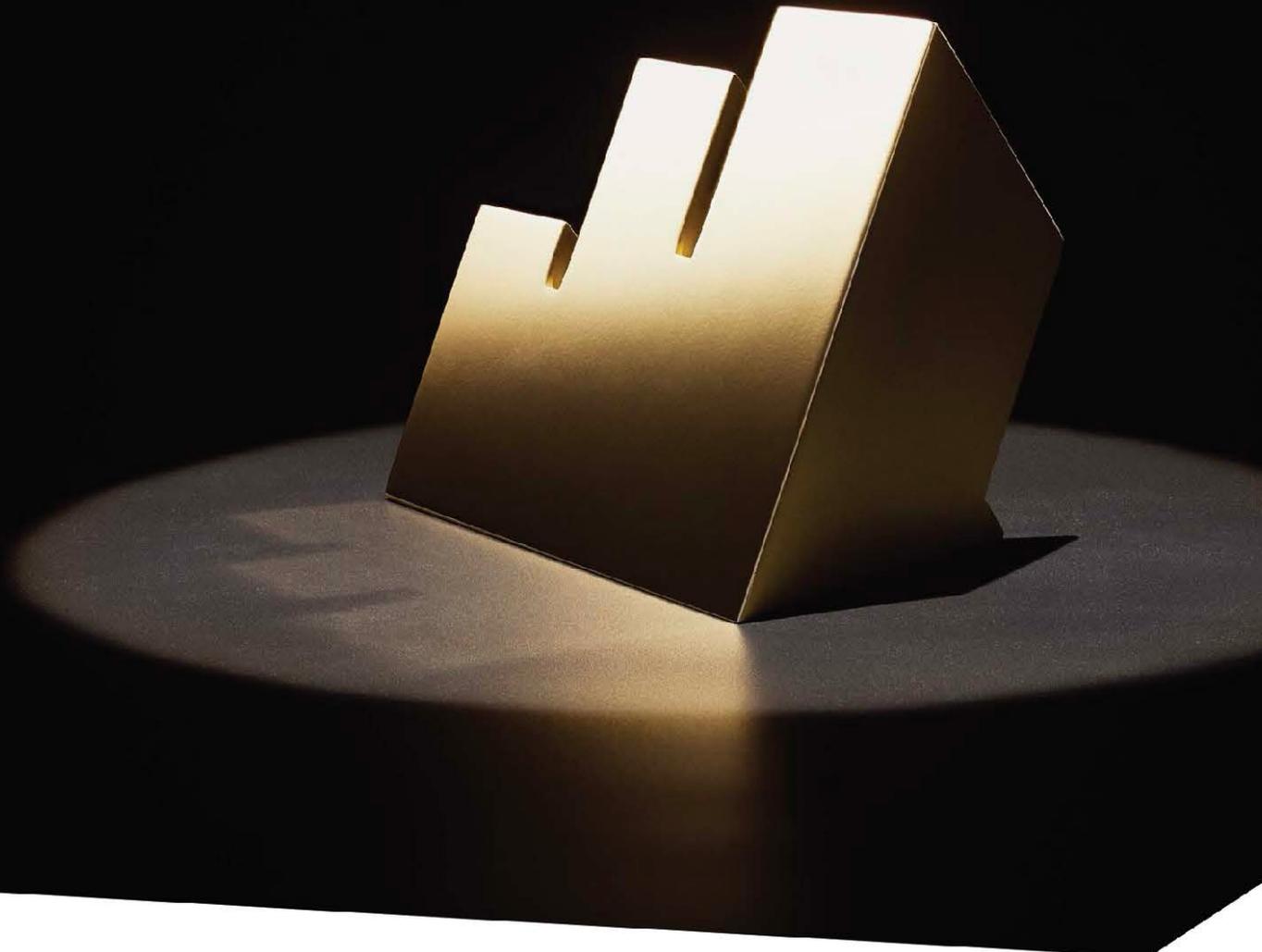# 2026 Category Definitions

INDUSTRY CATEGORIES

- o Agricultural, Industrial & Building
- o Automotive - Aftermarket
- o Automotive – Vehicles
- o Beauty & Fragrance
- o Beverages: Alcohol
- o Beverages: Non-Alcohol
- o Culture & The Arts
- o Delivery Services
- o Education & Training
- o Electronics
- o Fashion & Accessories
- o Finance
- o Food
- o Gaming & E-Sports
- o Government & Public Service
- o Health & Wellness: Health, Fitness, & Wellness
- o Health & Wellness: Healthcare Services
- o Health & Wellness: OTC
- o Health & Wellness: Rx – Consumer/DTC
- o Health & Wellness: Rx – Devices
- o Health & Wellness: Rx – Professional
- o Home Furnishings & Appliances
- o Household Supplies
- o Insurance
- o Internet & Telecom
- o Leisure & Recreation
- o Media & Entertainment Companies
- o New Product or Service Introduction
- o New Product or Service Line Extension
- o Non-Profit
- o Personal Care
- o Pet Care
- o Professional Services
- o Restaurants
- o Retail
- o Snacks & Desserts
- o Software
- o Sports & Entertainment ***Updated**
- o Transportation
- o Travel & Tourism

