



Awarding Ideas That Work

Effie Awards

Comments from the US Jury

This document was created to help entrants submit an effective entry.

The information and statements made in this document do not represent the opinions of The Effie® Awards organization, board of directors, steering committee, or staff – all comments and data presented – except for the Effie advice - are straight from the industry executives who dedicated their time to serve on an Effie Jury.

We hope you find the information useful as you prepare your cases for the 2010 competition. For additional insight, visit the winner's showcase at www.effie.org to view past winning cases and work.

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Judging Process

Effie entries are judged by some of the brightest and most experienced business leaders handpicked from around the world.

Judges are asked to evaluate specific criteria in scoring a marketing cases' overall effectiveness, and provide four separate scores analyzing specific attributes of the work. The breakdown is as follows:

SCORING SYSTEM

Strategic Challenge + Objectives =	23%
Idea =	23%
Bringing the idea to life =	23%
Results =	30%
	100% of final score

The judges' scores determine which entries are awarded a gold, silver or bronze Effie trophy. Each winning level – gold, silver, bronze –has a minimum score required in order for a finalist to be eligible for an award. Effie Trophies are awarded in each category at the discretion of the judges. It is possible that a category may produce one, two, three or four winners of any level or perhaps no winners at all.

2009 Case Scores

On average the **Results** and **Bringing the Idea to Life** sections had the strongest scores across all cases (entries, finalists, winners).

On average across all cases (entries, finalists, winners) the **Strategic Challenge & Objectives** section received the lowest scores.

Effie Winners - effie.org/ideas_that_work

We encourage entrants to visit the winner showcase section of effie.org to read past winning cases and to view the winning work, keeping in mind that all scoring sections are important to pay attention to when preparing your entry.

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Judge Insight: Tell a Story

Be Clear

- "Entrants need to show why objectives are important."
- "Clear concise information"
- "Year on year context"
- "Simple, clear and realistic about context and results"
- "A clear argument with solid linkage from one section to the next."
- "Objectives and results should relate to target audience."

Simplicity and clarity wins.

Show us your smarts, be clear, concise and tell us a good story. A story that worked.

How judges described entries they didn't like:

- "Too complicated"
- "Overblown"
- "Too long and dull"
- "Confusing"
- "Unchecked grammar"

And remember, you're talking to real, qualified professionals, but we'd rather read something more like a blend between U.S. Weekly and the Economist than a report from a research company. Avoid marketing jargon like the plague.

Be Concise

- "Short, to the point, with key insights clear."
- "Clarity in as few words as possible."
- "Staying on the message."

Being concise is critical. We're all smart, experienced people. We get it.

If the case is deserving, it should be very easy (and short) to write up. It shouldn't be a length test.

EFFIE ADVICE: You can't write your way to an Effie, but you can certainly write your way OUT of an Effie.

Be Consistent

- "The best ones were concisely presented, had a clear idea with results that matched strategy; had a style idea, cohesively communicated across media."
- "Clear thread to tie together all sections"
- "Seamless from idea to execution."

Tell us the story. It should have a scary beginning, an interesting and exciting middle, and a happy ending. Make me want to read every word, keep me engaged with how you've solved the problem and saved the day.

What judges are looking for:

- "Focused story with daunting goals, an inspiring idea, brilliantly executed, with impressive results."
- "Clear and compelling"
- "Well crafted, rewarding to read"
- "Some use of humor"

EFFIE ADVICE: Have someone else who hasn't worked on the campaign read and critique your work. Ask them where it falls down in interest, in brevity and in clarity.

Judge Insight: Take on a Challenge

How judges described entries they liked:

- "True innovation and leadership"
- "Shows desire to take risks"

Improvisational marketing is critical in reaching a faded target; need to be flexible and allow for shifts in execution as early results dictate.

This is a great culmination of marketers that deserve to be recognized even in tough economic times.

- "The ones that took a real challenge approach stood out the most."

Judge Insight: Take on a Challenge
(cont.)

How judges described entries they didn't like:

- "A lot safer than previous cases."

Judging the Effies is a great way to get a snapshot of the problem of the marketing. The great cases really stand out and inspire you to go and do greater work.

Judge Insight: Integrate Multiple Mediums

How judges described entries they liked:

- "Media innovation was brilliant."
- "Campaigns needed to be multi-channel to receive higher scores.... A dilemma for agencies who only do the general."
- "More community language this year overall, which is a good thing."

