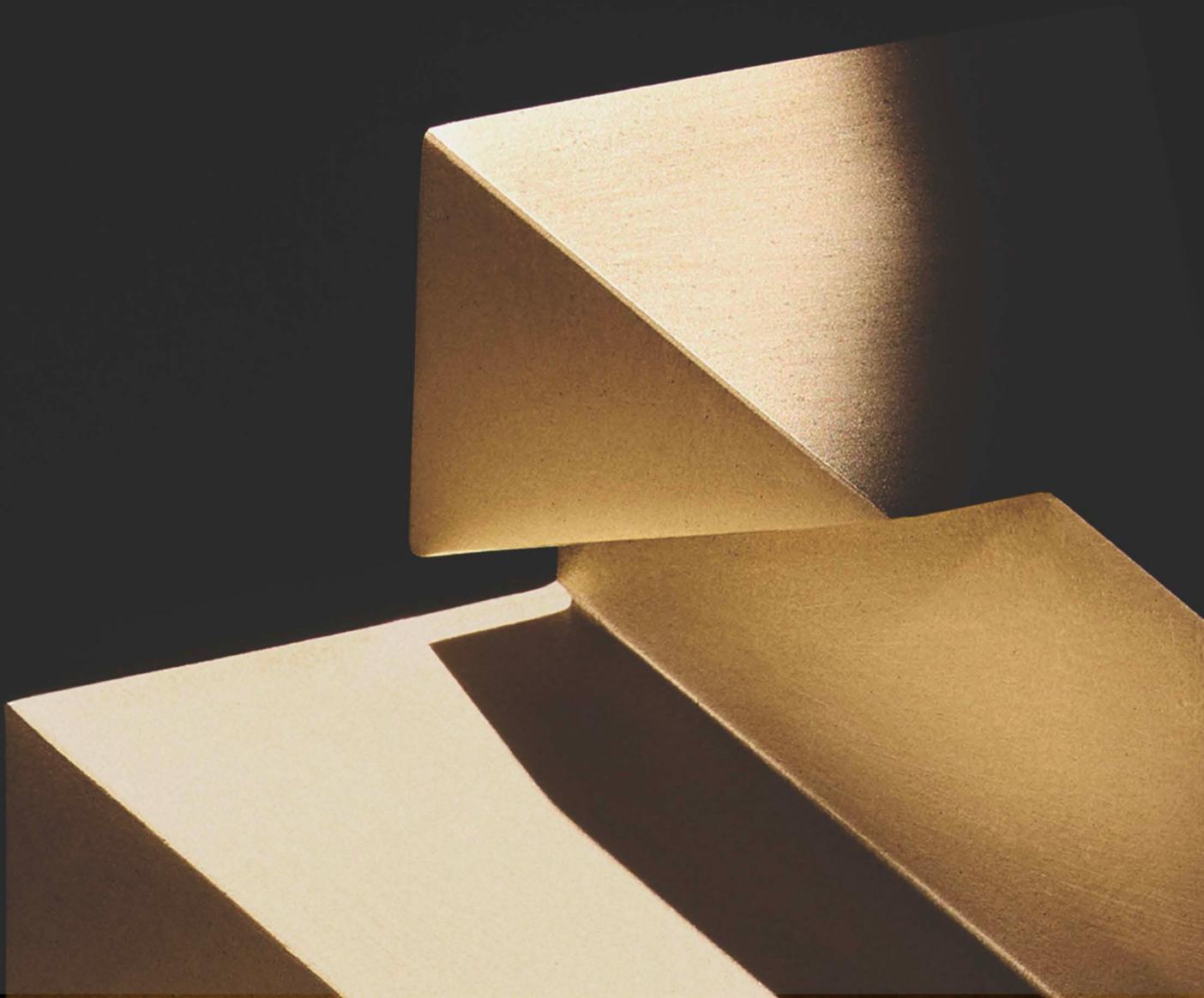




Ideas too effective to hide in the shadows

Entry Kit 2026



Introduction

The Effie Awards are a globally recognized symbol of outstanding achievement. We are proud to honor all types of effective marketing and the people who make it. By participating, you are helping to build a legacy of brilliant thinking that will inspire marketers for years to come.

This document is designed to give you all the information you need to write and submit your entry. It includes all the practical information - like what work is eligible to enter, what categories are available, accepted creative assets and credits, how publication permissions work, how to source your data, etc. It also explains the Effie entry form section by section, to help you understand exactly what the judges are looking for. Plus, there's information about what happens during judging and beyond.

To support entrants in the entry process, we're offering complimentary online workshops for guidance in crafting more effective entries. These sessions are designed to help you navigate the process and strengthen your submission. You'll find details about entry workshops, sample winning cases and other helpful resources at [effie.org](https://www.effie.org).

If you have questions at any stage of the entry process, please reach out to us at usentries@effie.org.

We wish you all the best in this year's competition!

New for the 2026 Effie Awards US Competition

We know you have a story to tell, and we want to help you tell it effectively. Each year, the Effie team carefully reviews all feedback we receive from judges, entrants, and partners, along with competition data trends. These insights drive our ongoing program improvements to ensure that the Effie Awards remain relevant and valuable, while reflecting the ever-changing marketing landscape. Please review key updates to the 2026 Effie Awards US competition below.

New in 2026:

CREATIVE REQUIREMENTS:

Creative Reel: Entrants now have the option to include results in the creative reel. While the main focus of the reel is to show the integral creative work as the audience would have experienced it, this update offers the opportunity for richer, more comprehensive storytelling, showcasing all forms of marketing effectiveness.

See page 23 for updated requirements.

CATEGORY REFINEMENTS:

- **Audience:** category group has been renamed **Precision Marketing**.
- **Multicultural:** category definition has been updated.
- **Positive Change:** category definition has been updated.
- **Sports & Entertainment:** category definition has been updated.

See pages 37 - 54 for all category definitions.

PROGRAMS:

We are pleased to share that Effie recently launched Effie Puerto Rico, in partnership with the Puerto Rico Advertising Association. If your work ran in Puerto Rico, you can enter the new competition [here](#).