SPECIALTY CATEGORIES

PRECISION MARKETING *Updated

- Business-to-Business: Products, Services
- Multicultural: Non-Profit, Products, Services ***Updated**
- Youth Marketing: Products, Services

BRAND CONTENT, ENTERTAINMENT, & EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING

- Brand Content & Entertainment: Products, Services
- Brand Integration & Entertainment Partnerships
- Experiential Marketing: Live, Digital
- Experiential Marketing: Hybrid

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT

- Corporate Reputation
- David vs. Goliath – Traditional, Situational
- Marketing Disruptors: Products, Services
- Renaissance
- Small Budgets: Non-Profit, Products, Services
- Sustained Success: Non-Profit, Products, Services
- Timely Opportunity: Products, Services

COMMERCE & SHOPPER

- Category/Aisle Evolution
- Challenger Brand Solution
- Crisis Response/Critical Pivot
- Digital Commerce
- Experiential Commerce Marketing
- Media Innovation
- Multi-Brand Shopper Solution

- Multi-Retailer Program
- New Product/Service Introduction
- Omni-Channel Shopper Solution
- Retail Media
- Seasonal/Event
- Single-Retailer Program: Mass Merchants, Supermarkets, Drugstores, Other
- Sustained Success

DIGITAL

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Direct to Consumer
- Engaged Community: Products, Services
- Influencer Marketing
- Performance Marketing
- Social Media: Products, Services

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- Disease Awareness & Education: Charitable/Research Funding
- Disease Awareness & Education: Non-Profit
- Disease Awareness & Education: Pharma/Corporate

MARKETING INNOVATION SOLUTIONS

- Business/Product/Service Innovation
- Customer Experience

MEDIA

- Data-Driven
- Media Content Partnerships
- Media Idea
- Media Innovation: Emerging & New Channels, Existing Channels

POSITIVE CHANGE *Updated

- o Environmental: Brands, Non-Profit
- o Social Good: Brands, Non-Profit
- o Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- o Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

TOPICAL & ANNUAL EVENTS

- o Crisis Response/Critical Pivot
- o Current Events
- o Seasonal Marketing: Products, Services

DEFINITIONS

INDUSTRY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

Agricultural, Industrial, & Building: All related products, materials, tools, and services.

Automotive – Aftermarket: Gasoline, motor oil, tires, batteries, paint, quick-lube, oil changes, muffler, transmission, windshield wipers, enhancements, etc.

Automotive – Vehicles: Cars, trucks, motorcycles, vans. Both brand and model advertising.

Beauty & Fragrance: Includes cosmetics, fragrances, hair products, nail products, skincare treatments, salons, etc.

Beverages – Alcohol: Beer, champagne, liquor, wine, hard seltzers, wine coolers, etc.

Beverages - Non-Alcohol: Diet and non-diet soda, coffee, tea, juices, milk, milk substitutes, bottled water, sparkling water, energy drinks, etc.

Culture & The Arts: Museums, plays, immersive experiences, music organizations and festivals, concert series, cultural festivals, theater festivals.

Delivery Services: Couriers, package/freight shipping, food & drink delivery, grocery delivery, flower/gift delivery, overnight delivery, package tracking, international service, etc.

Education & Training: Includes all educational organizations and institutions, training programs, job/career sites, etc.

Electronics: TVs, radios, mobile devices, home entertainment, laptops, tablets, cameras, smart home devices, computer hardware, game consoles, drones, VR/AR technology, sound systems, etc. Electronic devices may be aimed at consumers or businesses.

Fashion & Accessories: Includes all apparel, accessories, jewelry, styling services, clothing rentals, etc.

Finance: Financial products and services including overall corporate/brand image, capabilities of a financial institution or specific products or services. Includes: credit/debit cards, reward/loyalty cards, financial planning, mobile payment services, retirement funds, investment, home banking, loans, mortgage, mutual funds, etc.

Food: Fresh, packaged, and frozen foods. (For snacks & desserts, see the Snacks & Desserts category.)

Gaming & E-Sports: All forms of e-sports and single and multi-player video games, including virtual reality, arcade, console, mobile, online and computer games.

Government & Public Service: Municipal or state economic development, lotteries, utilities, civil, diplomatic, or armed forces, parks, libraries, public services, etc. Includes political messages and recruitment efforts.

Health & Wellness - Health, Fitness & Wellness: Unregulated products/services focused on consumer health and/or promoting a healthy lifestyle. Includes digital health products, fitness trackers, health/fitness apps, exercise equipment, nutraceuticals, vitamins, energy bars and drinks, etc.; fitness studios; weight loss and fitness programs, training camps and facilities, etc.

