in 2012 when he purchased and rebranded 15-year-old Stealing Time Editing. Under Valiquette's watch, Married To Giants still concentrates solely on the editing side of things.

Valiquette says, "Instead of diversifying our offering, I thought it was better to focus on one thing - editing - to keep it simple."

So far so good. The shop continues to get repeat business, in part because of its excellent work but also, Valiquette says, because it's a place where people feel welcome and comfortable. The company has a staff of 30 with eight editors and nine editing suites so it can accommodate a heavy workload.

MTG editors work on a wide range of short and extended branded content for North American agencies but they also have experience editing documentaries, feature films and music videos. The shop's roster of talented editors includes Raj Ramnauth, who recently cut Air Canada's 90-second 'Our Home' with FCB and director Kevin Foley. The full 90-second longer format spot reached audiences in theatres across the country and was widely shared on social media.

Another recent MTG project is the Mark's 'Well Worn' campaign created by Taxi and directed by Kacper Larski. Because of the quick turnaround required, the project really required close collaboration with the agency and the ability to make the strongest edit when there were numerous options available. Editor Monica Remba says, "This was shot doc-style and



Married to Giants worked with Sid Lee to edit 'What's In This' for Maple Leaf Foods. The shop's editing enabled a plethora of food choices and trends to be packed into 30-seconds for the wholesome choice - Prime Chicken, raised without antibiotics.



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The shop's new front signage is a striking wooden sign that is OLED backlit by a unique, changeable animation that's visible through the intricate logo on the front.

Reactiv wants to do more work with emerging technologies. As an example, a 15-second spot created a few years ago for Scotties tissues with John St. featured 3D-generated Scotties tissue boxes that would drop into a room and the box design would accent the décor. Today, Isocianu says he would pitch, in collaboration with agency creatives, the idea of an augmented reality app to go with it.

"People at home could point their phone's camera towards a surface in their house, like a coffee table or desk, and the app would sample the color in the room and then on their screen they'd see a virtual 3D tissue box drop onto their table with a matching box design," says Isocianu. "I feel our understanding of design, composition, color and 3D animation would allow us to bridge the visual divide between the broadcast/content world and the AR/VR experience."

Reactiv Better brand stories

Executive producer Anna Junger and creative director Alon Isocianu set up their Toronto shop in 2007 with a lofty goal to bring high-concept imaginative visuals to the music video business. At that time, music videos were fairly low budget compared to the advertising industry. Fast forward a decade and the ad industry is now looking for high-end effects and animation without the high ticket price, so the shop has been putting its visual effects and motion-design skills to work for agencies.

Junger says, "We're creative collaborators who execute high quality visuals with both creative and technical expertise. That's why people like working with us. It started with music videos but bled into commercials when ad agencies noticed how versatile and invested we were in every project. The work we were doing in music videos was ambitious and highly visual, very imaginative – and that was something we were able to showcase to agencies."

Although Reactiv has expanded its areas of expertise, the in-house staff has stayed small by design. Junger says, "We have a very nimble team – Alon and I alongside a handful of other designers, animators and composers. We obviously scale up when a project requires more production. I think that makes us a little bit more of a family, a little more collaborative."

Reactiv has been working with agencies and directly with brands for several years now creating campaigns for big names such as Nike, Scotties, Dove, Pinnacle Vodka, Joe Fresh, Husky and many others.

Last year, the shop worked on the ADCC and Clio award-winning Dove Self Esteem project with Unilever and Ogilvy & Mather. Reactiv created a touching 60-second commercial using old photographs and newly shot footage to create emotional portraits featuring young women, all of whom had completed Dove's self-esteem program, entering the photographs of their younger selves. The piece highlights the confidence and beauty that comes with strong self-esteem.

For Pinnacle Vodka, Reactiv designed and animated six 15-second computer generated commercials to run between segments on three of Shaw Media's main networks. The spots highlighted three Pinnacle Vodka flavours with unique environments and animations for each flavour. The spots were created using 3D animation techniques, including the precise modeling of the Pinnacle Vodka bottle and specific abstract 3D accents added to each scene.

Isocianu, a filmmaker and visual artist with over 10 years of directing, editing, motion design and visual effects experience, says that in the future,



Reactiv worked with Ogilvy & Mather on the Dove Self Esteem project to create a 60-second spot highlighting the impact that strong self-esteem has on young women.



Reactiv worked directly with the internal team at Shaw (now Corus) to produce six 15-second computer-generated spots. Unique environments were created using 3D animation, including precise modeling of the bottle. Each spot highlighted one of the three Pinnacle Vodka flavours.



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Les Enfants Creative storytelling



With a globe-trotting talent roster, this Montreal-based prodco is making waves in branded content and much more.