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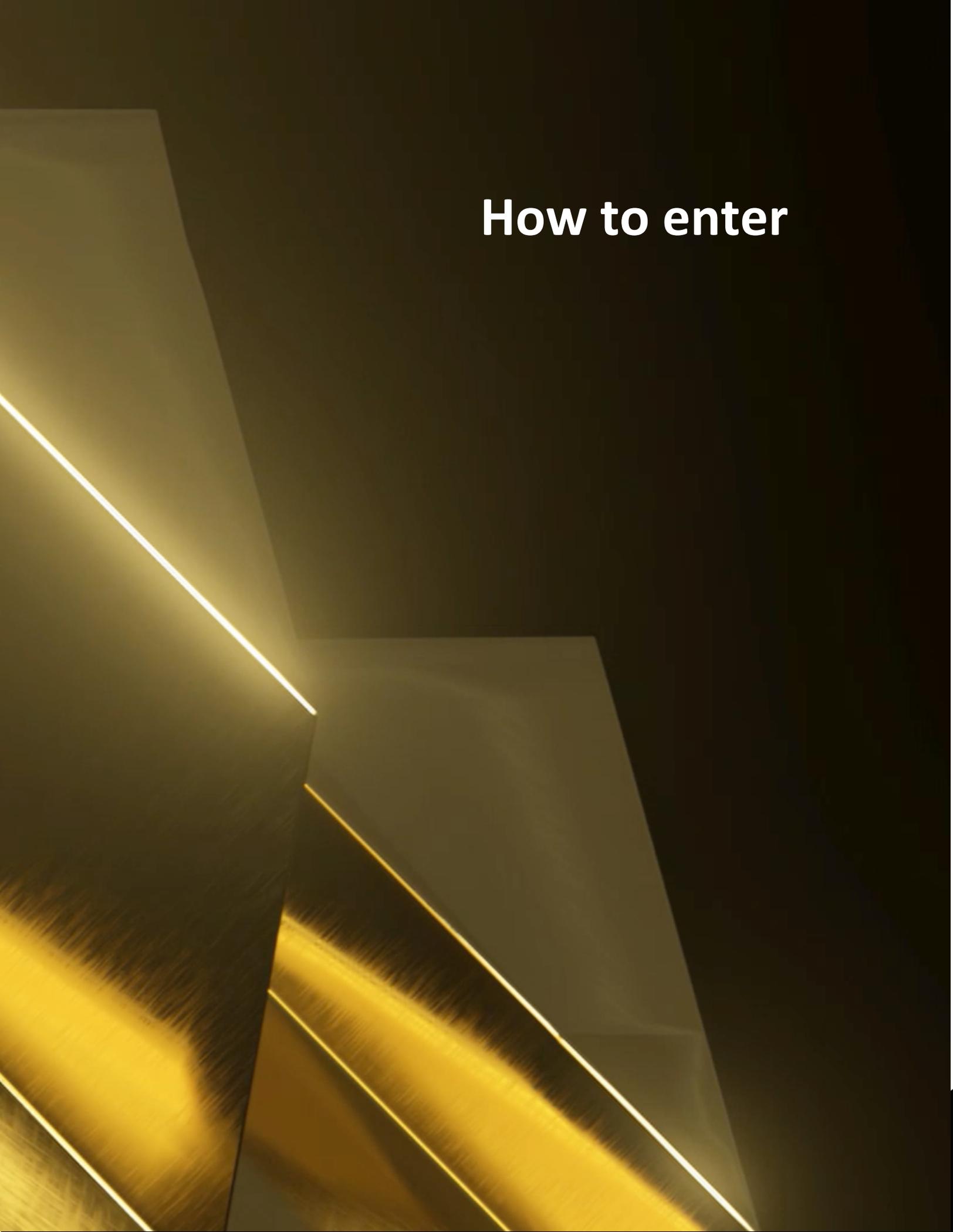
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The background features several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in shades of grey and black. A prominent feature is a bright yellow, glowing line that runs diagonally across the frame, starting from the left edge and extending towards the bottom right. This line is surrounded by a soft, blurred yellow glow, creating a sense of depth and light. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

How to enter

Eligibility

ALL MARKETING ACTIVITY THAT RAN IN THE UNITED STATES AT ANY POINT BETWEEN JUNE 1, 2024 AND SEPTEMBER 30, 2025* IS ELIGIBLE TO ENTER.

Any and all marketing cases, from any discipline, whether full campaigns or specific activities within a campaign, can enter. Data and creative work presented must be specific to the United States. Test efforts are not eligible.

The creative work and the written text of the entry must be the original work of the credited companies and authors.

One or any multiple combination of mediums may be submitted; any work that demonstrates how the objectives were achieved. Detail the “why” behind the strategy and provide proof that the work achieved significant results.

Your work must have run during the eligibility period. Elements of the work may have been introduced earlier and continued after, but the marketing activity you submit within your entry must have taken place *during* the qualifying time period.

Results that illustrate the effectiveness of your case can fall outside of the eligibility period, but must be tied directly to the marketing activity you have entered.

It is important to include context, data and results prior to the eligibility period. This enables judges to better understand the significance of your objectives and results. Keep in mind that not all judges are knowledgeable of the nuances of your brand’s industry.

A single effort cannot be submitted by different organizations in the same category. Teams must collaborate on a single entry. However, different organizations may take the lead on entering the work in different categories.

Effie reserves the right to re-categorize entries, split/redefine categories, and/or refuse entry at any time. Review category definitions and re-entry requirements for additional guidelines.

*The **Sustained Success and Performance Marketing categories** have separate entry forms. You’ll find more information in the [category definition](#).

Eligibility

RE-ENTERING PREVIOUSLY ENTERED WORK

- Entrants, finalists and winners of the previous year's competition period must update their entry to the current eligibility time period, including results.
- 2025 Gold Effie Winners can only re-enter a category in which they did not win Gold.
- Past Gold Sustained Success winners can re-enter the Sustained Success categories after 3 years - Gold winners from the 2022 competition and earlier are eligible to enter.
- 2025 David vs. Goliath & Challenger Brand Solutions winning brands (Gold/Silver/Bronze) cannot re-enter these categories in 2026.

ENTERING IN MULTIPLE CATEGORIES

- You may enter an effort into a maximum of 4 categories, with no more than 1 Industry category and no more than 2 Commerce & Shopper categories
- You will need to submit a separate entry and pay separate entry fees for each category submission.
- Each entry should be customized to speak to the specifics of each entered category. Judges are evaluating your work against the category definition.

Deadlines & Fees

DEADLINE	DATE	FEE
First entry deadline	October 6, 2025	\$995
Second entry deadline	October 20, 2025	\$1,940
Third entry deadline	October 27, 2025	\$2,845
Fourth entry deadline	November 3, 2025	\$3,330

Fees increase the morning after each deadline at 10:00 am ET. Entry fees are locked based on the date of submission - all requirements must be met to submit your entry.

NON-PROFIT DISCOUNT

50% off Entry Fees.

Eligibility: This applies when the entering organization or brand is non-profit. Discounts are automatically applied in the entry portal. If you have any questions, please reach out to usentries@effie.org.

NEW ENTRANT DISCOUNT

\$200 off Entry Fees.

Entrants (lead agency/entering company) that haven't submitted an entry in the 2023-2025 Effie US competitions are eligible for this discount. Discounts cannot be applied until you have created an account in the entry portal and cannot be requested after November 3, 2025. Once your account is active, please request the discount by emailing usentries@effie.org with the subject line: EFFIE US - NEW ENTRANT DISCOUNT.

INSIGHT GUIDE DISCOUNT

\$100 off each Insight Guide.

Eligibility: This discount applies only to Insight Guide(s) purchased at the time of submission. Discounts are automatically applied in the entry portal. If you have any questions, please reach out to our team at usentries@effie.org.

HOW TO PAY

Payment is due 30 days after submission.

Payment is accepted via credit card (AMEX, Mastercard, Visa) or EFT/ACH Transfer. When submitting your entry, you can choose to pay at that time via credit card, or to generate an invoice to be used for payment processing. Bank transfer instructions will be provided on your invoice.

Please email finance@effie.org for any payment related inquiries.

How to submit your entry

Entries are submitted online in the Entry Portal at <https://effie-US.acclaimworks.com>.

Before submitting your entry, we recommend you use the relevant Entry Form Template to prepare it - the next section explains what's required for each part. You can access the [Entry Form templates here](#).

- The template includes all required fields that must be provided in order to submit your entry.
- Once drafted in the template, copy/paste the answers to each question into the corresponding question in the entry portal.
- Please give yourself enough time to complete all requirements within the entry portal before your intended entry deadline.
- Ensure you have credited all your main strategic and creative partners and collaborate with all partners on submitting your effective work.

