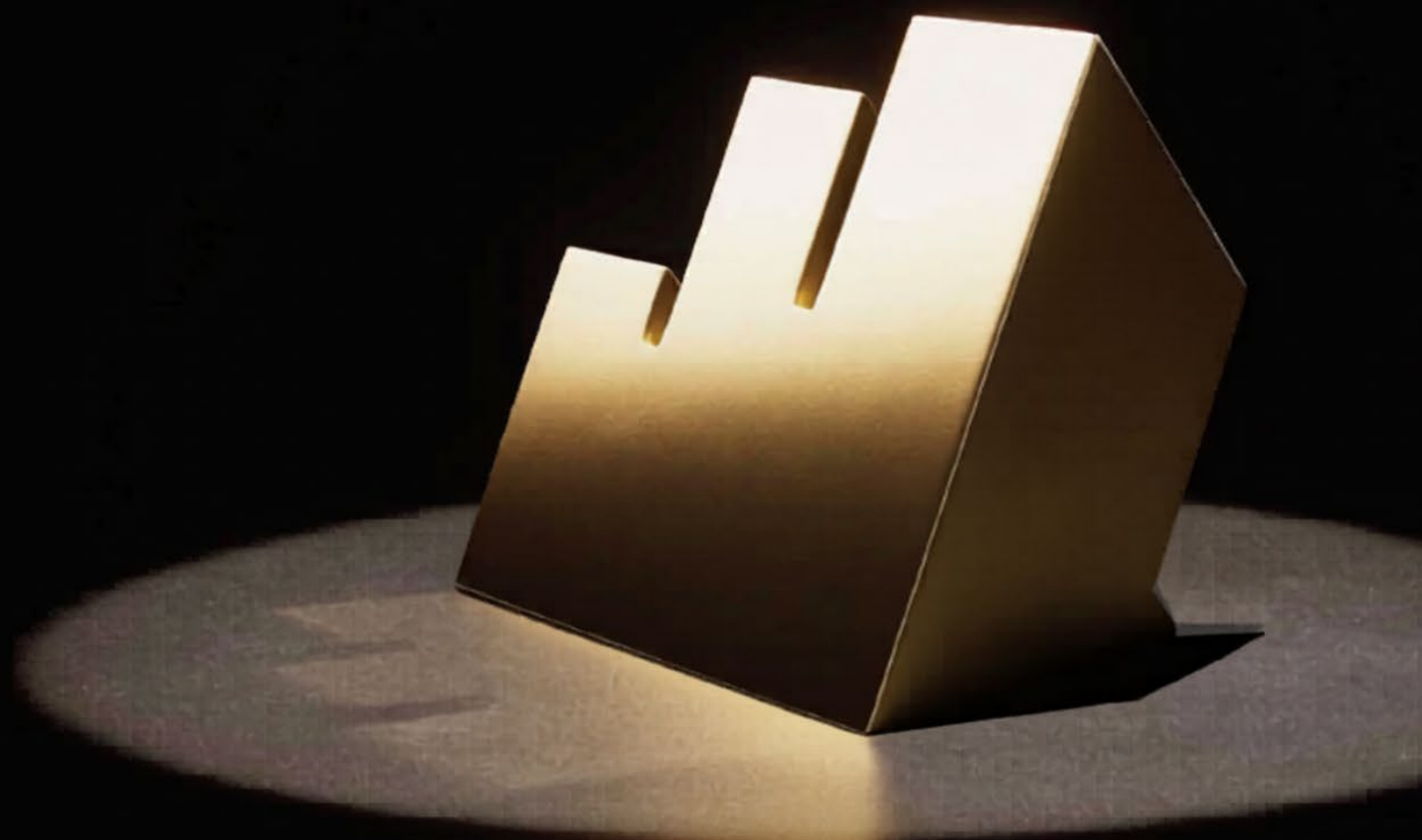


# 2026 Category Definitions



# 2026 Effie Awards Category Overview

## CATEGORY LIMIT

Efforts can be entered into multiple categories under Industry or Specialty Categories. Of the total number of entries, only one can be an industry category.

- When entering any of these categories, present the submission 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 information required by the category definition.
- Each entry should be customized to speak to the specifics of each category whenever applicable. Judges express difficulty in effectively evaluating a case when an entry wasn't tailored appropriately.
- You will need to complete a separate entry form and pay the entry fee for each category.
- Category definitions provide guidance regarding the types of products/services that may enter; however, it's not an exclusive list. For questions regarding what category best fits your brand, email [awards@aaaa.com.hk](mailto:awards@aaaa.com.hk)
- Effie reserves the right to re-categorize entries, split/redefine categories, and/or refuse entries at any time. Test market entries are not eligible for the Effie Awards Hong Kong competition.

