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Cineplex followed its blockbuster bit of branded content from 2015 with "A Balloon for Ben" in December.

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## Creative Report Card

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## The CASSIES

This year's topper won't be holding back the hugs after its insights-driven win.

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**ON THE COVER:** How do we arrive at the strategy? It isn't easy with all these hazards, illustrated by Greg Mably as a wayfinding ode to the planner's journey.

**P** Your category just got Ubered by game-changing tech. Where do you go next?

**P** Path-to-purchase is a lot less predictable. What's the best route to reach consumers now?

**F** We're eating less (canned) soup! CPG and grocery need reinvention strategies for the health-obsessed.

**N** Cord-cutters. Opt-outters. As audiences get more and more niche, what's your new customer outreach strategy?

**X** What's your brand's bulletproof CSR strategy to keep conscious consumers?

**S** With culture clashes south of the border, how will your brand stay above the fray?

**U** What goes up, must come down. How will you find the targeting balance between see-sawing generations?

**B** Fast-fashion is encroaching on mid-level fashion. Curated dining is emptying grocery aisles. Marketers need to navigate disruption before it's too late.

**K** Cars, houses, tools, even pets are no longer owned, as startups hand over their keys to renters. How will you be hit by the sharing economy?

## What about the planners?

**I**t's peculiar that – for a discipline whose purpose is to give clear communications that spark creative ideas – planning is still misunderstood (or worse yet, undervalued).

Sadly, the issue isn't so much a global one as it is Canadian. Our neighbours to the right were the first to invite researchers into the campaign process in the '60s, while shops below followed Jay Chiat in the '90s, when he first discovered account planning. Soon after, the "voice of the consumer" came to Canada.

So it's surprising to hear that, even after decades of practice, veteran strategist Mark Tomblin – having come from the U.K. where planners play a hybrid role (part problem solver, part creative aid) – say Canada is still lagging.

When the Account Planning Group of Canada (APG) asked clients, creatives and planners to weigh in on the State of Canadian Planning in 2015, it found that all three had wildly different views on its meaning and value. Some believed it was neither well understood, appreciated, or seen as world class. "Planning, and planners, still have a ways to go to be held in the same regard as their peers in New York or London," the report concluded.

However, that was two years ago, and the attitude we're seeing today seems a little less bleak. We've filed dozens of articles on agencies "bolstering" and "strengthening" their planning teams and strategic services within the past year. More and more shops are making strategy the axis. Just recently, DDB and Taxi welcomed new/improved "strategic design businesses" – because, as the former shop's CD James Bateman says, "[design is] there to serve a purpose, and that's born out of problem solving."

And why is designing simple solutions to complex business problems (not just sexy creative that wins awards) today's mantra? Because it's not business as usual anymore. The sharpening of strategic tools is almost necessary, as industries are under siege and marketers explore new territory (just as the Yellow Pages did to sell its beyond-the-book services, see pg. 36). They're looking to agencies to meet or beat see-sawing audiences.

We reckon adding planners to the Creative Report Card (see pg. 25) brings the folks on the left side of the creative brain into focus. And we're not alone. More awards are also recognizing the benefit of shops hiring data scientists. Cannes, for one, has its Creative Data category, with retailer Mark's (another survivalist brand, see p. 62) nabbing a Lion for its data-fied billboard, while the CASSIES, p.39, continues to recognize strategy as the panacea for business ills.

The country's planning hires aren't a quick fix to the APG's "lack of relevance" conundrum. To measure up to the global planning yardstick, there needs to be thoughtful investment in deep thinkers – explore new research methodologies (tapping academics to teach the behavioural psychology behind why humans do what they do, for example), put systems into place where strategists are embedded into every team, and get your creative manpower to not only understand the role, but perhaps even think like one, too. Baking strategy into creative is not a losing proposal – it's what will separate Canada from the pack, and take us from dark horse to world class.

**Jennifer Horn, managing editor**



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## WHAT GETS PEOPLE TO BUY WHAT THEY BUY?



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## Design – like strategy – starts with listening

**A** few years back we put wheels in motion to focus more on the smart strategic work being done for brands in Canada, and to elevate the role of planning. Our name being *strategy* and all, it seemed like a good idea.

This issue is the culmination of those efforts – the first time planners are part of the Creative Report Card. The heart of this push is the Strategy Awards, for “insights and ideas that strategists contribute to positioning brands’ success”. Developed with planning help from the Account Planning Group of Canada, it launched at the Agency of the Year, and we’re now prepping the March entry kick-off for the second edition.

Up next? Design.

The same industry observations that lead to a focus on planning point to a deeper design dive. As with strategy, more agencies are seeing the need to develop bench strength in design. High-profile moves are happening, like design ECD Dave Watson moving from TAXI to Mosaic as the shop looks to make Toronto its North American centre of excellence.

There’s also reinvention at design shops as more brands seek out design thinking.

Like strategy, design planning starts with research, anthropological observations and insights, which designers build off with functional, economic and aesthetic considerations. So at the core, it’s listening, boiling down inputs into the simplest form, and the ultimate brand litmus test.

Design stakes have been raised across the board as more marketers turn to it for a competitive advantage. Whether it’s decision-influencing packaging like the Riviera yogurt pots touting 1,001 other uses (pg. 18), or design-centric campaigns like the Creative Report Card

toppers, the impact can be huge.

That’s why the design lens is wider for this year’s Marketing Awards, to scope out design beyond traditional categories: experiences, environments or full-scale, built-from-scratch brand bibles. And that’s why Design Agency of the Year launches this year. From brand launches and rebrands to design-driven marcom, we’ll be curating who’s doing it best across Canada.

In this year’s Creative Report Card, alongside strategic planning, design is getting points as a big success factor as the impact of experiences, brand content and social considerations carry more marketing weight. It even pays off in free media, like Rethink’s penchant for creating Insta-friendly physical things (page. 28).

Design makes complex products and complicated messages less daunting, and gives new entrants to the market a fighting chance for trial.

As more IoT, AI and VR flood the market, design will be the Sherpa guide that helps us keep up.

As per Judy John, Leo Burnett Toronto’s CEO and North America CCO, the #1 CD at the #1 agency on the Creative Report Card: “Design is the future of what we want to do here and it should be at the heart of everything.”

So I expect to see a pretty interesting body of work roll in, and to read some fascinating insights behind it all.

Cheers, mm

**Mary Maddever, SVP/Publisher**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

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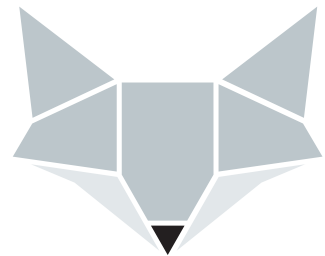
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# REINVENTION.

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## HEAR FROM THE GURUS



**Carman Allison**  
VP, Consumer Insights  
Nielsen

### What's in store for the path-to-purchase?

With the shopper journey changing, it's time to find new ways to connect with consumers. Allison breaks down what marketers must understand – and embrace – when it comes to how Canadians are shopping.

### The Great Disruptors

VR, AR, AI, blockchain, bitcoin – it will all have a crucial impact on the way consumers buy. Torella will dive into these great tech disruptors and leave you with a deeper understanding of the need to rethink your go-to-market strategies.



**John Torella**  
Senior Partner  
JC Williams Group



## Looking for inspiration?

**Shopper Innovation Awards** (included in your Shopper Marketing Forum pass) will showcase the best new thinking in Canada's shopper marketing industry!



## THE FRIGHTENING REALITY OF VR

By Josh Kolm

**Above:** Samsung is helping users face their fear of heights by virtually placing them in uncomfortable positions.

**V**irtual reality was born out of gaming, which explains why most brands are still resigned to using it for some kind of entertainment experience. But some are breaking away, using VR for educational value or personal betterment. Headache remedy Excedrin has used the tech to simulate migraine symptoms to build empathy among non-migraine sufferers, and Häagen-Dasz lets users see the world through the eyes of bees.

Proving those meaningful benefits is important to Samsung, which is looking to drive sales for its Gear VR headset. That is part of the reason it recently brought its global “#BeFearless” platform to Canada.

The Samsung Galaxy phone and VR headset place people in virtual situations to help them overcome their fears: standing on a suspension bridge for those afraid of heights, or addressing a roomful of people for those who fear public speaking.

“These fears create real barriers in people’s lives, and addressing them is part of Samsung’s ongoing journey of demonstrating real-life benefits as a way to bring our brand to life,” says Mark Childs, CMO at Samsung Canada.

The campaign was launched with global creative, but Samsung also followed six Canadians as they trained to overcome their fears with the devices. Silken Laumann, former Canadian Olympian, went along to help set goals and coach them through challenges. In mid-February, Samsung launched the doc-style creative unique to Canada on digital and social channels to reach its early adopter “millennial-minded” audience.

“A fear of heights and public speaking impact more Canadians than one might expect,” Childs says. “But our hope is anyone could look at this and see the connection between Samsung’s technology and the potential it has for other barriers in their own lives.”

The Canadian campaign has been supported by Samsung’s regular agency roster – Cheil Canada, Mosaic, Starcom and North Strategic – as well as Facebook and Oculus on its development.

“This is a global platform, but the core of it is people and the unique situations and challenges in their lives,” Childs says.

## REFRAME ISSUES, CHANGE MINDS

Changing brand perception can be challenging. Changing perceptions around decades-old societal issues even more so. Here are a few examples of brands and organizations that have recently reframed issues to stop people in their jaded tracks.

### IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

In January, British TV network Channel 4 – in association with Cancer Research U.K. and agency Anomaly London – aired the first live commercial from inside a human body during an afternoon broadcast. The 90-second spot wastes no time in getting to the point, immediately cutting to the live feed of a colonoscopy. The doctor explains what they found (a polyp), why it’s important to remove and how they plan to do that, just before snapping it off the patient’s bowel. It ends with the doctor asking the fully-conscious patient how he is feeling (“Great,” he responds).

Aside from enforcing the “get checked



often” message seen in a lot of cancer-related PSAs, the graphic execution actually did more to put people’s minds at ease about what can be an intimidating procedure. By explaining the situation and removing the polyp in the space of a single TV ad, it not only highlighted how easy it was to get checked, but how quick and painless it was to remove polyps.

### THIS SHOULDN’T MAKE YOU UNCOMFORTABLE, PERIOD.

Despite half of the adult population being deeply familiar with periods, many people are still uncomfortable talking about them.

In a fall campaign by Ogilvy’s Toronto and Colombia offices, U by Kotex sat people in front of an actress losing her temper with work



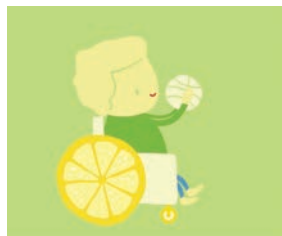
colleagues in a short play. The audience was asked which of the characters was on her period.

Their choice was as predicted, but after being asked several more questions, the same people agreed that the woman was actually just a good leader and the kind of person they'd want on their team. The message was that things people tend to write off as being part of a woman's "time of the month" are actually positive traits, as reflected in the "It's me, it's not my period" tagline.

In a much more blunt approach, Easy – a subscription



service that delivers tampons and pads made with organic materials – created an OOH campaign with Cossette that showed stained sheets, dangling tampon strings and blood in bath water. Being more provocative not only helped Easy empower women on a personal level – a common goal for femcare brands in recent years – but in terms of product choice, it aimed to embolden women to break from the brands that use synthetic fibres, bleach and plastic.

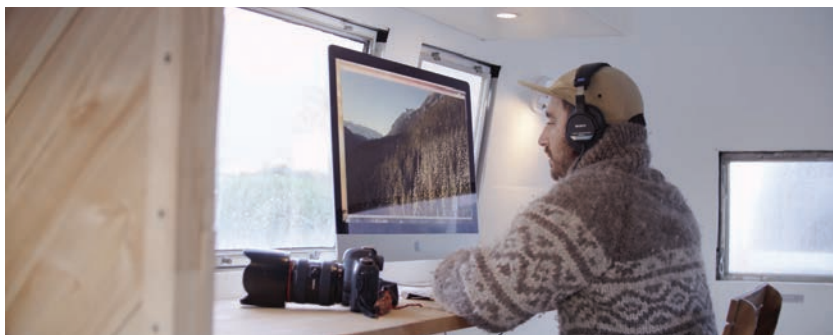


### EMBRACING THE LEMON

Parents of disabled children treated at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital are familiar with well-meaning people

applauding them for turning "lemons into lemonade." But "Baking Good," a campaign by Havas Worldwide Canada, took a stand against calling a child – regardless of their physical ability – a "lemon."

In an animated video, a patient describes how the "lemons" are a part of their identity. The video then embraces the "lemon" as something bright and full of possibility, using a cheery tone that stands out from heart-wrenching creative typical of the segment. To cheekily prove the point, kids from the hospital spent a week bringing a "lemon cart" to various locations around Toronto, giving out lemon squares they helped bake. **JK**



## TELUS ASSEMBLES A TEAM OF STORYTELLERS

The 2016 edition of *strategy's* Marketer Survey showed 30% of Canadian marketers bring branded content production in-house. While that is often to ensure the timely production of digital content, it can also be useful when the content is dear to a brand.

Like many large companies, Telus first hired in-house videographers, graphic designers and developers to create internal assets, like corporate videos or websites. But the team has grown and diversified, recently uniting as Telus Studios in Vancouver. The efficiencies of having all its creatives on a single team are being brought to bear on consumer-facing work – namely, "Stories by Telus."

The long-term project is a series of short online docs that highlight the social causes Telus contributes to through community partnerships, technology and investments.

Its four, four-episode seasons will live on YouTube and a dedicated "Stories by Telus" website. The first season (focused on health) launched in November and the second (focused on

community) at the end of January. One episode shows how technology helps adventure seekers plan their trips to remote mountains, lakes and forests. Another tells the story of volunteers who established a local health clinic on a remote island.

Telus has more seasons planned, tackling subjects like business, the environment and connected living.

Carissa McCart, who leads Telus Studios, says a benefit of having the "Stories" initiative led by an internal production team is that it offers more freedom to test and learn different storytelling methods. It's an ongoing process, with the brand monitoring consumer response to see what's most effective.

Many of the "Stories" cover things Telus' staff has long taken pride in, and the video series is about taking those things to Canadians who might not be aware of them. "From a brand perspective, we are doing a lot of work to talk more about why we do the things we do across the entire company," McCart says. **JK**

# HARLEY-DAVIDSON FACES A NEW OPEN ROAD

*Strategy's new Marketing C-Suite looks at the challenges the motorcycle brand will face as it targets a crowded urban youth market.*

By **Jeremy Lloyd**



**H**arley-Davidson Canada got a lot of attention with its downtown pop-up cafés in 2016, reaching beyond its suburban dealer network to find footholds in Canada's urban cores. It turns out they were the tip of the spear as the motorcycle brand sees urban brick-and-mortar as essential to reaching its new target demographic – young urbanites.

Coinciding with the brand's 100th anniversary in Canada, its new leadership is looking to establish permanent physical store locations in downtown Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal to address very specific challenges – and not just Canada's winter-shortened riding season.

"Winter is just an accepted situation," says Jay Owen, who was named marketing director for Harley-Davidson Canada in early January. It's one of several hurdles that all motorbike retailers face. "It's easier if you're buying a car. You have a driver's license, you go into the process, you just do it."

Interest in motorcycles usually comes before the cost and effort of getting the right training and licence. It makes for a longer sales funnel. Harley-Davidson's research shows it can take up to 40 dealership visits before the curious make a purchase.

Harley's young urban target market, however, comes with even more unique hurdles.

A 2014 U.S. study from Nielsen showed millennials are less likely to own vehicles or homes when they live downtown. Parking is expensive in cities, and storing a 500-pound hog in a one bedroom rental isn't feasible. Harley-Davidson retailers, however, will store bikes for customers as part of their community care initiatives. It

makes the physical store more than just a point of contact for those looking to buy. It becomes a clubhouse to a community of riders.

In fact, Owen sees an opportunity for Harley in increasingly crowded cities. "Yes, people have reduced space for residential living. They're not looking to get a car because they can live their life on foot or public transit. When your seasonal window for riding is already so small, you really have to go after those people who feel they need freedom, that element of enjoyment in transportation on their own. They may enjoy a motorcycle for when they want to get out onto the open road."

