



THE
DIGIDAY
AWARDS



The Digiday Awards are pleased to once again honor brands, publishers and platforms including Ally, M&C Saatchi Group and Comedy Central. For those winners, and every honoree in the guide that follows, 2020 turned out to be a proving ground ripe with risk but also rich with opportunities. Empathy, community and reaching out to people as they navigated a challenging new normal were the threads running through every campaign that our judges recognized.

From legacy brands and publications doubling down on innovation to social programs that opened pathways to survival for people and businesses on the brink, there's never been a Digiday Awards like this one. Read on to learn all about the campaigns and programs that changed the game in 2020 and for insight into what we can learn from the teams that earned a win.

**Best
Creative**

**Promote Iceland, SS+K, M&C
Saatchi Group, M&C Saatchi
Talk and Peel - Looks Like You
Need Iceland**



Campaign/Program

When the world locked down in response to COVID-19, travel almost entirely shut down with it. For countries such as Iceland, where tourism makes up more than 15% of the workforce, the effects were devastating. Promote Iceland, a public-private partnership, turned to data to create a campaign that would engage people most likely to travel as soon as the lockdowns lifted. Its 'Let It Out' campaign curated recorded shouts of frustration to be played against the iconic Icelandic landscape, for example, helping keep Iceland top of mind for when the return to vacations arrives.

Insights

Understanding audience sentiment is critical to getting the right message across, and there was never a more sensitive time to ensure context and positive alignment than during the sweeping changes of the pandemic. With lives upended and economies in turmoil, Promote Iceland first analyzed its cohorts carefully and then tapped an emotional and creative vein while mitigating the risk of striking a wrong chord with people not yet ready to think about travel.



SS+K

M&CSAATCHI
GROUP

M&C SAATCHI TALK

Best Collaboration

M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment, Heineken, UEFA and Defected Records - The Opening Party



Campaign/Program

It was a difficult year for fans of sports and music, so M&C Saatchi worked with Heineken to remind aficionados how much both matter. As the Union of European Football Associations took to the field again, in 2020, Heineken helped celebrate with eight DJs streaming live from around the world. A quartet of footballing legends introduced them, and the global event drew 330 million viewers across more than 90 markets.

Insights

For brand advertisers, hero moments happen when the stakes are high and the returns pegged to emotional peaks. Heineken captured a brand-fame victory by stepping into the spotlight with two powerful stories to tell — sports making a European comeback and soaring DJ sets that lifted spirits for a truly global win.



Best Use of Social

Ally Financial



Campaign/Program

To get the U.S. talking about Ally Financial, the company turned to augmented reality and created a campaign that transformed six cities into giant Monopoly boards, including physical squares and large-scale well-known game pieces such as the Scotty Dog, Top Hat and Car. Bringing a first-of-its-kind augmented reality game to life across six locations provided unique challenges, including the need for permitting in densely populated spots, developing weather-resistant game squares and providing around-the-clock monitoring of all game pieces.

Insights

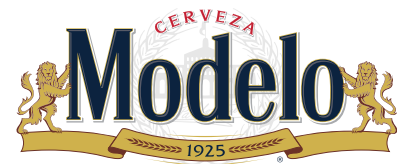
As prior experiences have demonstrated, fans of AR technology love to compete and participate in ways that transform the familiar into the fantastic. With its classic board-game approach, Ally brought the theme of finances and money to a playful program that allowed players to explore, outwit and outmaneuver their way to fun. Thinking about how to engage consumers with topics of money management can be daunting, but gamification is proven to help.



Best Use of Mobile

Groove Jones and Constellation Brands, Inc.'s Modelo

groove
jones



Campaign/Program

Day of the Dead comes to life in many ways across the globe, but one thing the celebrations all have in common is rejoicing via food, drink, music, artwork and communal activities. Modelo helped set the scene for the celebration by deploying 10-by-15-foot Day of the Dead themed murals in cities such as Washington D.C., Charleston South Carolina, Miami, Fort Lauderdale and New York. Using their mobile phones, celebrants could bring the murals to life by looking at them through their screens.

Insights

If context is king for brands seeking to match the mood of a given audience, adding to a party is a surefire way to get context right. Modelo dressed up the cities in its campaign with interactive, engaging Day of the Dead imagery that played into the public's fascination with augmented reality — making a day of fantastical imagery all the more real for customers, old and new.