Health & Wellness - Healthcare Services: Efforts developed for hospitals, HMOs, health insurance companies, referral services, mental health, dental and medical care services, pharmacies, or chronic care facilities. Efforts may be targeted to healthcare professionals, patients, and/or consumers.

Health & Wellness – OTC: Efforts for products that are sold without a prescription that address specific health conditions. Efforts may be targeted to healthcare professionals, patients and/or consumers. Only products that address a specific health condition should enter this category – there are separate categories for Beauty & Fragrance, Health, Fitness & Wellness, and Personal Care efforts.

Health & Wellness - Rx - Consumer/DTC: Efforts for prescription required drugs that are directed to patients and/or consumers. Entrants must detail any regulatory challenges that impacted the effort.

Health & Wellness - Rx – Devices: Efforts that were developed for devices that address specific health conditions that require a prescription for surgical placement, use or purchase. Efforts may be targeted to healthcare professionals and/or patients. Entrants must detail any regulatory challenges that impacted the effort.

Health & Wellness - Rx – Professional: Efforts for prescription-required drugs and other healthcare products that are directed to healthcare professionals. Entrants must detail any regulatory challenges that impacted the effort.

Home Furnishings & Appliances: Kitchen and laundry appliances, air conditioners, carpeting, furniture, decorator's supplies, paint, wallpaper, etc.

Household Supplies: Cleaning products, waxes, detergents, floor-care products, fabric softeners, paper products, lawn care, etc.

Insurance: Marketing promoting specific products or services related to insurance and the capabilities of financial institutions offering these services. All types of insurance are eligible (home, auto, financial, life, travel, business, etc.), except for health insurance service providers. (Health insurance companies, see Healthcare Services.)

Internet & Telecom: Mobile network providers, high speed internet access services, online services, bundled communications (internet, telephone, and TV), etc.

Leisure & Recreation: Products and services aimed at hobbies, leisure, and recreation, including, but not limited to: dating services/apps, wedding planning platforms, personal development/improvement programs/apps, genetics/ancestry testing services, sporting and camping goods/services, etc.

Media & Entertainment Companies: TV networks, streaming services, websites (entertainment, lifestyle, news, trade, etc.), magazines, newspapers, consumer or trade media, radio stations, broadcasters, etc.

New Product or Service - Introduction: Efforts used to introduce a new product or service that is not a line extension. Brand new products or new products in a new category are required to enter this category instead of their industry category. Address the category situation and how your product/service was new and the situation you faced as a result of it being new. For example, what specifically was new? Why did the newness matter?

New Product or Service - Line Extension: Efforts used to support a variation of an existing product that shares the same brand name and is in the same category as the existing product and shares the same characteristics as the parent but offers new benefit (flavor, size, package, type, etc.). New extensions can either enter this category OR an industry category. Address the category situation, how your product/service was new and the situation you faced as a result of it being new. For example, what specifically was new? Why did the newness matter?

Note: For Commerce & Shopper efforts, enter the Commerce & Shopper: New Product or Service Introduction category.

Non-Profit: Not-for-profit organizations of all types including charitable, social, civic, advocacy, trade, special interest, religious, etc. Includes membership drives, recruitment, fundraising, etc.

Note: Non-profit health advocacy & awareness campaigns, see the Specialty Categories -> Health & Wellness - Disease Awareness & Education category.

Personal Care: Soap, oral care, face & body lotions and cleansers, basic eye and ear-care products (e.g. cotton swabs, eye drops, etc.), deodorants, feminine hygiene products, razors, shaving cream, etc.

Note: For items focusing on beauty, see Beauty & Fragrance category.

Pet Care: Animal care products and services of all types, including food, toys, veterinary and boarding services, training, breeders.

Professional Services: Includes services such as accounting, consulting, legal, staffing, recruiting, real estate, domestic services, etc.

Restaurants: Quick service, casual dining, mid-scale, fine dining, tablecloth, and any other restaurants.

Retail: All retail companies (online and/or brick and mortar) with general or specific merchandise such as department stores; clothing, shoes or jewelry stores; grocery stores; home and garden stores; movie/bookstores; discount/bulk retailers; pet care; toy stores; specialty stores; convenience stores; etc.

Snacks & Desserts: Ice cream, candy, chips, cookies, bakery items, nut, fruit and vegetable snacks, popcorn, etc.

Software: Software, groupware, operating systems, SaaS/IaaS, and Cloud based services, software/apps stored locally on a computer/tablet/mobile device, etc.

Sports & Entertainment: This category celebrates work that effectively promotes sports-related content and all forms of entertainment. Work should demonstrate custom tactics, audience resonance, and measurable impact.

Sports example may include: sporting events (e.g., Super Bowl, Olympics, World Cup), sports teams, leagues (e.g. F1, WNBA, NFL) and fan engagement initiatives. All forms of entertainment are eligible: movies, TV shows, streaming series, podcasts, books, music, comics, toys, entertainment apps, etc.

Note: For campaigns focused on video games or e-sports, please refer to the Gaming & E-Sports category.

