

KANTAR



effie Awards
Europe

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

How Effie Europe winners connect with audiences to drive success

EACA / Effie Awards Europe in partnership with Kantar

Introduction

For marketers, the ability to connect with consumers has never been more critical: the continued proliferation of channels and content leads to a limited capacity to pay attention.

So how can marketers use creativity to break through these straitjackets? We know that aiming high with creative content is a proven strategy for success. Knowing this, Effie Awards Europe continues its legacy of honouring marketing excellence. As Strategic Insights Partner, Kantar has worked with Effie Europe to uncover how winning campaigns connected with people to deliver outstanding results.

We evaluated 84 pieces of creative that won in 2024, building on an analysis of 200+ Effie Europe winners from 2022 and 2023. This was done using LINK AI, Kantar's cutting-edge, AI-powered pretesting solution that tests and optimises content at scale, and provides insights in as little as 15 minutes, empowering you to refine your creative with confidence.

The findings reveal five ways in which marketers can use creativity to connect with audiences. Gold-winning campaigns significantly outperform other winners with their exceptional ability to cut through, drive short-term results, and create long-term brand equity, creating true and meaningful connection.

VĚRA ŠÍDLOVÁ
Global Creative Thought Leadership
Director, Kantar



Join us as we explore the insights behind these remarkable campaigns and celebrate the creativity and strategy that propel them to great outcomes.

Our congratulations to all the agencies and organisations recognised this year.

ECEM ERDEM
Global Creative Thought Leadership
Manager, Kantar

Creative Connections

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1 COURAGEOUS

Connecting with bravery

When it comes to creativity, marketers experience a tension between wanting to use creativity in new, unexpected ways - and risking harming the brand's bottom line by producing something that does not deliver for the brand or causes public backlash. In a world where audiences can easily and noisily react to brands' campaigns, what is the value of creative courage - of doing things differently? Effie Europe winners show that having the courage to do things differently from your brand, category, or even the entire marketing industry, can pay off.

For courageous strategy to land, it must be rooted in a deep understanding of people. Gyno-Canesbalance, a Silver winner, used a core insight to create a campaign that breaks away from pharmaceutical advertising and stands out from the clutter. They addressed the taboo surrounding bacterial vaginosis by using a mermaid character - a clever nod to

the fishy odour caused by the condition often misinterpreted as a hygiene issue. The campaign's unapologetic humour and direct approach helped destigmatise the conversation about vaginal health and empowered women to identify symptoms confidently and seek treatment, driving sales for the brand.



Case spotlight

Campaign: The Mermaid

Client: Gyno-Canesbalance, BAYER

Lead Agency: LOLA MullenLowe



PERSUASION

SPAIN
TOP **25%**

FRANCE
TOP **30%**

PORTUGAL
TOP **40%**

JURY COMMENTS:

"The results show that through innovative and assertive messaging, the brand was able to empower consumers and connect with them while achieving record-breaking business outcomes."

"Disruptive creative approach."

1

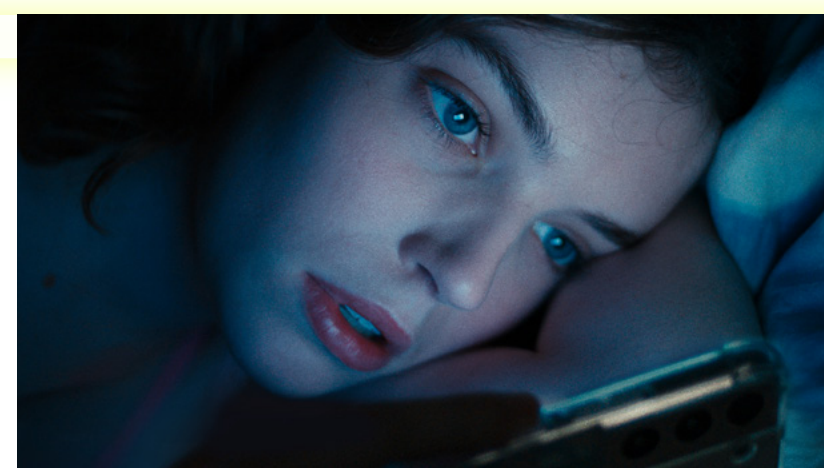
Honourable mentions



Campaign: Industrial Emissions Face Mist
Client: Vattenfall
Lead Agency: NORD DDB
Contributing Agency: House



Campaign: McDrip
Client: McDonald's
Lead Agency: NORD DDB Helsinki
Contributing Agencies: OMD (Finland), VAIN fashion Group Oy



Campaign: A Piece of Me
Client: KPN
Lead Agency: Dentsu creative
Contributing Agencies: Amp.Amsterdam // The Sonic Branding Company, Wefilm, Het PR Bureau, Mindshare Netherlands

Breaking away from category codes helps brands stand out. Can an energy company use the conventions of a beauty campaign? Vattenfall, a Swedish energy provider, took on the look and feel of a completely different category to draw in audiences and communicate their message. The Bronze winner took a daring step with their campaign 'Industrial Emissions Face Mist', to promote their fuel which emits water instead of carbon dioxide. By creating a beauty product from industrial emissions and partnering with supermodel Cara Delevingne, they captured the attention of a younger audience and strengthened the brand.