Best Use of Video

Global Citizen



Campaign/Program

As COVID-19 gripped the world in 2020, Global Citizen pivoted from its day-to-day mission of ending global poverty and created the 'One World: Together At Home' television broadcast and streaming special. Curated by Lady Gaga and featured appearances by The Rolling Stones, Beyonce, Stevie Wonder, Elton John and many others, the event raised \$127.9 million — \$55.1 million for the World Health Organization's COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund and \$72.8 million for first responders everywhere.

Insights

Infrastructure is infrastructure, and for organizations working to fix a broken planet, Global Citizen saw a need, knew it had the skills and resources to help address, and acted. While its event might have been an eight-hour extravaganza that viewers will likely never forget, the association of Global Citizen with cause-based work and incredible outcomes is something that funders and individual donors will remember forever as well.



Best Media Plan

Comedy Central and Fallon - Awkwafina is Nora from Queens



Campaign/Program

On the cusp of its new show's national premiere, Comedy Central put 'Awkwafina is Nora from Queens' on the New York subway. With its star's recorded announcements, actress Awkwafina told subway riders on the 7 train — which runs through the heart of Queens — all the travel info they needed to know. The 7 train takeover was the first activation of its kind, receiving widespread national coverage and massive press attention from the likes of GMA, ABC, CNN, Variety and others.

Insights

Audiences make their favorite shows part of their lives, and Comedy Central accelerated that process by bringing their new series into the day-to-day of New York subway riders. Especially at a time when commuting could feel fraught, in 2020, Awkwafina's signature comedic flare as the trains traveled between Manhattan and Queens was a welcome note of levity — and a newsworthy moment in advance of the show's big first night.



Best Product Launch Campaign

Ally Financial - Smart Savings Tools



Campaign/Program

To promote its new collection of smart savings tools, Ally Financial started a new kind of conversation with its banking customers. With a consultative message, Ally delivered a message around building a confident approach to financial health, addressing barriers to savings and goals and introducing people to a mindset where their bank is seen as more than just a place to park money.

Insights

Ally Financial put its money where its brand name is, positioning itself as an actual ally of its customers. While addressing the potential challenges that people face around finances could be perilous for some companies, Ally focused on authentic emotional content and a helpful stance. For 18 months, it held a remarkable conversation with thousands and emerged with significant data around the disconnect between dreams, priorities and money.



Best Social Good Campaign

The Martin Agency and DoorDash - #OpenForDelivery



Campaign/Program

Restaurants faced an existential crisis in 2020 as indoor dining evaporated and many establishments were forced to run on door-to-door delivery throughout the quarantine. In a campaign intended to spotlight the very real threat to owners' very ability to keep the kitchen stoves on, as well as the importance of restaurants to the fabric of the communities in which they cook, The Martin Agency and DoorDash launched the 'Open For Delivery' initiative. Together, they slashed a portion of the delivery app's commission fees for 310,000 partners.

Insights

Business rivalry and competition isn't necessarily a selling point during a public health crisis, and DoorDash rose to the moment with a message of unity and support. Their teams rallied merchants, consumers and communities together under a single mission: Keep their local flavor and their local restaurants open for good. The campaign positioned DoorDash as a company that cares, and a proponent of the customers — and the restaurants — it seeks to keep close long after the quarantine eventually lifts.



Best Branding Campaign B2B

Cheetah Digital, Tommy Lee and Brittany Furlan- Lee - #Signals20



Campaign/Program

With a campaign that dialed into the personalized experiences, cross-channel messaging and loyalty strategies that consumer engagement data platforms help deliver, Cheetah Digital brought ‘#Signals20’ to life for Starbucks, Hilton, Walgreens and Williams-Sonoma with the help of an unexpected spokesperson — Tommy Lee, the drummer from the legendarily outrageous rock band Motley Crue. Playing type against topic, Tommy and his wife Brittany Furlan-Lee rocked the campaigns blogs, display ads, YouTube pre-roll, email and LinkedIn promotions.

Insights

Juxtaposing the hard-rocking persona of a rock-and-roll drummer with the fish-out-of-water environments of a martech convention or a conversation on data-driven engagement added a charge to the topic of consumer engagement data. For the campaign’s target audience, senior marketers, the campaign’s tongue-in-cheek scenarios — how not to snoop on consumers, marketing jokes and even a jump from an airplane — made Cheetah Digital’s story attention grabbing and very different from anything else in the marketplace.