Transportation: All transportation methods: air, train, bus, taxi, rideshare services, subway systems, bike shares, scooter shares, car rentals, ferries, etc.

Travel & Tourism: Cruises, hotels, resorts, amusement parks, travel websites and booking services, travel tours, tourism campaigns, etc.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS
PRECISION MARKETING CATEGORIES

Business-to-Business: For marketing efforts from businesses targeting other businesses. Includes B2B efforts for any type of product or service, from any marketplace segment. Enter in one of two sub-categories:

- o Business-to-Business – Products
- o Business-to-Business – Services

Multicultural: Any effort whose success was dependent on connecting with a specific cultural group focused on contextual nuance. If the entry had multiple audiences, it is necessary to demonstrate results for the specific audience. Identify any elements in the creative work or strategy that are intentionally to this community and any relevant deep cultural differences, dynamics and/or nuances, traditions, values, linguistic characteristics, and their significance. Explain if and how tools were used to tailor messages to specific cultural groups with precision, and the strong organic engagement from non-paid metrics.

Note: Judges may not be familiar with the brand's particular segment, so showcase and explain details that may be missed to help them understand cultural nuances and context. Enter in one of three sub-categories:

- o Multicultural – Non-Profits
- o Multicultural – Products
- o Multicultural – Services

Youth Marketing:
This category honors work that effectively engages teens or young adults. Your entry should clearly demonstrate how the campaign was crafted specifically for this audience and how it succeeded. Detail the elements and strategies tailored to the youth market, and explain how you addressed relevant dynamics, trends, values, and linguistic nuances that resonate with this demographic.

Note: Judges may not be familiar with this particular audience, so showcase details that may be overlooked. Enter in one of two sub-categories:
- • Youth Marketing – Products
- • Youth Marketing – Services

BRAND CONTENT, ENTERTAINMENT & EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING CATEGORIES

As with all Effie categories, you can enter whether your work brought the brand to life as the entire marketing effort or as part of the larger marketing program. If the content was part of a larger campaign, demonstrate the contribution of the content as part of that campaign.

Brand Content & Entertainment: This category recognizes efforts that successfully engaged audiences through original branded content that goes beyond traditional advertising. The focus should be on content created to be actively sought out and consumed by the audience for its entertainment or informative value. Entries must detail the content itself, its alignment with brand and business objectives, the distribution and audience engagement strategy, and the measurable impact on the brand and business. Branded content may be produced and distributed by publishers or independently and can include long-form entertainment.

Note: Judges will expect to understand why branded content was chosen as a tactic. Enter in one of two sub-categories:
- Brand Content & Entertainment – Products
- Brand Content & Entertainment – Services

Brand Integration & Entertainment Partnerships: This category honors brands that have effectively reached their audience via strategic integrations and entertainment partnerships. Submissions should detail how the brand was seamlessly interwoven in an engaging way. Detail the strategic reasoning behind the partnership – why was this partner chosen over others? Clearly explain the selection process of the partner, and how this partnership led to the results that met the brand objectives.

Experiential Marketing: This category is to showcase brand experiences beyond traditional advertising – work that truly brought a brand or product to life and interacted with a specific audience to achieve desired objectives should be entered. It may include a re-invented product demo, re-imagined pop-up, or a "brick and mortar" retail overhaul; it may have created a new game, an alternate or virtual reality experience, or an interactive/immersive film experience that effectively showcases a new product or brand personality. Award winners will show how the brand is reaching out to their audiences to establish meaningful relationships, memorable, engaging experiences, and unique connections. Entrants must address how the experiential marketing related back to the overall brand strategy. Judges will expect to understand the 'participation' in the experience as a core factor. Enter in one of three sub-categories:

- o Experiential Marketing: Live
- o Experiential Marketing: Digital
- o Experiential Marketing: Hybrid

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT CATEGORIES

Corporate Reputation: Marketing efforts that promote corporations, not exclusively their products. Includes sponsorships, image, and identity. In addition to presenting metrics related to the reputation, entrants are encouraged to also address how these metrics relate to the business of the brand and why they are important.

David vs. Goliath (Traditional): This is an award for smaller brands, or new/emerging brands that are less than five years old making inroads against big, established leaders, taking on "sleeping giants," beyond their current category and set of competitors to tackle a dominant leader. Entrants must detail the business challenge, the competitive landscape, and how the business succeeded despite the odds. Define your competitive landscape, including the market difference between the David and Goliath to demonstrate why the brand was a Traditional David.

Note: Judges will deduct from the case without sufficient proof that the submitting brand is a Traditional David.

David vs. Goliath (Situational): This is an award for larger brands that are successfully competing at a disadvantage in their market. Entrants must detail the business challenge, the competitive landscape, and how the business succeeded despite the circumstantial odds. Define your competitive landscape, including the market difference between the David and Goliath to demonstrate why the brand was a Situational David.

Note: Judges will deduct from the case without sufficient proof that the submitting brand is a Situational David.