Creative courage is about how you tell a story, as well as how it manifests in your chosen media channels and touchpoints. McDonald's Finland, a Gold winner, chose to change the McDonald's uniform to recruit new employees.

Collaborating with Finnish fashion designer Jimi Vain, they transformed used McDonald's uniforms into a cutting-edge fashion line. The campaign, launched with the tagline "Want the drop? Get the Job!", resonated with Gen Z and led to an increase in job applications and significantly improved McDonald's employer image.

Brands operate in an increasingly challenging terrain when it comes to speaking up on social issues. KPN, a Dutch telecommunications company, tackled the topic of online shaming. They partnered with Dutch musician MEAU to create a powerful anthem and music video based on victims' true stories. The gold-winning 'A Piece of Me' campaign aimed to shift the blame from victims to those who forward intimate images without consent, encouraging young people to think twice before they act.

2 CATASTROPHISING

Connecting with drama

“Show, don’t tell” goes the age-old advertising mantra. Effie Europe winners show the power of using drama to allow audiences to not just hear your message, but to feel it. Deutsche Telekom’s campaign ‘#ShareWithCare’ uses hyperbole to highlight the potential dangers of oversharing children’s photos online. The Gold winner featured Ella, a digitally-aged version of a 9-year-old girl, who warned parents about the risks of sharing their children’s images on social media. This dramatic and futuristic approach effectively turned an abstract threat into a tangible reality, prompting parents to reconsider their online behaviour and protect their children’s privacy.



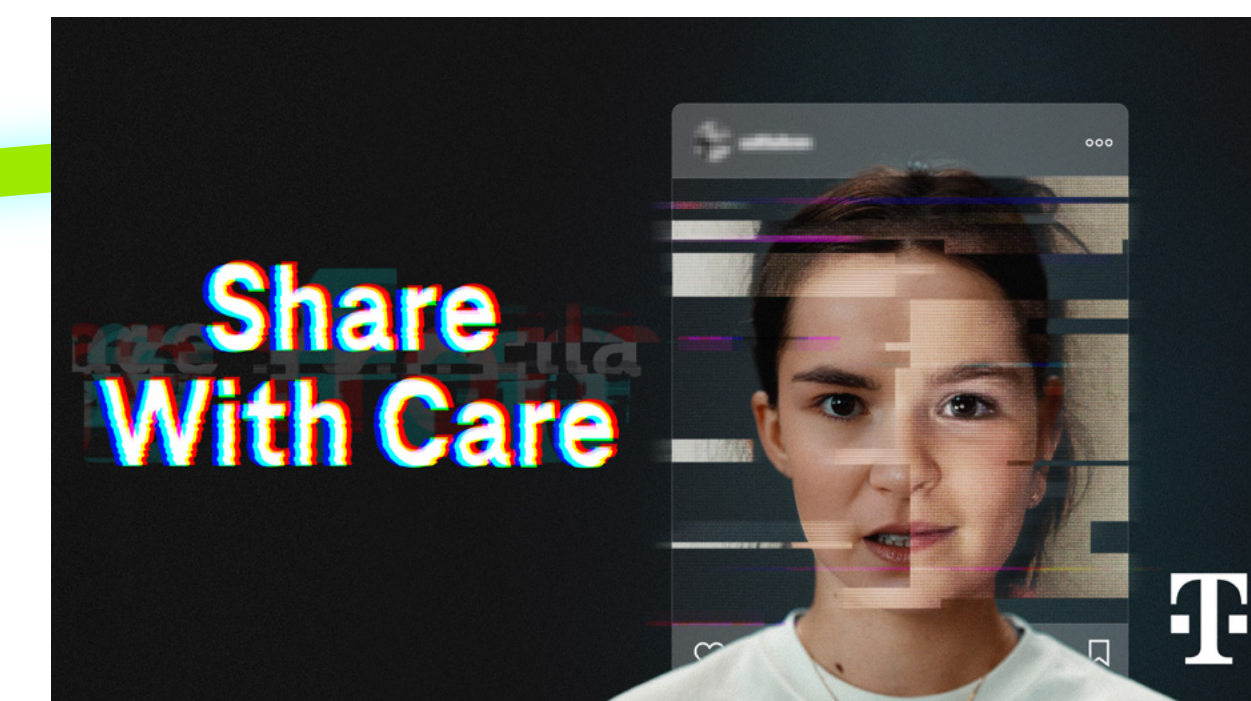
Case spotlight

Campaign: #ShareWithCare - Message from Ella

Client: Deutsche Telekom

Lead Agency: adam&eveBerlin GmbH, DDB

Contributing Agencies: Mindshare GmbH, emetriq GmbH



SKIP TIME

TOP **5%**



JURY COMMENTS:

“Great idea, flawless execution, amazing results.”

“Nailed it on the creative execution. It was both emotive and highlighted the issue in a dramatic and effective way. It is little wonder why this campaign gained such high earned media impressions.”

2

Honourable mentions

Hyperbole can be used to entertain audiences. TikTok, a Bronze winner, showed everyday scenarios in an over-the-top way. Unexpected characters shared useful tips they learned on TikTok. This approach challenged the perception of TikTok as a frivolous app and created a sense of FOMO among people. Similarly, Kotsovolos, a Greek electronics retailer, used humour and hyperbole to address people's economic hardships. By dramatising the absurdity of rising prices and economic challenges, the bronze-winning campaign promised a "fantasticero" Black Friday experience with real substance. The use of relatable scenarios, such as the soaring cost of olive oil and house rents, combined with catchy Greek music and playful language, made the campaign highly memorable and engaging.