## INDUSTRY CATEGORIES

There are 28 Industry categories to choose from. You may only enter one industry category per effort, though it is not required to enter an industry category.

## SPECIALTY CATEGORIES

Specialty categories are designed to address a specific business situation or challenge. There are over 30 specialty categories, focusing on General Specialty, Business Challenges, Commerce & Shopper, Digital, Health & Wellness, Marketing Innovation Solutions, Media, Positive Change, Topical & Annual Events and International Marketing.

## INDUSTRY CATEGORIES

Maximum of one industry category per effort.

It is not required to enter an Industry category.

1. Automotive
2. Banking and Finance: General
3. Banking and Finance: Digital Wallet / Payment Solutions
4. Beauty / Fragrance / Personal Care
5. Beverages: Alcohol / Non-Alcohol
6. Culture & The Arts
7. Delivery Services
8. Education & Training
9. Fashion & Accessories
10. Fast Moving Consumer Goods
11. Food
12. Gaming & E-Sports
13. Government Services / Non-Profit Organizations or Activities / Transportation / Utilities
14. Health & Wellness: Health, Fitness & Wellness
15. Health & Wellness: Healthcare Services
16. Health & Wellness: Over-the-counter (OTC)
17. Health & Wellness: Rx
18. Home Furnishings & Appliances
19. Insurance
20. Luxury Goods
21. New Product & Services Introduction
22. Office/ Computer Equipment / Electrical Appliances
23. Pet Care
24. Real Estate Agents / Real Estate Developments
25. Restaurants / Fast Food
26. Supermarkets / Shops & Stores / Retail / Etail
27. Telecom & Internet Services / Media & Entertainment / Electronics \*Updated
28. Travel / Tourism / Recreational / Leisure Facilities

## SPECIALTY CATEGORIES

### GENERAL SPECIALTY

- 29. Business to Business
- 30. Experiential Marketing: Live or Digital
- 31. Experiential Marketing: Hybrid
- 32. Use of Content

### BUSINESS CHALLENGES

- 33. Corporate Reputation
- 34. David vs. Goliath
- 35. Marketing Disruptors
- 36. Small Budgets: Non-Profit / Products / Services
- 37. Sustained Success: Non-Profit / Products / Services

### COMMERCE & SHOPPER

- 38. Crisis Response / Critical Pivot
- 39. Data-Driven
- 40. Digital Commerce
- 41. Experiential Shopper Marketing
- 42. New Product / Service Introduction
- 43. Omni-Channel Shopper Solution
- 44. Retail Media

### DIGITAL

- 45. Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- 46. Engaged Community: Products / Services
- 47. Influencer Marketing: Micro to Macro influencers
- 48. Influencer Marketing: Mega-Influencers
- 49. Performance Marketing
- 50. Social Media Marketing

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

- 51. Disease Awareness & Education: Charitable / Research Funding
- 52. Disease Awareness & Education: Non-Profit
- 53. Disease Awareness & Education: Pharma / Corporate

### MARKETING INNOVATION SOLUTIONS

- 54. Business / Product / Service Innovation
- 55. Customer Experience

### MEDIA

- 56. Data-Driven
- 57. Media Content Partnerships
- 58. Media Idea
- 59. Media Innovation: Emerging & New Channels / Existing Channels

### POSITIVE CHANGE *\*Updated*

- 60. Environmental: Brands / Non-Profit
- 61. Social Good: Brands / Non-Profit
- 62. Social Good: Diversity / Equity / Inclusion

### TOPICAL & ANNUAL EVENTS

- 63. Crisis Response / Critical Pivot
- 64. Current Events
- 65. Seasonal Marketing: Products / Service

### INTERNATIONAL MARKETING *\*New*

- 66. International Marketing

# DEFINITIONS

## INDUSTRY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

**Automotive:** All vehicles including cars, trucks, motorcycles, vans, both brand and model advertising; automotive aftermarket products such as gasoline, motor oil, tires, batteries, paint, quick-lube, oil change, muffler, transmission, windshield wipers, enhancements, etc.

**Banking & Finance: General:** Banking & Financial Services products and services including: overall corporate/brand image and capabilities of a financial institution; specific products or services including reward/loyalty cards, financial planning, retirement funds, investment, home banking, loans, mortgage, mutual funds, etc.

**Banking & Finance: Digital Wallet / Payment Solutions:** Specific products or services including credit, debit, prepaid cards, mobile payment services etc.

**Beauty / Fragrance / Personal Care:** Includes cosmetics, fragrances, hair products, dental products, nail products, skincare treatments, salons, spas, etc.