When Les Enfants first came into being in Montreal almost 10 years ago, its directors were winning awards for their work on music videos. Now, the same directors, joined by some new additions, are testing creative boundaries and bringing global stories to life in advertising and branded content.

Celine Ceillier, executive producer, president, founding partner says, "Our name describes our philosophy. We gravitate towards directors with a sense of creative purity. It's similar to the way children approach things: with simplicity and unfiltered curiosity. We then apply this to a project and watch the magic happen."

Ceillier is joined on the management team by partners, executive producers Visant Le Guennec and Genevieve Sylvestre. Together they work with a roster of highly talented directors who have been consistently recognised and awarded within the industry.

Some of the shop's notable works includes Natrel's 'Intolerance: A Lactose Story' directed by Benjamin Steiger Levine, short films for Honda motorcycles directed by Jonathan Bensimon, and humorous spots for LG2 client Plaisirs Gastronomiques, directed by Maxime Giroux.

Although most of the shop's work, about 80%, takes place in Quebec, its directors regularly work with international agencies and clients. For the Honda motorcycle branded content project with Dentsu Tokyo, Bensimon took his crew to the US, Japan and Croatia and worked with marketers from three different offices.

Les Enfants also created a branded short film called "Wear Your Heart", directed by Eva Van den Bulcke, for 85-year-old Japanese fashion designer Yumi Katsura and her eponymous fashion brand last year. The three-minute film beautifully tells the life story of the Paris-trained designer while showcasing her line.

"Our approach to anything, big or small, is simplicity and respect," says producer, partner Le Guennec. "That's how we ensure that our whole team remains motivated and engaged, allowing us to consistently deliver outcomes of the highest quality."

Les Enfants worked with LG2 to generate awareness of Natrel Lactose Free products with the short film - Intolerance - A Lactose Story. Directed by Benjamin Steiger Levine, the film is a tongue-in-cheek look at the life of 'Miles Granderson', the lactose intolerant son of a milkman.

Domestically, other long-form branded content has been crafted for Alliance de l'industrie touristique du Québec (AITQ), directed by Van den Bulcke and co-directed by François Méthé, while the shop also recently created commercials for clients such as Loblaw's, Hydro-Québec, Hitachi, Via Rail, Morinaga, Volkswagen and Subway.

Le Guennec adds, "Sometimes it's hard to script branded content and find the story, but our directors have a special interest and the skills for branded content. It's something we want to offer to agencies in addition to directing. More and more often, directors are asked to find the story and develop the storytelling from situation. We're always pushing to get the best out of each and every project."



"Wear Your Heart" for Yumi Katsura's designer fashion label was shot in Japan and Paris. Directed by Eva Van den Bulcke, the three minute film follows the career of the designer and showcases her line.



This 60-second spot, "Bateau", is one of several humorous pieces created with LG2 and directed by Maxime Giroux for Plaisirs Gastronomiques prepared food products.



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Zulubot launched in 2014, but the studio's name was imagined in 2008 by Zak Mroueh's son, who came home from school one day with a futuristic interpretation of Zulu Alpha Kilo.

Zulubot

Content for the platform era

In 2014, Zak Mroueh, Zulu Alpha Kilo's founder was trying to come up with a name for his agency's newest content production venture. He stared up at a picture hanging in his office and there, he found inspiration. In 2008, Mroueh's then five-year-old son had sketched a futuristic interpretation of his Dad's new agency, Zulu Alpha Kilo. Ten years later, that hand-drawn Zulubot robot is now the name and symbol of this industry-leading content production studio.

Not surprisingly, Zulubot's mission is to throw out all traditional notions and embrace a childlike, contemporary approach to content creation and production. "Two years before we launched Zulubot, we were inspired by one of our client's worldwide marketing leaders who shared some brilliant global work being produced by a new wave of filmmakers and content creators. At the same time, we were hearing from existing Zulu clients about their production frustrations with speed, efficiency and cost effectiveness." With this as inspiration, Zulubot set out to create a more nimble, creative and efficient offering.

In 2014, the fledgling studio had an opportunity to produce a reality TV series for OMNI right out of the gate, but it would require a major investment. Three additional edit suites were needed to service the production and additional space leased despite no guarantee of long-term work. Without

the hindrance of a holding company, Mroueh and the Zulubot team decided to move forward despite the financial risks. Within a month, three new edit suites were set up and Zulubot's first major TV series production was well underway.

Today, Zulubot's out-of-the-box storytelling, distribution and production expertise has perfectly positioned it to work with forward-looking marketers trying to deliver meaningful and timely content. Unlike a traditional production studio, where the process ends at delivery to client, the Zulubot team takes it all the way from ideation to distribution planning and measurement. Mroueh says, "Although video consumption is growing, we still see an overall lack of premium content from brands. Years ago, brands wanted to post new content every single day. In recent years, many of our own clients have reduced the frequency of their posts and by doing so, increased engagement with higher quality content. Our belief is in quality over quantity and engagement over impressions."