Don't be afraid of technology/media, use consumers as brand evangelists.

How judges described entries they didn't like:

- "No acknowledgement on the customer engagement revolution that is changing marketing."

I would think entrants would profit from preparing their case as if it was to be heard by a jury in a court of law.

Judge Insight: Present Your Case

How judges described entries they liked:

- "Well prepared"
- "Honesty"
- "Adherence to template"
- "Connection between objectives and results."

Be authentic, consumers know when you're not.

How judges described entries they didn't like:

- "Poor presentation"
- "Typos in some"

- "Get the grammar right"
- "Lot of great insights not always well executed."

EFFIE ADVICE: *Have someone else read the case and ask them - What were your unanswered questions? Those questions are exactly why a judge will downscore your case.*

It is truly the one industry award that is based on how well the campaign performs in the marketplace. The high level of creative quality is usually inherent in the submission. Without great creative, you can't get great results.

Judges on the work

How judges described entries they liked:

- "Very engaging, unpredictable"
- "Inventive, original work"
- "Fresh, innovative, breakthrough"
- "Big idea and risk taking; out of the box"

How judges described entries they didn't like:

- "Execution did not live up to the idea"
- "The creative was way too traditional"
- "Predictable"

Please keep the objectives concise, measurable and relevant to the challenge. Also, be sure to provide a brief description of the target audience.

Judges on the challenge and objectives

What makes for a great challenge and strong objectives?

- "A clear articulation of the problem to solve."
- "Set up of context - challenge or opportunity."
- "Specific, tangible objectives."
- "Cultural challenge, brand challenge, business challenge clearly outlined."

How judges described entries they didn't like:

- "More quantifiable objectives, not just make it higher."
- "Strategic one-liners were benign and had no quantifiable backing."
- "Need more about past learning applied, less retro-fitting."
- "No context on past year spend, competitive situation – if I don't know where you've been I can't judge what you achieved."

Judges on **the idea**

If you can't explain an idea in one sentence, then you don't have an idea.

What makes a great idea?

- "Clearly and solidly linking target, strategic message and visual identity with creativity."
- "Simplicity. More of an umbrella idea."
- "Identifying true opportunity for differentiation and brilliant execution."
- "Either the strategic or creative idea inspiring expressed in as few words as possible."
- "Something breakthrough, universally appealing, emotionally grabs you."

How do you bring the idea to life?

- "Seamless and uncompromised execution."
- "Show the idea in action."
- "Outstanding creativity and thinking and engaging all touch points."
- "Multi-disciplinary efforts demonstrating the strength and elasticity of an idea."
- "Consistency. Integration by design (not default) across different platforms. Adapting the message to the channel."

Video and text should be used in a mutually supportive way -- use the distinct advantages of each medium to emphasize different aspects of the case vs. just saying the same thing.

What judges want to see more of:

- "More about how the media mix was determined. Sometimes felt that everything was thrown at it to see what would stick."
- "More focus on media strategy. Entrants mentioned tv and print ads but didn't always mention where they ran and how they appealed to the target."
- "I'd like to see more ideas with a cultural impact."

Show how you are performing against competitors. That context makes a huge difference. Everyone has results that they can make look good. Context makes it real.

Judges on results

What makes for great results?

- "Include competitive context."
- "Charts, comparisons from a year ago, sales versus years."

EFFIE ADVICE: *Be future-focused and count learning as a result. What didn't you achieve that you wish you had? What will you do going forward?*

- "Clear, honest data. Easy to tell when something is omitted."
- "Sales, sentiment, ideas generated by customers."
- "Not only achieving internal sales goal but brand building measures as well; longevity of the effort."
- "Tie into the objectives and show enough context to be evaluated. For example, if claiming to reverse declines, show the drop before the recovery."
- "Talk about the scale of couponing, price cuts, etc. - no information or context on these means a downscore."

Don't Inflate Results

- "Saying things like "exceeded by 520%" just makes me think that the objectives were stupid rather than results being good."
- "Clear, contextualized, and believable; too many set objectives low and then "exceed" them... it feels like they're reverse engineered."
- "It feels as if the cases were written in reverse, beginning with results and then results justified."

Connecting your results back to the decisions you made will better ensure fair evaluations.

EFFIE ADVICE: *Provide as much connection and context as you can to justify that it was the communications that drove the results.*

- "Tie them directly to objectives."
- "Clear alignment with objectives."
- "Beyond impressive stats, results that are clearly and directly connected to the campaign."