Note: there are dedicated Entry Forms for submissions into the Performance Marketing and Sustained Success categories.

Here's a checklist of the entry requirements:

REVIEWED BY JUDGES

- Written entry form
- Creative examples (reel, images)

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Case background
- Company & individual credits
- Publicity materials
- Authorization & verification form

Categories

Category limits

Cases can be entered in **up to four categories (max)**. Of those four categories, only **one category submission can be an industry category**. Additionally, Commerce & Shopper has a limit of two categories and Topical & Annual Events has a limit of one category per entry. You are not required to enter an Industry category or a Commerce & Shopper category - you may enter four speciality categories instead.

Each entry should be customized to speak to the specifics of each entered category.

Multiple Category Submissions:

The entry portal allows you to submit your work to multiple categories. Standard details (like credits) can be replicated across entries, while answers to category-specific questions can be customized.

When starting a new entry, browse the category list and click **"Add to Entry"** next to each desired category. You can also add more categories later by scrolling to the top of the entry form and clicking **"Add to More Categories."**

You can also add additional categories after you start an entry - scroll up to the top and click the "add to more categories" button. You will need to adapt the entry form based on the category definition and pay the entry fee for each category entered.

By default, your answers will carry over to all selected categories. Use the **Multi-Category "Show/Hide"** button in the portal to choose which categories should receive customized answers, allowing you to tailor your case to the specific category requirements.

The Effie Awards reserves the right to re-categorize entries, split/redefine categories and/or refuse entry any at any time.

Industry categories

There are over 30 industry categories to choose from. Category definitions provide guidance regarding the types of products/services that may enter that category; however, it is not an exclusive list.

Specialty categories

The Specialty Categories are designed to address a specific business situation or challenge. There are over 40 specialty categories, with category groups for precision marketing, brand content & experiential marketing, business challenges, commerce & shopper marketing, digital, health & wellness, media, marketing innovation, positive change and topical & annual events.

When entering into any of these categories, you should present your entry in a way that addresses the situation or challenge as outlined in the category definition. It is critical to thoroughly review the category definitions to ensure your effort meets the criteria. Judges will down score your entry if you are missing required information.

Category Overview

INDUSTRY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Agricultural, Industrial & Building○ Automotive - Aftermarket○ Automotive - Vehicles○ Beauty & Fragrance○ Beverages: Alcohol○ Beverages: Non-Alcohol○ Culture & The Arts○ Delivery Services○ Education & Training○ Electronics○ Fashion & Accessories○ Finance○ Food○ Gaming & E-Sports○ Government & Public Service○ Health & Wellness: Health, Fitness, & Wellness○ Health & Wellness: Healthcare Services○ Health & Wellness: OTC○ Health & Wellness: Rx - Consumer/DTC○ Health & Wellness: Rx - Devices○ Health & Wellness: Rx - Professional○ Home Furnishings & Appliances○ Household Supplies○ Insurance○ Internet & Telecom○ Leisure & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Media & Entertainment Companies○ New Product or Service Introduction○ New Product or Service Line Extension○ Non-Profit○ Personal Care○ Pet Care○ Professional Services○ Restaurants○ Retail○ Snacks & Desserts○ Software○ Sports & Entertainment *updated definition○ Transportation○ Travel & Tourism

SPECIALTY

Precision marketing

- Business-to-business: products, services
- Multicultural: non-profit, products, services
- ***updated definition**
- 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, drugstore, 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

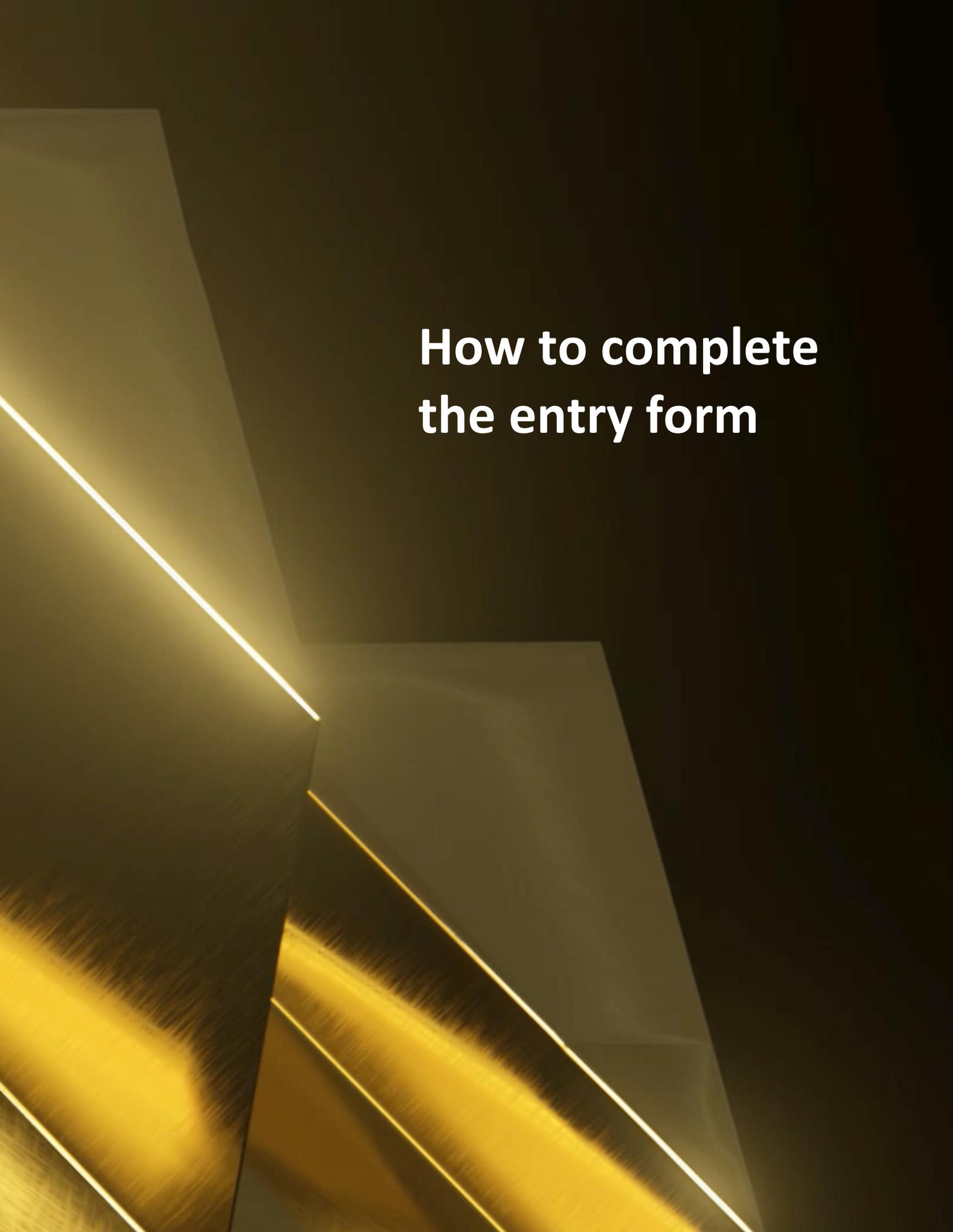
- Data-driven
- Media content partnerships
- Media idea
- Media innovation: emerging & new channels, existing channels

Positive change

- Environmental: brands, non-profit
- ***updated definition**
- Social good: brands, non-profit ***updated definition**
- Diversity, equity & inclusion

Topical & annual events

- Crisis response/critical pivot
- Current events
- Seasonal marketing: products, service



How to complete the entry form

Entry Form Overview

The written Entry Form has three sections:

1. Entry details and Executive Summary to set the stage of your entry.
2. Full written case. This is where you tell your marketing story from beginning to end across the four pillars of Effie's framework, listed below. It is important to have a coherent storytelling through the entire entry.