Drama can also be delivered through exceptional craft. Majorica, the iconic century-old Spanish pearl brand, faced a challenge as pearls were increasingly seen as old-fashioned. The silver-winning campaign featured striking visuals and music that juxtaposed traditional elements with modern trends, creating a dramatic and captivating narrative. This approach rejuvenated the brand's image proving that showing, not telling, can help modernise a brand.



Campaign: TikTok Comes with Benefits
Client: TikTok, ByteDance
Lead Agencies: Tribal Worldwide, Tribal Istanbul



Campaign: Kotsovolos Black Friday, Kotsovolos
Client: Kotsovolos, Public Power Company
Lead Agency: The Newtons Laboratory
Contributing Agencies: FILMKEY PRODUCTIONS, Bounce Audio



Campaign: Classic Meets Today
Client: Majorica
Lead Agency: McCann Spain

3 CANDID

Connecting via real life

Being genuine and authentic is the secret sauce that fuels all kinds of relationships, including those between a brand and its audience. A standout quality of Effie winners is their knack for authenticity and connecting with audiences through 'real' moments. These impactful campaigns embrace the colourful tapestry of life, blending creativity with candid storytelling, creating a powerful connection on the way to advertising success.

The 'Safe to Play Hub' campaign by Durex, a Gold winner, was a standout success, by connecting with a Gen Z audience through relatable and authentic conversations about sex - a topic often shrouded in taboo.

Addressing Romania's low condom usage, exacerbated by gaps in the country's sex education system, Durex championed the notion that sex education should reflect the intrinsic intimacy and vulnerability of the topic. The goal was to turn the typical fear-driven approach into something empowering and entertaining, giving young people control over their sexual health. By creating a safe space for young people to share candid stories and ask questions, the campaign transformed rigid lectures into intimate, open dialogues.

Case spotlight

Campaign: Safe to Play Hub

Client: Durex, Reckitt Benckiser Romania

Lead Agency: VML Romania



SKIP TIME

TOP **20%**

JURY COMMENTS:

"Understanding the problem and using the insight to produce a strong educational content suite to reach the target audience in a more authentic way."

Honourable mentions

Building candid connections can start with brands being honest about themselves, even acknowledging past mistakes. Pot Noodle did this with their honest and humorous social strategy, which saved the relaunch of the Lost the Pot product. The brand managed to shift their audience's perception based on the old product, by embracing their past failure while celebrating the success of the reformulated taste.

Getting real sometimes means helping your audience face reality. The non-profit organisation Talita raised awareness among young men about the reality of sex trafficking victims, by altering the popular game GTA-5's narrative and presenting real stories of sex workers to highlight the experiences of trafficking victims. ING Romania's 'Unfollow Self:Hate' campaign also tackled the reality of a social issue - young people overspending as a coping mechanism, by putting a mirror in front of them. The campaign introduced a "Self:Hate Calculator" which shows the financial toll of these habits, and offers specialist support..



Campaign: Lost the Pot

Client: Pot Noodle, Unilever

Lead Agency: U-Studio/OLIVER



Campaign: Mission Talita

Client: Talita

Lead Agency: Åkestam Holst NoA

Contributing Agencies: North Kingdom Noa, Universal Music Publishing, Other, Esportal