Marketing Disruptors: For efforts that grew the business/brand by changing the marketing model in ways that drive the industry forward. A marketing disruptor of any size can enter. Detail the marketing challenge, the competitive landscape, and how the brand succeeded by changing the existing marketing model for the brand/category. Note: Judges will deduct from the case without clear articulation regarding how the marketing was disruptive for the brand/category. Enter in one of two sub-categories:

- o   Marketing Disruptors – Products
- o   Marketing Disruptors – Services

Renaissance: For rebirth campaigns. To enter, your brand must have experienced a downturn of several years and a period of at least six months of upturn sales. Entrants must detail the business challenge, the situation of the brand, the competitive landscape and how the effort succeeded.

Note: The entry must address the previous marketing investment and strategy as part of the context and provide detail on the length of the renaissance.

Small Budgets: To be eligible, an entry may not be for a line extension and must represent the only marketing efforts for the brand during the time period. The value of donated and non-traditional media as well as activation costs must be included. Budget eligibility is as follows:

- o   Local Efforts: $1 million or less
- o   Regional Efforts: $2 million or less
- o   National Efforts: $5 million or less

Enter in one of three sub-categories:

- o   Small Budgets – Non-Profit
- o   Small Budgets – Products
- o   Small Budgets – Services

Sustained Success: Efforts that experienced sustained success for at least three years are eligible for entry. At a minimum, include at least three years of creative work and case results, and include the current competition year's results. Work must have a common objective in both strategy and creative executions; with a continuation of core executional elements (e.g., spokesperson, song, theme, tagline, etc.) that demonstrates effectiveness over time. As part of the entry, specifically address how the effort evolved over time (e.g., media choices, targeting, insights, new products/services, etc.). Answer all questions for the initial year and describe how/why change occurred over time. Enter in one of three sub-categories:

- o   Sustained Success – Non-Profits
- o   Sustained Success – Products
- o   Sustained Success – Services

Note: There is a special entry form and different creative requirements for the Sustained Success Award. The creative requirements, including different rules for the creative reel, can be found in the Sustained Success form.

Timely Opportunity: This category spotlights effective strategic efforts that were able to generate desired results as a direct outcome from a single significant moment of activity. Cases should show how the brand or product/service was put in an intensely bright spotlight to create immediate, measurable, unexpected, and unconventional impact. The best examples include live experiences, moments, stunts, and tactics, online and offline, perhaps amplified through PR, social media, digital engagement, or even the use of content created in the moment to fuel paid campaigns. Enter in one of two sub-categories:

- o Timely Opportunity – Products
- o Timely Opportunity – Services

COMMERCE & SHOPPER CATEGORIES

Honoring the most effective integrated campaigns based on a specific shopper insight and designed to engage the shopper and guide the purchase process to achieve conversion. An effort may be entered into a maximum of two Commerce & Shopper categories.

Category/Aisle Evolution: Some of the most impactful efforts occur when a deep understanding of shoppers' attitudes, behaviors, and needs lead to innovative category/aisle evolution, whether in-store, online or both. Entrants must outline how the effort utilized shopper activation at shelf or shopper awareness of evolution to enhance the shopping experience and drove greater engagement, conversion, and category growth. Successful entries in this category will be sustainable evolutions and not simply promotional in nature.

Challenger Brand Solution: This is an award for smaller, new, or emerging brands that are making inroads against big, established leaders, taking on "sleeping giants," or moving into a new product/service field beyond their current category and set of competitors to tackle a dominant leader. (Challenger brands are defined as having less than 15% of branded market share in the product/service category.) Entrants must detail the business challenge, the competitive landscape, and how their business succeeded despite the odds. Requirements include a definition of the competitive landscape, including the market difference between the entered brand and its top competitors to demonstrate why this brand is a challenger.

Note: Judges will deduct from the case if sufficiently proof that the brand is appropriately classified as a challenger brand is not included.

Crisis Response/Critical Pivot: This category recognizes brands that successfully navigated significant structural and cultural shifts or moments of crisis (e.g., pandemic, social justice movements, political events) by effectively pivoting their marketing strategy or business activities. Entrants must clearly identify the pivot and explain how the messaging, campaign, production approach, or go-to-market strategy was adapted. Highlight the impact and effectiveness of these actions on the brand's success. Examples may include shifts in brand positioning, portfolio management, digital acceleration, and more.

Digital Commerce: This category is for campaigns that effectively used insights, strategy, creative, and analytics to drive digital shopper conversion. Show how, by utilizing data and a deep understanding of the shopper, the brand and/or retailer succeeded in a digital setting. A successful effort will combine strong shopper knowledge with digital marketing practices to increase conversion online. The effort must be

based on a shopper insight(s) and be shopper-driven. Explain the strategy of how the effort went to market. Submissions in this category will be solely evaluated on digital commerce effectiveness.