The company's first steps toward establishing these clubhouses came last year with its pop-up "1903" coffee houses. Designed more as a hangout than a sales centre, they were staffed with baristas serving branded coffee and, for those interested in more than coffee, the cafés featured a Jumpstart station with a motorcycle bound to a set of rollers so riders could turn it on and experience driving without moving.

Harley-Davidson reports the café sold more than 12,000 coffees and more than 1,200 visitors tried the Jumpstart station. The project received 48 million impressions across earned, paid and social media.

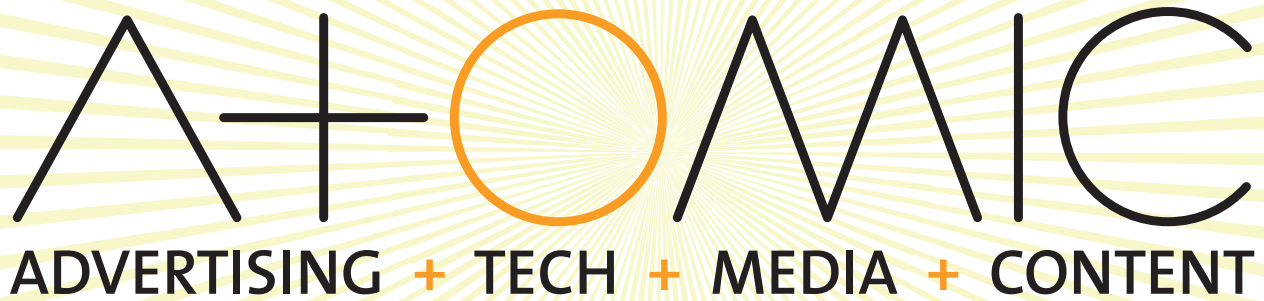
Ignacio Isusi, newly named managing director of Harley-Davidson Canada, says more café-like experiential executions are on tap in the new year, but he also expects the company's product lineup will help bridge the gap with downtowners. He points to lineups like Harley's Dark Custom bikes as a "direct response to what young urban adults were asking for." While not a radical departure from the brand's established look, Dark Customs have smaller designs and cater to shorter rides.

Globally, the brand is seeing its motorcycle sales decline. Nasdaq reports that competitors have been discounting in key product markets, eating away at Harley's share. With U.S. sales accounting for two-thirds of all bike sales, there may be more pressure on international markets like Canada to make up the difference.

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# WASTE NOT, WANT NOT: BRANDS TAP CONSCIOUS CONSUMPTION

BY JENNIFER HORN



**Above, from left:** A woman makes a profit after upcycling a chair with Krylon paint; Riviera yogurt pots find a new purpose in DIY planters.

**D**own on her luck, with barely a cent to her name, Emily Bitze needed tomatoes for her noodle dinner. Her cupboards were bare, so she did what any hungry millennial would do: she bummed from her friends online. It worked, sort of – she ended up with hearts of palm instead.

But that wasn't the end of the story for the creator of Toronto's famous trading site, Bunz. After that first solicitation, "Mother Bun" – as fellow traders like to call her – started the cashless bartering group on Facebook for her circle of friends. Three years later, in February, the newly rebranded group migrated to its own app, and now helps 100,000 members swap metro cards for Tinkerbell bags, clothing for calculators, and even beer for roadkill (taxidermists in training) on a daily basis.

Bitze is part of a group of adults under 34 (millennials, as we know them) who anthropologist and

strategist Johanna Faigelman of Human Branding says is leading the charge in the next evolution of "conscious consumerism." We're entering a phase where the second "R" in "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle" is stealing the environmental limelight, with resourceful folk – somewhat ashamed by the trappings of excessive consumerism – bartering once-loved items and upcycling strangers' trash into their own personal treasure. Beyond bartering with Bunz (which has spawned copycats in cities all over Canada), there's also Hipcycle, Ikea Hackers, The Upcycling Exchange and others that are fuelling a new kind of post-consumerist world.

"We're being much more conscious of what we're consuming and how that impacts not only ourselves, but the world around us," says Faigelman. She says you can trace the trajectory of the social movement by looking at the growth of the sharing economy and the

idea of community that's being built through groups (like Bunz) on social media, not to mention consumers demanding more transparency and ethical practices from companies.

Faigelman believes there may be socio-economic factors at work, too. "I think it connects on a deeper level, where there is a certain amount of dissatisfaction from millennials on how much money they have spent on their education with no real clear path for them," she says, with bartering as a way to feel less reliant on currency. "There's also a bit of an undercurrent of rebellion against being dictated to in terms of how to consume and be a consumer."

So, how can marketers respond to this sprouting trend? Faigelman suggests not just looking at the products their company produces, but also how they're packaged. "That's a dimension people weren't really thinking about before. We do a lot of innovation around new and clever formats to make it more

usable or portable, but in fact, one of the questions that comes up [in our focus groups] is 'Where is this going to go post-consumption?'"

Be more conscious of the product's packaging and its life cycle by creating reusable food containers that you can eat from today and use for something else tomorrow, she says as an example. "Packaging can be convenient or sexy, but if it doesn't meet the yardstick on the conscious consumption side of things, you could lose."

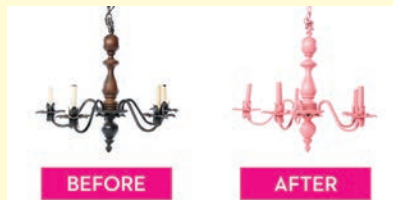
Quebec-based Chalifoux Dairy's Riviera brand is measuring up to the eco packaging standards. Its products, from parfaits and cheese to milk and butter, line shelves in grocery stores across Canada. In dairy aisles, where most products are packaged in plastic, Riviera stands out with signature glass Petit Pots, first introduced as compact, reusable containers in 2015. A local ceramist uses the pots to hold plants in porcelain planters, which she sells on Etsy, while other artists have repurposed them as candle holders, Christmas ornaments, even light fixtures.

The packaging addresses the notion that consumers want "brands to take action beyond self-interest or selling another consumer product to add to the wasteland" — as Faigelman puts it — by providing "1,001 Tips" for reusing the pots, which live on its website and are promoted on-pack and in social posts. The brand is also working with Maison Orphée to create recipes for dips and spreads that people can make at home and store in the jars, which are also sold online (without the dairy contents), alongside accessories to fancify the jars, such as delftware-style porcelain lids.

The trend has been gaining steam and there have been more cases, particularly in the past year, where marketers are tapping into ethical consumption. Here we explore programs coming from Canada and the U.S. that have played with the idea of how we pay for things and the reinvention of consumer goods.



## KRYLON MAKES OLD THINGS NEW AGAIN



Krylon stuck out like a sore thumb at this year's Interior Design Show in Toronto. Most paint brand vendors show up to talk about colour trends and how their paints can achieve a visually balanced

look with the latest hues. U.S.-based Krylon, on the other hand, didn't choose to focus on the 2017 palette, but rather its videos of design blogger Amy Devers taking old household items and revamping them with just a touch of spray paint.

The videos were a part of the brand's global campaign, in which Krylon and its agency Deutsch, followed Devers as she travelled 690 miles and stopped at yard sales along Route 127 in the U.S. to purchase 127 items, from furniture and jewelry to toys and tools.

The video demonstrations showed how to make the old items look new again with a lick of Krylon paint, and then put them up for sale on Pinterest. The brand called it the "First Ever Pinterest Yard Sale," with the videos receiving between 1,000 and 5,000 views each.

## THAT COORS BAG USED TO BE A BILLBOARD

The idea of thinking about the future journey of products and packaging is being embraced by Coors Light in the U.S. as it plans to convert its old billboards into beer coolers and damaged beer kegs into BBQ grills for in-store marketing, as reported by Adweek. The brand's environmental push will be part of its summer campaign "Every One Can" where TerraCycle will upcycle the discarded packaging and promotional material into items that will include a tag that reads "I used to be a billboard."



The upcycling program is just another effort from the brand under its "Climb On" umbrella campaign, by 72andSunny, which also includes TV spots that promote the brand's sustainable contributions, like how it uses massive solar-power systems at MillerCoors' breweries.

## CANADIAN RED CROSS BARTERS ON BUNZ



After the 2016 fires destroyed much of Fort McMurray in Alberta, the Canadian Red Cross joined the (online) world of used furniture and handbags with a campaign on bartering platform Bunz. The idea was to educate millennials about the importance of having an emergency kit, said Sara Falconer,

director of digital communications at the Red Cross. Working with OneMethod, the organization created a Bunz profile where it traded items, like blankets, flashlights and first aid kits, to help people better prepare for an emergency.

"The idea at the core of Bunz is so in line with the kind of work that we do," said Falconer. "We help people in need and we mobilize Canadians to help Canadians and in a way that's exactly what Bunz is doing too."

*With files from Harmeet Singh*



A central illustration of a superhero figure, seen from behind, lifting a large, dark, irregular rock. The rock is covered in the title text. The superhero has a blue 'SC' on their back and a red cape. A white beam of light emanates from the bottom, passing through the superhero. The background is a solid orange color with small, dark, irregular shapes scattered around the rock.

# WHEN SOCIAL CONTENT DOES THE HEAVY LIFTING

BY MEGAN HAYNES

**IT'S A WIDE WORLD**, and there's a lot of content to fill it. For many brands, the strategy has been to release a plethora of content (sometimes with the help of influencers) into the digital spheres.

But as companies roll out hours upon hours of creative – from the light-touch “brought-to-you-by” content to the heavier-handed “buy our products because” – how do they ensure it all ladders up to actually, you know, sell stuff?

For many that are breaking through the clutter (and managing to move product

along the way), it comes down to a simple strategy: build cohesion with a well-thought-out plan, and stick to it.

Gone are the days when brands simply experimented with their digital content strategy, throwing ideas at the wall just to see what sticks. Today, companies are creating robust approaches to how they put information into the ether, making sure it links back to business results.

Read on to see who's cracking the content code (and how).

# AMEX CREATES A CONTENT FUNNEL

THE CREDIT CARD COMPANY IS GETTING BETTER AT GUIDING CONSUMERS THROUGH THE PATH TO PURCHASE WITH A MORE SOPHISTICATED FUNNEL FOR ITS VIDEO CONTENT.

For American Express, video starts with inspiration. That's not new. In fact, Lauren Dineen-Duarte, director of public affairs and communications at Amex, says for as long as the brand has been on social, its content creation has veered largely toward providing branded experiences. But content designed to encourage people to sign up wasn't necessarily as effective as it could have been, she says.

So in 2016, the brand reshaped its entire approach. While inspiring "Here's what you can do with our brand" messaging still starts the consumer journey, the content path has become more complex – and that's a good thing.

Just look at its November 2016 travel push. Working with Notch Video, the brand tapped a number of influencers – including MuchMusic and *E!* host Tyrone Edwards – to talk about their passion for travel, pulsing the content out on social channels. The videos were aspirational, with little American Express-related messaging. "It was more of a 'Brought to you by' approach," Dineen-Duarte says.

Within a few days, viewers who completed the first set of social videos were re-targeted with a second round that featured influencers, such as Toronto actor Marcus Choi and car enthusiast Kristen Lee. This content spoke more directly about Amex and its benefits. Again, those who watched the video all the way through were presented with more American Express-tailored content, this time driving people to sign up for the credit card.

It's a more sophisticated funnel for social content, with the goal of driving acquisition, she says. And while she wasn't able to provide metrics for the November campaign, she says the approach (tailored video content guiding consumers through the path to purchase) has been 15- to 20-times more effective than traditional digital content, driving 25% of all click-throughs to the brand's website and a quarter of all digital sign-ups (it doesn't account for people who visit a bank or apply by mail).

The brand first revamped its social strategy in late 2015. The marketing teams were siloed, with different departments pushing out different messaging: the acquisition team focused on content to bring in new customers, while the brand team created a higher-level brand awareness campaign. Recognizing that it wasn't the most efficient use of social, Amex rolled out a pilot program to test the funnel approach, she says.

For the first time, the social strategy was handled by a distinct team at Amex, with a single project budget the agency partners could dip into. This created message cohesion, which didn't exist before, she says.

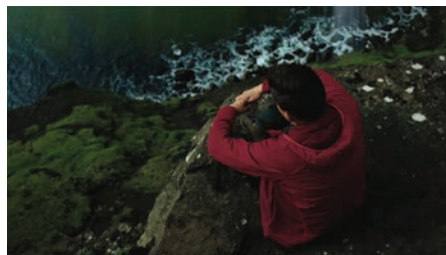
Like the November travel push – where consumers were greeted with aspirational content before receiving more product-focused messaging – the 2015 pilot program focused on blending style and travel. It led to a 400% increase in Facebook-driven sign-ups over the previous year and prompted the brand to completely restructure its departments.

First, it's doing more video (now 70% of the social budget), because the engagement rates are so much higher, says Dineen-Duarte. The social team kept its independence, and maintains its own budget.

And while not every piece of content will have this robust funnel approach, the revamp has meant that social programs are more cohesive. It has weekly meetings with other departments to see where it can be added into programs (such as creating social video for sponsorship events or additional video for campaigns), while also managing its own editorial calendar. This ensures there is message consistency across all digital touchpoints, she says.

And the strategy means the team's output is seeing success outside the social and digital spheres, getting pick up in other markets (such as the Tyrone Edwards vid, which got picked up in Australia) as well as in linear channels (like its branded airport lounges).

**Top:** TV personality Tyrone Edwards created a video for the brand on Facebook, casting his daughter. **Bottom:** Photographer Mike Seehagel was featured in a travel video for Amex.



# TANGERINE TAPS INFLUENCERS

THE BRAND'S CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY HAS EXPLODED OVER THE PAST YEAR, WITH A NEW CAMPAIGN THAT BANKS ON CONTENT CREATORS TO STRENGTHEN ITS POSITIONING.

For Financial Literacy Month in November, Tangerine wanted to start the conversation around saving and building bigger nest eggs. So it launched a campaign that fit nicely with the bank's positioning, which has, over the years, been about helping Canadians get the most out of their money.

Its research showed many Canadians struggle with financial basics. For example, 32% of millennials said they didn't save any money at all (citing other priorities, such

as travel, or not making enough to put any aside), while 54% of new parents felt they weren't saving enough for their children.

As a result, Tangerine rolled out a massive influencer campaign, tapping content creators in three different demographics to roll out more than 200 pieces of content and partner in live events.

To reach consumers on the precipice of big life changes (new careers, buying a home, starting a family, retiring), the brand and its agency Veritas targeted three demographics: up-and-coming adults in the 27-to-34-year-old range; parents with young kids; and boomers set to retire.

Tangerine partnered with influencers Bridget Eastgaard (a personal finance blogger

who targets millennials after graduation); SavvyMom, UrbanMom and The Baby Post (which target parents with hints for managing a household), as well as Boomer and Echo (a financial blog for those on the cusp of retirement).

Each influencer rolled out their own content, such as in-person boot camps, Facebook Live sessions, and written and video blogs. They also collaborated with the bank to co-create content that would live across their personal sites and the brand's feeds. Finally, the bank's internal content team rolled out supporting content to delve even deeper into financial literacy.

In November and December, the push received more

than 10 million impressions. The Facebook Live session with SavvyMom was the most popular, generating 10,000 live views and more than 1,000 comments and likes. The brand plans to push out popular content throughout 2017 with a paid media buy.

The Financial Literacy Month campaign marked one of the bank's most concentrated efforts to put influencers at the centre of its marketing efforts, says Cayley Kochel, PR manager at Tangerine.

While the bank has traditionally worked with digital influencers, such as bloggers and vloggers (its digital nature made it a natural fit), when it brought its PR agency Veritas on board in 2016, Tangerine's content marketing strategy exploded, she says.

The agency uses a proprietary ranking and vetting system, which assigns a score to influencers who might be a good fit (regardless of whether they talk about finances).

In the case of Tangerine, Veritas looked for a variety of creators across genres, from straight-up financial experts to new parents to those in the lifestyle and travel space.