With filmmakers, editors, writers, strategists, designers all under one roof, Zulubot is set up to help brands succeed in the platform era, where properties owned by Google and Facebook command the majority of consumer time spent as well as digital advertising revenue. "The video industry is growing at a rapid pace. All you need to do is look at how the major social networks are prioritizing video on their platforms today," says Mroueh. "We took a big leap with Zulubot four years ago and it's positioned us and many of our clients ahead of the curve for how today's brands need to engage with audiences."

Sometimes the content Zulubot produces still involves traditional broadcasters. One of the best examples is *Common Ground: 100 Years of Harley-Davidson in Canada*, originally an online series that followed three Harley riders during their journeys across Canada.

The content was eventually picked up by Discovery Channel and aired as a one-hour primetime special. Over 475,000 Canadians tuned in and the documentary was recently held up by *AdWeek* as a best-in-class example of brand storytelling. *Fast Company* named it as a top pick of the week, calling it "content that people actually want to watch".

Today, Zulubot has grown to seven editing suites and a state of the art audio recording studio. But long-term, Mroueh says he wants the studio to create scripted series that build audiences that will eventually attract brands beyond Zulu Alpha Kilo's borders and client list.

Cary Smith, who joined Zulubot in January as director of content, is excited about that future potential, adding that "Zulubot's mission has been to create premium content that doesn't resemble advertising and instead competes for attention and engagement with entertainment and other mainstream media."

Smith's extensive production experience included four years as executive producer for Red Bull Media House, the brand's in-house media and content creation division. Before that, he was executive producer at Bell Media where he got to work with stars like Will Farrell, Selena Gomez, Ed Sheeran and Justin Bieber. Smith says, "With Zulubot's entrepreneurial spirit and disruptive culture, our team has the freedom to push boundaries not only in branded content, but also in pure entertainment."



Credit cards have actually been issued to pets. Playing off this bizarre truth, Zulubot produced Interac's "documentary" *Pets with Credit* about a dog who gets a credit card.



Zulubot handled post production on JennAir's premium content series *Fine Dining Redefined*.



To wean Canadians off their credit card addiction, Zulubot tapped into Gail Vaz-Oxlade, star of TV series *Til Debt Do Us Part*. Each day consumers received videos of inspiration and financial advice.



For Whirlpool, Zulubot produced *Sama's lunchbox*, a powerful piece of content that tells the story of a 9-year-old girl who cooks a traditional Syrian meal for her new Canadian classmates. The short film received a full-page article in the *Globe & Mail* as a best-in-class example of branded content for modern brands.



Fast Company described Zulubot's *Common Ground* documentary as "content that people actually want to watch." It aired on Discovery channel during prime-time with over 475,000 Canadians tuning in.



Produced for Uber in partnership with MADD, Zulubot had to nimbly shoot and edit an emotional short film in time for the party-filled holiday season. It featured Shelly, a real-life Uber driver who tells riders her story of personal loss after her daughter was killed by a drunk driver.



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Executive producers Chilo Fletcher and Estelle Weir founded Toronto-based Someplace Nice in 2013.

and in turn were able to produce it in one day instead. One directed the comedy performance, a second was DP on the performance and a third shot the product in another set up in another part of the location.”

Recent work includes spots for Budweiser, the Edmonton Eskimos and Dementia Network, and the shop has also worked on projects for brands such as Air Canada, BMO, Coca-Cola, CIBC, Dare, Hyundai, Maple Leaf Foods, Rogers, Toyota and Volvo.

Fletcher says, “Our roster includes technical directors well-experienced in 360 filming and VR and we’re excited to leverage advancing technology in content creation and experiential marketing. Markets like the US have really embraced VR and AI in advertising and the creative results are exceptional user experiences, it’s inspiring. We also want to push and work with our directors to develop and produce episodic and longer format sponsored or branded content.”

Someplace Nice Production solutions

This Toronto production company takes a multi-tasking team approach to meet evolving brand needs. When executive producers Chilo Fletcher and Estelle Weir founded Toronto-based Someplace Nice in 2013, their goal was to offer a fresh, solution-oriented approach to productions of any level and budget. Both previously held sales roles at various production companies and wanted to use their collective experience to make things easier for agencies and brands to produce great creative in today’s business climate.

Fletcher says, “The business of commercial production has changed so much since Estelle and I got into the business 15 years ago and Someplace Nice began with the mindset of embracing change and evolving with it, keeping the model nimble. With that evolution has come a growing clientele beyond advertising agencies. Marketing clients are increasingly reaching past ad agencies directly to production companies to produce, and sometimes develop, their creative.”