Experiential Commercial Marketing: This award features work that truly brought a brand, product, or retailer to life – either literally or virtually – and interacted with shoppers to influence conversion. You may have re-invented the product demo, re-imagined the pop-up store, led a "brick and mortar" retail overhaul, or created a new game/interactive film experience that effectively showcases a new product/brand personality. As long it truly came alive and worked. The winners of this award will show how brands and/or retailers are reaching out to audiences to establish meaningful relationships, engaging experiences, and unique connections. Entrants in this category must address how the experience related back to the overall brand strategy.

Media Innovation: This award showcases those who had the insight and creativity to change the way a particular media channel was consumed, or to create a new channel. The award goes to brands and retailers who went beyond the conventional approach to grab their shoppers' attention and effectively engage them. Identify the specific target and how the campaign influenced conversion. Whether the effort was one execution or multiple, and/or used one engagement channel or multiple – the work must represent new and creative usage of the media channels (known, or that have not yet been met).

Note: All entries must specifically address what was innovative and the conversion achieved. Write the entry to address the category and/or brand situation and provide clear articulation of how the media was used innovatively.

Multi-Brand Shopper Solution: Shoppers are looking for ways to tackle everyday challenges, whether it's what to prepare for dinner or how to maintain a beautiful lawn – they seek all-in-one solutions. This award celebrates multi-brand/product/manufacturer solutions that came together to address exactly what their target shopper needed. Entries into this category must address the rationale behind the creation of these differentiated shopper solutions. Brands may be from a single manufacturer or multiple manufacturers. Shopper solutions may be developed by manufacturer(s) and/or retailers.

Multi-Retailer Program: For campaigns that ran with a central idea and executed that idea via dedicated rollouts to three or more different retail chains. Cases in this category will highlight and explain both the cohesive thread working at each retailer, and the specific customizations that were done for each retailer. Entrants should outline the specific barriers and challenges in tailoring their solution to each retailer – elaborating on the nuances among the shopper segment and insights at each retailer, differences in retail environments, etc.

New Product/Service Introduction: To enter this category, the case must address the commerce/shopper effort surrounding the launch of a new product/service. Whether it is the creation of a whole new brand, a new product from an existing brand, or a new line extension, submissions in this category need to present how shopper insights were leveraged to overcome the barriers faced by products/services being launched for the first time. If submitting an effort that was part of, or inspired by, a national campaign, explain how you adapted it for the shopper and the retailer.

Omni-Channel Shopper Solution: Winners in this category will represent the best examples of manufacturers and retailers committed to providing effective omni-channel shopper programs. Enter brands that have ensured an effective, connected shopper journey and showcase how manufacturers and retailers are connecting the dots in their engagement strategies to ensure simple, seamless, effective experiences across the shoppers' path to purchase. In- store, online, customer service, loyalty programs, mobile apps, delivery services, social media, aisle disruption – it could entail anything – as long as the case illustrates how it was all connected to provide a fully integrated "shopper journey" from beginning to end.

Retail Media: This category highlights the success achieved through strategic collaborations between retail media networks and brands, driving measurable business growth for both parties. Whether digital or in-store, or omnichannel, demonstrate how your efforts were tailored to specific customer segments using data-driven insights. Showcase the use of multiple channels, both online and offline, to deliver a cohesive and effective campaign that resonates with your target audience and drives tangible results for both retailer and brand.

Enter one of (3) sub-categories:
- **Digital Commerce** - use a retail media digital ecosystem (e.g., digital advertising, marketplace) to drive an online purchase
- **In-Store Retail** - use of retail media in-store to drive a sale
- **Omnichannel** - follow through from digital to in-store to drive to purchase

Seasonal/Event: This category features events, platforms, or programs that were created to meet the demands of the shopper that are driven by a season, holiday or cultural event. Entrants must explain the insight into their shoppers that led to adjusting product and/or creating events/seasonally based platforms and programs to be in line with their needs and shopping mindset during a specific time period. Innovative shopper events, strategically created by the retailer and/or manufacturer, may enter as well.

Single-Retailer Program: For campaigns that ran with a tailored, retailer-specific idea and executed that idea at a single retail chain (mass merchants, supermarkets, drugstores, warehouse clubs, pure play digital commerce stores, etc.). The work in this category will provide insights as to how an effort was effectively designed to work with the retailer and the shoppers of that retailer. Entrants should elaborate on the

specific shopper barriers affecting their brand at that retailer and how they addressed those issues in a customized way for that retailer.

Sustained Success: Commerce and shopper marketing efforts that experienced sustained success for at least three years are eligible for entry. At a minimum, you must include at least three years of creative work and case results, and you must include the current competition year's work/results. Work must have a common objective in both strategy and creative executions; with a continuation of core executional elements (e.g., spokesperson, song, theme, tagline, etc.) that demonstrates effectiveness over time. As part of your entry, specifically address how the effort evolved over time (e.g., media choices, targeting, insights, new products/services, etc.). Answer all questions for the initial year and describe how/why change occurred over time.

Note: There is a special entry form and different creative requirements for the Sustained Success Award. The creative requirements, including different rules for the creative reel, can be found in the Sustained Success form.