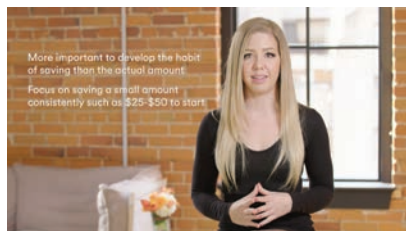
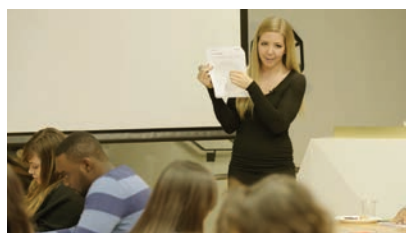
Passing the baton to influencers has the added benefit of sharing the production burden, which can mean more content. However, managing that mass flow of communications has required the brand to open up the lines of dialogue internally.

Specifically, while Tangerine hasn't restructured its marketing or communications departments, both teams now work closely together. At the start of each year, the two teams map out all possible marketing/comms touchpoints for the coming months to ensure that the brand's umbrella messaging (of being the bank that helps consumers make the most out of their money) is consistent across all touchpoints, Kochel says.

For influencer work, the brand starts working with content creators six months ahead of any marketing push to develop creative that complements paid and PR content, giving the team time to work out any kinks.

There's also been a push to educate staff to the benefits of turning brand control over to influencers (Tangerine only has approval rights on content for factual purposes – the rest is left up to the creators). But the vetting process with Veritas is so complete, says Kochel, that there's little fear the creators will stray from the script.

"We always try to keep in mind that the brand can't control the message," she says.



Tangerine tapped blogger Bridget Eastgaard for boot camps and live streams of her finance advice for millennials.



# BUDWEISER'S TIT-FOR-TAT STRATEGY

THE BEER ADOPTED A BACK-SCRATCHING APPROACH, CREATING BRAND AMBASSADORS OUT OF INFLUENCERS BY GIVING THEM MERCHANDISE AND ACCESS TO EVENTS.

**A**ndrew Oosterhuis wants to create a symbiotic relationship with influencers.

The director of marketing for Budweiser and his team have access to exclusive events and “once-in-a-lifetime” opportunities, while the influencers they work with have access to thousands of potential beer-drinkers. It’s like a match made in beer halls.

The first step to creating symbiosis is to stop treating partnerships with YouTubers, bloggers and Instagrammers like a financial transaction. Rather, it’s an ongoing tit-for-tat relationship, he says. In this case, an influencer provides brand call-outs, while Budweiser provides access to cool experiences.

In early 2016, the Budweiser marketing team devised a pilot program, picking seven social influencers with whom they could develop a deeper relationship.

First, working with Veritas, the team identified content creators who matched the brand’s core attributes, including “authentic” and “unwilling to compromise.” “If they’re going to be the voice of the brand, they should represent the DNA of the brand,” he says.

The influencer team, which included the likes of YouTube’s Hockey Collective and Instagrammer Adam Madrzyk, were invited to the Labatt head office to learn about the brand’s brewing process and history, and to meet with marketing team members to get a better sense of Budweiser’s DNA, Oosterhuis says.

Then, they opened the line of dialogue, offering free tickets to the Blue Jays home opener to Madrzyk and sending free Red Light Christmas lights to Hockey Collective, which could be given to fans.

The influencers aren’t obligated to post about Budweiser and there are no set minimums for how much content is expected in exchange, but most create at least a couple pieces around the experiences.

And while there is always a risk that one of the influencers might tweet or say something unfavourable, Oosterhuis says having no financial exchange helps provide some distance between the brand and its influencers should someone go off the rails.

What’s more, regular exchange between the pair breeds trust, he says.

“By having an ongoing relationship you naturally feel more comfortable that they’ll represent the brand in the right way,” he says.

So far, the pilot has netted 1.1 million impressions, he says, across 120 posts. And the investment has been minimal, since the team offered opportunities the brand already had access to through its existing sponsorships. Success going forward will be measured almost exclusively against whether the impressions these influencers generate outweigh the cost of providing the experiences, he adds. In 2016, the program was successful, though Oosterhuis wouldn’t provide numbers behind how much it cost.

The pilot program still has some kinks. Into 2017, the team is looking to expand the influencer pool, adding different tiers of content creators. Budweiser might, for example, tap a broad base of people in different genres, such as music or lifestyle, who don’t have huge followings, but then also add

in a couple of engaged influencers with larger fan bases for a nominal fee – the details (such as the size of the pool, what they’re looking for and who) were still being finalized at press time. Oosterhuis hopes to have a final group selected by April to tap into the heavy summer Budweiser has planned.

“There’s so much communication now that consumers are listening more to these [digital] friends than to brands,” he says. ☞

The brand gave Christmas Red Lights to YouTube’s Hockey Collective, which were then gifted to fans to spread the Budweiser love.





THE NEW BRAND CONTENT UPFRONTS

# TIME TO HONE YOUR BRANDED CONTENT STRATEGY!

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TO BUILD COMMUNITIES AND DRIVE COMMERCE.



**KEYNOTE:** David Beebe, VP Global Creative and Content Marketing at Marriott International, takes a deep dive into the art and science of M Live – the hotel chain's social media and marketing command centers.

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# CREATIVE REPORT CARD 2017

BY  
MARK  
BURGESS

**THE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT IS MORE** cluttered than ever. After years of shrinking attention spans and proliferating platforms – and trying to figure out how to make something go viral on each of them – agencies are relying on fundamentals as reliable shortcuts to reaching brands' targets: planning and design.

The Creative Report Card elite featured in this issue all talked about the clutter and how to overcome it. For top agencies Leo Burnett, Rethink and Lg2, design was a means of standing out, whether through brand identification and seamless positioning – from

a logo to a package to a campaign – or by inventing something that meets a shared belief between the brand and the audience, and building an ad around it.

On the strategy side, planners – welcomed into the CRC fold for the first time – talked about that carefully honed mix of data and intuition that helps brands identify where the culture is going and how to get there first.

For the second year in a row, this was Leo Burnett's report card. The agency swept the

rankings (topping the CD, AD, CW and planners lists) on the strength of its multiple wins in the more than 1,500 awards we count in our annual tally (see more about the methodology on p. 33).

Read on to learn about the top agencies, brands, creatives and planners, and details about the winning work you may have missed. And don't forget to go online for the complete CRC lists.



## TOP AGENCIES

1. Leo Burnett
2. Rethink
3. Lg2
4. Cossette
5. BBDO / Proximity
6. Jam3
7. Grey Canada
8. Zulu Alpha Kilo
9. J. Walter Thompson
10. DDB / Tribal Worldwide / TracyLocke

## TOP CREATIVE DIRECTORS

1. Judy John, Leo Burnett
2. Chris Staples, Rethink
2. Ian Grais, Rethink
4. Lisa Greenberg, Leo Burnett
5. Aaron Starkman, Rethink
6. Peter Ignazi, Cossette
6. Carlos Moreno, Cossette
8. Ryan Crouchman, Leo Burnett
9. Denise Rossetto, BBDO
9. Todd Mackie, BBDO

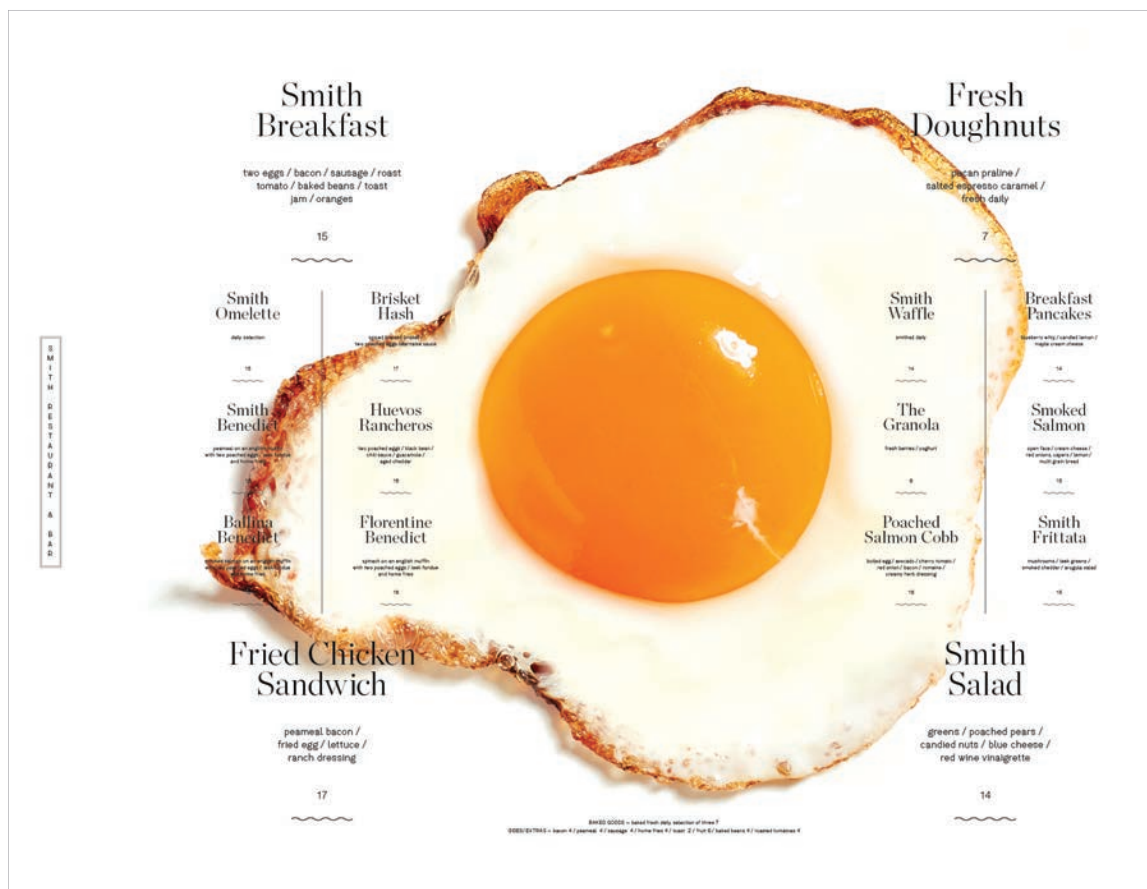
## TOP ART DIRECTORS

1. Dejan Djuric, Leo Burnett
2. Pedro Izzo, Leo Burnett
3. Chris Duchaine, Leo Burnett
4. Scott Leder, Proximity Worldwide (formerly with Leo Burnett)
5. Ryan Crouchman, Leo Burnett
6. Joel Holtby, Rethink
7. Luc Du Sault, Lg2
8. Simon Au, Freelance (formerly with Zulu Alpha Kilo)
9. Rob Trickey, McCann (formerly with Grey)
10. Guilherme Bermejo, Zulu Alpha Kilo

## TOP COPYWRITERS

1. Marty Hoefkes, Leo Burnett
2. Andrew Caie, Leo Burnett
3. Mike Dubrick, Rethink
4. Sue Kohm, Grey
5. Andrée-Anne Hallé, Lg2
6. Darrel Knight, Grey
7. Nick Doerr, Zulu Alpha Kilo
8. Steve Persico, Leo Burnett
9. Matt Hubbard, BBDO
10. Luc Du Sault, Lg2
10. Patrick Scissons, KBS+ (formerly with Grey)

For brand and planner lists, see p. 30-31.



# Designing another way to stand

When Leo Burnett's long-time print shop, Printed By Somerset, approached the agency to work on its branding, the creative team naturally looked at what the competition was doing, particularly online. Most of it fell flat, says Ryan Crouchman, group CD at Leo. They were basically just showing photos of their printed products, not addressing what he considered the fundamental problem of representing something as tactile and layered and messy as a print product online. "Print is physical, online is virtual," he says. "How do you bridge that gap?"

That's what the CRC's #1 agency set out to do in what turned into a three-year effort involving animation, the bridging of design and digital teams, and lots of paper. The campaign dominated this year's report card, winning at virtually every show, from Cannes to One Show to Epica to the ADCC. The creatives who worked on it topped the lists, including #1 CD Judy John, #1 AD Dejan Djuric and #1 CW Marty Hoefkes. Somerset was also the top-ranked brand. Unfortunately, the family business made the decision

to shut its operations earlier this year and declined an interview for this article.

As with all its design work, Leo viewed Somerset as an opportunity for the client to instantly communicate its message and stand out. And because Somerset's clients were a discerning bunch – fellow designers and art directors "who live and breathe print," says Crouchman – it was also a chance for the agency to show off its design abilities.

Since hiring the first designer in 2005, Leo Burnett has placed more and more emphasis on that side of its operation. There are now 10 designers helping the agency attract clients and expand its role with existing ones, says Judy John, Leo's Canadian CEO and North American CCO.

"Design is the future of what we want to do here and it should be at the heart of everything we do," she says. "[It] can have such a big impact on brands, and our belief is it should permeate every brand."

For Somerset, the team settled on a lo-fi approach. There were discussions about using CGI or 3D technologies for





## Rethink and develop

### Putting the ink in Rethink:

The agency used thermal ink for its message about cocoa workers for the Canadian Fair Trade Network, and a measles reminder broke out in UV-sensitive ink spots for the B.C. Centre for Disease Control.

Rethink has designed a shortcut to successful campaigns. Most of the agency's "greatest hits" from the last few years have followed the same blueprint, says Chris Staples, partner and CD: make something that meets a "shared belief" between the public and the client (a safe ride home for Uber, a love of hockey for Molson) and film the making-of, which becomes the ad.

"The internet is obsessed with the new, and particularly with inventions that make things better or change the world in some way," says Staples, the #2 CD.

A well-designed idea becomes something "useful or interesting" that people actually want to share, he says, eliminating the need for a huge media budget.

The "Uber Safe" campaign, which won One Show, ATOMiC and Marketing awards last year, all started with the "Rob Ford Breathalyzer" – an arcade game-style device designed for bar patrons to blow into, with the erstwhile Toronto mayor letting them know whether or not they should drive.

The idea was born during one of Rethink's "R&D Days" (Rethink and Development Days), before the late Ford had aborted his re-election campaign. Once or twice a year, the agency divides its offices into groups of five. The teams get a brief and have to create a working prototype by the end of the day. The Rob Ford Breathalyzer was never developed,

but it was reworked into a rejected pitch to Molson, and then the wildly successful program for Uber that ordered free rides to those who blew over the legal limit.

It's not the agency's only good idea to result from play. It also collects "Change Proposals," ideas that don't fit with client briefs but are picked through once a quarter for the best ones to act on. Two winning campaigns from last year – the "Measles Mailer" for the B.C. Centre for Disease Control, which used UV-sensitive ink spots in direct mail pieces that reminded people to get vaccinated; and "Cocoa Cups" for the Canadian Fair Trade Network, which used cups printed with thermal ink that displayed a message about child workers – emerged from these proposals.

Another one, "The Fantasy Life" for Coors Light, was inspired by Rethink's spoof video for strategy's Agency of the Year competition, where the agency used 3D printers to engineer its own industry trophies. Playing with that technology to make the video led to the social campaign for Coors, based around trophies for NFL fantasy leagues.

The agency's "experimental play time" uncovers previously unknown skills while allowing the teams to try new things and fail in a safe environment, says founder and CD Ian Grais, the #2 CD. "So when you tell your creative team to come up with a tech solution, they've actually gotten their hands dirty."



# Lg2 likes to see the whole picture

For Claude Auchu of Lg2, the #3 agency, design has always been the advertising industry's underdog. But that's starting to change.

The partner, VP and CD at Lg2 Boutique, which launched as a division of the agency in 2006, says his discipline is getting some overdue recognition as brands appreciate the value of linking all aspects of branding – from logos to packaging to advertising.

A growing share of Lg2's business begins with a rebrand and grows into a full campaign, he says. While the Lg2 group has seen revenue growth of 10% year over year for the past decade, for the design branch that number is 25%.

"When you see the big picture and you know what's happening from the beginning to end on a brand, it really helps with the understanding," says Nellie Kim, partner, VP and CD. "If there's an issue that comes up, you know what's going on from design to strategy to copy to all the different integrated parts of it."