Someplace Nice specializes in broadcast, digital and print production for ad agencies and brands direct from creative development to final product.

Brands are producing more content, for multiple platforms, and that means evolving the production process to make budgets stretch. Knowing that clients expect the same level of quality, Someplace Nice has developed a creative roster filled with multi-disciplinarians. A fulltime staff of six is augmented by a roster of local and international directors, DPs and photographers repped by Someplace Nice. Several directors can fill more than one role on a shoot, or can be part of a Someplace Nice team whereby the shop can offer a different price point.

Weir says, “Someplace Nice encourages a collaborative atmosphere and our directors, DP’s and photographers often work as teams to help make the most of time and money. For example, when a past project required two days of shooting, we were able to put a team from our roster together



Budweiser’s ‘Who You Got?’ 30-second spot for Bud Light NFL cans was directed by Drew Lightfoot.



Someplace Nice worked directly with the Dementia Network Calgary to create the ‘Forgetting the Past’ video directed by Andy Ferreira.



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The 2018 CASSIES was held on Feb. 21 at Toronto's Arcadian Court, where Canada's most effective marketing campaigns were celebrated among an audience of marketers and agency folk alike. Once again hosted by *Eat St.* comic James Cunningham (pictured), the gala also presented awards to *strategy*'s Marketers of the Year and the top companies and folks that landed on the 2018 Creative Report Card.



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1. A congratulatory exchange between CRC winners Carlos Moreno (tied for top CD) and SickKids' Lori Davison (top Brand). | 2. Taxi snags the Effectiveness Index Award for raking in the most CASSIES points. | 3. The SickKids brand leader is crowned this year's overall MOY. | 4. Another 2018 MOY, Loto-Quebec's Marie-Claudel Lalonde with *strategy* digital editor Jeromy Lloyd | 5. Canadian Tire and Taxi win Gold for their "Tested" campaign. | 6. Budweiser's Todd Allen and Anomaly accept a trio of awards for lighting up a nation. | 7. CDSS's Ed Casagrande and the FCB team behind the Gold-winning "Down Syndrome Answers." | 8. MOY winner Andrea Hunt from Weston poses with *strategy*'s Lloyd and Lisa Faktor. | 9. The *Globe*'s Jon Banack presents its Creative Effectiveness Award to SickKids. | 10. Edelman wins Gold for getting in the mind of a hacker for HP. | 11. Keen Creative Report Card winners atop a glossy magazine. | 12. *Look ma, we're famous!* Cossette's Peter Ignazi peeks at the March issue of *strategy* where his agency dominated the CRC. | 13. SickKids and Cossette huddle for a Grand Prix-winning pose.

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PHOTOS BY MATT FORSYTHE

Mic drops at Marketing Evolution

Brand leaders and future watchers **spit truth** at *strategy*'s first C-Suite Summit, outlining the challenges and opportunities facing the modern CMO.

BY JEREMY LLOYD



As CEO of 48 North, Alison Gordon believes Canada has a unique (and global) cannabis brand building opportunity over the U.S.

"I have faith that many [cannabis growers] that have \$800 million in the bank and are worth \$4 billion will figure out how to be mass producers of cannabis, and that will be a mass product. And there will be companies like ours that will be more craft... That said, I don't want to be in the agriculture business either way. **You can be the wheat farmer, or you can be Nabisco who creates the value by creating the brand and the product.**"



Jason Chaney left the agency world to become CCO of Koho, a mobile banking startup. He does not beat around the bush when explaining the enormity of the task put before him.

"The objective I was given was 'redefine the brand, redesign the brand and launch the brand in three months'... In any other forum, you'd have someone come up here and talk about speed being the objective. The other word people use is agility. For me, that's a cop out. Anyone who says speed is the answer doesn't actually want to talk to you because speed and agility aren't solutions. They're realities. **We don't operate in a world that allows us to take our time... What I'm trying to accomplish is greatness. Speed puts a constraint on that.**"



As brands publicly take stances around gender issues, Lucie Greene, worldwide director of JWTIntelligence's Innovation Group, warns representation is more than just lip service.

"Consumers, and particularly women, are really concerned with representation: how they're represented in media and advertising campaigns... The female gaze is a bigger trend we see within that – a growing emphasis of the nuances of a woman behind the lens, a curator. It's not enough to just have an all-female *Ghostbusters* or *Ocean's 8*. There's a rise in platforms bringing female perspectives. **It's not 'by women, for women.' It's the female perspective on the world.**"

PHOTOS BY MATT FORSYTHE

AFTER DOWNING ENDLESS NO-FOAM-DOUBLE-SOY LATTES,
DESIGNER REBECCA KNIGHT CONCEIVED
THE GOLD-WINNING RECYCLING POSTER.



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