- "Clearly articulated against objectives with baselines for comparison/reference."

In case you haven't gotten it yet...

"Compare objectives vs. results in this section directly."

EFFIE ADVICE:

- *Make sure you link together objectives and results together, but don't create objectives after the fact to make your story more pat. Judges can see right through this.*
- Talk about the rest of the market and put your results in context. Maybe you didn't achieve your goal but in context of the bottom dropping out of the market and everyone else achieving stagnant growth – there's a story to tell.
- Don't assume judges know anything about your marketplace – judges are specifically matched with categories where they will not have a conflict of interest – hence they may not know what equals strong success in the luxury market or the automotive market – you need to tell them.
- Remember that judges represent a broad swath of the industry – if you are presenting PR results there will likely be a judge with extensive PR experience in your room – make sure you present the standard measures they would expect or explain why you don't have them. Same for digital, etc.

Judges on trends in marketing communications

Consumer Involvement

- "Higher consumer engagement and interactivity, more integrated."
- "Consumers are now in control of the information."
- "A lot of work still speaks *at* the customer and trends are becoming how to integrate a customer's values in the conversation."

Innovating Under Economic Constraints

- "Brands are able to be as, if not more, effective with limited dollars, only if they can maintain a high level of creativity."
- "More emphasis on cost effective solution, more use of web based communities."

EFFIE ADVICE: *Innovation comes in many areas - it might be the message, the visuals and media mix, or re-imagining the target. Highlight new learnings.*

Judges on the Effies and Entries

“The most compelling trend in marketing should be innovation, beginning with the product itself.”

“The Effies are a great way to see how work should be evaluated. A great ad without results is not worth a dime.”

“The Effies provide a unique look across industries for benchmarks of creative impact.”

Stretching brands' creativity to integrate them into how people are living; you can't just buy space for promotion anymore.

“It is important to consider how the entire mix of marketing activities works together. The Effies allow for this.”

“Great ideas with great marketing plans make for great business results... and the coveted Effie.”

“Great work is not just great creative or great strategy or great media plan. It's all of that, combined, that results in great results. Effies are about the total package. Does it all work? Was it all smart? Was it all unexpected and appropriate and meaningful? This is what makes effective strategic communication. Most important, did the audience care?”

“ A great Effie Entry tells a cohesive story that starts with friction, unveils interesting thought, entertains and proves its worth. ”

Brand Experience – thoughts from the Jury

“ Great Brand Experiences last far beyond the initial communication, they become anecdotal, they rise above the monotony of life and become something else. Great Brand Experiences should change your life. ”

“ An experience involves but includes more than a product demo, game, film, or pop-up store. It is often all these things combined. Intelligently. The result being something immersive and enduring. It also has different levels of engagement. This means that a person who wants to spend 5 minutes with the “experience” can find an exciting way to spend 5 minutes with it. But on the flip side, someone who wants to spend 5 hours with it can spend 5 hours with it. Levels of engagement is important because it gives dimension to the “experience” – there is always something else to explore. ”

Brand Experience - What are some trends in the way brands communicate with their targets?

“ The trend continues that companies are trying to interrupt people’s lives rather than contribute to them. Immersive, well-executed experiences are chances for companies to contribute, meaningfully, to people’s ambitions and lives. However, we are still using them as attention-grabbing, life-disrupting stunts. These case studies scream “Look at me” rather than “Let’s do something interesting together.” We need desperately to gravitate to the latter. ”

“ It struck me that most examples entered were either living on- or offline and predominantly ‘one-off’ marketing ideas with a rather short life span. Hence, I’d have liked to see more permanent immersive 3D brand experiences and examples that live – just as people do – seamlessly on- & offline = nonlinear. ”

“ While hard data (sales in relation to investments = ROI) must be the ultimate metric for the Effies, I’d like to see submissions mix in more soft data (think engagement metrics). And not only look at success from company terms but audience terms as well (i.e. peer ratings). ”

How to Learn More

- Read through the Entry Form instructions + Entry Kit
- Review in careful detail the ten reasons a case may be disqualified from Effie and make sure none apply to your case.
 - Particularly check and make sure all data throughout the entry includes a specific, verifiable source.
 - Make sure your entry is agency-blind – do not cite agency names anywhere in the entry form or creative materials.
- Visit Effie online Winner Showcase to read case studies and view videos created by the winning cases.