Campaign: Unfollow Self:Hate

Client: ING

Lead Agencies: ING Bank N.V. AMSTERDAM, Sursucala Bucuresti

Contributing Agencies: Dentsu Romania, Bread Content, McCann PR Romania

4 CONSISTENT

Connecting over time

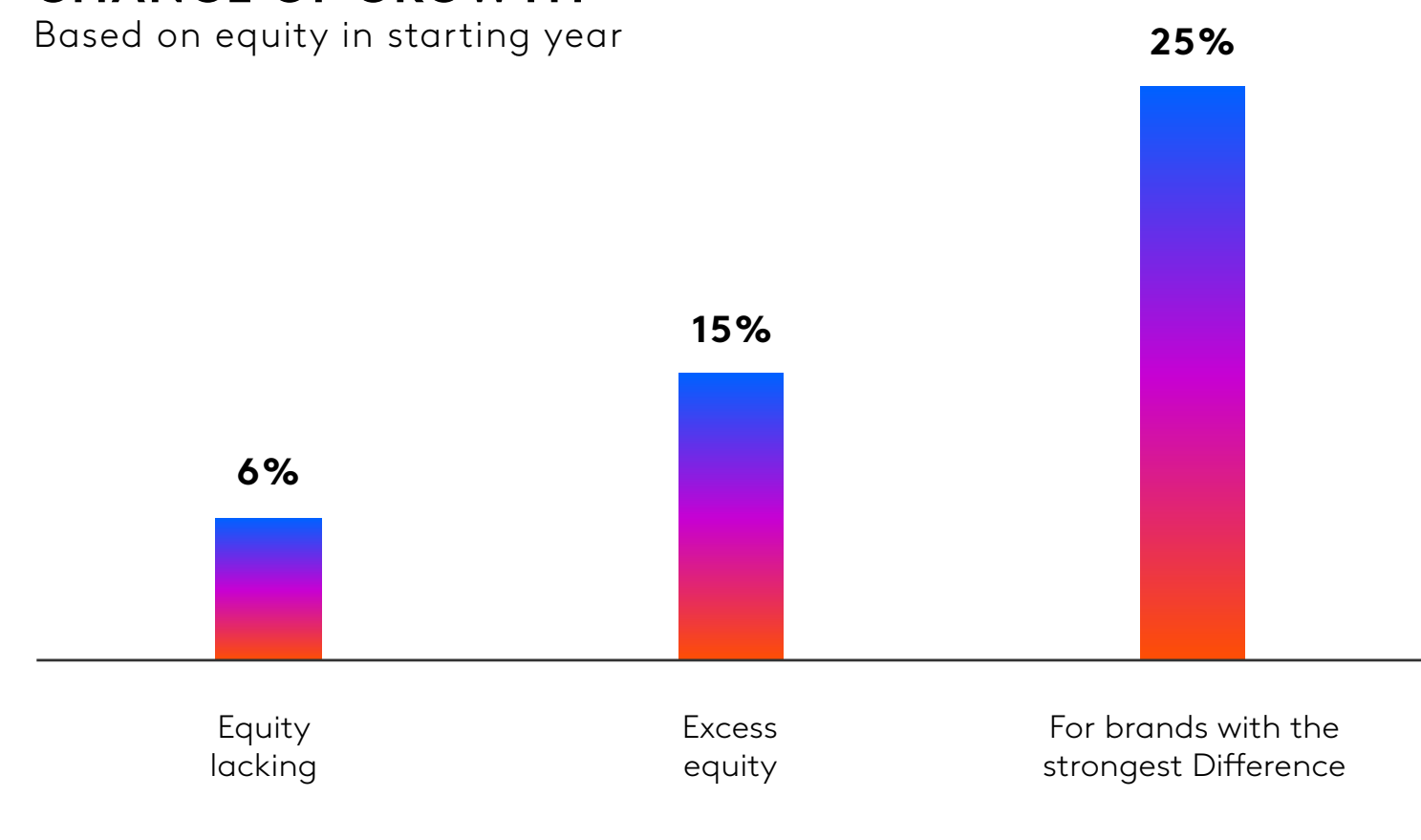
Brand building takes time, and being creatively consistent is a key builder of brand equity. Creative consistency, such as the use of distinctive assets over time, can act as a mental shortcut for the brand, improving effectiveness. Consistency help supercharge brand growth if it is used in a way that differentiates the brand. Sustained Success Effie Europe winners (2022-2024) score higher on the ability to cut through clutter, as well as the ability to differentiate their brand from competitors. So consistency is more than a signpost, it can be a significant growth driver. As Kantar's [Blueprint for Brand Growth](#) shows, brands that are seen as different are 4x more likely to grow.

DISTINCTIVE ASSETS ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH, PERCEIVED DIFFERENCE PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN BRAND GROWTH

Brands with the strongest difference credentials are more than

4X AS LIKELY TO GROW

CHANCE OF GROWTH Based on equity in starting year



Source: Meta Analysis from the Mind in sales simulator for 1602 brands, that corresponds to 163 projects, in 94 categories and 26 countries.

Volume market share are most sources from Worldpanel. Low - bottom 33%, Medium - middle 33%, High = Top 33%

SUSTAINED SUCCESS WINNERS (2022-2024)

+14
ON BRAND DIFFERENCE

+12
ON IMPACT

4

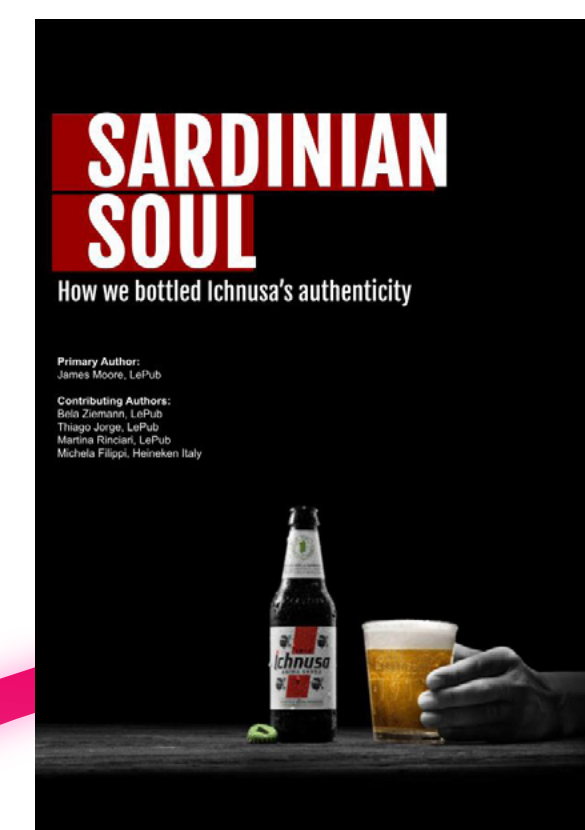
Case spotlight

Ichnusa, a small regional beer from Sardinia, wanted to grow in mainland Italy. The silver-winning campaign leveraged its authentic connection to the island to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about Sardinians. By consistently communicating the brand's genuine understanding of Sardinian culture, Ichnusa transformed from a local favourite into one of Italy's most meaningful brands.

