



DIGIDAY

MEDIA AWARDS
EUROPE



The 2021 Digiday Media Awards Europe honors the companies, technologies and campaigns that have modernized European media for the past year. This year's finalists proved they could produce impactful, innovative and topical work and programs, even as they navigated business challenges created by privacy laws — and the pandemic.

This year's winners pivoted in times of uncertainty for sure, but they also listened to what the data had to tell them. This led to an ever-expanding range of platform choices,

channel approaches and audience engagements. It prompted our winners to dive into issues that mattered to their constituencies and to modernize and modify their messaging based on the ways the customer of 2020 (and 2021) turned to e-commerce and social media as a baseline for the shopping journey.

In this guide, we look at the winning programs, highlighting what worked best for the creators who made them and the lessons marketers can take from the campaigns our judges selected.

Best Brand Partnership

LADbible Group and PlayStation - 'Play Day'



Program

As PlayStation brought its much anticipated PS5 to market in November 2020, the console giant partnered with Mediacom and LADbible Group to mark the moment with 'Play Day' — a social-media blitz. The twist was that LADbible was giving its more than 300 staffers the day off, pausing editorial output and promoting the news that its employees were spending the day mashing buttons on PS5.

Insights

In a day of standout posting, LADbible carried the PlayStation message to fans — and its entire readership — while capturing the concepts of breaking free from routine and shining a positive work-life light on both brands. Especially during a year of lockdowns and quarantine, any gear in the home that allowed people to have fun became lifelines to stress-free moments (and afternoons, and whole days). PlayStation saw the opportunity to be the hero in the LADbible story, and the story of every PS5 fan as well.



Best Branded Content Program



Program

In a campaign designed to bring Häagen-Dazs to a hip, young audience, LADbible and the legendary ice cream brand dug into the lockdown and opened the Instagram Stories feed to a bit of quarantine confessional. The team created an advice-line series titled 'Dear Tyla,' featuring comedian Deborah Frances-White and journalist and author Yomi Adegoke to take on the roles of Agony Aunts. The Aunts brought the user-generated content to life and leaned into a spirit of "don't hold back" across the campaign.

LADbible Group and Häagen-Dazs - 'Dear Tyla'

Insights

Great content creates positive moments for audiences and those upbeat associations add to brand awareness. Häagen-Dazs worked with LADbible to expand the ice cream story beyond scoops and flavors, recasting the brand as a relatable part of the Instagram experience. The secret ingredient proved to be its "don't hold back" message, which was timely and also ripe for hilarious interpretations by its hosts when it came to the advice they gave.



Best Virtual Event

Havas Sports & Entertainment and PUMA - Alonzo's Virtual Music Tour



Program

During the lockdown, Alonzo, a famous French rapper and PUMA brand ambassador, released a special EP — 'Pack de 6.' To promote the new album, PUMA and Havas turned to the virtual world, staging a live concert in the video game 'GTA V.' Alonzo picked up the mic in the digital city of Los Santos, within the game, dropping bars for hip-hop fans in a certifiably virus-free celebration.

Insights

Gathering for a couple of hours of high-intensity music was among the experiences people couldn't have safely in 2020. In response, Havas and PUMA took the promotion of Alonzo's latest to the least dangerous place possible, and in the process opened up a world of connections that only the digital space can offer. In the end, PUMA stood out with a campaign that brought light to dark times, gave an artist back to his fans and pushed the envelope in terms of what virtual can do for brands going forward.



Best Virtual Event Series

British Vogue - '5 Days of Vogue'

VOGUE

Program

In an interactive and exclusive series of conversations, British Vogue brought together its editors, influencers and sponsors to host a highly engaged audience for five days of meaningful discussion. With talking points spanning subjects such as modern motherhood and body positivity, the themes focused on culture and community in uncertain and sensitive times.

Insights

'5 Days of Vogue' created a virtual space for substantive content and it presented its speakers and panelists — editors, carefully selected talent and partner brands — on a level par. The approach still secured the opportunity for sponsors to dovetail their contributions with a brand-awareness push, but under the halo of an editorially native event. When it comes to content marketing and related strategies, British Vogue scored five stars for doing it right.



Best Use of Social

RT Creative Lab - 'The Endless Letter'

RT CREATIVE LAB

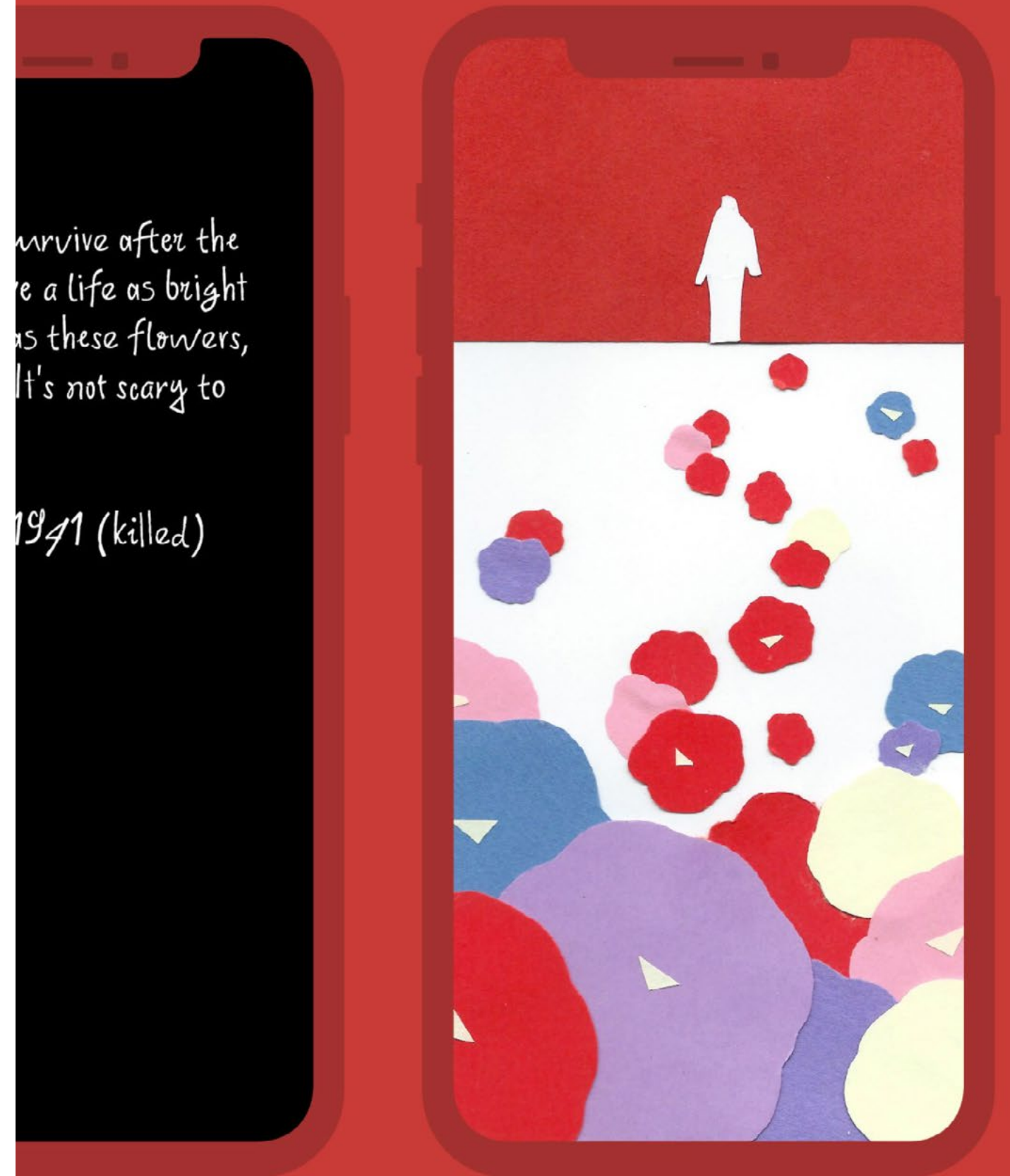
Program

As a graphic series, 'The Endless Letter' brought to life 7,000 missives penned by frontline writers reaching out to family and loved ones during World War II. Young students at the Moscow RANEP Design School illustrated each selection, and the most poignant passages appeared line by line as Instagram Stories, complete with an original score by Russian composer Max Makarychev.