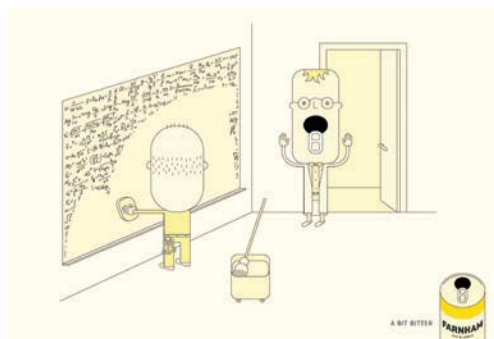
One example is Lg2's award-winning "A Bit Bitter" work for Farnham Ale & Lager (#7 brand), which picked up Clio, Epica and other awards last year. The brewer came to the agency for branding help three years ago and is now on the third iteration of the advertising campaign.

The ads evolved from clever OOH beer tanks, personifying a bitter odd-one-out, to print ads depicting a humorous scenario of mild bitterness: a professor's shock at a custodian erasing chalkboard math equations; a woman, surrounded by 10 children, holding up a positive pregnancy test to her husband.

The design challenge was to maintain the central idea from the first campaign, connecting the bitter people and the bitter beer through an icon (in that case the beer tanks) while keeping the tone light and humorous, says Luc Du Sault, also a partner, VP and CD (and the #7 AD, #10 CW and #11 CD). The solution was to use the tab on beer cans as the gaping mouths expressing the (mildly) bitter surprise.

The agency has also used product design as an advertising tool. Its "Give-A-Care" campaign for Rethink Breast Cancer got its message out by creating design-heavy products to help recently diagnosed women with the side effects of cancer treatment, from lip balm to cozy scarves.

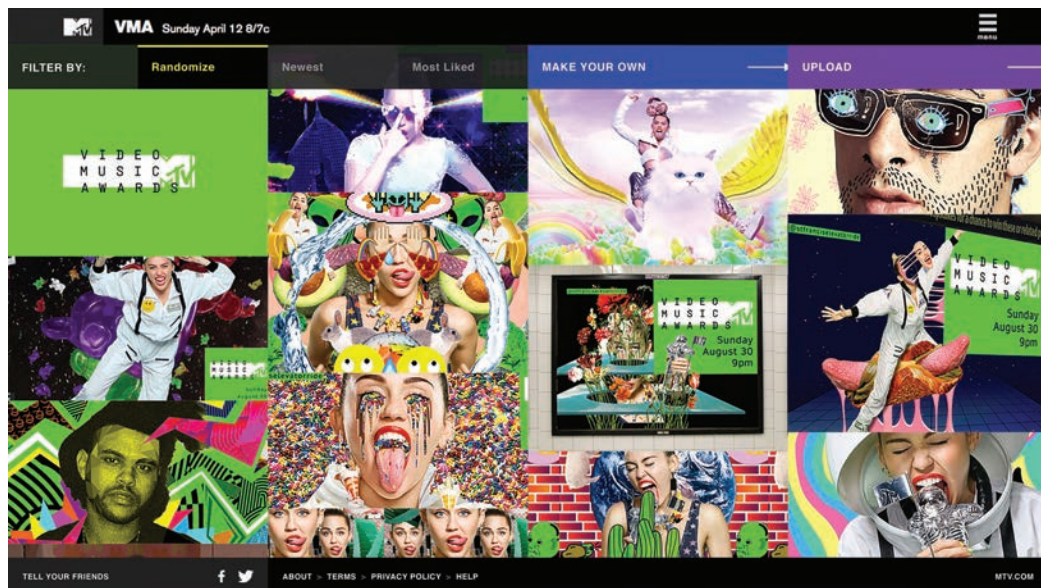
"By using uniquely designed products, we could extend the shelf-life of the message for these women," says Kim.



**From top:** Some of Lg2's winning designs, for Rethink Breast Cancer, the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec, Farnham Ale & Lager and Parc Olympique.

"In design it's often about the simplicity and what kind of cleverness you can bring to it," Claude Auchu says.

**Left:** It wasn't without risks, but MTV's trust in user-generated content and Jam3's design created some memorable promotional material for the 2015 VMAs, moving the brand and the agency up the CRC ranks.



# MTV hands the design reigns over to the masses

When he found out it would be Miley Cyrus, Adrian Belina knew it was going to be special. The partner and ECD at Toronto and L.A.-based Jam3 had been going back and forth with MTV on a campaign to promote the U.S. brand's 2015 Video Music Awards (VMA) that would be heavy on fan involvement. But the discussions hadn't included the host.

"Whenever you're dealing with user-generated content, my first recommendation to the client is it's got to be someone the internet is going to have a field day with," Belina says. Some stars, like Beyoncé, are simply adored. But the polarizing Cyrus is perfect.

The brand, #2 on this year's report card, wanted to play up the VMA's unpredictability. Almost every year, the internet explodes over an unscripted moment, from Cyrus's twerking to Kanye's Taylor Swift interruption. The campaign was designed to trigger that explosion in advance.

Jam3, the #6 agency, built a website that allowed users to create their own GIFs and memes of the pop star using green screen images provided by the brand.

Of course there were risks. "That's a big thing for not just a brand but an artist to put themselves out there and let people do whatever it is they want to do with the content," says Belina, the CRC's #12 CD. Jam3 built a back-end moderating system to allow MTV to reject and approve fans' creations.

Designing the site came down to a choice between quantity or getting "really weird stuff," Belina says.

Rather than developing an online tool for fans to create their images, which limits creativity, Jam3 opted for downloadable assets that fans could use in whatever design program they preferred.

"There's some horrendously wonderful stuff in there that you wouldn't get if we had built a tool," he says. "We actually [told MTV] it wouldn't be worth your time and money. Everything would just look like a variation of something." That design choice had a huge effect on the "wildly different" content that emerged.

Belina also credits MTV with the decision to take user-generated content offline. The promotion launched with a teaser campaign of green screen billboards, some with Cyrus on them, some with only the VMA website, which were attention grabbing by virtue of looking "almost out of place." Those billboards were later populated with the user content.

"That was a brilliant idea because it makes the campaign truly 360 degrees," Belina says. "It started in outdoor and in print, went to digital, went to social, then back to digital and back to the real world. I think that's what made this project really special."

## TOP BRANDS

1. Somerset Graphics
2. MTV
3. SickKids Foundation
4. Molson Coors (Molson, Coors Light, Coors Altitude, Rickard's)
5. Skittles
6. Uber
7. Farnham Ale & Lager
8. Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America
9. Cineplex
10. Raising the Roof

# Leaving the zoo to understand the tiger

We talked to the CRC's top planners about how they arrived at their winning insights and why their jobs follow them home.

If you've ever been in line at Starbucks, waiting for an almond milk latte that you feel is taking far too long (you've already swiped left on a dozen potential matches and ordered 300 Nespresso pods, which would surely have been ready to drink by now), there's a chance that Brent Nelsen has been observing you, diagnosing your impatience.

The SVP and director of strategic planning at Leo Burnett, and the CRC's top planner, calls himself a "legal voyeur," studying real-life subjects and sometimes gently interrogating them.

The behaviour is not uncommon in the profession. Cossette chief strategy officer Jason Chaney takes junior strategists to Balzac's with a similar anthropological intent. Juniper Park\TBWA's Joshua Hansen can be found at car dealerships, lurking and inquiring about decisions and indecisions.

We talked to the CRC's top planners about the research behind their winning work, and why their jobs follow them out of the office.

## TOP PLANNERS

1. Brent Nelsen, Leo Burnett
2. Joshua Hansen, Juniper Park\TBWA
3. Jason Chaney, Cossette
4. Kevin McHugh, Cossette
5. Ebrahim El Kalza, Zulu Alpha Kilo
6. Catherine Darius, Lg2
7. Mireille Côté, Lg2
8. Tara O'Doherty, Stealth Startup (formerly with Cossette)
9. Joe Dee, Cossette
10. Andrew Carty, Send + Receive (formerly with Grey)

## #1 BRENT NELSEN, SVP AND DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, LEO BURNETT

**Top campaigns:** Raising the Roof – "Coming Soon"; Ontario Women's Directorate – "#WhoWillYouHelp"; Amazon – "The Magic of Echo"; Ikea – "The Great Indoors"



**Using an example from one of your winning campaigns this year, tell me the story of how you arrived at the insight.**

I'll give it to you in a quote: 'If you want to

understand a tiger, you have to leave the zoo.' What we do well is 'dirty research.' Rather than ask people into a focus group room, feed them warm sandwiches and bad soft drinks ... [we] go out and simply interact with people.

As an example, on the Kellogg's Special K work, in trying to understand where to take that brand from what was essentially a heritage of low-calorie and diet food to something different, given the context of how dieting had shifted, we sat down with peer-recruited groups – girlfriends of girlfriends from the agency – over drinks and hors d'oeuvres. We had a very emotional heart-to-heart – an elucidating conversation for me as the opposite gender – [covering] issues about body, issues about self-image, issues about what is skinny and not skinny, what is healthy and not healthy. I think we got to insights and an honesty and rawness of conversation because the three women knew each other ... You would never, ever achieve [that] in a focus group.

**How do you bring those insights back to the client when it wasn't as scientific a process to get there?**

Most of our clients are fairly open to experimenting and changing how we get the research. At times it's sort of Einstein's definition of insanity, of doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. We've been fairly quick to prove an approach of 'dirty research' yields tremendously good results.

**What is the general mix between data and intuition or other anecdotal types of research?**

I would say 100% of what we do is informed by data, without a doubt. On a brief, we will always quantify what the main message is so we know that of the six or seven potential messages, there are two that are really going to drive solving that big, juicy consumer problem.

**How does your work colour how you interact with the world on a daily basis?**

When I'm in a grocery store – my better half hates this – I'll stand and watch what people are putting in their basket and sometimes I will say, 'Can I ask you a question?' I think they assume I'm the poor male shopper in need of help, which is true, I am really pathetic at shopping. It's amazing what you learn when you just engage with people in a very simple, honest, trustworthy, empathetic way.



## #2 JOSHUA HANSEN, PLANNING DIRECTOR, JUNIPER PARK\TBWA

**Top campaigns:** Printed by Somerset (Leo Burnett), Nissan – “Conquer All Conditions” (Juniper Park\TBWA)



**How much did your experience doing tours and interviews with staff, and it being a family-run company, feed into the insight and the final product for Somerset?**

It was instrumental. The time we spent working with them, understanding their business, understanding what is really unique about not only what they create but their point of view on what they create... No matter who you talked to, whether it was the guys running the presses or the people doing pre-

production, you kept hearing that this was a very tight-knit group, that they were there ultimately for the work... All of these different filters – the interview process and the rigour that went into talking

to everyone – it was hugely important in the formulation of the strategic way in and the final result.

**How does your work affect how you interact with the world on a daily basis?**

Strategy at its core is about understanding brands and their role and place within culture. So one has to spend time not only observing but participating in culture. A lot of being a strategist these days is about doing as much as it is about thinking: creating projects and experimenting with things, having personal projects and exploring things... I work on a podcast where we spend a lot of time talking about cars [called “The Bucket Seat”]. I’ve worked on some musical projects with friends. All of those things give you a lens through which to look at brands – brands as cultural artifacts – and understand how they need to be positioned so that people react to them in the way we ultimately would like them to.

## #3 JASON CHANEY, CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER, COSSETTE AND #4 KEVIN McHUGH, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, COSSETTE GOT TOGETHER TO DISCUSS THEIR WORK.

**Top campaigns:** SickKids Foundation – “Life Unpaused”; Kobo – “Titles”; General Mills – “Bring Back the Bees” (Cheerios) and “Rediscover the Joy of Nature Manifesto” (Nature Valley)



From left: Cossette's Kevin McHugh and Jason Chaney.

**McHugh:** What piece of advice would you pass on to an aspiring strategist?

**Chaney:** Continue to push yourself to understand the world in as many ways as humanly possible. To be a great strategist, it should be something that almost consumes you outside the [agency's] walls.

I'll take juniors over to Balzac's and have them analyze the people in line, and watch them when they look at the food and don't order the food. What were they thinking? Why did they choose to not buy that food even though they were looking at it for five

minutes? It's to get them to start living in the world where they're watching people's behaviours and trying to understand them.

The other part is it's a tough role. You're kind of the leading edge of the spear in getting to new work and opportunities, and that's met with a lot of resistance from a lot of people. Your job fundamentally is to sell an opportunity that hasn't been identified.

“Bring Back the Bees” is a great example of that ... In retrospect, a lot of people look at the work and think it was pretty straightforward – of course that makes sense for the product, it was a great connective strategy. But the job of getting it into market was nearly a year of work and convincing and a lot of debate.

**McHugh:** That project was ultimately kicked off by grounded intuition – it wasn't just pie in the sky, see what sticks; there was a rationale behind it – but it wasn't necessarily data driven until we got to that point where we were met with a lot of skepticism and we had to go back and prove this point. We found that the bee population was the third most cared about [environmental] cause among Canadians [behind global warming and water quality]. Without a doubt we had the smoking gun after we did the research to prove this is something people do care about, and were perfectly poised to have a voice in the matter.

**McHugh:** Do you feel your intuition comes naturally to you, or is it something that's developed over time?

**Chaney:** At the core of our process is a basic understanding of human behaviour – not at a superficial level but understanding the deep-rooted fears, anxieties, joyous moments in people's lives and understanding what drives those. Our process is really rooted – you see this in “Bees” and “Life Unpaused” – in finding value for the consumer and connecting that back to the brand, rather than starting with the brand and connecting that brand to the consumer. It's a subtle difference but it's a big difference in the work and the output and what motivates the creative team to end up creating what they're creating.

# Methodology

Strategy's Creative Report Card tracks and tallies the awards taken home by agencies, advertisers and creatives over the past year to help the marketing community know who's at the top of their game.

We select a range of shows that incorporate a variety of media and assign every award a point value, weighted to recognize that international shows are bound to be tougher to win than regional ones. As the books arrive throughout the awards season, we keep a database of wins for each advertiser, agency, CD, AD, CW and planner, and add them up to determine a ranking in each category.

Please bear in mind it accounts for more than 1,500 individual awards and relies on the credits as published by the various shows. Therefore, there is room for error and/or omission. This is especially true for planners in their inaugural year. We hope to see more strategy credits going forward.

## SCORING

Point values are highest for international awards, followed by national and then regional. Best of Show and Grand Prix will receive more points than Gold, which receives more than Silver and so forth. We reserve the right to review and/or change the weight of awards each year based on their level of prestige and difficulty.

## AGENCIES

The points for agency offices in multiple cities have been combined. However, distinct but affiliated agencies (with the same parent company) are listed separately, unless considered a single entity by the agency. If two agencies are listed on a single campaign, each receives the same points.

## INDIVIDUALS

Points are awarded to the individuals credited

in the award show books as they appear. If a name isn't listed, the individual doesn't receive any points. In some cases, agencies have provided corrections, which have been taken into account on a case-by-case basis. We have done our best to fix any discrepancies in spelling of names between various books.

## ADVERTISERS

Points are awarded for the brands as listed in the awards annuals. Sub-brands or brand extensions are grouped together under the main brand.

## THE AWARDS THAT COUNT

**Regional:** ACE, Ad Rodeo, Créa

**National:** ADCC, Applied Arts, AToMiC, CASSIES, CMA, Marketing, Shopper Innovation Awards

**International:** Cannes, Clios, Communication Arts, D&AD, Epica, One Show

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AN INFLUX OF STRATEGY OFFICERS JOIN THE CREATIVE AGENCY C-SUITE AS SHOPS INVEST MORE IN DATA-LED INSIGHTS AND PLANNING WITH A STRATEGIC PURPOSE.

BY MEGAN HAYNES

**B**link and you'll miss it: Cineplex's recent "Balloon For Ben" short is like a cinematic "spot the difference." On YouTube, the opening panning shot reveals a beautifully animated cityscape. On Facebook, it opens with a balloon popping (followed by the same cityscape). The two-minute video follows a little boy who lives in a magical world in which balloons are filled with movies that play when popped. The film ends the same way, but the YouTube version drives viewers to click for behind-the-scenes footage or to watch last year's hit "Lily & the Snowman."

There was a reason to start the Facebook video with the popping balloon. In fact, everything about "Balloon for Ben" had strategic intent.