Campaign: Sardinian Soul

Client: Ichnusa, Heineken

Lead Agency: LePub



JURY COMMENTS:

“The strongest element of this case is the long-term thinking and effect.”

“The strategic insight of leveraging Sardinian cultural pride to overcome misconceptions resonates strongly, and the campaign successfully balances authenticity with expansion, avoiding the “sell-out” risk. The results are also extremely strong, with impressive growth in both market share and penetration, all while maintaining brand equity in Sardinia.”

IMPACT

TOP **10%**

BRAND DIFFERENCE

TOP **20%**

POWER

TOP **25%**

4

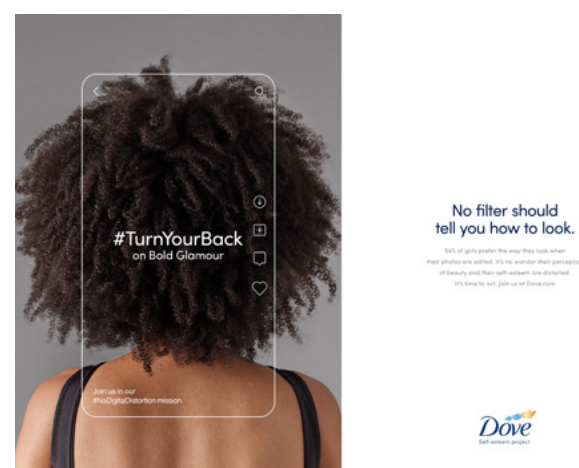
Honourable mentions



Campaign: Have a Word & Breaking the Silence

Client: Mayor of London

Lead Agency: Ogilvy UK

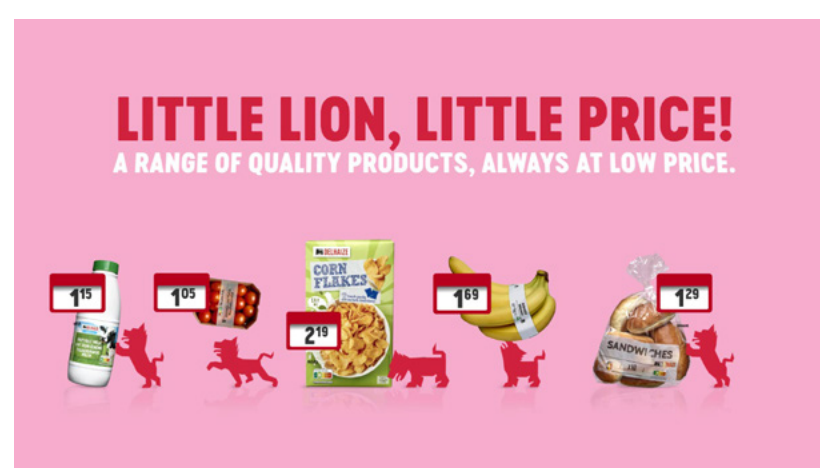


Campaign: #TURNYOURBACK

Client: Dove, Unilever

Lead Agency: DAVID Madrid, Ogilvy UK

Contributing Agency: David São Paulo



Campaign: Little Lions

Client: Sofina

Lead Agency: TBWA Belgium

Contributing Agency: Mindshare Belgium

Consistency needn't be a creative straitjacket. Dove shows that having a strong idea that can act as a springboard for creativity helps to differentiate the brand. Dove's 'Turn Your Back' campaign tackled the harmful effects of digital distortion. It encouraged people to turn their backs on unrealistic beauty standards promoted by AI-driven filters. By consistently reinforcing its commitment to real beauty and self-esteem, this campaign contributed to building the Dove brand amongst young audiences and winning two Bronzes this year.

The supermarket Delhaize leveraged its logo creatively and consistently to defend its premium positioning amidst the cost-of-living crisis. The campaign animated the lion from Delhaize's logo into a group of little lions that symbolised affordable, high-quality products from their private label range. As a result, Delhaize improved its price perception and increased sales.