**Beverages: Alcohol / Non-Alcohol:** Beer, champagne, liquor, wine, hard seltzers, wine coolers; non-alcoholic beverages include diet and non-diet soda, coffee, tea, juices, milk, milk substitutes, bottled water, sparkling water and 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.

**Fashion & Accessories:** Includes all fashion, accessories, jewelry, eyewear, styling services, clothing rentals, etc.

**Fast Moving Consumer Goods:** All fast-moving consumer goods products, non-food items only, including cleaning products, household goods, toiletries etc.; refer to Food Category for food items and Beverages Category for drinks.

**Food:** Fresh, packaged, and frozen foods, including snacks & desserts.

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

**Government Services / Non-Profit Organizations or Activities / Transportation / Utilities:**

**Government Services:** Political/election campaigns, public information, armed forces marketing communications.

**Non-Profit Organizations or Activities:** Not-for-profit, charities, non-profit organizations and its activities.

**Transportation:** All transport related services, including public transport, ride sharing and hailing services, subway systems, bike shares, car rentals, etc.

**Utilities:** companies that supply the community with services on electricity, gas, water and broadband network.

**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/camps, training camps and facilities, etc.

**Health & Wellness: Healthcare Services:** Efforts that were developed for hospitals, Health maintenance organizations (HMOs), health insurance companies, referral services, 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/ 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.

**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.

**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.

**Insurance:** Communications 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, health, travel, business, etc.)

**Luxury Goods:** Includes products, services and experiences that target to upmarket consumers and customers.

**New Product & Services Introduction:**

Any effort 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 eligible. Effie defines line extension as:

- Any 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.).
- A derivative product that adds or modifies features without significantly changing the price.
- Products that bear the same brand name and offer the consumer varied options (e.g. diet version of drink).

**Office / Computer Equipment / Electrical Appliances:** Includes office furniture & fixtures, smartphones, tablets, computers, phones, smartwatches, consumer & office electronics, etc.

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

**Real Estate Agents / Real Estate Developments:** Home/Office rentals, both residential and commercial project.

**Restaurants / Fast Food:** Quick service, casual dining, cafés and restaurants. Any type of restaurant or fast food may enter.

**Supermarkets / Shops & Stores / Retail / Etail:** Open to all retail companies (online and/or brick & mortar) with general or specific merchandise, including department stores; all scales of supermarkets, discount/bulk retailers; online retailers and other specialty stores, etc.

**Telecom & Internet Services / Media & Entertainment / Electronics:**

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

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

**Electronics:** Devices may be aimed at consumers or businesses. TVs, radios, mobile devices, home entertainment, laptops, tablets, cameras, computer hardware, game console, drones, external or integrated VR/AR devices, sound systems, etc.

**Travel / Tourism / Recreational / Leisure Facilities:** All forms of travel/tourism including cruises, hotels, resorts, amusement parks, travel websites and booking services, travel tours, tourism campaigns, etc.

## SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

### GENERAL SPECIALTY

**Business-to-Business:** This category is for marketing efforts from businesses targeting other businesses. Business-to-business efforts for any type of product or service, from any marketplace segment, are eligible to enter.

**Experiential Marketing: Live or Digital:** 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 this category if only live experiences or digital experiences were involved.

**Experiential Marketing: Hybrid:** 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 this category if live, in-person experiences were blended with digital elements to create integrated, multi-channel experiences that maximize consumer engagement.

**Use of Content:** This category is for efforts that effectively reached their audience through the creation of original branded content that is not advertising. The award honors branded content led ideas that are the heart of the communications program.

## BUSINESS CHALLENGES

**Corporate Reputation:** This category is for marketing efforts that promote corporations, not exclusively their products. Includes sponsorships, image & 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:**

This is an award for smaller, new, or emerging brands:

- making inroads against big, established leaders
- taking on “sleeping giants”
- moving into a new product/service field beyond their current category and set of competitors to tackle a dominant leader

Entrants must detail the business challenge, the competitive landscape, and how their business succeeded despite the odds. You are required to define your competitive landscape, including the market difference between the David and Goliath to demonstrate why your brand was a David.

Judges will deduct from your case if you do not sufficiently prove that your brand is a David in the situation.

**Marketing Disruptors:** This award is for efforts that grew their business/brand by changing the marketing model in ways that drive the industry forward. A marketing disruptor of any size can enter. Entrants must detail the marketing challenge, the competitive landscape and how they succeeded by changing the existing marketing model for the brand/category.

### **Small Budgets: Non-Profit/Products/Services**

To acknowledge local efforts working with a budget of HK\$ 0.5 million or less, including sponsorships and non-traditional media expenses. It must represent the only communications for this brand during the qualifying time period. The entry may not be for a line extension, a sub brand, or have an overarching brand campaign to support it.