The popping image was chosen to immediately grab audience members on Facebook, where videos play automatically but silently, says Sarah Van Lange, director of communications at Cineplex.

Within three weeks of its launch during the 2016 holiday period, the video had garnered more than 10 million views across social (including 6.2 million on Facebook and 1.8 million on YouTube).

Another strategic goal for "Balloon for Ben" was to encourage people to watch 2015's "Lily & the Snowman," says Heidi Philip, chief strategy officer at Zulu Alpha Kilo. The team did this by adding in-video links to the spot on YouTube. On top of the 10 million views for "Ben," in its first three weeks, "Lily" received an additional one million hits across social platforms, adding to its already impressive 60 million views.

"Balloon for Ben" is the culmination of a two-year process at the agency that's seen it shift its strategy towards, well, strategy – restructuring the team entirely and bringing aboard new staff and skills to complement creative and account teams, says Zulu Alpha Kilo president Mike Sutton.

Clients were increasingly approaching the agency for non-advertising related issues, such as helping with internal hiring or dealing with potential inefficiencies (at the start of briefs, there was always a conversation about whether a campaign required a brand or digital strategist) while the launch of branded content studio Zulubot meant the shop was pushing out more content that required strategic planning.

Sutton says it started a hunt for a chief strategy officer, bringing Philip aboard from Leo Burnett in 2015. Today, the team has been restructured so that a single strategist works with a brand throughout the lifecycle of a campaign – there is no handoff to another team member or department, Philip says. There's also a deepening focus on understanding how messages travel differently on various platforms – as was the case with "Balloon."

The agency spent most of 2016 purposely beefing up its strategic offering, most recently adding strategy director Heather Segal and innovation director Sean Bell (who is helping people understand channel



planning) to its lineup. While everyone on the team has some analytics capabilities, Zulu created a data scientist position last year dedicated to crunching numbers.

Zulu isn't the only agency investing in that department: shops across the marketing spectrum, from creative to media and PR, have focused on their strategic and planning offering. And it's about time too, says Mark Tomblin, chief strategy officer at Juniper Park\TBWA and chair of the Account Planning Group (APG).

Hailing from the U.K. – where strategy and planning is baked into the core of most, if not all, creative shops – Tomblin says coming to Canada in 2012 and getting the industry to understand what a good planner or strong strategic insight could do for a campaign was like pulling teeth. People just didn't understand why that skill set was necessary.

In the U.K., he says, people recognized the need back in the '80s, with shops like BBH baking strategy into their name (John Bartle – the first B – was the planner in the founding trio). As those agencies picked up new clients, soon other shops raced to fill the skills gap, until it was odd to not have strategic planning in the creative process, Tomblin says.

And now the industry is seeing a similar shift in Canada.

While there are few numbers available (the APG doesn't track planners and strategists yet, though Tomblin says that's a goal for the near future), anecdotally he's seeing a rise at the agency levels, with more jobs being posted to the organization's site, a steady increase in membership year-over-year (though it still remains small, at 150) and more strategists in the c-suite. There are more than a dozen chief strategy officers in agencies across the country today – up from only a handful a couple years ago.



**Above and below left:** Minor strategic tweaks were made to Cineplex's "Balloon for Ben" creative, helping the brand attract social media users.

**Bottom right:** Zulu Alpha Kilo tapped chief strategy officer Heidi Philip to lead its growing team in 2015.



In the 2016 *strategy* marketer survey, 31% of agencies said their clients were demanding more data and analytics-led insights, while 29.9% of marketers said they were hoping to see more strategic leadership from their partners in the year ahead.

There's still work to do: planners and strategists are only recently getting a slice of the spotlight, and there's a shortage of staffers with the necessary skills, says Tomblin, particularly at the director level.

The demand is largely driven by the continued channel fragmentation, where brands compete for slivers of audience attention amidst the digital noise. Couple that fragmentation with tightening (or at least stagnant) marketing budgets and finding effective strategic insights becomes the philosophy *du jour*.

Many winners in *strategy*'s Agency of the Year competition attributed part of their success to putting strategy at the heart of operations, while others, such as Citizen Relations, carved out strategy departments for the first time. And some big agency vets, such as former DDB SVP and head of strategy



THE  
LEMONADE  
STAND



**Above:** Yellow Pages' "Lemonade Stand" promoted its digital tools.

**Right:** Republic's Beverley Hammond promoted her shop's strategic offering by launching a "war room" to find solutions to business problems.

Dino Demopoulos, have branched out, creating their own strategy shops.

For Leo Burnett, baking strategy into its everyday operations was organic, says COO David Kennedy. There was never a conscious decision to double down on its strategic offering, but that shift occurred naturally within the past 18 months. Led by CSO Brent Nelsen (whom Tomblin calls one of the foremost strategic thinkers in Canada – evidenced by his promotion last fall to lead the agency's planning for North America), the Toronto team has nearly doubled in size with 13 planners on staff and a deeper focus on channel planning and data insights.

The agency is focusing more on training current staffers in other departments, such as account managers, to shift toward the planning side – specifically with the goal of getting employees to better understand clients' business issues.

"There was a time when planning was a solitary discipline. A planner would toil over research or a brief, then lock themselves in a room, come out a week later, say 'Voila!' and then hand off [the insight] to the creative team," says Kennedy. But with increased output, it's easy for strategy to be lost in the shuffle.

So today each client works with a triumvirate – a planner, an account person and a creative – which ensures strategy is woven in throughout the campaign, says Kennedy.

Nelsen points to Leo's work with Yellow Pages as an example.

The agency originally pitched and won the account in 2013 on the strength of its strategic team, he says. Mapping out a future for the brand, which most people still associate with a physical phone book, has been

a lengthy process, says Paul Brousseau, former VP of brand communications at Yellow Pages. Nelsen and Leo's strategic team were with the brand throughout, highlighting current brand equity, white space, brand purpose, core targets to tap and how to communicate the brand's digital footprint. The end goal is to get consumers to think about Yellow Pages more as a digital suite of tools.

A recent campaign is the culmination of that process, Nelsen says. To reach small and medium business owners, the team latched onto an insight that, despite all the gains in tech, entrepreneurs still want a person at the other end of the line to help with their business needs.

Yellow Pages has more than 1,000 advisers for just that purpose – but few knew about them. To promote that business service, in May 2016, the brand got its employees to create, run and promote a business using only YP tools. A "Lemonade Stand" was created and 1,000 people visited the store in Toronto's east end to buy a drink. Behind-the-scenes videos and a short film about the project rolled out on conventional and digital channels, as well as through SEO and in-mail.

Prior to the campaign launch, only 11% of business owners considered using YP products. Following the launch, that number tripled to 33%. The campaign generated 16-times more sales leads opportunities and a 33% bump in clients actually signing up, year-over-year.

"Our budgets are not gigantic," says Brousseau. "We have to be really smart about how we spend our money. We don't have the luxury to put something in market, see if it works, and if it doesn't, try something else. We've got to get it right the first time."

He adds that it's important to have a partner who understands

the brand's strategic needs. "At the end of the day, I need more from my agency than just cranking out ads."

Into 2017, Kennedy says the focus for Leo's strategic department will be to ensure that data analytics (for which Leo has two dedicated employees) is woven into all client work, while strategy will be a part of all marcom at the agency, with better sharing of insights throughout the shop.

While focusing on internal strategic departments is important, Tomblin says that, historically, Canadian agencies haven't done a great job at selling their capabilities, which in turn made marketers reluctant to invest. Good strategic direction isn't just a cheap add-on, he says.

Agencies like Republic have recognized this. Beverley Hammond, CEO and founder of the Toronto-based shop, decided a little over a year ago that it needed to better brand its strategic offering as part of its marcom services. While it's always offered strong strategic direction, with growing demand from clients, Hammond says it was important to emphasize Republic's strategy skills more plainly.

The agency carved out a unique department, headed by VP of strategy and innovation Chris Hopper. While it's a small, four-person team, a key component for the agency is its "war room" – a proprietary process designed to find deeper solutions to business issues (beyond communication) that plague organizations, she says.

After identifying the business need and delving deep into quantitative and qualitative research, a group of individuals from both inside the client (stakeholders, brand managers, agency partners) and outside the brand's realm (design experts, user experience folks, the intended target demo) are brought together for a discussion,

Hammond says. The goal is to come to an insight that can help solve the business problem. At press time, Hammond was in the process of inking four separate client deals she directly attributed to the renewed focus on its strategy team and war room.

She points to a recent session with Aurora, Ont.-based horse racetrack firm Stronach Group, which operates across North America. The brand, attracted by the war room, tasked the agency with identifying ways to revitalize horse racing, particularly among millennials.

The process was illuminating, Hammond says. Millennials were turning away from gambling in droves: the younger cohort, for example, didn't go to Vegas to bet, but to participate in the night life and sights. And since many didn't grow up going to racetracks, horse racing was a giant unknown.

The smartphone generation was looking for a gaming experience that was more than just pulling a lever or betting on a horse.

Based on strategic direction from Republic, a new racing property was created – one without the legacy of major races. The Pegasus Cup, launching in February, is built around gamifying the race itself, says Hopper. While Republic doesn't handle Stronach's marketing, it identified the key insights that are informing the advertising, which is being handled by a U.S. shop.

For example, unlike with sports teams, millennials are unsure who or what to bet on when it comes to horse



racing. A key focus for the external communication became helping potential attendees connect with the horses themselves (the logic is that if they know the horse, like their favourite sports teams, they are more likely to support it – and therefore bet on it).

Other aspects of the experience, such as socializing over drinks with friends, are also more prominently featured in communications in order to sell the event as more than a race.

Advertising of the future doesn't look like an ad, says Zulu's Sutton: it's content, new products and events. Part of the mass migration toward strategy is a recognition that marketing needs to play a deeper role in solving business problems and connecting with consumers.

"Over the past 10 years, the industry has been very focused on understanding the digital landscape, gathering knowledge and expertise in that area," Philip says. "That needed to happen, but now we're at a point where we recognize that 'people are people.' They're people irrespective of whether they're watching a TV ad or thumbing through their newsfeeds. Strategy [departments] are about understanding people, their behaviour and motivations behind that behaviour. That's the key goal." 



# CASSIES

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While Cannes Lions is known for pushing the boundaries and celebrating world-leading creativity, the ROI of creativity is just as important. That's why, for the sixth year, we're pleased to recognize the most outstanding advertising that meets the stiff requirements to enter the 2017 Cannes Lions Creative Effectiveness competition. For the winner of this award, we'll also cover the cost of the entry fee for the winning campaign.

Congratulations to this year's Cassies and Creative Effectiveness winners, as well as the finalists. Let's keep creating great work and showing off Canada on the world stage.

To learn more about the Canadian Cannes Lions initiative, visit [globelink.ca/canneslions](http://globelink.ca/canneslions)



Andrew Saunders  
Chief Revenue Officer, The Globe and Mail  
Chair, Canadian Cannes Advisory Board





2017

**Promotional material for this year's CASSIES event**

encouraged agencies to attend in order to “find out your client is a ‘hugger.’” While we admit this provides some ammunition to the conspiracy theorists, we promise our event marketing was conceived without a Grand Prix winner in mind.

That said, when the top prize was announced, public displays of affection were especially fitting. Huggies stole the show with a campaign that championed its brand name, positioning itself to own that basic response to newborn babies.

Huggies’ “No Baby Unhugged” took home three awards, after rule changes this year permitted such a haul. There were also new categories, with winners in Brand Content, Brand Reawakening and Capitalizing on Curveballs.

The CASSIES are exceptional among Canadian advertising awards because they require proof that a campaign was actually effective – impacting the brand’s bottom line, or effecting demonstrable societal or political change.

To determine the winners, a jury of senior executives deliberated over detailed case studies, considering insight, execution and, most importantly, results.

Presented by the ICA, in association with the A2C and APCM, the Toronto gala on Feb. 22 saw 43 awards, plus the Grand Prix, handed out to 34 different cases.

Read on to learn more about this year’s top campaigns, and go online for the complete cases and credits.

All cases were condensed by John Bradley and edited by Jennifer Horn.



## Proving the power of hugs

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Pampers had a 60% market share for newborn baby diapers – almost twice that of Huggies – due to its long history of product demos and decades of hospital endorsement. Because the relationship with a diaper brand lasts years, the lifetime value can be as high as \$2,600 per child. The goal was to increase Huggies' newborn diaper dollar volume by 10% over a 12-month period (with the annual category growth at 1%).

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Evidence shows that taking newborns baby out of their mothers' arms and into the care of nurses and incubators has drawbacks. Being held is necessary for development: skin-to-skin contact with a newborn via hugging helps regulate body temperature, stabilize vital signs, build immune systems, and promote weight gain.

Positioning Huggies as the hugging champion could build emotional equity while giving the brand some medical authority.

### CREDITS

Client | **Kimberly Clark (Huggies)**  
 Director of marketing, baby and child care | **Brian Clayton**  
 Brand team leader | **Paul Scott**  
 IMP director | **Mitch Faigan**  
 Director, marketing and sales strategy | **Michael Hurt**  
 Social and digital marketing manager | **Ali Ruffo**  
 Shopper marketing lead | **Alicia Cameron**  
 Associate marketing manager | **Lauren Wong**  
 Agency | **Ogilvy & Mather**  
 CCO | **Ian MacKellar**  
 ACDs | **Chris Dacyshyn, Julie Markle**  
 Managing director | **Laurie Young**  
 Group account director, senior VP | **Aviva Groll**  
 Account executive | **Kennedy Crawford**  
 Digital strategic planner | **Robyn Hutman**  
 Planning director | **Michelle Lee**  
 Digital project manager | **Charmion Brathwaite**  
 eCRM director | **Leslie Warren**  
 Digital strategic planner | **Asha Davis**  
 Account supervisor | **Amy Brash**  
 Planning director | **Doug Potwin**  
 Producer | **Anne Marie Martignago**  
 Media agency | **Mindshare**

**EXECUTION** | Launched nationally in May 2015, "No Baby Unhugged" was supported by a \$5 million budget across platforms. The campaign positioned Huggies as an extension of a mother's hug by creating surrogate hugging programs in consultation with the Canadian Association of Pediatric Hospitals (CAPHC). The brand screened volunteers and had them come into hospitals' Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU) to administer hours of hugs to newborns whose moms couldn't always be there.

The campaign invited mothers to join the "No Baby Unhugged" initiative, beginning with the "Power of Hugs" online video launched on Mother's Day 2015. Three documentary-style videos showcased the hugging programs. Online advertising via newborn-centric digital partnerships drove viewers to the "No Baby Unhugged" website, which housed an online film called "Here's what hugs can do."

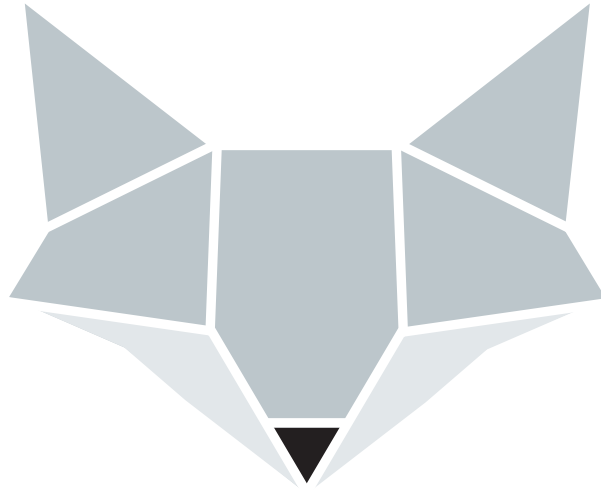
All the videos were released on social, and via additional media partnerships with HGTV, W Network, Global 7 and CTVGo. The site also invited women to upload photos of them hugging their babies or of their pregnant bellies in support of "No Baby Unhugged" for a \$5 donation to the hospital hugging program. New moms were rewarded for their support with a free pack of Huggies diapers and automatically registered to a long-term rewards program.

**RESULTS** | The campaign led to a 19.2% increase in dollar sales of Huggies newborn diapers in the first year of the campaign, compared to a flat performance in the preceding 12 months. There was a net sales ROI of \$2.76 for every dollar invested, driven by a TV net sales ROI of \$4.67 per dollar spent. In addition, the number of mothers signing up to the Huggies database more than tripled.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | Newborn diaper sales increases doubled other diaper sizes. Pricing was flat for both Huggies and Pampers from 2014 through 2015, while Huggies newborn diapers actually lost 3.6% distribution points.