Section 1: Challenge, Context & Objectives (23.3% of score)

Section 2: Insights & Strategy (23.3% of score)

Section 3: Bringing the Strategy & Idea to Life (23.3 % of score)

Section 4: Results (30% of score)

3. Investment overview (an outline of what you spent and where, i.e. topline budgets for development/production and activation/media)

The next few pages give an overview of each of the four pillars of Effie's marketing effectiveness framework, to explain what's required for each section.

1. Challenge, Context and Objectives

This section lays the foundation of your case and accounts for 23.3% of your score. If this section is weak, your entry will suffer, because it's key to understanding how big your idea was and how impressive the results were. Judges evaluate whether they have the necessary context about your industry category, competitors, and brand to understand your entry and the degree of challenge represented by your objectives. They will assess the case for both suitability and ambition within the framework of the challenge. Weight will be given to the degree of difficulty and whether the entrant has provided the context to evaluate the case's effectiveness in this section.

Reminder: Judges might not be familiar with your brand's industry, so try to avoid jargon or acronyms.

QUESTION 1A

The context to your brand and business situation. This could include main competitor spend, position in market, category benchmarks, etc. Explain the characteristics or trends in the market (e.g. government regulations, societal trends, weather/environmental situations). Frame what success looks like in your category.

QUESTION 1B

Judges look for clear objectives that are not retrofitted to match the results of the case. We ask you to outline your objectives across the following 3 types:

- **Business:** This should be the one key thing that you wanted to achieve. The ultimate commercial objective that was being discussed in the boardroom. State it as clearly and simply as possible.
- **Marketing:** These objectives should directly link to the customer or target audience in some way and are typically focused on specific behavior changes you want to achieve. Examples may include starting a new behavior, increasing an existing behavior, reducing an existing behavior, stopping a behavior entirely etc. You can have up to 3 of these objectives - only 1 is required.
- **Campaign/Activity:** What did you set out to change or reinforce through your activity? For example, attitudes, perception, social discourse etc. You can have up to 3 of these objectives - only 1 is required.

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

- **Commerce & Shopper Cases:** Include Category/Retailer Growth objectives if applicable.
- **Performance Marketing Cases:** You may provide both Pre-Conversion objectives and Conversion metrics. You must provide at least one conversion objective. Please see the [Objectives Guide](#) for examples of Pre-Conversion and Conversion metrics along the customer journey. Present the performance marketing goals and explain how these goals relate back to the overall brand or organization's strategy and objectives.
- **Sustained Success Cases:** It's important to include change over time for both questions.

2. Insights & Strategy

This section asks you to explain the strategic thinking that enabled you to pivot from the challenge to your results. It counts for 23.3% of your total score.

QUESTION 2A

Explain who the target audience is and why they were the right for your brand, bearing in mind your context, challenge and objectives. Outline if your audience was existing, or new, or both. Describe them using demographics, culture, media behaviors, etc.

- **Commerce & Shopper Cases:** Be sure to highlight the shopper's motivations, mindset, behaviors, and shopper occasion.

QUESTION 2B

Outline your key insight(s) and how your audience's behaviors and attitudes, your research and/or business situation led to or informed them. Your insight(s) may be a consumer, channel or marketplace insight etc. Keep in mind, an insight is not merely a fact or observation, it is the strategic insight, unique to your brand and audience, that was leveraged to help meet your objectives.

Performance marketing cases: Your answer should include the data and audience insights that led to your strategy and idea and can include one or more of the following:

- Any non-data insights (e.g. behavior observation, market research) that complemented your data insights.
- Any data analysis that provided the breakthrough in shaping your strategy.
- New ways of identifying your audience and their search and purchase behavior.
- Any marketing channel insights that was the foundation of your marketing spend channel mix.

QUESTION 2C

The judges are looking to you to describe the core idea or shift you made that drove your effort and led to the breakthrough results. What was at the very heart of the success of this case? Please show how your thinking related back to your insight and audience.

- **Performance Marketing Cases:** In addition to the above, your answer should bring to life your initial strategy and idea on how to target and convert your audience.
Note: In Section 3 (Bringing the Strategy & Idea to Life), you can describe how you optimized or changed your strategy based on real-time performance.
- **Sustained Success Cases:** It's important to include change over time.

3. Bringing the Strategy & Idea to life

Judges are looking for a summary of the key elements of your plan, including your creative work and channel strategy. It's important to help them understand how your plan relates back to your strategy and audience, and how the core components worked together to drive results. This section will be scored based on your answers, the information in the Investment Overview, and the assets you showcase in the creative reel and images. Together they account for 23% of the total score.

Judges review the written case before they view the creative work.

QUESTION 3A

Articulate how you activated your strategy. This may include one or more of the following: communications, brand experience, packaging, a product extension, a retail space (in store or stand-alone), a promotion, sponsorship or partnership, CRM program, search engine marketing, display advertising, affiliate marketing, etc.

QUESTION 3B

Outline the key creative building blocks of the executions for your main marketing vehicles e.g. endline, call-to-actions, format choices, SEM copy, display ads, email copy and visuals, short or long videos etc. If relevant, include any important changes that optimized the creative while the activity was running.

QUESTION 3C

Your channel plan, with clear rationale behind the choice you've made. Judges are looking to understand why you chose specific channels and how they relate to your strategy and audience. Explain how the integral elements worked together to drive results. If relevant, explain how you changed your spend across channels as part of your campaign optimization.

KEY VISUAL

You have the option to upload a single image to accompany your explanation, to show how you brought your strategy and idea to life. It may be a media plan, a marketing mix visual, a flowchart, a calendar, a storyboard, etc.

4. Results

Tie together the story of how your work drove the results. This section is key for a winning entry and accounts for 30% of the overall score. Judges are looking for direct correlations between the objectives and the results of a case.

QUESTION 4A

Results must relate to your objectives and KPIs as outlined in Section 1.

- Explain how the results impacted brand and the brand's business. Why were these metrics/results important to the brand?
- Prove the results are significant using category, competitive and brand context. You should do this by providing context with historical data, industry benchmarks, competitors, etc so that judges can contextualise results. You must include a clear time period for all data shown.
- When providing engagement/social metrics in particular, detail what these meant for the brand and business/organization.
- If you achieved additional results, explain what they were and why they are significant.
- When key metrics are withheld without explanation, judges may assume it is because the results were weak.

QUESTION 4B

Marketing rarely works in isolation. Outside of your effort, what else in the marketplace could have affected the results of this case - positive or negative?

- It is important to make a compelling argument around why marketing led to the results achieved, eliminating or attributing other factors such as weather, business events, etc. that could have contributed to your success.
- When this section is not addressed thoroughly, judges may assume attribution to other factors.