CHEETAH DIGITAL

Best Branding Campaign B2C

Condé Nast's CNX and The New Yorker

THE NEW YORKER

Campaign/Program

In an branding campaign that celebrated the 95th anniversary of the launch of the The New Yorker magazine, CNX at Condé Nast dove into the archives and brought back some of the banner moments that made the house of Eustace Tilley (the gentleman on the periodical's first cover) such a bastion of reporting and storytelling for nearly a century. Leaning into the theme of the right question changing everything, the campaign highlighted perspectives and ideas on everything from technology to culture, from racism to popular culture and more.

Insights

As far as campaign content goes, The New Yorker's branding program enjoyed an embarrassment of riches. There's no testament to quality like a century of undisputed scoops, game-changing investigations and zeitgeist-capturing commentaries. For readers, it was a total affirmation of subscription dollars well spent, and for the subscription team at The New Yorker, it was the best argument possible for adding the magazine to a new audience's regular reads.



WHAT DOES
“RACIST” MEAN?

Best Multi-Platform Campaign

Movement Strategy and Netflix - Unsolved Mysteries Launch



NETFLIX

Campaign/Program

Netflix greenlit a reboot of 'Unsolved Mysteries,' relaunching the series in July 2020 to attract a new generation of true-crime fans. They created a loyal fanbase by a rather old-school method: message boards. Back when the internet was largely a place where fans could come together and discuss their favorite topics, Netflix dusted off that feeling and put a modern spin on it: communities of engagers with separate content hubs built for each new 'Unsolved Mysteries' episode. The challenge was to create entertaining content for a rebooted show, and to build enough of a moderator's presence for these community boards to become self-sustaining fan hubs. The effect was similar to creating a group of friends who are going to a movie theater — yet another IRL experience that has moved online during the pandemic. And the results were impressive: Unsolved Mysteries debuted in the Top 10 on Netflix in July, then rose to the number-one spot on the platform and remained there for 11 days.

Insights

The analysis on the message boards after each episode stoked feelings of drama and anticipation, inciting viewers to continue watching. Gossiping about entertainment is a pastime as old as cave paintings, and Netflix was able to leverage this social experience to drive demand to this new version of the show. Fanning the flames of an old interest can be difficult, but Netflix pulled it off with effective online chatter centered around an old-fashioned community feel.



Adam Graham
@grahamorama

Me watching Unsolved Mysteries on Netflix and solving all the mysteries



Jul 13, 2020



Best Search Campaign

Crealytics and Urban Outfitters



Campaign/Program

Pursuing a way to balance long-term profits with short-term revenue, Urban Outfitters and Crealytics added a new measurement layer to their customer profile and analysis. Assessing Customer Lifetime Value (CLV), which calculates the exact profit that a given shopper represents, considering the remaining margin after returns, cancellations, cost of goods sold and ad spend, the partnership optimized Urban Outfitters' bidding platform for long-term ROI without creating an outsized impact on available budget.

Insights

Crealytics' approach to Urban Outfitters' ROI equation highlighted the power of changing assumptions along with shifting the metrics in play. Because CLV assumes that new customers are worth more than existing ones — due to higher repeat purchases over their "lifetime" (in this case, 12 months) — they nudged the retailer into a new way of framing profits over time. With its investment rationale updated, the bidding platform was able to do its job better without driving up costs.