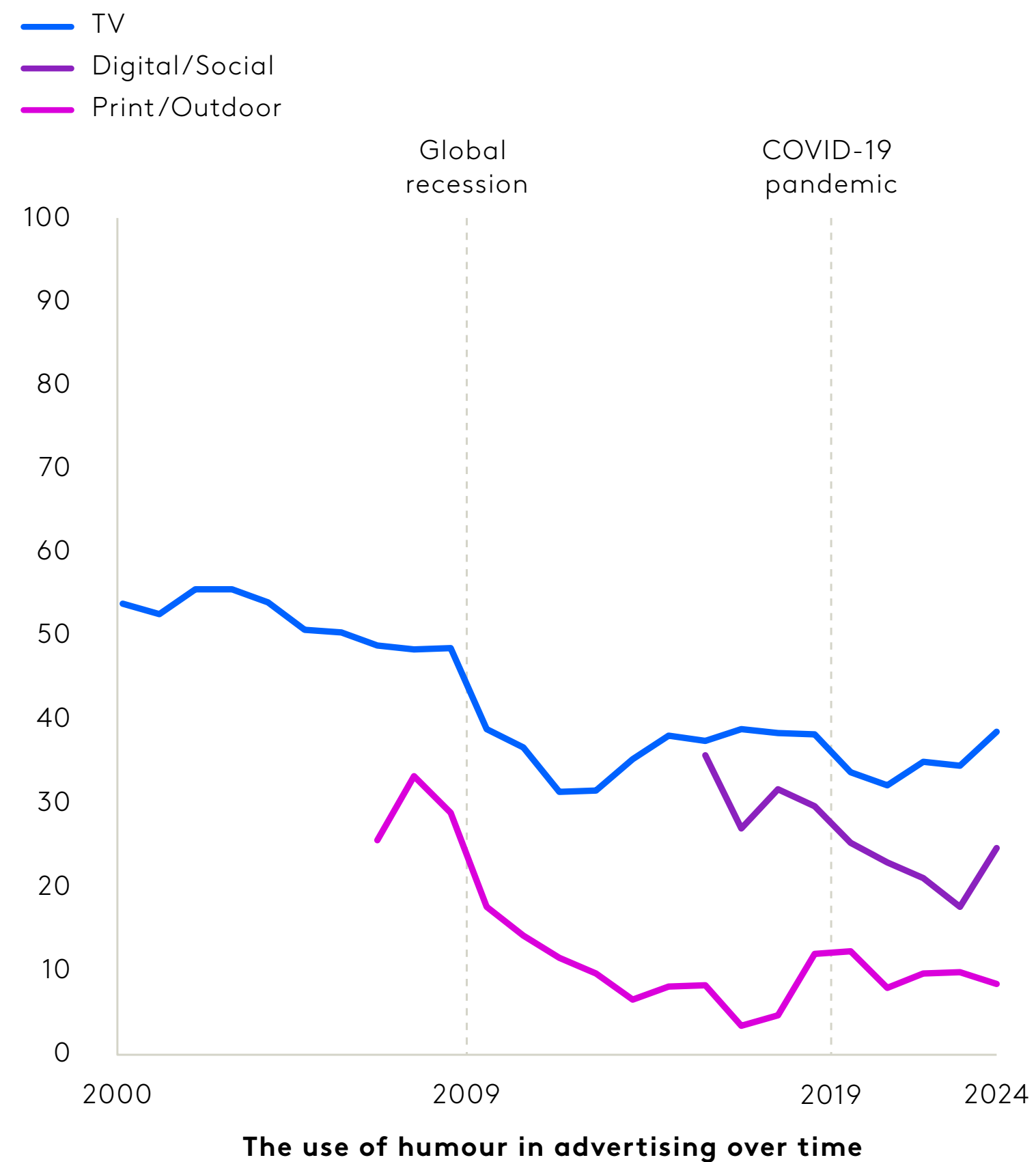
Consistency of messaging is even more vital in communications by governments and non-profits aiming to change behaviour. The Mayor of London's campaigns 'Have a Word' (Gold) and 'Breaking the Silence' (Bronze) consistently addressed the issue of misogyny by empowering men to speak up. The 'Breaking the Silence' used the familiar term "MAAATE" to create a simple yet powerful tool for intervention, making it easier for men to call out misogynistic behaviour without breaking social bonds.

5 COMICAL

Connecting through humour

Humour is a powerful tool for creative effectiveness. It helps an ad to stand out creatively, elevates its enjoyability, engages its viewers emotionally and critically, leads to stronger branded memories in consumers' minds. Humour as a creative strategy has declined globally across all channels in the last two decades, although we have started to see a light of hope in its slight rise over this past year. This comes from a realisation in the industry that whatever the world throws at us, we don't have to let go of a good laugh. Gold Effie winners show above average enjoyment scores and many of these achieve that using the power of humour.