How to craft your entry within guidelines

The Entry: Requirements

The following could result in disqualification and loss of entry fees:

Failing to adhere to the competition and eligibility rules. The creative work and the written text of the entry must be the original work of the credited companies and authors, and the entry must meet the competition requirements. Data presented must be isolated to the United States and work must have run at some point between 6/1/24 and 9/30/25. Results prior to the eligibility time period that help to provide context for judges to assess the significance of results achieved within the eligibility time period are fine to submit. Results that fall after the end of the eligibility period that are directly tied to the work that ran in the eligibility timing are also fine to submit. No work after the cut-off to the eligibility period should be submitted. See the [Eligibility section](#) for further details and special exceptions.

Entry does not meet category definition requirements. Entries are judged based on their effectiveness within the entered category.

Agency names/logos included in the entry form or in the creative materials. Effie is an agency-blind competition; no agency names should be included in the materials that judges will review (entry form, investment overview, creative reel, creative images). Do not include any agency names in your sources – this includes agency names other than your own. The source of data should be referenced as “Agency Research,” “PR Agency Research,” “Media Agency Research,” etc. **Note:** It is fine for agency name to appear in an entry in situations where the agency is the brand for the entered case, or the agency name appears in the creative work that ran publicly.

Data not sourced. All data, claims, facts, etc. presented anywhere in the entry form must reference a specific, verifiable source. Sources must be as specific as possible in documenting all evidence, while not citing specific agency names. Provide source of data, type of research, and the time period covered. The entry portal is set up to encourage sourcing via footnotes. Refer to the following “sourcing data” page for more information.

Directing Judges to External Websites. Entries are judged solely on the materials presented in the written entry and the creative examples supplied (creative reel + images). Entrants aren’t permitted to direct judges to websites for further information or for further examples of work. Ensure all data, details for sources, etc., are included in the written case.

Missing Translation. All non-English creative work must include translation via subtitles or the Translation field on the Creative Examples tab on the Entry Portal.

Violating Creative Example (creative reel + images) Rules. Entrants must follow all creative rules as outlined in the entry kit. This includes but is not limited to: no competitor logos/creative work, the integral creative work must be shown and time limits must be followed. See full rules, including guidelines on editing and content, in the [Creative Requirements](#) section of the entry kit.

The Entry: Sourcing Data

All data, claims, facts, etc. included anywhere in the entry form should include a specific, verifiable source, including dates. Entries that do not source data will be disqualified.

The entry form has a SOURCING box provided at the bottom of each scoring section for all references/footnotes. This allows entrants to provide full sourcing details without word limit restrictions. Here's what you need to do:

1. At the end of a sentence which includes a source, use the SUPERScript feature to number your sources.
2. In the Sourcing box, numerically list your citations. **Sourcing layout: Source of Data/Research, Research/Data Type, Dates Covered.**

Judges cannot click on external websites when reviewing your entry. Be sure to include all key sourcing details like publication, article name, dates, time period covered and additional details that will help judges to understand it is a legitimate source and to verify the data. Include the website of the source when available, in addition to all the details listed above. However, the URL is **not** a substitute for providing the additional details.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

- Because of Effie's specific eligibility period, entrants are required to include the dates covered for all results data presented.
- All data must be included in your response to Sections 1-4 and Investment Overview. The sourcing sections should only be used to provide detailed citation for footnoted sources, not to present new data.
- Use the specific name of the company to reference a source except when the source is an agency (advertising, media or other). Because Effie is an agency-blind competition we require agency research to be referenced via the term "Agency Research." This applies to all agencies and is not limited to the entering agency. For increased specificity, entrants are encouraged to list the type of agency when applicable, e.g. "PR Agency Research", "Media Agency Data", etc. As with all other sourcing, include any relevant citation information (type of research/data, dates covered, etc.). Research companies should be cited by name, and judges encourage third-party data when available.
- Effie reserves the right to check all sources provided for accuracy.

The Entry: Creative Reel

Your creative work is scored as part of Scoring Section 3: *Bringing the Strategy & Idea to Life*, along with your answers to the questions in Section 3 and in the Investment Overview sections of the written Entry Form.

The focus of the reel should be the creative work for the entered case. You don't need to feature all of the items selected in the touchpoints checklist (from the Investment Overview), only those integral to the case's success that are explained in your written case. Any set-up on the reel (re: context, challenge) should not impede the judges' ability to have a clear understanding of the creative work as the audience would have experienced it.

Judges recommend that, at minimum, 70% of the reel is spent showing examples of creative work the audience experienced, or other materials created to bring the idea to life internally or externally. **Judges review the creative reel after reading the written case.** Review the [Effective Entry Guide](#) for judge recommendations regarding the creative reel and images.

New in 2026: Entrants now have the option to include results in the creative reel. This update offers the opportunity for richer, more comprehensive storytelling, showcasing all forms of marketing effectiveness.

- **Updated description and guidance:** Provide a three (3) minute maximum reel (4 minutes for Sustained Success). The reel should show your integral creative work as the audience would have experienced it. You can provide explanation, including results, as long as it does not take time away from showing the work. Explanation and results are not required, and **any results must also be in the written case.** Do not include any confidential information in the creative reel, as it will be shown publicly if your case is an Effie finalist and winner, and edits cannot be made after submission.

MUST INCLUDE

- The original creative work for the entered case that ran in the territory and eligibility time period for the competition.
- At least one complete example of each integral touchpoint, as it ran, to ensure that the judges can see the breadth of the work you've described. It can be helpful to label each creative example by media type ("Outdoor", "Social", etc.)
- Work over 60 seconds may be edited down for time; but entrants are encouraged to keep as close to the original as possible.
- If showing multiple examples of a touchpoint (e.g. 3x TV spots), after you show one example in full, it's fine to edit down the additional examples for time.

DO NOT INCLUDE

- Agency names, logos, images unless they were part of the creative work.
- Competitor creative work or logos. (Exception: permitted if competitor logos/work were included in your campaign materials.)
- Editing that will misconstrue what your audience viewed (e.g. changing the audio during a TV spot).
- **Any confidential information, as creative reels will become public for finalists & winners.**

SPECS

- 1 creative reel per entry
- 3 minute maximum (**Sustained Success entries can be 4 minutes**)
- 250 MB maximum file size
- mp4 format
- High Resolution: 16:9 at 1920x1080.
- Do not include any agency names/logos in the video or in the file name.
- It is helpful to label each creative example by media type ("Outdoor", "Social", etc.)
- **Sustained Success:** Creative examples from three or more years are required, with labelling of the year/time period on the creative reel and images.

TALENT / LICENSING

- Do not add music/stock images that did not run in your original creative work to your reel unless you secure the rights to include those supplemental materials and they do not cause confusion with or take time away from showing the integral creative work.
- Effie honors effective marketing ideas and the successful teams (advertiser and agency) creating them. If your case is a finalist or winner, the creative work (reel and images) will be published.

The Entry: Creative Images

Images of the Creative Work: at least 2 images are required; a maximum of 6 images are allowed.

When the judges have read your case and watched the reel, they'll review images of your work. The images uploaded should complement your reel and help the judges better evaluate the image-based creative elements that ran in front of your audience. It can be helpful to provide images of work best seen as a still image (e.g. website, print ad, direct mail piece, etc.) or you may wish to upload work that you'd like judges to have another look at after watching the reel.

This is an opportunity to showcase your creative work:

- Highlight elements that are better seen as a still image vs. video format.
- Draw further attention to key element you wish to highlight

Technical Requirements:

- .jpg format
- High-res. 15 MB max
- It is helpful to label each creative example by media type ("Outdoor", "Social", etc.)
- Do not include agency names or logos on any creative materials (including file names) you submit unless they were included in the work that ran.
- **Sustained Success:** Indicate time period the work ran as part of the labeling.