crealytics 

URBAN OUTFITTERS

Best Experiential Campaign

Ally & CAMP - Virtual Birthdays

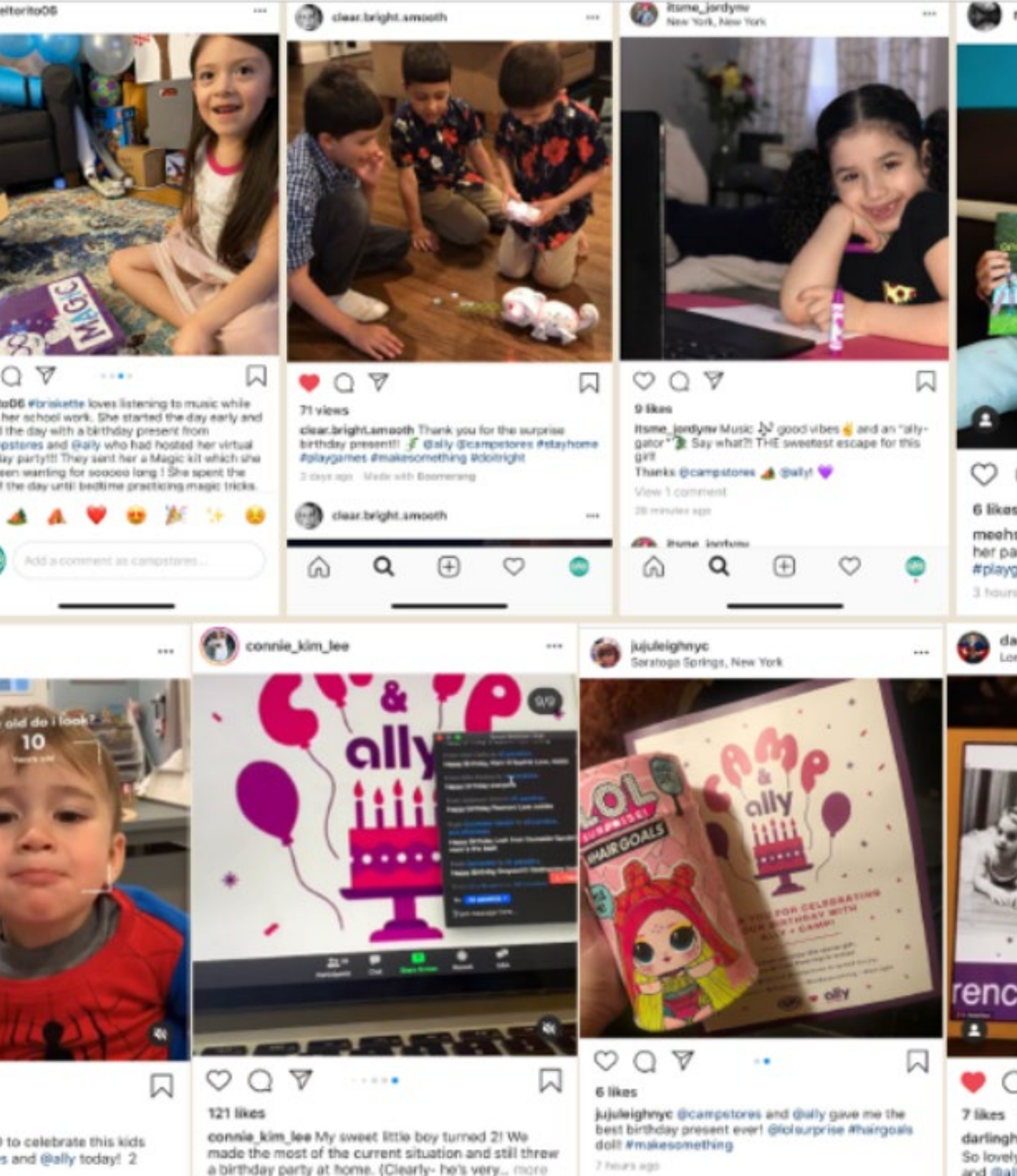


Campaign/Program

As the pandemic and quarantine forced families everywhere to curtail and cancel deeply important and beloved events such as birthday parties, Ally and CAMP — a family experience company — partnered to salvage the celebrations. Creating a month-long series of free virtual birthday parties and surprise birthday gifts, every day at 5 p.m. families from across the country were invited to participate in a 45-minute celebration, complete with a magician, story time, dance party and, of course, birthday cake. Each birthday kid had their own special spotlight moment, with shoutouts of their favorite songs, movies and characters. After the event, the birthday kids were sent surprise gifts based on their age and interests.

Insights

Ally and CAMP succeeded in bringing joy to families stuck at home, fusing a commitment to support and bolster communities in a time of crisis with the very real challenge of what families can do together during lockdown and isolation. When it comes to long-term loyalty building campaigns, this campaign delivered a gift that few of its recipients will ever forget.



Best Audio Campaign

SpokenLayer and Mindshare - Lucky Charms Magical Mission



Campaign/Program

In a narrative-fueled campaign, SpokenLayer teamed up with Lucky Charms cereal to develop an interactive voice-based adventure for families found in homes. In ‘Lucky Charms Magical Mission,’ parents and kids accompanied Lucky on an adventure based on Lucky Charms’ eight marshmallows — each with their own unique storyline, sounds and characters. For Lucky to restore the magic of his mystical lands, listeners played an active role in helping him along.

Insights

Play is a powerful avenue to positive associations and memorable experiences that mean something beyond basic marketing outcomes. For Lucky Charms and SpokenLayer, the recipe for a successful campaign went all the way back to sponsored radio and television serials, building a halo effect of fun and excitement that just happened to connect to the cereal. As a content marketing strategy, it resulted in a magical outcome for both.