Insights

As the 75th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany approached in May 2020, RT Creative Lab saw the opportunity to bridge time with timeless emotions — love and dreams, faith and anxiety. Linking generations with narrative, and using social media as the technology to tell stories in immersive and interactive ways, the content team brought long-ago voices to life and revisited the experiences of a people in concert against a common foe.

Survive after the
re a life as bright
as these flowers,
It's not scary to
1941 (killed)



Best Use of Video

'VG Rampelys'



Program

VG.no teamed up with Snapchat to launch its new show 'VG Rampelys' in May 2020 with the express purpose of reaching young women with meaningful information and entertaining shows.

Insights

Mobile, fast-paced and video-driven, the daily entertainment news show met its Generation Z audience where they spend their time — on screens and online. Putting the breezy, hip and youth-oriented content front and center, VG.no's new show earned its name's translation: Rampelys means "limelight" and the new program certainly ended up in our judges' limelight this year.



**Best Use
of YouTube**

**Telegraph
Media Group**



Program

In an effort to engage audiences that might not otherwise find The Telegraph's stories, Telegraph Media Group turned to YouTube as a trunk strategy for promoting its journalism. The channel proved a critical part of the publisher's program when it came to live feeds, instant news content and deep-dive analysis in 2020.

Insights

Telegraph Media Group understood that news and audiences move in different directions through different channels across online content. Leaning on the community tab on YouTube helped spotlight its non-video content and bring the two together. The Telegraph established a dynamic conduit to an audience that likes to watch, stay on top of the breaking headlines and it put its newsroom front and center, regardless of the format.



telegraphmediagroup

Best Video Campaign

T Brand Studio and Zenith - 'Time to Reach Your Star'



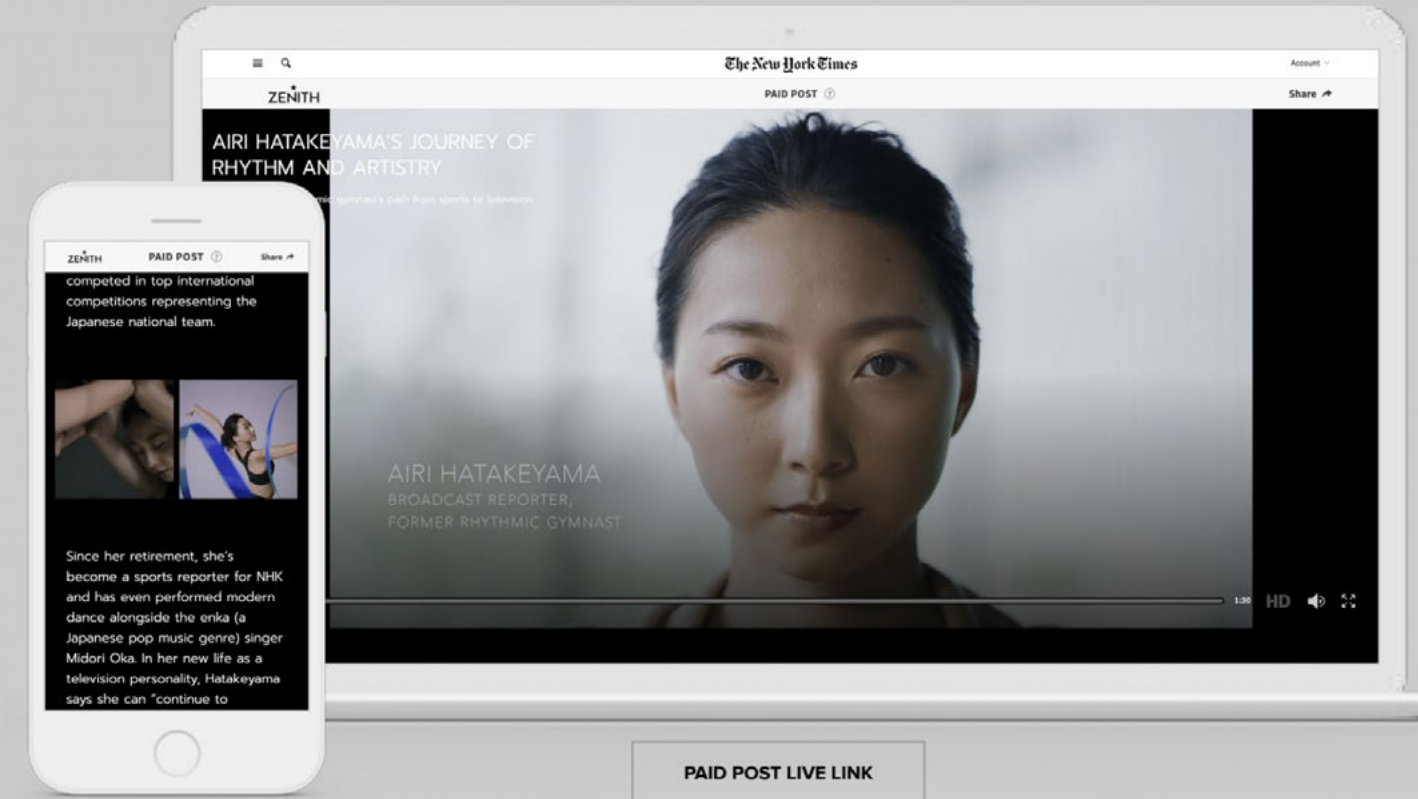
Program

In a series of documentary-style videos, Zenith worked with T Brand Studio to spotlight ambassador athletes, coaches and others, reaching a younger audience that was looking for authentic representations of powerful personas at the top of their class. Encouraging viewers to reach their own star, Zenith's media roster included Japanese rhythmic gymnast Airi Hatakeyama, French tennis coach Patrick Mouratoglou and American football quarterback Aaron Rodgers, among others.