Creative work (reel and images) will be shown publicly if your case is a finalist or winner.

Other Requirements: Publicity

Entrants are required to provide the publicity materials below at the time of entry.

❑ PRIMARY PUBLICITY IMAGE

This should be an image of the work that best represents your case. This image will be the primary image of the work for publicity and promotional purposes if the case is a finalist or winner.

Specs: High-res jpg, 15 MB max.

❑ LEAD AGENCY & CLIENT LOGOS

Please provide current company logos for the Lead Agency and Client. Logos are not required for companies designated as Contributing Companies. These will appear on screen at the gala if you're one of our winners, so please make sure the logos are current and hi res.

Specs: High-res, ai/eps preferred; jpg also accepted.

❑ CREATIVE EXAMPLES FROM JUDGING

The Creative Work provided for judging (reel + images) will also be used for publicity purposes.

❑ PUBLIC CASE SUMMARY

In 90 words, provide a summary of your case with no confidential information included.

❑ STATEMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS

In 15 words or less, provide a statement that exemplifies the results of the case, ensuring no confidential information is included.

Other Requirements: Credits

Effie recognizes the effective teamwork needed to create an effective case. You are required to credit all creative and strategic partners who contributed to the effort. Think carefully about your partners - clients; agencies (full service, media, digital, promo, PR, event, etc.), media owners; retailers; etc.

Effie’s policy is that those recognized on the work at time of entry deserve recognition at time of win. At no time will Effie permit individual or company credits to be removed or replaced.

Client and Lead Agency credits are considered final at time of entry and cannot be added after the entry is submitted. Credits must be reviewed by senior account leadership and approved via the Authorization & Verification Form, which can be downloaded in the entry portal after you have input all credits.

- Additions to company and individual credits will only be permitted after time of entry if the entry did not already credit the maximum number. Credit additions require a \$500 fee per request and will not be permitted after April 1, 2026. All credit requests will be reviewed and accepted at the discretion of Effie and are not guaranteed.
- It is the responsibility of the entrant to confirm and accurately submit all agency office names, networks, holding companies, brand names, and client names. If the Effie team uncovers an inconsistency, Effie has the right to amend the credits. The decisions of Effie in all matters relating to the competition shall be final and binding.

COMPANY CREDITS	INDIVIDUAL CREDITS
<p>Lead Agency (1 Required, 2 Maximum) Client (1 Required, 2 Maximum) Contributing Companies (0 Required, 4 Maximum)</p> <p>CO-LEAD AGENCIES: You may credit a second Lead Agency and they will be given equal recognition by Effie. In order to be considered a second lead agency, you must certify that the work done by each agency was of equal weight and each agency deserves equal recognition. Second Lead Agencies must be designated at time of entry; you may not add or remove second lead agencies after the entry period.</p> <p>IN-HOUSE WORK: If you are an advertiser submitting in-house work, please list your company as both the Lead Agency and Client.</p>	<p>Primary Individual Credits (0 Required, 10 Maximum) Secondary Individual Credits (0 Required, 30 Maximum)</p> <p>Primary Individual Credits will be used in situations where space is limited; otherwise, all individuals will be listed in the credits.</p> <p>Individuals credited on your case must be current or former employees of any one of the credited companies.</p>

Please confirm the spelling and formatting of other company names to ensure they'll receive proper credit in the Effie Index® and in all forms of publicity if your case is a finalist or winner.

Read more about the Effie Index here:

effieindex.com/about/

Publication Permissions

Effie stands for effectiveness in marketing, spotlighting marketing ideas that work and encouraging thoughtful dialogue about the drivers of marketing effectiveness.

By providing permission to publish your written case, you are:

Bettering the industry. By allowing other marketers to learn from your success, you are inspiring the industry to raise the bar and make their marketing better.

Bettering the future leaders of our industry. Colleges and universities use Effie case studies in their courses, and Collegiate Effie participants learn how to write their own effective submissions by learning from yours.

Showcasing your team's success in achieving one of the top marketing honors of the year. Effie wins help attract new talent, prove the importance of marketing in business, and strengthen agency-client relationships.

We respect that entries may have information deemed confidential. Within the Entry Portal, entrants are asked to set the publishing permission for their written entry. Entrants may select from the following options:

PUBLISH AS THE CASE WAS SUBMITTED

If you are a finalist or a winner, you agree that your entry may be published as it was submitted and may be reproduced or used by Effie as set out in Clause 4 of the Competition Terms.

PUBLISH AN EDITED VERSION OF THE WRITTEN CASE

If you are a finalist or a winner, you agree to submit an edited version of your case study for publication which may be reproduced or used by Effie as set out in Clause 4 of the Competition Terms. Any edits must adhere closely to the original entry. While you may redact sensitive data, you may not redact any section in its entirety, including results.

If you would like to have a further discussion on Effie's publishing policy, please email usentries@effie.org.

The written case is the only portion of the entry that should contain confidential information. For that reason, the written case is the only portion of the entry that is included in the above publication permission policy. The creative work (reel, images), public case summary, and statement of effectiveness should not include confidential information and may be used however we deem fit, including by reproducing the materials on the effie.org case Library, 'eLearning Platform', 'www.warc.com', 'www.lovethe.com', and 'The Work', and on any future iterations, replacements, extensions or similar associated or affiliated products or services provided by us or our affiliates (together the "Platforms"), on social media platforms via social media accounts controlled by us, and/or offline, along with your public-facing written case, if your

entry becomes a finalist or winner. Work submitted must be original or you must have the rights to submit it. Review the Authorization Form and Competition Terms in the Entry Portal.

JUDGING

Judging events have strict confidentiality protocols and are securely supervised by Effie moderators. Judges are required to sign confidentiality agreements before judging begins. Judges cannot save materials from the judging session and are individually matched with entries and categories that do not pose a conflict of interest.

INDEXING DATA

While judging is confidential and entrants may select publication permission for their written case, Effie understands some entrants may still have concerns regarding sensitive information. When presenting numerical data within the entry, entrants may choose to provide those numbers as percentages or indexes, so that actual numbers are withheld. As with all data points, be sure to include context so the judges understand the significance of the data. Additionally, entrants have the option to select whether to publish their original written case or an edited version of the written case if the case is a finalist or winner.