HUMOUR HAS BEEN IN DECLINE, WITH SIGNS OF RECOVERY



Source: Kantar LINK database

GOLD EFFIE WINNERS ARE

+15PP

MORE ENJOYABLE THAN AVERAGE CREATIVE

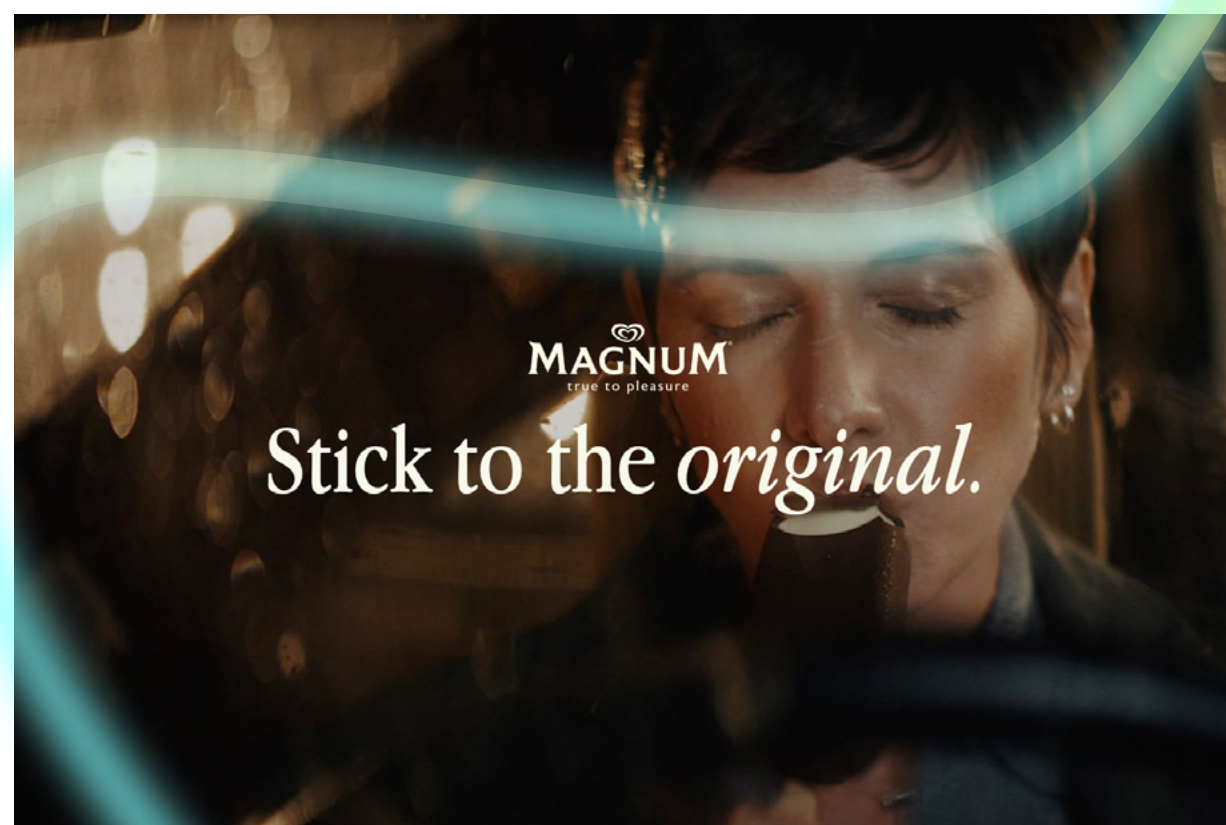
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Case spotlight

Campaign: Stick To The Original: Fighting Against Private Labels

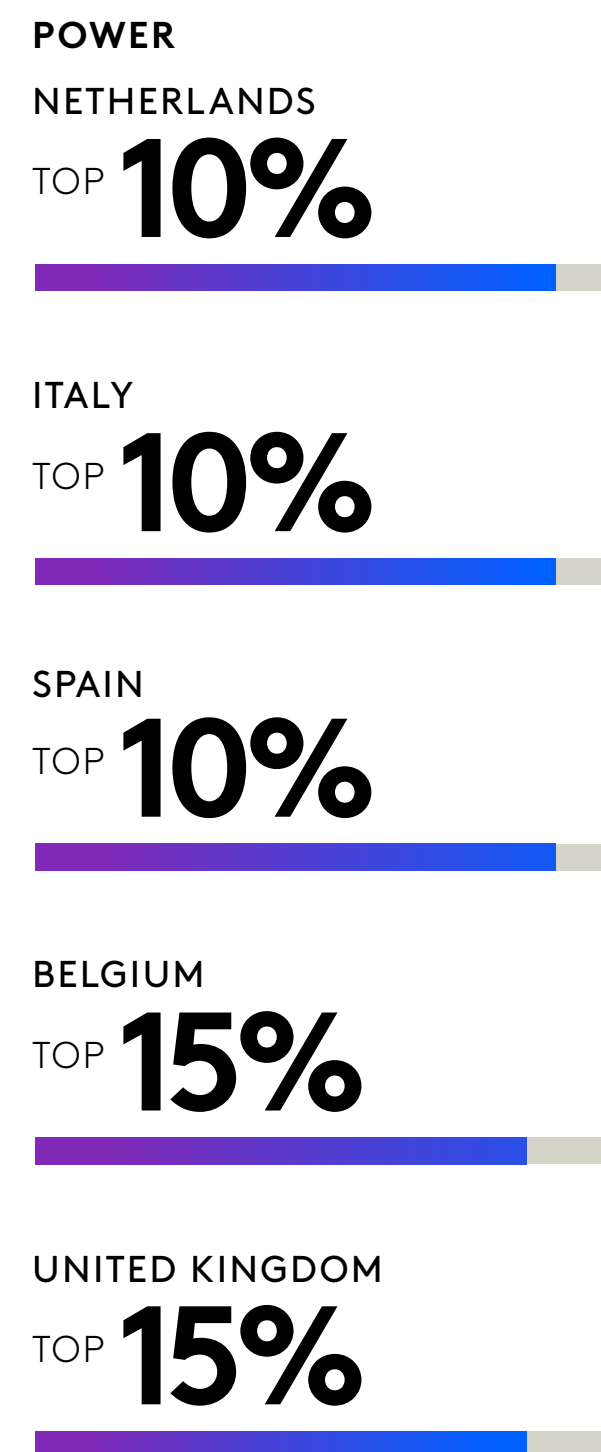
Client: Magnum, Unilever

Lead Agency: LOLA MullenLowe, Mindshare Worldwide



JURY COMMENTS:

“Loved it all. A brilliant insight with a well-polished creative platform, combining humour and craft. It’s no surprise the results and effectiveness were so strong.”