DIGITAL CATEGORIES
Honoring the most effective convergence of data, technology and all forms of creative that maximize end user engagement and conversion.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): For the AI Category, entrants are required to showcase their effective use of artificial intelligence to drive meaningful business outcomes. This category recognizes outstanding campaigns and initiatives where AI was leveraged as a pivotal tool to achieve specific business goals, whether it be enhancing customer engagement, optimizing operations, increasing sales, or any other measurable objective.
Entrants must provide clear evidence of how AI was integrated into their strategy and demonstrate the tangible impact it had on their business growth and desired results. This includes detailed metrics, analytics, and any other relevant data that highlight the effectiveness of the AI implementation. The judges will be looking for entries that not only display creativity and technical proficiency but also a profound understanding of how AI can be harnessed to produce real, quantifiable success.

Direct-to-Consumer: This category is for effective marketing efforts from direct-to-consumer businesses. DTC efforts for any type of product or service, from any marketplace segment, are eligible.

Engaged Community: This category is about managing effective, engaged communities. Entrants are brands that are creating content, experiences, platforms, news, etc. that get their communities to grow, engage, share, act, or amplify messaging in a way that directly relates to the brand's goals. State clearly how the brand managed the community, defined effectiveness around the community, what they specifically

achieved, and why the engaged community was significant for the development of the brand/business. Enter in one of two sub-categories:

- o Engaged Community – Products
- o Engaged Community – Services

Influencer Marketing: This category recognizes brands that successfully partnered with influencers to achieve short or long-term marketing goals. Influencers can range from micro to macro and include social media personalities, brand ambassadors, and bloggers. Clearly define the strategy, target audience, and why the influencer was chosen. Highlight how the influencer engaged the audience, influenced consumer behavior, and contributed to the brand's success by driving measurable business results.

Performance Marketing: This category celebrates the most impactful performance marketing strategies, where a combination of tactics generated significant, incremental results and conversions. Describe how you leveraged the synergy between your organic and paid ecosystems to create a halo effect, using data-driven insights, agile testing, and continuous optimization. Your submission should be performance-led, demonstrating how approaches such as (but not limited to) affiliate marketing, paid search, SEO, email campaigns, personalization at scale, influencer or sponsored content directly drove measurable outcomes like increased revenue or leads.

Social Media: This category celebrates campaigns designed around social media as the primary touchpoint, leveraging its influence to engage connected consumers. Focus on campaigns where social media was the core idea, not just an element. Provide a clear rationale for using social media, demonstrate its direct impact on audience behavior, and show how it drove measurable business results. Enter in one of two sub-categories:

- • Social Media – Products
- • Social Media – Services

HEALTH & WELLNESS CATEGORIES

Honoring effective marketing within the healthcare industry. Please note these categories feature both Industry categories (max. 1 per effort) and Specialty categories. Note: Disease Awareness & Education efforts must enter one of these categories – they may not enter Positive Change categories.

Disease Awareness & Education: Charitable/Research Funding: Efforts dedicated to generating funding/donations/support for research, treatment, and care of specific health conditions.

Disease Awareness & Education: Non-Profit: Public health and non-profit cause marketing efforts produced to raise awareness/education about specific health conditions. Efforts may be targeted to healthcare professionals, patients and/or consumers.

Disease Awareness & Education: Pharma/Corporate: Brand/client efforts designed to educate and/or promote health awareness. Efforts may be targeted to either healthcare professionals, patients and/or consumers.

MEDIA CATEGORIES

These categories reflect the importance of the use of media in driving effectiveness and will be judged by experts within the media industry across brands, agencies, and media owners. Submissions must speak to the media channel choices and measurement methodologies.

Data-Driven: Data-driven is the application of data and/or technology to connect people to the brand at the right moment/s. These efforts should prove how they specifically utilized data to drive creativity or to optimize media to improve business outcomes (brand KPIs, ROI, performance marketing measures, etc.).

The best examples will recognize the interplay and application of data, inclusive of automation and AI, to engage with and/or deliver to a precise audience and achieve the best results. To enter, your case must detail the role that data had within the creative and/or media strategy in achieving the brand and business goals.

Submissions are expected to:

o   Utilize personalized/custom-tailored creative messages.
o   Explain how data impacted the media plan through clear measurement & analytics.
o   Demonstrate the insights captured from data used to understand audience.

Media Content Partnerships: This category recognizes brand-media partnerships that created and activated original content beyond traditional advertising. These partnerships should showcase innovative consumer connections through integrated communication channels centered on creative and strategic content. Each activation channel should demonstrate how the media company contributed to the campaign's effectiveness and impact. Submissions must detail the strategic rationale for the partnership, the selection process, and how the partnership led to results that achieved the brand's objectives.

Media Idea: This category is about outstanding effectiveness as a result of media-led ideas. The line between what constitutes a creative idea and a media idea is blurring and there are occasions when the media idea drove the entire effort. Of course, media cannot exist without the content, but this award is

intended to recognize those cases that were led by the media thinking – where the integration of media and message led to success. The award honors media-led ideas that are powerful enough to become the genesis of the marketing program itself, to the extent that the program would not have been successful without the strategic media idea.