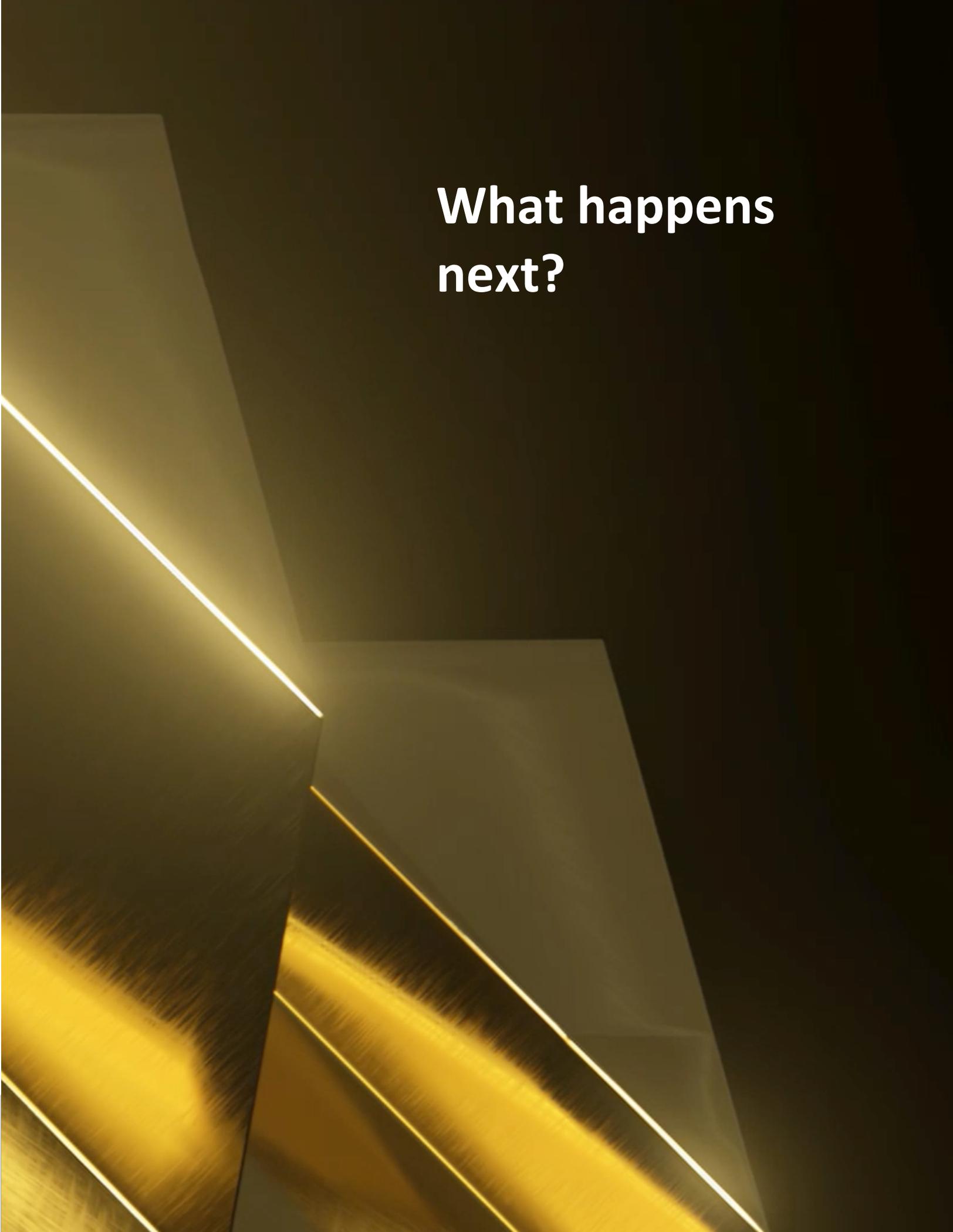
CREATIVE WORK & PUBLICITY MATERIALS

The creative material (reel, images, publicity materials) and case summary you submit into the competition become the property of Effie and the Effie Awards and will not be returned. By entering your work in the competition, the Effie Awards/Effie is automatically granted the right to make copies, reproduce and display the creative materials, case summaries, and statements of effectiveness within the context of your Effie entry for education and publicity purposes.

Creative work, case summaries, and the statement of effectiveness may be used however we deem fit, including by being reproduced in or on all of the Platforms listed above. Because materials for publicity & creative work will be published for all finalists & winners, no confidential information should be included in these elements. Review the Authorization Form and Competition Terms in the Entry Portal.

Please review the Creative Reel section of the Entry Kit for more guidance on licensing/talent.

In extraordinary circumstances, Effie will review requests to submit an edited reel for publication. Such requests should be submitted if the case becomes a finalist, as non-finalist creative reels are only seen by judges and will not be published.



**What happens
next?**

Judging

Your entry will be judged by some of the brightest and most experienced business leaders in the US. We draw on their experience to not only judge the work of their peers but to highlight learning for the industry overall. For more on the judging process, [visit our website linked here](#).

Entries are judged in two rounds. In both rounds, judges evaluate the written case first and then review the creative work (reel and images). Scoring is done anonymously and confidentially. Judges provide written feedback on each case for the entry's Insight Guide.

The Insight Guide is a useful tool that includes direct feedback and advice from judges who reviewed your entry, providing more detailed understanding of your entry's scoring. Insight Guides can be purchased within the entry platform at time of submission or after submission. Please refer to the Deadlines & Fees section of this entry kit for additional information.

Judges are specifically matched with cases that do not prove a conflict of interest. For this reason, it is critical that entrants provide market and category context to give judges a clear understanding of the category situation and explain the KPIs provided in the context of the category. In all rounds of judging, judges provide scores across the four pillars of the Effie Framework:



The judges' scores determine which entries will be finalists and which finalists are awarded a Gold, Silver, or Bronze Effie trophy. Each level has minimum scores required to be eligible for finalist status or for an award, therefore it is possible that a category may produce one or multiple winners of any level or perhaps no winners at all - no matter the number of finalists.

The highest-scoring Gold Effie winners are eligible for the Grand Effie Award, the award for the single best case entered in a given year. As the Grand Jury expresses their collective opinion, the winning case represents both the most effective case of the year and a message that will be sent to the industry about lessons for the way forward. Only a select number of the highest-scoring Gold winning cases are considered contenders for the Grand Effie award.

Interested in becoming a judge?

We welcome nominations for senior marketers across the industry for judging. Participating as a judge provides a unique opportunity to gain firsthand insight into the awards program, understand the judging process, and experience confidentiality protocols firsthand.

To nominate a judge, please complete our [**Judge Application Form**](#).

If you win

WINNING AN EFFIE

Winning an Effie Award means your work stands out as one of the most effective and impactful marketing efforts, combining insightful strategy, creative brilliance, and proven market results. As the competition continues to grow, winning has never been more challenging or rewarding.

Winner notifications will be sent late spring 2026. The 2026 Effie Awards United States Gala will be held in late May.

TROPHY

A complimentary trophy is provided to each winning lead agency and client company. The client and lead agency is the default engraving setting for all trophies, unless co-lead agencies or co-clients are designated, in which case both lead agencies/clients would appear on the trophy.

Complimentary trophies will be shipped to each Lead Agency Main Contact in summer 2026, following the gala.

If your case is a finalist or winner, and you're interested in purchasing additional personalized trophies and/or certificates with your choice of credited company(ies) or individuals showcased, please visit the [Effie Store linked here](#).

EFFIE INDEX

The Effie Index (effieindex.com), identifies and ranks the most effective agencies, marketers, brands, networks, and holding companies by analyzing finalist and winner data from Effie Awards competitions around the world. Announced annually, it is the most comprehensive global ranking of marketing effectiveness.

If your case becomes a 2026 Effie finalist or winner, the submitted credits will be used to tally the Effie Index results. Because different point values are given to lead and contributing companies, it is critical that all brands and companies are properly credited at time of entry.

We request that all entrants communicate with their own corporate/communications office and the offices of their credited partner companies and/or PR departments to ensure all client and agency company names are credited correctly. This information should be communicated to contributing companies as well.

AGENCY RANKINGS

Agency office rankings are compiled using the Agency Name, city and state, as listed on the Company & Individual Credits Tab in the entry portal. Whether or not the city/state is included in the "Agency Name" field, the Index rankings will be based off the location of the office using the city/state fields. Effie encourages consistency year-to-year. Crediting of agency office is based on which agency office(s) did the work for the winner or finalist case. If two agency offices did the work, both should be credited per the Index requirement to credit all strategic and creative partners.