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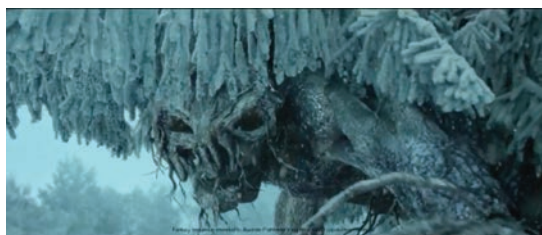
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Strategy Awards provides a benchmark  
for Planners in the Creative Report Card.



#### CREDITS

Client: Nissan  
 Director of marketing | Steve Rhind  
 Senior marketing manager | Mary McNeill  
 Agency | Juniper Park\TBWA  
 CCOs | Terry Drummond, Alan Madill, Barry Quinn  
 Group CDs | Rodger Eyre, Gerald Kugler  
 ACD | Susie Lee  
 Copywriter | Marco Buchar  
 AD | Leo Gonzalez  
 Planner | Josh Hansen  
 Agency producers | Nadya MacNeil, Janice Bisson  
 Head of client services | Calvin Daniels  
 Production house | Radke Films  
 Director | Leigh Marling  
 DOP | Chris Soos  
 Executive producer | Miriana DiQuinzio  
 Line producer | Ed Callaghan  
 Editing house | Saints Editorial  
 Editor | Ross Birchall  
 Animation house | The Embassy  
 Animation director | Winston Helgason  
 Music house | Eggplant  
 Music director | Adam Damelin  
 Online facility | The Vanity  
 Transfer | Alter Ego

## Nissan conquers all conditions

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | By the end of 2013, Nissan was in danger of missing out on CUVs, a growing car format in Canada. Its CUVs were being considered by 40% of Canadians, and market share for the Rogue (Nissan's main category entrant) was below 6%. Nissan's marketing focus had to switch from cars to CUVs. In January 2014, the brand was set to launch a new model Rogue.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | The target for CUVs in Canada is dual-income, suburban couples in their mid-30s without children. Research shows that Canadian CUV drivers purchase their vehicles because of the all-wheel drive (despite almost never taking them off-road) because it allows them to drive confidently in adverse conditions – including the brutal Canadian winter. They take pride in being able to drive when conditions are at their worst. "Pride in the face of adversity" would set Nissan apart from competitors who all positioned their CUVs as versatile family vehicles, communicated in a warm, folksy tone.

**EXECUTION** | "Winter Warrior" launched nationally in January 2014 with a TV spot, supported by a \$1 million annual spend. It cast winter as the villain, with snowmen attacking people and cars in city streets. The look and feel of a Hollywood blockbuster film trailer was amplified with behind-the-scenes social media interviews with the evil snowmen and the heroic Rogue driver. For the 2015 winter, a new execution, "Icy Bridge," featured the Nissan Murano and ran alongside existing "Winter Warrior" creative. The 2016 winter campaign followed a similar pattern.

**RESULTS** | Sales over the three months in 2014 increased 77% versus the prior year. The Rogue sales target for the year was exceeded by early September and the total sales for the calendar year set what was then a record for the model. In January 2014, Rogue's share leapt to a monthly high of 8.9%, and it broke its share record in every subsequent month. Its share increased to 8.8% in 2015 and then to 9.1% for the Nissan fiscal year ended March 2016. Sales for Murano followed a similar pattern. The campaign was picked up and used as the CUV campaign for the U.S. – the first time for a Canadian-originated Nissan campaign.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | Throughout the campaign period, Nissan underspent its main category competitors. Rogue was not the least expensive and there were no significant distribution changes during the period, nor any unusual or overly generous promotions.



## CREDITS

Client | **Ovarian Cancer Canada**  
 VP of marketing | **Karen Cinq Mars**  
 Marketing and sponsorship associate | **Hilary Lanyon**  
 Director of communications | **Janice Chan**  
 Communications associate | **Arden Bagni**  
 Agency | **Grey Canada**  
 CCO | **Patrick Scissons**  
 ADs | **Lisa Chen-Wing, Mark Mason, Perle Arteta, Marissa Mastenbroek**  
 Copywriter | **Sue Kohn**  
 Producers | **Karen Blazer, Terri Vegso, Lisa Smith, Deena Archibald**  
 Production specialist | **Biko Franklin**  
 Account lead | **Darlene Remlinger**  
 Account team | **Megan Chown**  
 Strategists | **Andrew Carty, Lauren Scapillati**  
 PR agency | **Hype PR**  
 Media agency | **Pollin8**  
 Recording studio | **Eggplant**  
 Visual effects | **Fort York**  
 Post production | **Rooster, Alter Ego**  
 Production company | **Untitled Films**  
 Photography | **Raina + Wilson**

## Taking cancer by the Ladyballs

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | While other cancer foundations boast high awareness, high spend levels and significant corporate sponsorship, Ovarian Cancer Canada (OCC) relies almost exclusively on private donors. Unaided awareness of ovarian cancer was frightfully low (less than 4%) compared to other forms, with 60% of Canadians completely unfamiliar with the disease.

There was a common misperception among Canadian women that a routine pap test could detect the disease when in fact there is no reliable screening. The objective was to get people to talk about ovarian cancer, so that more women would ask their doctors about it.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Cause campaign's are successful when they permeate the culture with something memorable – as shown by moustaches, ice bucket stunts and booby balls. But people weren't comfortable talking about ovaries beyond acknowledging their existence and anatomical location. In contrast, with the male equivalent (testes), the literal meaning takes a backseat to what they colloquially represent: courage and boldness. Ovaries, however, had no such alternate usage or name. So the OCC decided to position ovaries as female balls.

**EXECUTION** | The "Ladyballs" campaign ran nationally from December 2015 to May 2016, launching with a 30-second PSA, a 60-second cinema version and an on-premise film in restaurants, bars and salons. It depicted situations that a modern woman might find herself in – such as a business meeting or a social gathering – where she has to make brave decisions, reminding women that they have balls, too, and leading to the line, "Do you have the Ladyballs to do something about ovarian cancer?"

Print and digital ads featured strong women of varying ages and ethnicities to show that the disease did not discriminate. "Show us your Ladyballs" – a user-generated activation – was deployed in social, digital and search, allowing the public to display their support for the cause, while PR and community outreach amplified the message. OCC representatives and survivors were also featured in national TV and radio news segments.

**RESULTS** | The campaign prompted a 118% year-over-year increase in inquiries about Ovarian Cancer from women, along with an average increase of 22 donor calls per week. Seventy five percent of donations received during the campaign were from new donors. Calls to OCC regional offices went up by 35% and social engagement increased by 220%.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | All results occurred year-over-year with no other organizational or operational changes. All earned media was a result of the campaign being pitched to media outlets by Pollin8 founder Lauren Richards, one of the survivors depicted in the campaign. In previous years, Ovarian Cancer Canada would receive a few hundred thousand dollars in media space, compared with \$12 million in donated media space for "Ladyballs."





#### CREDITS

Client | **Wrigley Canada**  
Marketing director | **Dan Alvo**  
Marketing manager | **Julia Mauer**  
Assistant brand manager | **Kurtis Wong**  
Agency | **BBDO Toronto**  
SVP, ECDs | **Todd Mackie, Denise Rossetto**  
VP, ACDs | **Chris Booth, Joel Pylypiw**  
Agency producer | **Terry Kavanagh**  
VP, group account director | **Kristina Hayes**  
Account director | **Saloni Wadehra**  
Account executive | **Zach Kula**  
Media agency | **MediaCom Canada**  
Account management | **Michael Mills, Amber McKean**  
Production | **Alaine Perrow**  
PR agency | **Harbinger**  
Production company | **Creative Soul**  
Director | **Matt Eastman**  
DOP | **Michael Banasiak**  
Producer | **Evan Landry**  
Executive producer | **Adam Palmer**  
Editorial house | **Panic and Bob**  
Editor | **Steve Puhach**  
Post production | **Smith**  
Colourist | **Bill Ferwerda**  
Online editor | **Brodie McNeill**

## Swapping gifts for Skittles

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Skittles has become a successful confectionery brand by taking risks and being provocative. However, the candy is sometimes overshadowed during the holiday season – the second highest volume period for confectionery, behind Halloween – when consumers tend to purchase niche brands (like Toblerone and Lindt). Traditional brands like Skittles experience volume declines as people buy candy canes, gumdrops and marshmallow Santas. There is limited opportunity to drive incremental seasonal sales of Skittles.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | While people love the holidays, there is one thing they don't love – receiving an awful gift they'll never use. Research shows that nearly 75% of Canadians have been disappointed by a bad holiday gift at one point in their lives.

There was an opportunity for Skittles to enter the holiday conversation by converting bad gifts into good candy, reinforcing the brand attributes – unique, irreverent, youthful – that had been driving its long-term health and growth.

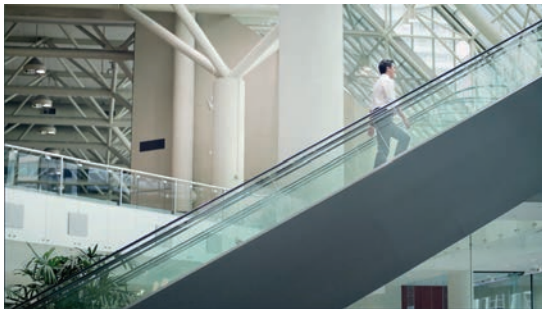
**EXECUTION** | The brand decided to launch a pop-up store called “The Skittles Holiday Pawn Shop” on Boxing Day. Inside the store, people could exchange unwanted holiday gifts for Skittles.

From December 2014 to February 2015, “The Skittles Holiday Pawn Shop” was supported by a \$200,000-plus budget and focused on the Greater Toronto Area. The campaign launched with a promoted video on YouTube and Facebook let viewers know they could trade bad gifts for real Skittles. The program was supported by print, social posts and PR.

Skittlespawn.ca encouraged people to upload photos of their unwanted gifts to be appraised for their Skittles value. Real-time “appraisers” valued each submission and instantly provided a certificate that could be redeemed for Skittles. For those unable to make it to the shop, the appraisal certificate gave them \$2 off a bag of Skittles. The brand also partnered with YouTube influencer Lilly Singh to promote the store. Multiple video segments were filmed featuring social influencers and Skittles fans who pawned off their unwanted gifts. At the end of the campaign, all the swapped gifts were donated to one of Canada's largest charities.

**RESULTS** | National seasonal Skittles sales increased by 16% versus the previous year. The ROI delivered by the program was well above corporate benchmarks and hurdle rates.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | “The Skittles Holiday Pawn Shop” garnered 98.8 million earned media impressions, 2,700 store visits over five days, 15,984 website submissions, 51,798 site visits, 4.4 million video views and 503,000 total engagements. The social commentary and interaction was 98% favourable. There was no difference in overall sales incentives versus the previous year and no changes to distribution.



## The Liberals' hurricane win

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Former Conservative PM Stephen Harper had been misleading Canadians on the campaign trail, suggesting that Liberal Justin Trudeau would cancel pension income splitting for seniors – a popular tax-saving program that seniors counted on, giving Harper a solid hold on the critical seniors vote. While the claim wasn't true, Trudeau's denials were not getting through. Advertising needed to convince seniors that Trudeau wouldn't cancel the program.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Fear is a powerful tool, especially to the 25% of Canadian seniors already living in poverty. The possibility of more financial stress left pensioners confused and frightened, a similar dynamic to the phone scams seniors get. In an election that became about defining Canadian values, manipulating vulnerable seniors didn't meet the values that Canadians prioritized. The team responded with a viral video containing humour (a big risk in political advertising) to refute the false claim.

**EXECUTION** | The Liberals worked with a trustworthy senior, former Mississauga mayor "Hurricane" Hazel McCallion, to expose the deception. McCallion was briefed on Thanksgiving Saturday – only nine days before the election – and shot on the following Tuesday, with "Hazel" airing nationally for the next day five days on TV and social, supported by a \$500,000 budget.

The casting of McCallion was designed to use her reputation to rise above political rhetoric and be the last word on the issue. In short, she was seen as more believable than Stephen Harper, even by voters who didn't know her. "Hazel" would also more broadly demonstrate for all voters the manipulative tactics Stephen Harper was using, thus undermining his character.

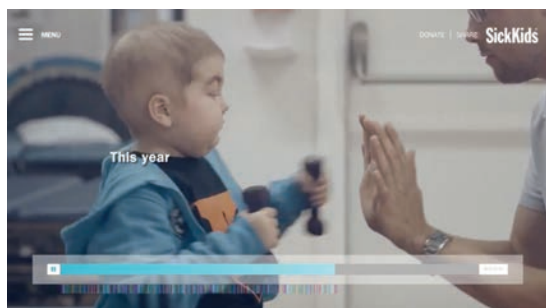
**RESULTS** | In less than a week, Conservative vote intention by seniors dropped 11%, from 48% to 37%, while Liberal vote intention rose 8%, from 30% to 38%. After months of the Conservatives owning the support of seniors in the election, Trudeau's Liberals became the preferred party.

Given that seniors have more than double the propensity to vote than millennials, this swing was a key factor in the Liberal party's largest seat gain in Canadian history and in the doubling of its share of the popular vote, from 18.9% in 2011 to 39.5%.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | "Hazel" gained over 50,000 unpaid social views in the first half hour and became a top trending topic on Facebook for almost three days. All views were organic. In total, the ad generated more than six million unpaid social media views. While there was clearly momentum building for Trudeau in the last weeks of the campaign, there had been little change in seniors' vote intention prior to the spot.

### CREDITS

Client | Liberal Party of Canada  
 Principle advisor | Gerald Butts  
 National campaign director | Katie Telford  
 Director of advertising | Suzanne Cowan  
 Strategy and research | The Gandalf Group  
 Strategist | David Herle  
 Agency | Bensimon Byrne  
 President and strategist | Jack Bensimon  
 CCO and copywriter | David Rosenberg  
 Group account director | Jill Engelman  
 Project manager | Katelyn Porter  
 Agency broadcast producer | Meghan Cheesbrough  
 Media director | Thomas Shadoff  
 Media buyer | Alex Gillespie



#### CREDITS

Client | **SickKids Foundation**  
 VP, brand strategy and communications | **Lori Davison**  
 Director, integrated brand marketing | **Kate Torrance**  
 Director, digital projects | **Mark Jordan**  
 Manager, patient ambassador program | **Lisa Charendoff**  
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 Agency | **Cossette**  
 CCOs | **Carlos Moreno, Peter Ignazi**  
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 AD | **Jessica Wong**  
 Copywriter | **Darrel Knight**  
 Senior interactive designer | **Gustavo Oregel**  
 Agency producer | **Heather Moshioian**  
 Account executive | **Olivia Figliomeni**  
 Account director | **Hanh Vo**  
 VP, national brand director | **Steve Groh**  
 SVP, national client lead | **Andrea Cook**  
 Director, strategy | **Kevin McHugh**  
 CSO | **Jason Chaney**  
 UX/CX coordinator | **Thomas Wilkins**  
 VP, experience strategist | **Tara O'Doherty**  
 VP, product and technology strategy | **Joe Dee**  
 Technology and innovation partner | **Hoffman Digital**  
 Technical director | **Dominic Gignac**  
 Lead developer | **Clément Guillou**  
 Production house | **Skin and Bones**  
 Media Agency | **Cairns Oneil**

## Unpausing SickKids' lives

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Each year SickKids launches a fundraising campaign during the holiday season. Past campaigns have consistently set the bar higher for donations, making it difficult to surpass year-over-year. SickKids' goal was to build on the success of the 2014 campaign and increase year-over-year online donations by 10%.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Research shows that the propensity to donate tends to increase when the achievement of a goal feels more tangible. So if prospective donors believed they were contributing to a solution, they would be more likely to participate.

When children are diagnosed with an illness, their life is put on pause: everything from playing sports to attending school to being with family and friends. By allowing potential donors to “unpause,” they could immediately see the impact of their contributions.