Insights

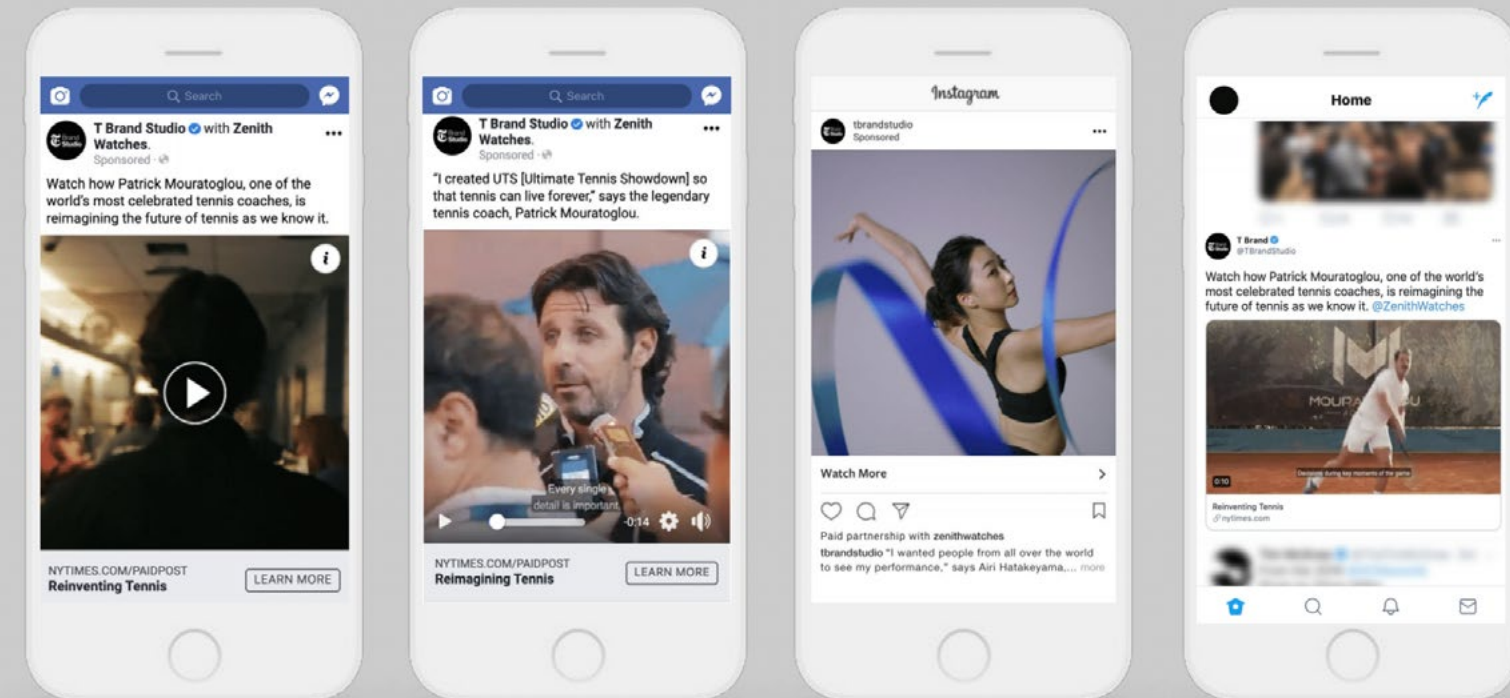
Aspirational content builds bridges between brands and the lives of the icons that represent it. For audiences, Zenith understood that positioning its watches on the pages of nytimes.com with inarguably best-in-class ambassadors carried a weight and significance far beyond the look and feel of a stellar timepiece. The message of 'Time to Reach Your Star' encouraged that audience to view themselves in the roles of the representatives the series captured.

PAID POST - EPISODE 1



PAID POST LIVE LINK

SOCIAL MEDIA



**Best
Podcast**

International Paralympic Committee and Allianz - 'A Winning Mindset'



**INTERNATIONAL
PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEE**

Program

The International Paralympic Committee partnered with Allianz to provide a platform for Para athletes to discuss their empowering and inspirational stories, in order to drive a cultural shift in the way differing abilities are perceived. 'A Winning Mindset' takes on the stories of people who've experienced phenomenal, if often harrowing, life stories. All of these experiences were covered with an eye for the details that put audiences' own human lives into context.

Insights

The Paralympic Games and the athletes at the heart of 'A Winning Mindset' drive global awareness and worldwide adoration every two years. But there's more to them than just sport, and the new podcast highlighted that fact. Listeners ended each installment with ideas they can apply to their personal and professional lives, touching on themes including self-acceptance, recovering from trauma, parenting and equality — all essential parts of the world around them.

A WINNING MINDSET

LESSONS FROM THE PARALYMPICS

Allianz 



**INTERNATIONAL
PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEE**

Worldwide Partner

Best Site Design

GSP.ro - Gazeta Sporturilor



Program

GSP.ro is considered the leading Romanian sports website by many, and its trendsetting design and always-up-to-date features have helped it achieve a recognition among digital brands in the space. The audience experience is built around a balance of elements — text, video, graphics, photo galleries, special visuals, widgets with sports data (statistics), special editorial campaigns — and, of course, advertising.

Insights

The advertising on GSP.ro is part of their user-experience strategy, one that prioritizes ways to avoid intrusive ads or annoying formats. The publisher gives special attention to the work it does with its partners to provide native or special integrations, and not only standard campaigns.



Best Use of Audience Insights

Hybrid Theory



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Program

Hybrid Theory worked with a tech-company partner to reach small business decision-makers ready to buy and drive low cost-per-site visits. Hybrid Theory met the challenge by gathering and analyzing real-time data on consumers' online behaviors across millions of premium websites. This helped uncover audience insights which Hybrid Theory used to find relevant in-market users and build bespoke audiences most likely to convert.

Insights

With the help of its on-site pixel, Hybrid Theory unlocked the kind of granular analysis that generates in-depth insights. And those insights meant the difference between being forced to cast a wide net and being able to mine down through search and reviews to tailor targeting. With the highly data-driven campaign surfacing information on the country, business and individual level, their tech partner got close to precisely the SMB decision-makers it sought.