Be sure to guide all teams entering in the competition within your office to list the company name in a consistent manner - this includes consistent capitalization, spacing, punctuation, abbreviations, etc. This will ensure all finalist/winning cases from your office location can easily be tabulated together.

AGENCY NETWORK & HOLDING COMPANY RANKINGS

Agency networks and holding companies are selected in the entry portal.

The way the agency name is entered in the agency field does not affect the Agency Network or Holding Company rankings, though it will be reviewed for accuracy.

Effie has the right to amend the credits for consistency and accuracy. The decisions of Effie in all matters relating to the competition shall be final and binding.



Appendix

The background features a dark, almost black, field. Overlaid on this are several large, semi-transparent, light-colored geometric shapes, primarily triangles and quadrilaterals, which appear to be layered. A prominent feature is a bright, glowing yellow line that starts from the left edge and extends diagonally across the middle of the frame. Another similar, though slightly less intense, glowing yellow line runs parallel to it, positioned lower and further to the right. The overall effect is one of depth and dynamic movement, with the glowing lines suggesting light or energy passing through the translucent planes.

Category 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:

- Business-to-Business - Products
- 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:

- Multicultural - Non-Profits
- Multicultural - Products
- 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:

- Experiential Marketing: Live
- Experiential Marketing: Digital
- 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:

- Marketing Disruptors - Products
- 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:

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

Enter in one of three sub-categories:

- Small Budgets - Non-Profit
- Small Budgets - Products
- 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:

- Sustained Success – Non-Profits
- Sustained Success – Products
- 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:

- Timely Opportunity – Products
- 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/manufacture 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:

- Engaged Community - Products
- 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:

- Utilize personalized/custom-tailored creative messages.
- Explain how data impacted the media plan through clear measurement & analytics.
- 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

- Media Innovation - Emerging & New Channels
- 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:

- Environmental - Brands
- 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:

- Social Good - Brands
- Social Good - Non-Profit
- 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:

- Seasonal Marketing - Products
- Seasonal Marketing - Services

Contact us

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR ENTRY

For any questions regarding the entry process, materials, categories, rules, etc., don't hesitate to contact our team at usentries@effie.org.

CASE LIBRARY & SUBSCRIPTIONS

The purpose of the Case Library is to educate about effective marketing and to showcase the companies and individuals creating effective work to enhance learning in our industry. Take a look at what the Effie Case Library has to offer [here](#). For more information, email our dedicated team on subscriptions@effie.org.

JUDGING

We welcome nominations of senior marketers across the industry for judging. Participating as a judge is one of the most valuable ways to learn about the awards, understand how judging works, and confidentiality rules firsthand. To nominate a judge, please complete our [Judge Application Form](#).

If you have questions about the judging process, email usjudging@effie.org.

EFFIE INDEX

The Effie Index identifies and ranks the most effective agencies, marketers, brands, networks, and holding companies by analyzing finalist and winner data from Effie Award competitions around the world. Announced annually, it is the most comprehensive global ranking of marketing effectiveness.

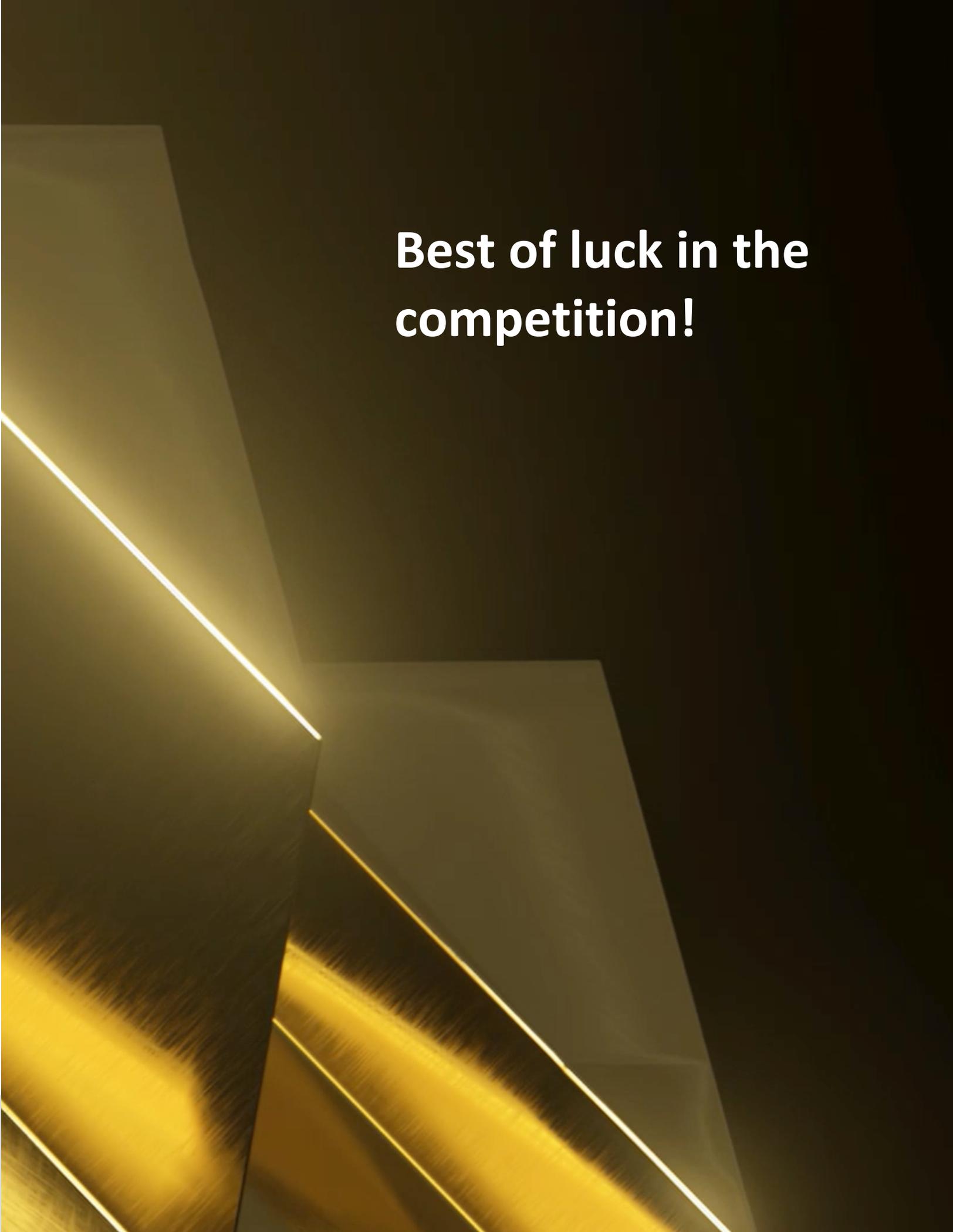
For more information email us at index@effie.org.

ACADEMY

The Effie Academy equips marketers with the tools to build cultures of effectiveness inside their teams. From self-directed courses to immersive bootcamps, marketers of all levels gain proven effectiveness skills through our diverse portfolio of learning programs. Anchored in the Effie Framework, the Effie Academy transforms award-winning cases into practical applications, delivering global insights from 125+ markets.

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**Best of luck in the
competition!**