**EXECUTION** | The “Life Unpaused” campaign ran from November to December 2015 in the GTA and was supported by a \$100,000 budget, with video and custom content pieces running across TV, digital and social.

The campaign leveraged call-to-action technology within a video. SickKids followed up with patient stories from the 2014 campaign, but this time the stories included a twist: each video was paused mid-way and then prompted the viewer to donate in order to unpause it. Immediately following a donation, the video resumed with new footage of the child living a normal healthy life.

The content encouraged conversation, sharing and donations, and potential donors were able to see the “social proof” of others who had already made a donation by having the names of donors appear below the video bar. Media weighting and creative rotation were continually optimized, based on donation levels per child, media engagement rates and on-site behaviour.

**RESULTS** | SickKids exceeded the goal of 10% online donation growth, with the average donation amount increasing by 50%. Overall, donations increased by 32% to a record \$49 million – \$12 million more than the previous year. The campaign significantly strengthened the overall impression and desired brand image of SickKids, and increased people's likelihood to donate. Benefitting from additional donated media value and social uptake, the campaign achieved a 26-fold ROI increase.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | Sixty percent of GTA residents remembered seeing at least one of the ads, which was a nine-point increase from 2014. The two-minute spot was SickKids' highest performing post to date on Facebook, reaching more than four million people with over 72,000 interactions. Overall, the campaign generated 74.5 million impressions. Results were achieved with a similar budget to 2014.





## Love is in the Doritos chip bouquet

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | In January 2016, Doritos Ketchup returned as a limited-time flavour after its highly successful re-introduction in 2015. However, even though it had developed a cult-like following among 18- to 34-year-old males, mass penetration had been low. With a higher sales target in 2016, a broader audience needed to be reached.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Doritos Ketchup was set to launch just before Valentine's Day, an event that has traditionally been geared toward women. While a bouquet of flowers is the go-to gift guys rely on, there was no equivalent gift for women to give to men, making it a pretty one-sided affair. So what do women give guys? "Doritos Ketchup Roses" – bouquets made entirely of Doritos Ketchup chips – would solve the historic problem of what to give a guy on Valentine's Day.

**EXECUTION** | Launched nationally in Feb. 2016, "Doritos Ketchup Roses" was supported by a budget of \$200,000 and focused on social media as the primary driver, along with key influencers and news media. A week prior to Valentine's Day, a 70s-inspired infomercial launched "Doritos Ketchup Roses" across all Doritos channels. Fans could visit [DoritosKetchupRoses.com](http://DoritosKetchupRoses.com) and order a bouquet for their loved one, to be delivered to their door on Valentine's Day for free.

The campaign was supported with a mix of videos, animated promotions and instructional guides designed to encourage people to secure their bouquet for a loved one. A series of irreverent memes and GIFs were seeded on Reddit and other social channels. Bouquets of "Doritos Ketchup Roses" were pre-seeded to key media outlets and bloggers the week before Valentine's Day.

**RESULTS** | Baseline sales grew 8%, more than double the target sales increase, making Doritos Ketchup the most successful limited time offer in the brand's history. The repeat sales rate of 30% exceeded the objective of 20%. There was a 45% increase in brand purchase consideration while the rating for "brand I love" increased by 10%. Feature pricing (commonly used to support limited time offers) was limited, leading to a record percentage of volume sold at full purchase price for a Doritos limited time offer. This made the program significantly more profitable than previous year.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | The campaign achieved 4.3 million views – more than double the projection – with 56 million earned media impressions, a value of over \$675,000. #DoritosKetchupRoses became a top 10 organic Twitter trending topic during the promotion. Doritos Ketchup was in market during the same period as the previous year with a similar level of investment, with no significant change in distribution.

### CREDITS

Client | **PepsiCo Foods Canada**  
 Senior director of marketing, global brand | **Susan Irving**  
 Marketing manager | **Matt Webster**  
 Senior marketing manager, digital strategy | **James Clarke**  
 Contractor, digital content | **Kevin Gonsalves**  
 Senior manager, corporate communications | **Sheri Morgan**  
 Agency | **BBDO Toronto**  
 SVP, ECDs | **Denise Rossetto, Todd Mackie**  
 VP, ACD | **Derek Blais**  
 AD | **Nolan Kennelly**  
 Copywriter | **Egin Kongoli**  
 Senior account planner | **Travis St. Denis**  
 Agency producer | **Jana Desjardins**  
 Project manager | **Sarah Ng**  
 VP, group account director | **Stephanie Page**  
 Account supervisors | **Solo Gritskiv, Mary Montsenigos**  
 Account executive | **Karrie Kwong**  
 Broadcast producer and account exec | **Anne-Christel Rajoelina**  
 Media agency | **OMD Canada**  
 PR agency | **Citizen Relations Canada**  
 Production and post-production | **Someplace Nice**  
 Director/video editor | **Sean McBride**

## Reitmans makes its case to a younger crowd



Categories | Retail + Brand  
Reawakening  
Agency | Tank

### SITUATION ANALYSIS |

Reitmans was built as an inexpensive, accessible fashion destination. But as fast-fashion brands like H&M became more established, online retailers and aggressive discount stores (like Walmart) were also creating fierce competition.

### STRATEGY & INSIGHT |

The retailer had already shifted to appeal to a younger target (age 25 to 44), but the perception hadn't caught up. Reitmans needed to show younger customers that its products were for them.

### EXECUTION |

The "Reitmans. Really." campaign showed

that, when it comes to fashion, seeing is believing.

Launched nationally in September 2015, the campaign ran until July 2016 with a \$4-million budget.

It included a stunt during Montreal Fashion Week, and later revealed actress Meghan Markle (*Suits*) as its brand ambassador.

The campaign – featuring women struggling to get a peek at the label on Meghan's fabulous outfits – ran on TV, OOH, online and flyers.

The brand created "Fashion Conversations" online, where Markle offered her take on how to embrace current trends.

**RESULTS |** Twenty-nine percent of 35- to 44-year-olds said they purchased something at Reitmans after seeing the campaign, versus 18% before its debut. Online sales increased (69.6% in wave one, 72.8% in wave two), and on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, Reitmans experienced a 25% increase in sales from the prior year.

**CAUSE & EFFECT |** The media spend was very similar to the previous year's budget and, during 2015, Reitmans was outspent in mass media by its five main competitors.

## Providing Chatr for life transitioners

Category | Brand Reawakening + Targeting  
Agencies | BBDO/Balmoral Multicultural

**SITUATION ANALYSIS |** Rogers launched Chatr in 2010 as a flanker brand in the pre-paid segment. After strong growth in the first year, the brand's share of the market stalled at 13.5% and then began to slowly decline.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY |** Chatr found that new Canadians made up more than 50% of its users. This presented a unique target to focus on, and the new direction allowed the brand to expand to non-immigrant consumers embarking on new chapters in their lives, such as a job or moving to a new city. "Life transitioners" was an under-targeted segment as competitors focused on millennials and disaffected post-paid consumers.

**EXECUTION |** Prior to the campaign launch in May 2015, Chatr was rebranded around the newly defined audience. Chatr Wireless became Chatr Mobile, while graphics were redesigned to reinforce value. The year-long "Let's Get Going" campaign launched with a \$7-million budget, delivering three core messages: value, long-distance plans and accessibility.



Before arriving in Canada, potential customers were geo-targeted in their home countries on websites frequented by those interested in immigration. Non-immigrant "life transitioners" were targeted with digital banners on job sites and Kijiji. Advertising placements in airports targeted new Canadians as they arrived, with Chatr kiosks offering newcomers a free long-distance call home.

**RESULTS |** Gross activations for Chatr increased by 54% and subscribers grew 30%, increasing the brand's average revenue per user by 4.27 points versus the prior year. Chatr more than doubled its share of the prepaid market to 12%, and is now one of Rogers' fastest-growing businesses. Awareness for the brand increased 16%, while the brand's attribute of a "worry-free" solution increased by 19%. Website traffic grew 205% in May 2015, 307% in June, 150% in July and 191% in August

from the previous year.

**CAUSE & EFFECT |** There were no significant changes to Chatr's pricing.

## SILVER

# Shock Top has no filter

Categories | **Brand Content** + **Canadian Success on the Global Stage**  
Agency | **Anomaly**

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | The growing craft beer category in the U.S. had mid-size brands in a bind. Shock Top, a Belgian-style wheat beer launched in 2007, fell into consecutive months of decline for the first time in its history.

**EXECUTION** | Wedgehead became the straight-talking brand ambassador. Launched in the U.S. in January 2016 and running for two months, the campaign was supported by a \$5-million budget and ran in three phases, beginning with packaging in grocery stores and a giant billboard on Venice Beach.

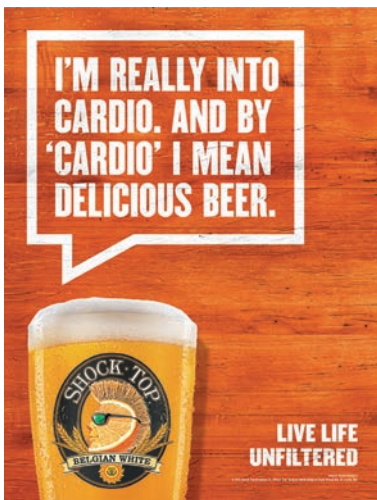
The beer packaging and OOH media featured a talking Wedgehead that interacted with shoppers and pedestrians. The brand also created a 30-second Super Bowl spot, a long-form version of which was released the week prior to the game, and 16 pieces of unique content, cinema ads and PR. The morning after the game, a five-minute film with Wedgehead and actor T.J. Miller (*Silicon Valley*) giving an unfiltered review of the Super Bowl ads was shared online.

**RESULTS** | During the first quarter of 2016, Shock Top's brand awareness by almost nine points. The year-on-year sales trend improved from -16% at the end of January to +15% in March 2016. The campaign generated 300 million earned impressions and over one billion PR impressions nationwide.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | Spending was consistent with other advertising during the Super Bowl, and there were no pricing initiatives or distribution changes during the program.

### INSIGHT & STRATEGY

Big breweries took themselves too seriously while craft brands owned quirkiness. Shock Top had moved away from its fun personality, which had once set it apart, despite having an approachable logo – an orange wedge with a mohawk and sunglasses, named “Wedgehead.” To target 18- to 34-year-olds who were open to experimenting with new beers, the brand decided to give Shock Top a voice that would match its unfiltered brewing process.



# Cineplex prioritizes pleasure

Categories | **Silver: Brand Content** + **Bronze: Building Brand Equity**  
Agency | **Zulu Alpha Kilo**

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | While Cineplex's brand awareness was almost 100%, brand affinity was surprisingly weak at 16%. Canadians had an emotional connection to the Hollywood films but not the brand itself. Cineplex needed to be more than just another way to see popular movies.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Canadians tend to forget to make time for entertainment in an environment beyond the couch. Cineplex decided to position itself around the platform “See the Big Picture,” communicating the idea that a person prioritizes pleasure by making time for entertainment (such as going to the cinema).

**EXECUTION** | “Lily & the Snowman,” an emotional, animated short film about a young girl and her snowman, was released in three phases and supported by a \$1-million national budget. Phase one consisted of online trailers and movie posters, as well as blogger outreach. Phase two launched in theatres a few days later to capitalize on holiday moviegoers in December 2015, with the short film playing in every theatre across the country. Phase three ran from Dec. 28 to Feb. 29, with the film released across all major social channels.

**RESULTS** | In only three months, Cineplex saw a 37.5% increase in brand affinity, an 11-point increase in its “meaningfulness” score, and increases across all other key brand equity measures. “Lily & the Snowman” was shared 620,000 times on Facebook and YouTube and generated more than 30 million online views (21.8 million in the first 10 days alone), which beat the brand's objective by more than 1,000%, driven by a 9:1 ratio of organic to paid views.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | This was the first time that Cineplex had invested in brand support.



See the full cases and credits at [strategyonline.ca](http://strategyonline.ca)





## This is why you should play Lotto 6/49

Category | Brand Reawakening  
Agency | Sid Lee

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Lotto 6/49 reigned supreme in Quebec until the introduction of Lotto Max in 2009. With prize guarantees of at least \$10 million, Lotto Max heavily cannibalized sales from Lotto 6/49, particularly among younger players.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Millennials have dreams, but they did not see Lotto 6/49 as a means of realizing them. They are a generation of “makers” who don’t rely on luck, even though they still believe in it. The brand decided to shift its focus from the jackpot to highlighting the role of luck in everyday life. Lotto 6/49 tapped into the expression “You should buy a lottery ticket,” used when a person is experiencing a run of good luck, to show millennials that life is full of lucky moments.

**EXECUTION** | Running in Quebec from September 2015 to April 2016 and supported by a \$1-million budget, “#youshouldplay649” ran across TV, radio, OOH, digital and social. Each communication platform featured a lucky moment and suggested that the viewer buy a Lotto 6/49 ticket. Copy included “I’ll take a 6/49” and “#youshouldbuya649.” An online promotion and contest invited people to share their lucky moments using the hashtag. In early 2016, six more TV spots extended the campaign.

**RESULTS** | The participation rate of 18- to 34-year-olds in Lotto 6/49 increased from 27% to 35%, driving a 10% increase in participation rates across the entire legal-age population. In 2016, the Lotto 6/49 campaign led to an 8-point increase to Loto-Québec’s reputation score.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | Even though lottery sales are generally linked to jackpot size, the new Lotto 6/49 campaign significantly increased sales compared to the other provinces that promote the same lottery product. Loto-Québec did not spend more than previous campaigns or have any unusual price discounting, and POS didn’t increase significantly during the campaign period.

## CIL offers a challenge to resourceful DIYers

Category | Limited Resources  
Agency | DDB Canada

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | CIL Premium was sold only at Home Depot, where BEHR’s higher margins led store associates to promote it over its competitor.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | There is a perception that redecorating is hard and costly work. But painting doesn’t require much effort or money to transform a space. The brand needed to establish this message of ease and link it to CIL Premium before consumers arrived at the store, where they were often convinced to buy BEHR.

Small Budget” tips.

Consumers were encouraged to use CIL Premium paint, document the process and share the results on social media for a chance to win \$5,000 Home Depot gift cards, plus a consultation with a top Canadian designer.

Designers and bloggers were also engaged to take on the challenge, and the campaign included a partnership with the *Roger & Marilyn* radio show.

**RESULTS** | CIL Premium sales saw a 23% dollar increase and a 26.8% volume increase. The campaign resulted in 25 million media impressions,



**EXECUTION** | The \$1-million “Beauty on a Small Budget” campaign ran online, targeting men and women age 25 to 54. It featured a miniature room that was given a makeover with just a little bit of paint and a few accent pieces. The campaign launched with 15-second pre-roll spots and a one-minute film, driving consumers to the CIL site where they found “Beauty on a

including 7.6 million hits for the online videos. Sixty percent of the social media impressions were organic and CIL’s social media activity outperformed its competitors BEHR and Valspar.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | Distribution of CIL Premium remained unchanged at Home Depot.

SILVER

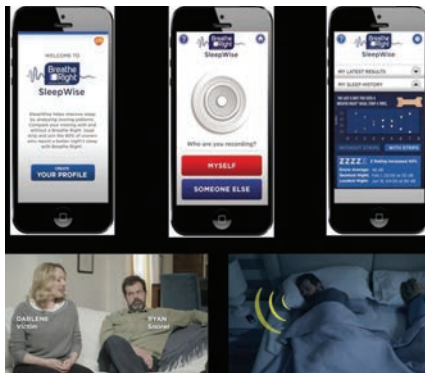
# Breathe Right's very personal snoring pitch

Category | Matching Message to Medium  
Agency | Grey

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Penetration and sales of Breathe Right Nasal Strips had plateaued. While the product had a loyal user base, its relevance was not appreciated by potential new users. A "test-and-learn" regional budget was targeted to drive 65% trial of Breathe Right strips among new and lapsed nasal congestion sufferers.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Research showed the biggest purchase barrier was "snorer denial," with 42% of snoring Canadians not admitting that they snore at all. The opportunity lay in providing proof that a Breathe Right strip could improve nasal airflow and give sleep-starved bedmates a good night's rest.