Best Custom Advertising

Kruidvat, Greenhouse and Stocard

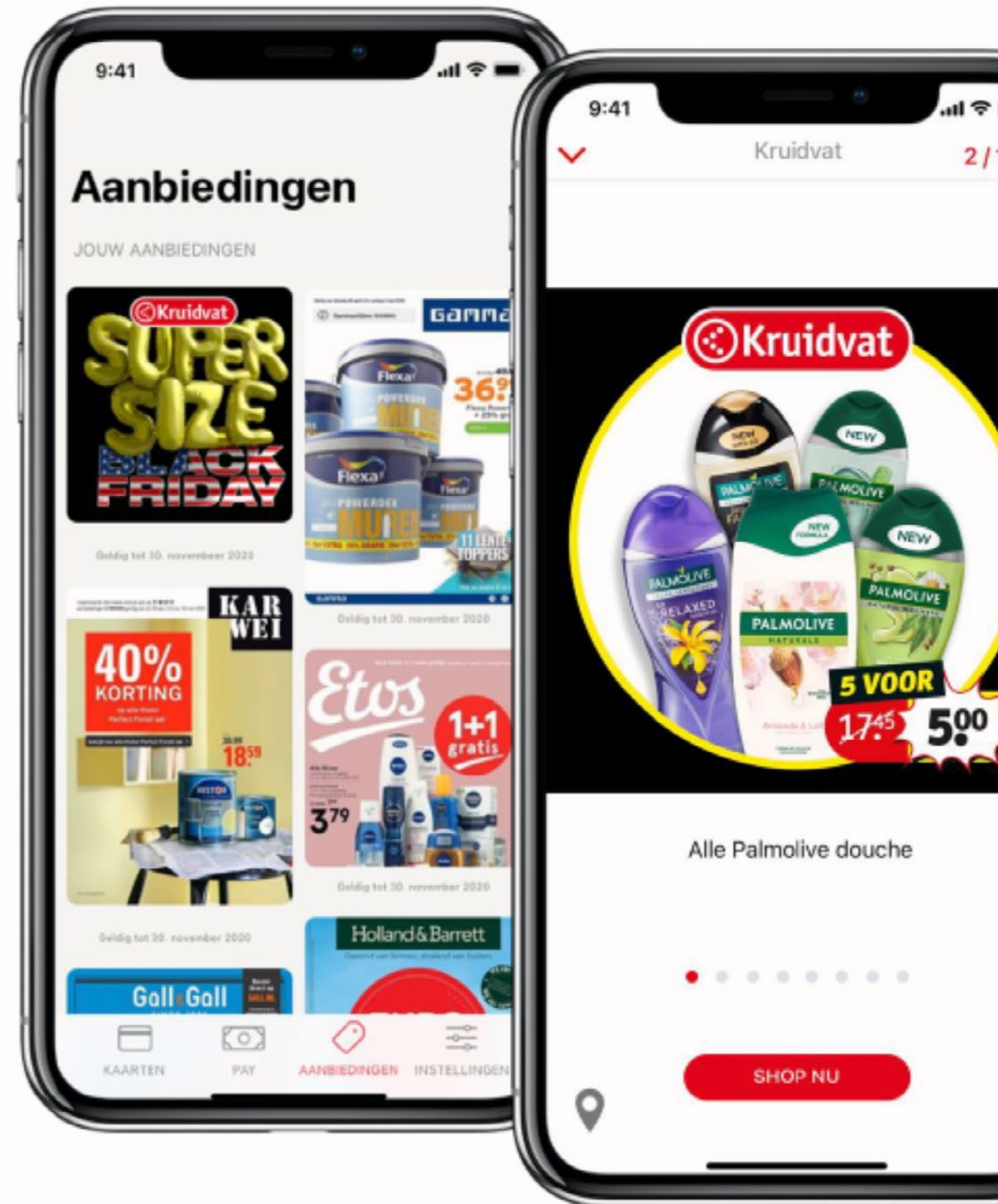


Program

Black Friday shoppers are a big deal in The Netherlands, and health-and-beauty retailer Kruidvat needed a way to cut through the noise and drive them to its own deals across 1,200 drugstores. Partnering with Stocard, a loyalty-card aggregation platform, they launched a campaign of digital flyers that landed directly in the apps of bargain hunters looking to pinpoint the best prices at their local stores.

Insights

Location and timing counted for just about everything when it came to Kruidvat's campaign — and Stocard provided just the right place for the drugstore chain's messaging to appear. With data, the pair were able to personalize their campaigns and prompt purchase decisions right alongside the actionable pricing info that tipped spend in Kruidvat's favor.



Best Ad Tech Platform

Influencity



Program

Influencity is an influencer marketing tech platform that allows brands and agencies to create influencer strategies at scale. The platform has customers in more than 40 countries across five continents, with clients including brands such as Nestlé, Samsung and AliExpress, and agencies including Havas and Reprise.

Insights

AI is key in advancing influencer relationship management and marketing strategies. Influencity provides more than 60 functionalities that are adaptable to different workflows, including the ability to quickly search for influencers, creating influencer databases, estimating campaign results and measuring results through reports that include automatically generated data and graphs.

Influencity

Best Video Platform

Video Intelligence



Program

Video Intelligence is a contextual video platform that creates contextual video moments by analyzing the content of videos and websites. The platform then matches this video content and advertising with relevant publisher pages, sourcing videos from content creators in categories like sports, news, entertainment and business.

Insights

VI provides technology that creates contextual relevance, ultimately leading to better synergy with videos, brand messaging and publisher sites. The platform is a principal example of how scaling content and context can deliver value to both consumers and publishers.



Best Publisher Platform



Program

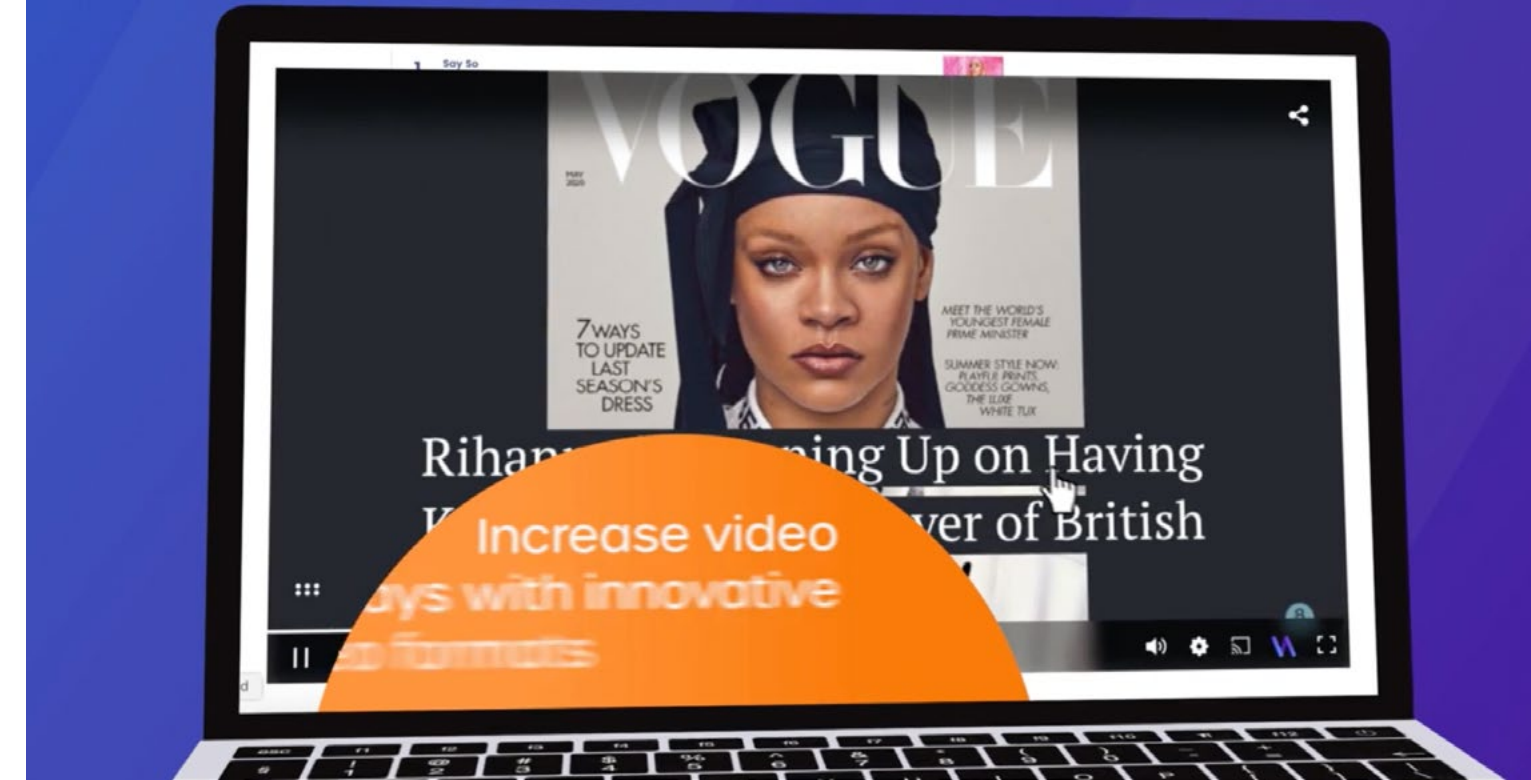
Minute Media is a media and tech company that provides proprietary solutions for publishers with a focus on platform and content. The company's technology is designed to eliminate the main challenges publishers face — such as high costs and lack of scalability — and provide offerings like a global content library, robust VMS, built-in monetization tools and real-time analytics. After launching in May 2020, the company onboarded 24 new partners through the end of the year.

Minute Media - Voltax Video

Insights

Providing an all-in-one tech solution helped these businesses grow during difficult economic times for the publishing industry.