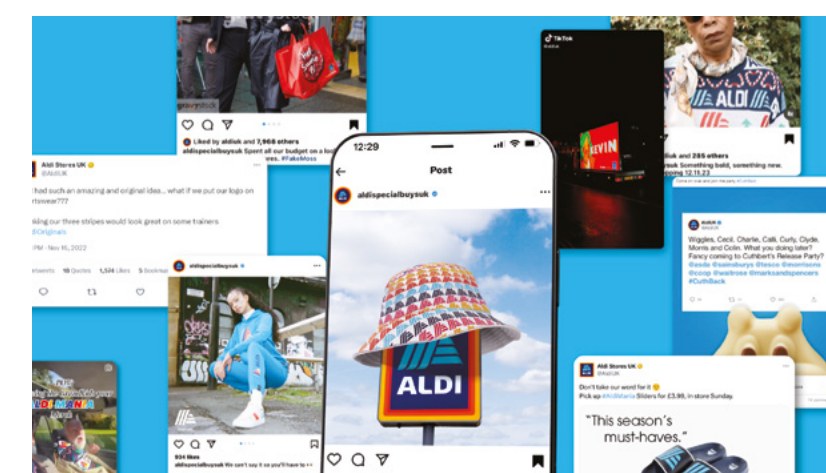


A standout example of using humour is Magnum’s ‘Stick to the Original’ campaign which cleverly leveraged humour to address competition from private labels. The TV ad from the campaign showed fantastic long-term potential across all the markets where the campaign efforts ran, predicted by LINK AI. This is no surprise as the campaign was also one of the winners of Kantar Creative Effectiveness Awards in 2024. The side-splitting storyline where a woman discovers a fake Magnum in the freezer which leads to her questioning her whole relationship, made the campaign memorable while highlighting the distinct qualities which make Magnum the original and superior choice.

5

Honourable mentions

Humour's strength comes from its ability to morph, grow, and be fine-tuned to address brands' pain points and connect with their target audiences. Take Aldi, for example: they preserved their funny image which they built over years with Kevin the Carrot and spun it into a completely new, yet hilarious social media strategy. By "being the pirates, not the navy", they've successfully reached pre-family audiences who prioritize social media over TV. Tourist body Visit Sweden took their country's challenge in often being mistaken for Switzerland and transformed it into a creative success that had us all chuckling and wanting to visit Sweden. Lipton, cleverly linked their new product's convenience to the type of humour enjoyed by younger generations, featuring a comedic actor known for his absurd and unexpected style, in line with this audience's preferences.



Campaign: How Being the Pirates of Social Media Sustained Serious Commercial Growth

Client: Aldi UK

Lead Agency: McCann Manchester



Campaign: Sweden (not Switzerland)

Client: Visit Sweden

Lead Agency: Forsman & Bodenfors

Contributing Agencies: Mindshare Sveriga, Bleck Films



Campaign: Where Did This Tea Come From?

Client: Lipton

Lead Agency: Medina Turgul DDB

Takeaways

Effie Europe winners show that understanding your audience and connecting with them through creativity is key to making an impact for your brand or cause. This year's winners demonstrate the range of creativity that can be used to forge those connections:

- 1** **COURAGEOUS:**
CONNECTING WITH BRAVERY
- 2** **CATASTROPHISING:**
CONNECTING WITH DRAMA
- 3** **CANDID:**
CONNECTING VIA REAL LIFE
- 4** **CONSISTENT:**
CONNECTING OVER TIME
- 5** **COMICAL:**
CONNECTING THROUGH HUMOUR

GET IN TOUCH

If you're looking to connect with audiences via outstanding creative which pushes boundaries, you need a measurement approach which is sensitive to disruptive content and able to measure reliably at scale.

[Get in touch](#) to discover how LINK AI can help you create ads that connect more deeply with your customer.

ABOUT EACA

The European Association of Communications Agencies (EACA) represents more than 2,500 communications agencies and agency associations from nearly 30 European countries that directly employ more than 120,000 people. EACA members include advertising, media, digital, branding and PR agencies. EACA promotes honest, effective advertising, high professional standards and awareness of the contribution of advertising in a free-market economy and encourages close co-operation between agencies, advertisers, and media in European advertising bodies. EACA works closely with EU institutions to ensure freedom to advertise responsibly and creatively.

For more information, visit www.eaca.eu

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ABOUT THE EFFIE AWARDS EUROPE

Introduced in 1996, the Effie Awards Europe were the first pan-European marketing communications awards to be judged based on effectiveness. Effie leads, inspires and champions the practice and practitioners of marketing effectiveness through education, awards, ever-evolving initiatives and first-class insights into marketing strategies that produce results. Effie recognises the most effective brands, marketers and agencies in Europe and is considered as global symbol of achievement, while serving as a resource to steer the future of marketing success. EFFIE® and EFFIE EUROPE® are registered trademarks of Effie Worldwide, Inc. and are under license to EACA.

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ABOUT KANTAR

Kantar is the world's leading marketing data and analytics business and an indispensable brand partner to the world's top companies. We combine the most meaningful attitudinal and behavioural data with deep expertise and advanced analytics to uncover how people think and act. We help clients understand what has happened and why and how to shape the marketing strategies that shape their future.

For more information, visit www.kantar.com

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