### **Sustained Success: Non-Profits/Products/Services**

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 years' 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.*

### **COMMERCE & SHOPPER**

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.

**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.

**Data-Driven:** Brands and retailers using data, analytics, and technology to identify and match the right shopper to the right message at the right time should enter this category. Award submissions should explain how entrants utilized data (i.e., category data, retail channel data, shopper data) to guide commercial growth strategies, support the shopper journey, and ultimately meet their business objectives and impact the purchase decision. Highlight any advanced analytic capabilities that contributed to the success of the program, such as market mix modelling, price elasticity, and Return On Investment (ROI) measurement & analysis.

**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 Shopper 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 as 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.

**New Product / Service Introduction:** To enter this category, your case must address the commerce/shopper effort surrounding the launch of your 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 you are 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

## DIGITAL

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.

### **Engaged Community: Products / Services**

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: Micro to Macro influencers**

For brands that effectively worked with key influencers to reach their target audience to achieve short or long-term marketing goals. Influencers/opinion leaders may be social media/vertical platform leaders, brand ambassadors, bloggers, etc. - from micro to macro. Clearly identify the strategy, the desired audience, and why the influencer was important to that audience. Explain why the brand selected that influencer, what the influencer did for the audience, how they were used to carry out marketing activities, and what consumer behaviors were impacted, and a result, how the business was impacted.

Note: Celebrities and top idols will be classified as mega-influencers

**Influencer Marketing: Mega-influencers**

For brands that effectively worked with mega-influencers to reach their target audience to achieve short or long-term marketing goals. Mega influencers including celebrities, top idols etc. Clearly identify the strategy, the desired audience, and why the influencer was important to that audience. Explain why the brand selected that influencer, what the influencer did for the audience, how they were used to carry out marketing activities, and what consumer behaviors were impacted, and a result, how the business was impacted.

**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 Marketing:** This category is for campaigns that set out with the explicit purpose of using social as the primary touchpoint or have social at their heart. The kind of idea that is specifically designed to take advantage of the socially connected consumer and the influence of social. Judges are looking for campaigns that begin with a social idea, as opposed to advertising or integrated campaigns with a social media element. They will need a clear rationale for why social was the right way to tackle the brief, and evidence of how social activity measurably and materially drove the commercial result. It is not enough to count the number of impressions, likes or shares. You will need to measure and prove the commercial value of social through the direct effect it had on audience behavior or perceptions and demonstrate correlation with the achieved business results.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

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.

## MARKETING INNOVATION SOLUTIONS

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:** In this category, innovative single marketing & business activities or entire marketing programs will be awarded. You can 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 of a business, brand, product or service. If communication was a significant element of marketing mix, work should be submitted in another competition category of Effie.

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:** In this category, innovative single marketing & business activities or entire marketing programs will be awarded. You can 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. If communication was a significant element of marketing mix, work should be submitted in another competition category of Effie.

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.

## MEDIA

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: Emerging & New Channels / Existing Channels**

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

## POSITIVE CHANGE <sup>\*updated</sup>

### **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 - Brands / Non-Profit:** 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 3 sub-categories:

- Social Good - Brand
- Social Good - Non-Profit
- Social Good - Diversity / Equity / Inclusion

## TOPICAL & ANNUAL EVENTS

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**

This category is for cases that effectively leveraged immediate relevance, interest or importance via a targeted marketing/PR strategy around current news & events (e.g. World Cup, Olympics, economic situations, social issues, etc.).

Note: Annual events should enter the Seasonal Marketing category.

### **Seasonal Marketing - Products / Services**

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 will honor those efforts that effectively capitalized on a season, holiday or annual cultural event to drive results for their business.

## INTERNATIONAL MARKETING <sup>\*new</sup>

**International Marketing:** This category is for campaigns that run in other countries but are designed to generate financial, sales or other results directly in the home market of the Effie Awards program. The work is not required to have run in the local market. However, the main focus of the entry must be on the measurable results achieved in the local market that can be directly linked to the work that ran in other market(s).

- Examples: a local based e-commerce site that markets in other geographies but that manage the sales process and collect revenue directly in the local market (i.e. not via a subsidiary or distribution partner in other geographies); or inbound tourism campaigns where results such as visitor numbers, spend, etc are recognized in the local market.
- Judging: The link between the activity conducted in other geographies and the results in the local market need to be clear. To enable this, some results from the other markets are permissible (for example, soft advertising measures such as awareness; enquiries initiated in markets of origin). However, there must be concrete results in the local market to validate the entry.