+ Innovative Tech



+ Revenue growth



Best Subscription or Membership Product

ELEVEN

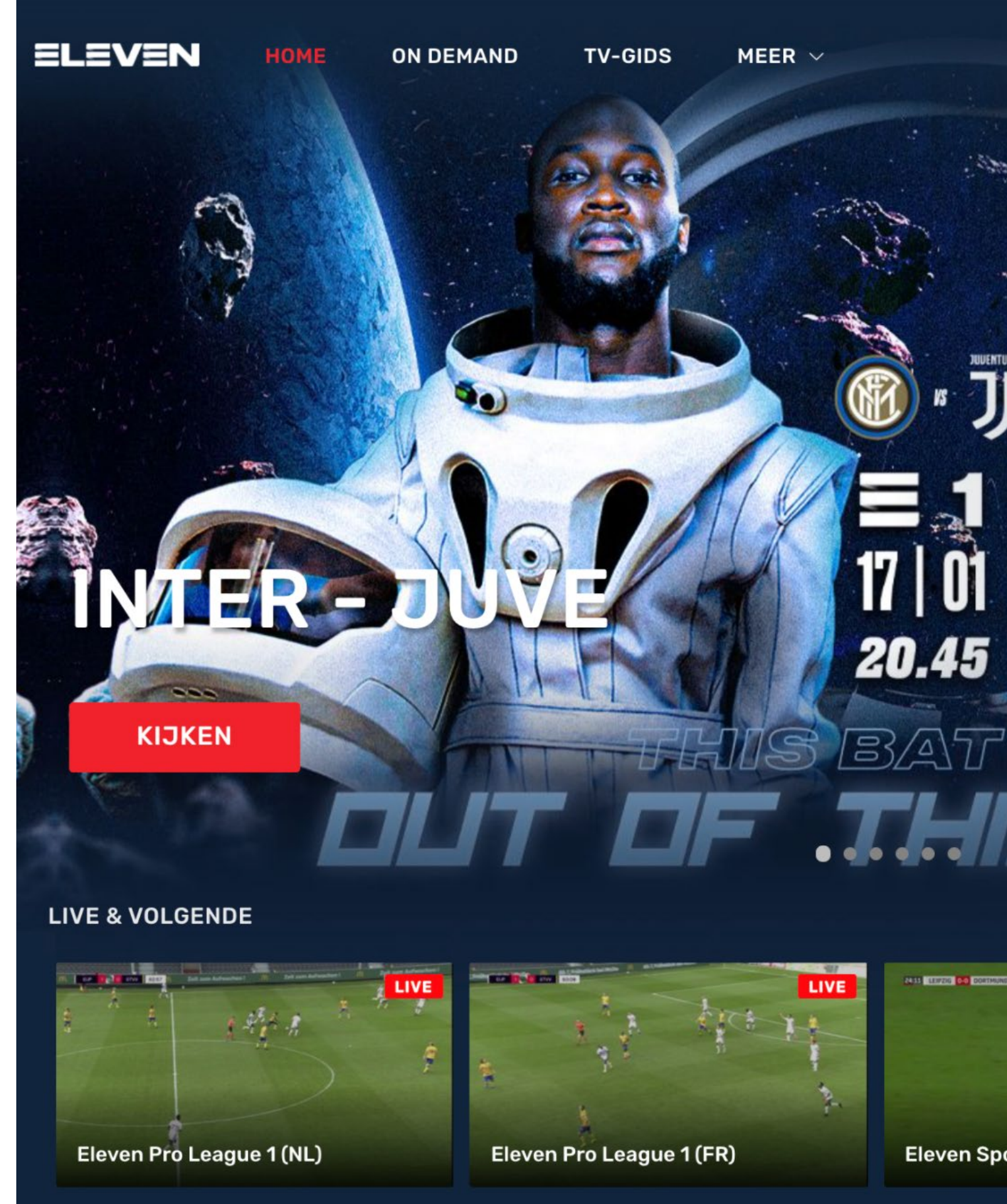
Program

Eleven Belgium is a leading sports subscription service in the country with rights to airing the Belgian Pro League. The service also airs competitions from La Liga, FA Cup, League Cup, MLS, the NBA and the NFL, offering live and on-demand access to sports entertainment with features that include a virtual watch room for fans to watch games together, integration of WSC Sports AI technology to create customized highlight clips and a dedicated landing page for the Belgian Pro League club with curated content.

Eleven Belgium

Insights

Eleven Belgium is disrupting the traditional broadcast landscape in Belgium with an OTT platform that allows viewers to watch content when and where they want to. As user viewership from linear to CTV continues to shift, having a product that caters to new TV consumption habits will be key in growing and retaining customers.



Best Digital Product Innovation

Picnic - AMPLified UX

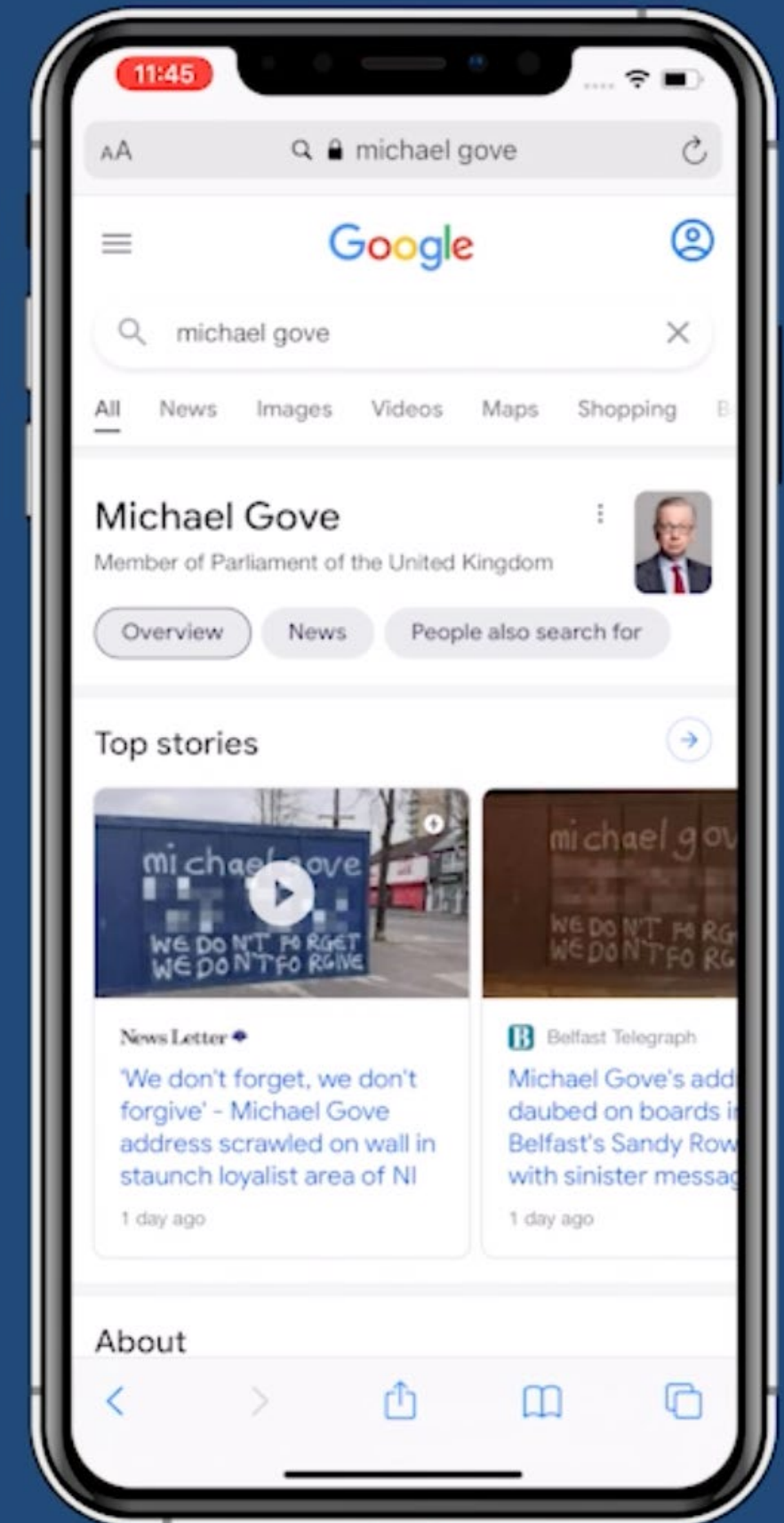


Program

Picnic, a social display ad marketplace, specializes in creating interactive ad formats such as Stories and Carousel on user-first Accelerated Mobile Page (AMP) inventory. Built specifically for Google's AMP, Picnic enables publishers such as HELLO! and The Independent to generate incremental revenue on AMP, which is difficult to monetize.