Best PR Campaign

Fallon, Posterscope and Comedy Central



Campaign/Program

With the goal of creating awareness and driving ratings for Comedy Central's new series 'Awkwafina is Nora from Queens,' actress Awkwafina took to New York's transit system and joined subway riders on the 7 train in the form of recorded travel announcements. The campaign's 7-train takeover was the first activation of its kind, receiving widespread national coverage and massive press attention from the likes of GMA, ABC, CNN, Variety and others.

Insights

As New York City grappled with a tragic year, Awkwafina's comedic flare lightened moods and changed the ride for Manhattan and Queens train passengers. And it drove media coverage and boosted the campaign just as the show took flight.



Most Innovative Publisher



Campaign/Program

News publisher Newsy launched its first OTT streaming show, 'In the Loop' — a nightly news program that delves deeper behind the headlines. Free of the baggage of influencers, talking heads and typical politics, Newsy has broken new ground in terms of delivering the news in both cable, online and OTT format, a timely multichannel pivot aimed at reaching a wide, digitally-savvy audience. Instead of dragging viewers into the negativity loop known colloquially as "doomscrolling," Newsy launched a PSA encouraging viewers to take a step back from the news and focus on their mental health.

Insights

Media companies trying to be all things to all people risk an air of desperation and lack of focus. But, perhaps counterintuitively, Newsy seems to have figured out a way to strategically engage their audience without forcing them to pick a side or dragging them into the fray. In a hyper-partisan, politicized environment, it's hard to peel back the layers and get "just the facts" hard-news reporting. Newsy gave the news a face-lift for the digital age.



**Most Innovative
Creative Agency**

BORN Group



Campaign/Program

BORN Group's unique value proposition is the ambitious integration of 10 specialized areas of focus under one digital umbrella: creative design, content production, commerce enablement, conversions, cloud technology, cognition (analytics), cohesions, consulting and completeness across all channels.

Insights

Marketing campaigns require a great degree of centralization, consistency and data insights across multiple channels. By placing all these various aspects under one roof, BORN Group is positioning itself to be a leader among agencies that can manage all aspects of campaigns, soup to nuts, in-house.

BORN

Most Innovative Media Agency

Essence



Campaign/Program

In the midst of a pandemic and severe business uncertainty, Essence was able to take necessary risks and keep their business innovative and inclusive: They continued to invest in machine learning and AI on the advertising side of the house, and continued to roll out a sustainable advertising program by adding a carbon calculator to media plans, allowing clients to determine the ultimate impact of their investing and helping them to choose more climate-conscious products.

Insights

As a global data and measurement- driven agency, Essence is always close to metrics, and they put their expertise to work for a cause in 2020. The carbon calculator ties the media industry to the concept of doing good while doing business, and the conversations tools like that start with prospects and clients are not only good for the planet, they're needle-movers when it comes to deciding who we want to work with — and why.

essence

Most Innovative Brand

Crocs
crocs



Campaign/Program

“What? They’re comfortable.” If Crocs hasn’t trademarked that phrase as their universal tagline, they should. The infamous clog has graduated from any associations with late night snack runs to the convenience store thanks to an army of loyal wearers. And maybe because they made a comeback during a pandemic — especially as first-responders pushed the limits of having to be on one’s feet — Crocs successfully positioned its non-conventional approach as optimistic and fun. While that kind of evolution is tough to execute and even tougher to pull off, Crocs did it with aplomb.

Insights

Sticking to its design and lifestyle underpinnings, Crocs transformed into a cultural signature item — celebrating its cool pastel colors, helping wearers personalize every pair with accessories and offering different kinds of ways to let wearers express their own individuality. It’s almost as if by making Crocs more visible by turning up the volume on the colors, bells and whistles, Crocs were able to tap into a desire that has lain dormant for some time: the need for old-fashioned, crafty kookiness, for no other reason than “just because.”



Most Innovative Technology Platform

AdsWizz



Campaign/Program

With a new feature, AdsWizz unlocked a bevy of new data points, empowering audio marketers to dynamically generate more than 10 million unique audio ad creative variations. As an established end-to-end platform that has become an industry standard for digital audio advertising the new program — Dynamic Creative Optimization (DCO) — is further enabling publishers to generate more revenue.

Insights

Many small business customers are ready and eager to advertise on audio, but haven't thrown the switch because they don't meet the minimums of large publishers, don't have an audio ad and don't know how to make one. The growing suite of AdsWizz advertising solutions democratizes access to advertising for businesses of all sizes, and with DCO's data-driven approach they're accelerating that promise to allow even new and emergent audio advertisers to scale.

adswizz



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