Media Innovation: This award showcases those who had the insight and creativity to change the way a particular media channel is consumed, or to create a new channel. The award will go to brands who reached out of the conventional approach to grab their audience and effectively engage with them. Whether the effort was one execution or multiple, and/or used one engagement channel or multiple – the work must represent new and creative usage of the media channels we know and love, or have not yet met. Note: All entries must specifically address what was innovative and the results achieved. Address the category situation and provide clear articulation of how the media was used innovatively and how the media strategy/plan optimized the results. Enter in one of two sub-categories

- o Media Innovation - Emerging & New Channels
- o Media Innovation - Existing Channel

MARKETING INNOVATION SOLUTIONS CATEGORY

This category awards innovative single marketing and business activities or entire marketing programs. If communication was a significant element of marketing mix, work should be submitted in another category.

Business/Product/Service Innovation: This category awards innovative single marketing and business activities or entire marketing programs. Submit any action or business idea regarding innovation for the product, service, or business that has had an exceptionally positive impact on the market position. Examples of eligible activities in this category include: product/service innovation; change in packaging, both in terms of its appearance and size; design, technology or UX innovation for the business, product or service; consumer involvement in product development; operation change, etc.

Customer Experience: This category awards innovative single marketing and business activities or entire marketing programs. Submit any action or business idea regarding customer experience innovation that has had an exceptionally positive impact on the market position of a business, brand, product or service. Examples of eligible activities in this category include: design, technology or UX innovation for the customer experience; consumer involvement in product development; introduction/change of a loyalty program, introduction of a new distribution channel, etc.

POSITIVE CHANGE CATEGORY

in collaboration with the World Economic Forum

The Positive Change Effies reward and celebrate the brands and non-profits that are promoting the greater good through purpose-driven marketing. The program has two tracks - Environmental and Social Good.

Environmental: For efforts that have measurably shifted audience behavior toward more environmentally sustainable choices, and/or grown demand for more sustainable products and services. Explain how your efforts created positive impact on the environment and the business. Efforts entered must have as one of their main strategic objectives changing audience behavior towards more environmentally sustainable choices . Entrants should address how the sustainability goal relates back to the overall brand and business strategy. Demonstrate immediate impact while articulating progress toward long-term objectives. Highlight the most interesting, effective and impactful elements of the work, including the actual change-making components.

Criterion for this award is the result of behavior change toward more environmentally sustainable choices, with these elements being considered in judging:

- Awareness – Making the audience aware of a sustainable product, service or action.
- Trial – Trying the sustainable product, service or action for the first time.
- Product/Service Substitution – Switching to a more sustainable product, service or action.
- Change in Use – Using a product/service more sustainably than before or taking a more sustainable action.

Enter in one of the two sub-categories:

- o Environmental – Brands
- o Environmental – Non-Profit

Social Good: For marketing efforts proven effective in solving/impacting a social problem or in expanding an existing program in ways that benefit our society. This is about creating positive societal and cultural change, challenging the established status-quo and changing accepted norms and stereotypes that create societal inequalities with inspired action.

Examples include initiatives that tackle food poverty; access to healthcare or education; creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive society; or creating equal opportunities at work and in wider society for all members of our society. Any effort that sets out to give back in some way for the greater good is eligible to enter, and any/all marketing efforts, whether full campaigns or unique efforts within a campaign are eligible to enter as long as measurable results exist.

Demonstrate immediate impact while articulating progress toward long-term objectives. Highlight the most interesting, effective and impactful elements of the work, including the actual change-making components. Include the impact your work had on the cause and why it was a match for your business.

Enter in one of three sub-categories:

- o Social Good – Brands
- o Social Good – Non-Profit
- o Social Good – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Entrants can enter a single effort into a maximum of one of the below categories.

Crisis Response/Critical Pivot: This category recognizes brands that successfully navigated significant structural and cultural shifts or moments of crisis (e.g., pandemic, social justice movements, political events) by effectively pivoting their marketing strategy or business activities. Entrants must clearly identify the pivot and explain how the messaging, campaign, production approach, or go-to-market strategy was adapted. Highlight the impact and effectiveness of these actions on the brand's success. Examples may include shifts in brand positioning, portfolio management, digital acceleration, and more.

Current Events: For cases that effectively leveraged immediate relevance, interest, or importance via a targeted marketing/PR strategy around current news and events (e.g., World Cup, Olympics, economic situations, social issues, etc.).
Note: Annual events should enter the Seasonal Marketing category.

Seasonal Marketing: Seasons, holidays and annual events allow marketers the opportunity to build strategic efforts based on the time-based interests of their target audience. This category honors those efforts that effectively capitalized on a season, holiday, or annual cultural event to drive results for their business. Submit in one of two sub-categories:

- o Seasonal Marketing – Products
- o Seasonal Marketing – Services