Insights

Building social ad formats that only work with AMP — which has a UX that is lighter and speedier than mobile websites — is helping publishers increase their user viewability and engagement. Along with the AMP inventory, Picnic's formats also allow publishers to integrate with interactive formats on social platforms like Instagram and Snapchat, all geared toward generating brand awareness.



Best Video Distribution and Programming Strategy



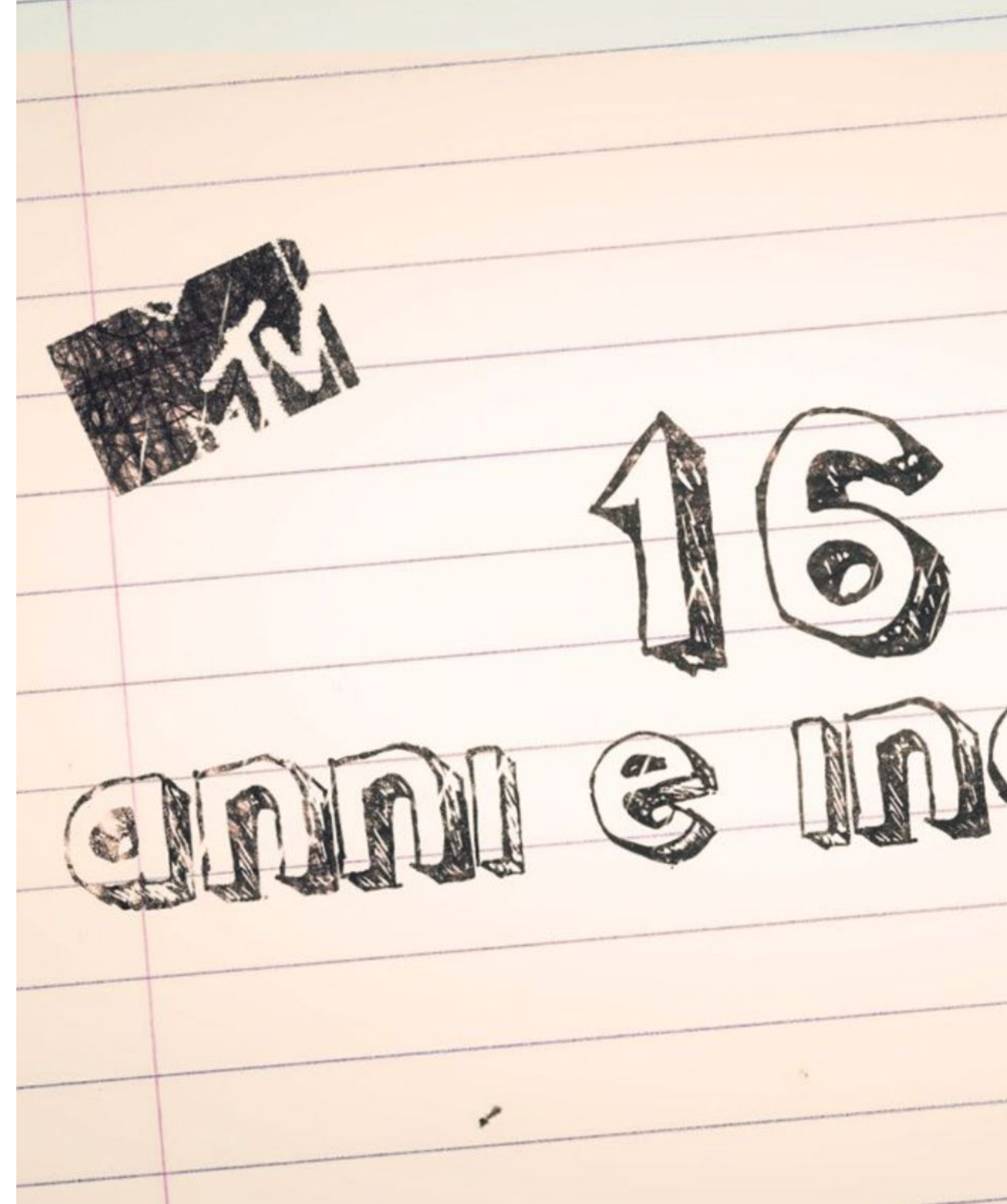
Campaign

MTV Italy launched a multifaceted campaign to promote the seventh season of '16 Anni E Incinta,' the network's local version of '16 and Pregnant.' To tease the new season, the network produced compilations and best-of clips from previous seasons. And to complement linear episodes, MTV Italy debuted a web series spinoff to focus on the struggles, challenges and changes in the lives of the young mothers featured in the show.

ViacomCBS EMEA MTV Italy - '16 Anni E Incinta' (S7)

Insights

Developing digital-only content as an exclusive add-on to broadcasted episodes is an effective fan engagement strategy. The web content not only built more buzz for the show, but also offered its fanbase a new point of view around the teenage motherhood stories.



Best Revenue Diversification Strategy

HELLO! & Skimlinks



Campaign

Royal, celebrity and lifestyle news brand HELLO! partnered with content monetization platform Skimlinks to grow its commerce-related content into a meaningful revenue stream. Skimlinks helped turn high-performing stories into purchasing opportunities for the showcased products. Outside of Skimlinks, HELLO! launched a beauty box initiative and began licensing brand-appropriate products.

Insights

Publishers looking to scale their content commerce strategy are leveraging tech platforms to ensure success and depend less on advertising to grow their revenue streams. This was crucial for HELLO! once the pandemic began, as global e-commerce growth made it important to introduce purchasing opportunities into high-performing stories to convert readers. To further future-proof their brand, media companies can also diversify their revenue opportunities through in-house branding programs.



**Video
Team of
the Year**

PinkNews

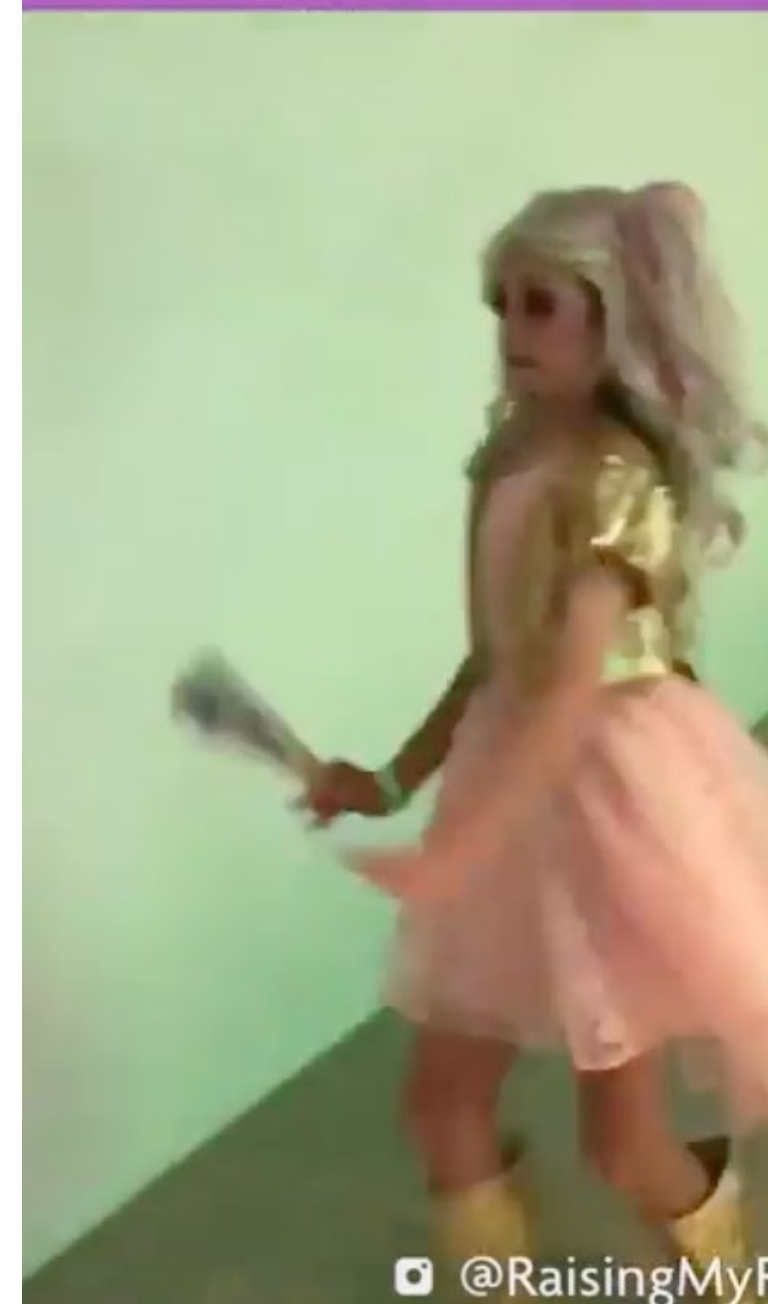
PinkNews

Campaign

PinkNews, which covers LGBTQ+ culture and communities, doubled down on its video content this year by growing its team to become the largest operating arm of the business, and launching two new Snapchat shows: 'The Queer Catch-Up,' a weekly positive LGBTQ+ news show, and 'Got A Queery,' with a focus on busting LGBTQ+ myths.

Insights

Putting more investment into growing video teams and content strategies provides a new revenue stream and a new way to tell stories. The minority publisher was able to give marginalized groups a platform through its video content, highlighting stories that are often overlooked by non-LGBTQ+ outlets.



Editorial Team of the Year

Sky News

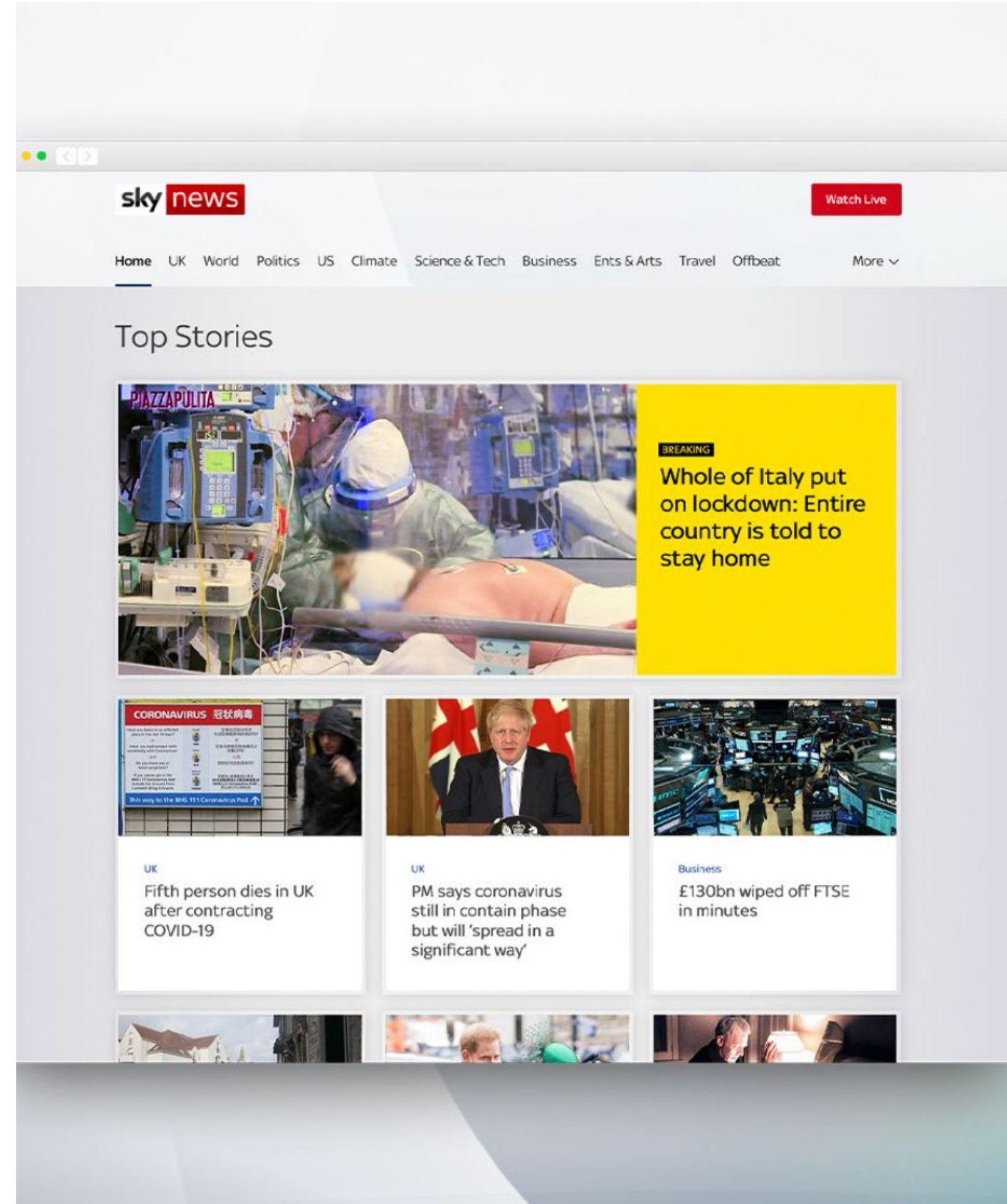


Campaign

International publisher and broadcaster Sky News made its journalism more relevant and accessible than ever before this year. The company's editorial team excelled at delivering content about COVID-19's impact on society by putting information and personal stories at the forefront of coverage. The team also diversified its content through digital, with video stories on topics including fatphobia and the conversation around Afro hair.

Insights

To stand out and grow its audience, Sky News took risks in experimenting with new journalism formats and methods of gaining necessary information for its audience. The editorial team challenged those in power, and questioned leaders and experts, to ensure readers received a full picture of the pandemic's toll on society. The editorial team also launched Sky News Investigates for Snapchat and IGTV, delivering users investigative journalism in a convenient and social media-friendly format; the team's shift to digital and social more than doubled traffic on Sky News' website and app.



Publishing Executive of the Year

Benjamin Cohen, founder, PinkNews

PinkNews

Executive

Benjamin Cohen, the founder and CEO of PinkNews, has transformed the company from a niche LGBTQ+ publisher to a mainstream media group that is a go-to source for its target community. Through Cohen's leadership, PinkNews has stayed true to its core values throughout the pandemic, providing readers in lockdown — especially those living in unsupportive environments — with a hub for important stories and resources.

Insights

Cohen has led the company through growth despite unprecedented, challenging circumstances. During the pandemic, Cohen ensured PinkNews' transition to a remote operation would focus on maintaining team culture and being sensitive to employees' new working environments. To support the team and boost morale, Cohen's leadership included providing remote work perks such as free drinks, quizzes, pampering kits and takeaway vouchers.



Best Content Studio

Haymarket Automotive Studio



Program

Haymarket Automotive Studio includes a team of 10 who create content for Autocar and What Car?, helping auto brands tell their stories across digital, social, video and print. The studio kicked off 2020 with three standout campaigns for CUPRA, Toyota GAZOO Racing and BMW, and developed COVID-19 protocols to safely shoot video content for Ford and Skoda during the pandemic. The studio's storytelling approaches also won new business this past year, including a digital content project for new client MINI.

Insights

Brands are eager to participate in new, sponsor-led content opportunities that are profitable and offer an innovative way to tell their story. Haymarket Automotive Studio's engaging pitches prompted Audi to become a launch partner for the new Autocar Electric hub, and Skoda is joining as the launch partner for the studio's new Autocar Company Car hub. Additionally, Haymarket's creative pivots during the pandemic helped keep their clients' campaigns alive, reaching consumers during a time when many brands were forced to pause marketing pushes.



Most Engaged Community

Ads & Data Brand Studio

Ads & Data

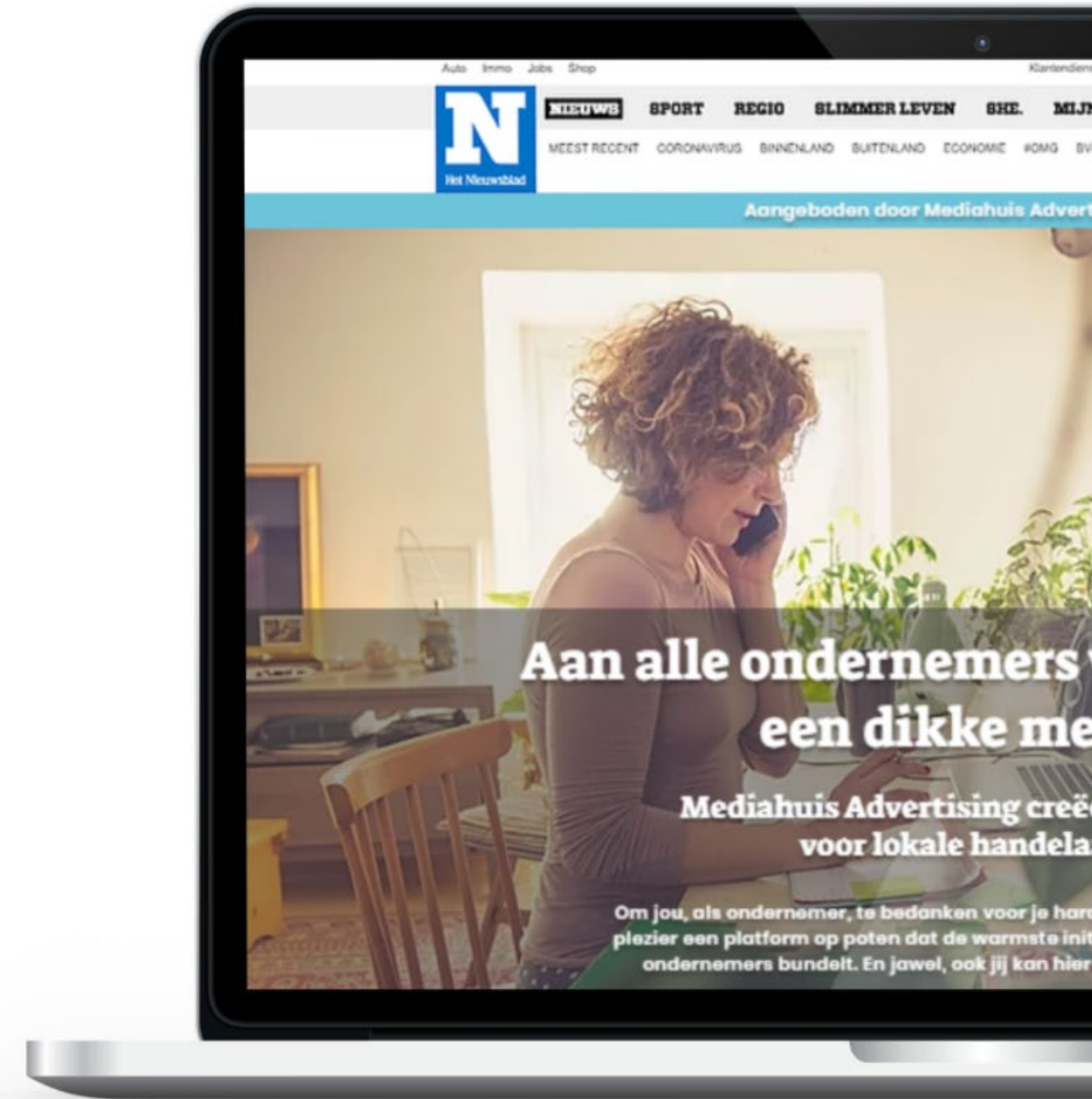
We un-waste

Program

Ads & Data is the national ad agency of publishers Mediahuis, Telenet/SBS and Proximus Skynet. Among the agency's standout campaigns this past year was Samen Impact — a program offering local businesses free display campaigns that tasked them to develop creatives that would draw new customers and boost their online businesses, and the local economy, during challenging times.

Insights

Giving local businesses freedom to create can lead to impressive performance. More than 2,000 entrepreneurs signed up for a free display campaign within the Mediahuis news brands, which resulted in 15 million free banner impressions. Additionally, the campaign rewarded 36 entrepreneurs for their creativity by highlighting their stories on the Samen Impact platform.



Media Brand of the Year

Twisted

Company

Twisted is one of the United Kingdom's top food and drink brands on social media, with more than 35 million followers across Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and TikTok. Known for its lighthearted take on food content, the brand responded to the pandemic by launching five new series offering practical and purse-friendly recipes. These included 'What's In Your Fridge,' in which chefs created recipes with the most common fridge ingredients based on photo submissions from Instagram followers. The brand also leveraged video tactics like TikTok and Instagram Reels to present short recipe videos filmed on chef's phones, behind the scenes footage and live streams.

Twisted

Insights

Creating video content that was friendly for YouTube, TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat was key for growing Twisted's online presence. Twisted also found it could humanize the brand by putting its chefs in front of the camera. Furthermore, for Twisted, expanding its offline presence is valuable as a revenue stream — the company opened a new Twisted London takeout venue in Kings Cross and its first cookbook.



**Publisher of
the Year**

Sky News



Company

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted Sky News to reevaluate its editorial structure and working methods in order to double down on human stories — particularly the pandemic's toll on healthcare workers and how it disproportionately affected Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities in the United Kingdom. The company put resources into live blogging, data journalism and expert analysis to ensure its readers received a full picture of the pandemic's impact.

Insights

Sky News demonstrated that it's possible to produce important journalism while adapting to a crisis and pivoting to different work models as needed. The company had to figure out how to function without editing hardware in the newsroom, in-person communication and unreliable WiFi. Working remotely prompted Sky News to use new, innovative tactics to create content, including a new streaming and clipping tool and screen mirroring technology to produce video.

AROUND 1 IN 3
PEOPLE WHO HAVE
COVID-19 HAVE
NO SYMPTOMS
AND ARE
SPREADING IT
WITHOUT KNOWING

STAY HOME
PROTECT
THE NHS
SAVE LIVES

EYEWITNESS

Coronavirus: Italy's hardest-hit city wants you to see how COVID-19 is affecting its hospitals

The sheer numbers of people succumbing to the coronavirus is overwhelming every hospital in northern Italy.

 **Stuart Ramsay**
Chief correspondent @ramsaysky

Friday 11 September 2020 11:16, UK

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS ITALY



At the centre of the COVID-19 crisis in Italy



T Why you can trust Sky News >

Staff frantically wave us out of the way, pushing gurneys carrying men and women on mobile respirators - it's not chaos, but it is hectic.

They rush past wards already rammed with beds all filled with people in terrible distress - gasping for air, clutching at their

Advertisement

SAMSUNG

Galaxy S21 Ultra 5G

BUY NOW

Say hello to the sharpest zoom in our Galaxy



AROUND 1 IN 3
PEOPLE WHO HAVE
COVID-19 HAVE
NO SYMPTOMS
AND ARE
SPREADING IT
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STAY HOME
PROTECT
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SAVE LIVES



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