**EXECUTION** | The Breathe Right SleepWise app was created to provide tangible proof of snoring. Launched in April 2015 in Western Canada and supported by a \$200,000 budget, the SleepWise app gave users (or their sleep-deprived partners) the ability to upload personal data and record the quality of their



sleep – or the disruption of their snores.

The data became the message in executions calling out real-life snore deniers: people could have their partner's snores inserted into an ad that would play on their favourite radio station during the next morning's drive to work. The ad would even include the

snorer's first name and street name, so there was no denying what they were hearing. The campaign also used banner ads on favourite websites and text messages to reach the snorer.

**RESULTS** | Retail dollar sales increased by 7% and volume sales by 6% in Western Canada versus the rest of Canada, increasing dollar share by 0.3 points and unit share by 0.2 points.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | Traffic to BreatheRight.ca increased between 123% and 1,088% in key Western Canadian markets versus the rest of Canada. Ninety percent of site visitors opted-in for free trial of the product.



# Spotify's musical locales

Category | Matching Message to Medium  
Agency | Anomaly

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Spotify launched its first Canadian campaign in May 2015. Most Canadians were unfamiliar with the music streaming category, let alone the Spotify brand, and among those most likely to use a music streaming service, there were already established competitors like Songza, Rdio and SoundCloud.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | Music has the ability to change listeners' experience of the world around them. Spotify could quantify this through its platform by identifying what each of its users was listening to, when they listened and how often. And, uniquely, it could identify where consumers were listening, down to the neighbourhood.

**EXECUTION** | "Music For Your World" was created with playlists customized for Canadians based on where they lived.

Running from May to June 2015 and supported by a \$250,000 budget, the campaign ran nationally across digital and OOH. Over 30

neighbourhood playlists were developed and every element of the campaign was driven by real-time data. Influencers were asked to add to their neighbourhood's playlist and promote it. Customized ads ran on billboards and on transit in the neighbourhoods celebrated in the playlists to promote them.

**RESULTS** | Daily registrations for Spotify increased 21%, more than double the 10% target. Spotify moved from number three to number one in App Store downloads (among music streaming apps). Overall streaming in Canada on Spotify increased by 71% versus the previous period.

The campaign generated over 30 million impressions, fuelling an increase in brand awareness from 38% to 58% versus the previous period. The brand's net promoter score increased from 15% to 25%.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | There was no change in distribution as Spotify had been available in Canada prior to the campaign launch.

➤ See the full credits for all cases at [strategyonline.ca](http://strategyonline.ca)

# McDonald's stirs up a winning rivalry



Category | Retail  
Agency | Cossette

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | McDonald's 25-year sponsorship of the Montreal Canadiens, and its link to French-Canadian consumers, was threatened by direct competitors who had also become sponsors of

the team. The QSR needed to take its partnership to another level in order to be perceived as a dominant "player."

## INSIGHT & STRATEGY

McDonald's and the Montreal Canadiens are both "unifying" brands, and Max Pacioretty, a central character in the long-standing Montreal Canadiens-Boston Bruins rivalry, is a fan favourite. McDonald's wanted to position itself as a unifier by bringing together both sides of a bitter rivalry.

**EXECUTION** | The brand and Pacioretty created the Max67 burger and offered it to everyone – even Bruins fans – for a limited time.

Launched in March 2015 in Quebec with a \$1-million budget across TV, digital and social, Pacioretty dressed as a McDonald's employee

and introduced his signature burger to a crowd of unsuspecting Bruins fans in Boston. They were asked on camera what they thought of the burger before and after he was revealed as its creator.

**RESULTS** | McDonald's generated an incremental traffic increase of 31% in Quebec during the three-month program, with 31% of Max67 buyers visiting the restaurant solely because of the promotion. The Max67 achieved more than 2.5 times the average incremental sales of a limited-time offer and increased key brand metrics including "Has good-tasting food" (+17 points) and "I feel closer to the brand" (+33 points).

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | The campaign generated more than 27 million organic impressions, achieving 93.7% brand recall and 91.1% product recall – double the average for regular McDonald's advertising. Intent to purchase after communication exposure was 43%, 1.5 times higher than the IPSOS norm in the category.

# Leon's upcycles street furniture into discounts

Category | Seasonal  
Agency | Taxi

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Leon's had awareness and relevance problems in Quebec. If Quebecers considered Leon's, it was typically because of a price promotion rather than an emotional connection. To grow sales, the brand needed to connect with Quebecers on a cultural level.

**INSIGHT & STRATEGY** | "Moving Day" is a uniquely Quebecois phenomenon when thousands of Quebecers simultaneously relocate to new homes and apartments. When a person is getting ready for a move, some things make the cut and some don't. In Quebec, discarded furniture usually ends up on the sidewalk – and so this is where Leon's would insert itself into the Moving Day narrative.

**EXECUTION** | Running from June to July 2015 in Montreal, Leon's "Moving Day" was supported by a \$200,000 budget deployed in three phases. Phase one pre-seeded the idea of "move-worthy furniture" by placing wild postings throughout the city to pique interest. In the second phase, real-life 3D coupons were



framed around discarded furniture on the streets, turning them into discounts. Pedestrians took photos of the 3D coupon and redeemed them at Leon's. The coupons could also be shared. Phase three amplified the message through earned coverage, plus a social media video.

**RESULTS** | During the installation period, the seven corporate stores in Quebec saw a 34.7% increase in sales and a 15.8% increase in store traffic compared to the previous year.

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | Leon's had a standard "Save the Tax" event in market during the previous year's period, but it had seen limited success in Quebec. "Moving Day" generated more 100 million earned media impressions.



SILVER

## Interac stays in the black

Category | Sustained Success  
Agency | Zulu Alpha Kilo

**SITUATION ANALYSIS** | Credit cards are highly appealing, offering points as free benefits. Interac Debit cards offered no rewards, and the brand needed to persuade consumers to pay with debit rather than credit. With no new innovation, brand advertising needed to do the heavy lifting.

**STRATEGY & INSIGHT** | Being debt-free means never dreading a bill, never paying interest or having to avoid creditor calls. It means feeling financially stable and, as a result, more relaxed, capable and optimistic. Simply put, life is better when you use your own money.



**EXECUTION** | Launched nationally in the spring of 2014 and running for more than two years, "Be in the Black" was supported by a \$5-million budget across multiple channels. In 2014, the brand encouraged Canadians to avoid debt by using their Interac Debit cards, which would make them feel like rock stars (AC/DC's "Back in Black" was employed); in 2015 the focus

shifted to showing Canadians how using their own money is emotionally rewarding with a campaign around holiday debt.

**RESULTS** | Transactions increased by 4.7% between June 2014 and May 2015, and by a further 5.5% in the following 12 months. Brand equity measures were positively impacted by the campaign. Interac maintained the leading top-of-mind awareness position of 63%, eclipsing Visa (57%), MasterCard (52%) and AMEX (49%).

**CAUSE & EFFECT** | There was no discount or cash incentive offered to consumers for choosing to pay with Interac before or during the campaign period.

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# PROMO!

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## BRONZE

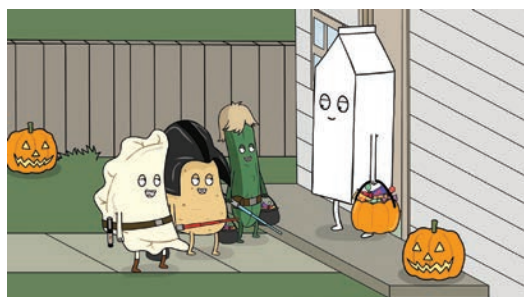
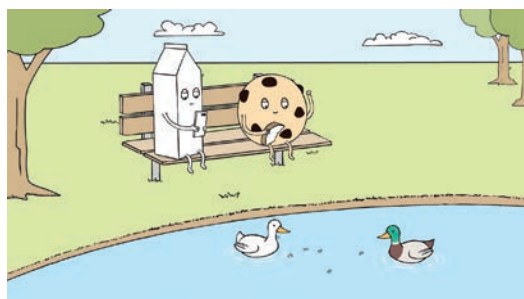
# Milk West's snackable content

Category | Brand Content  
Agency | DDB Canada/Tribal Worldwide

When kids hit their teens, they assert their independence in all kinds of ways, and not all of the change is good. Like drinking less milk. They're also less influenced by advertising, so to get them interested in their product again, Milk West took the branded content route.

It came up with "Snack Time," a social platform featuring milk and the snacks that go best with it, starring Carlton (a milk carton) and Chip (his chocolate chip cookie best friend).

Running from September 2014 to April 2016 across Western Canada and supported by an annual \$1-million



budget, the unbranded series ran online, accompanied by Tumblr cartoon posts and GIFs. Cinema campaigns ran during the three biggest teen films of the year, with the brand giving out 20,000 special Carlton-styled USB sticks to movie-goers.

The "Snack Time" audience consumed 13 servings of milk per week – versus 10.6 servings per week for teens not watching the content – with 28.2% of viewers saying they would drink more milk in the future, compared to only 18.3% of those who had not seen the campaign.



# Kellogg's treat trade

Category | Long-Term Success  
Agency | Leo Burnett

Nothing says holiday season like treats, toys and giving. Kellogg's

managed to combine this holy trinity in its "Treats for Toys" campaign, created to help moms "Make a treat, make a difference."

The holiday campaign encouraged Canadians to create and photograph a Rice Krispies treat, with the brand donating a toy to a child in need for every photo submitted.

Launched nationally in November 2013 and running each subsequent year, "Treats for Toys" was supported by a \$2-million annual budget. The brand created a nostalgic, black-and-white 30-second video showing a mother and child creating a treat together. This was supported by print, online and social. In the second year, the brand released animated online videos featuring toy and treat characters.

Rice Krispies' market share increased every year during the campaign, from 6.1% to 7%, outpacing the brand's share increases for the rest of the year (3.7% to 4%).

In 2015, the brand's household penetration grew 0.8 points to 27.7%. Over the three years, the campaign delivered an extra \$2.20 in sales for every \$1 invested. Rice Krispies' regular and promotional unit prices increased every year of the campaign while distribution remained unchanged.

# Amazon creates a magical Echo

Category | Canadian Success on the Global Stage  
Agency | Leo Burnett



In 2015, Amazon launched Echo. The voice-enabled digital assistant was successful with early adopters but not with a wider audience. The brand needed some star power to extend its reach.

Enter Alec Baldwin. Launched in the U.S. in January 2016 and supported by a \$5-million budget across multiple platforms, the "#BaldwinBowl" campaign followed Baldwin as he planned an epic Super Bowl party with Echo's help. Three films and paid social activated the campaign online, while a 60-second TV spot ran during the Super Bowl. Another post-game spot focused on Echo smoothing the tedious task of re-stocking after a big party.

Echo sales increased almost five-fold by the end of the campaign. The device captured a 26% market share in online speaker sales in 2016, surpassing the existing leader Bose at 8%, a sales increase of almost 1,200% from the previous year.

"#BaldwinBowl" was Amazon's most successful campaign ever across all key metrics. Sales were four times higher than for any other campaign while Prime member registration surged 2.5 times. There were no changes in pricing, distribution or availability for the Amazon Echo.

➤ See the full cases and credits at [strategyonline.ca](http://strategyonline.ca)





## The Liberals strike back

Category | Brand Reawakening  
Agency | Bensimon Byrne

After winning the Liberal leadership in 2013, Justin Trudeau's support was high until the fall of 2014, when the Conservatives began to position him as a shallow lightweight who made suspect decisions. As the 2015 federal election approached, they released the "Just Not Ready" spot to drive the point home. The Liberals needed a way to counter the message.

Despite its success, the Conservative ad felt contrived, providing an opportunity to contrast Trudeau's authentic approach to politics.

Running nationally from August to October 2015 and supported by a \$5-million budget, the Justin Trudeau 2015 election campaign launched with a "Ready" commercial, breaking the unwritten rule in political communication to never refer to an opponent's line of attack.

This was followed by "Escalator," a metaphor focusing on a key Trudeau message about the middle class. "Rally" illustrated Trudeau's growing momentum in the campaign's final days, while "Hazel" (see p. 43) attacked Stephen Harper's trustworthiness with seniors.

Trudeau won a 184-seat majority, the first time a third-place leader rose to the Prime Minister's Office in a single election. The Liberals accomplished this while spending roughly \$10 million less than the Conservatives.

## Giving new life with blood

Category | Cause  
Agency | Sandbox Advertising

The charity space is a crowded one, and many campaigns are built around fun, shareable ways of giving, like pouring cold water on your head and recording it. It's more complicated with blood. The Canadian Blood Services is mandated to encourage blood donations, but its ask is inherently more invasive.

The charity decided to focus on how blood is central to every aspect of life. Without blood, there are no soccer games, first dates or guitar lessons. Blood donation is a "first response" way of helping those in need.

Supported with a \$500,000 budget, "You have the power to give life" was launched in September 2015. The symbol for the

campaign was a red bandage on a lowered forearm – a literal call to arms and a recognizable badge of honour shared by donors. The campaign gave donors a way to share personal stories about their experience through social media. Donors now receive the red bandage after donating.

The campaign resulted in a 30% increase in new blood donors. This number continues to rise, from a monthly average of 5,262 prior to launch to 6,875 (and counting) post-launch. Engagement on Facebook increased by 66%. Campaign media spending year-over-year was flat and there was no change to the availability of blood donation locations. There was no other promotional activity.



## Raising the Roof hits home

Category | Cause  
Agency | Leo Burnett

Homelessness is a visible problem, but it's hard to get people to think about it beyond the visceral reminders and to consider long-term solutions.

Raising the Roof needed something dramatic to take on "Not In My Backyard"

attitudes and confront short-term thinking.

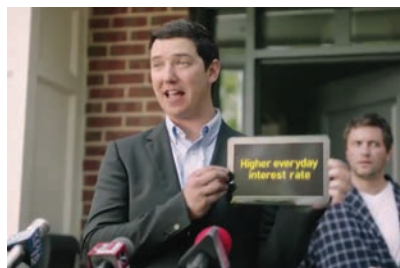
The "Coming Soon" campaign launched in October 2015. PR and social media were used to amplify the hoax, in which a property for lease in an affluent area of Toronto was covered with a plywood façade and a sign announcing a homeless shelter was coming. The sign included a phone number, email and URL to contact the shelter.

The message was clear in the ensuing uproar – nobody wanted a shelter in their "backyard." The next day, Raising the Roof revealed the ruse and pushed the topic into the news cycle with a video documenting the response and encouraging debate.

Donations to the organization increased 506% from the prior year. A total of 19 articles in The Huffington Post, BuzzFeed, *Toronto Star*, CP24, *The Independent* and other outlets resulted in 7.7 million unique impressions and 52,000 video views.



## BRONZE



### EQ Bank leaves the branches to others

Category | Launch of New Product/Service  
Agency | Union

In 2015, EQ Bank faced all the disadvantages of a challenger. The digital-only bank started off with zero brand recognition in a cluttered space. J.D. Power reported that only 9% of Canadians would consider switching banks, even though satisfaction scores were dropping year over year, as consumers complained about rising fees, bait-and-switch promotional offers and a lack of flexibility.

The brand decided to play up its lack of physical retail space with “We Don’t Build Branches,” saying it would rather build savings for clients than branches for itself. With a \$500,000 budget, the campaign ran across TV, OOH and digital between January and February 2016 while targeted digital, SEM and social were used to drive acquisition.

Within five weeks, the campaign had exceeded the initial first-year acquisition target, signing up 17,000 new customers, with cost per sign-up 70% lower than the campaign benchmark. First-year deposit targets were surpassed by 400%. When the campaign launched, traffic to the EQ Bank website grew 89%, equating to 650,000 visits and 3,700,000 page views.

### Jamieson brings convenience



Category | Launch of New Product/Service  
Agency | Union

It’s one thing to diligently stock a house with vitamins, quite another to actually take them. Jamieson found that at least 40% of those who buy vitamins don’t take them as often as they should. The category was ripe for an easier way.

Jamieson came up with Vitamin Sprays – a more convenient format. The core target audience was suburban working moms in their mid-30s who use

vitamins but have failed to establish regular habits. “#Onesecondvitamins” communicated that no matter how busy you are, you have at least one second to spray.

Launched in April 2016, the campaign was supported by a \$500,000 national budget with bite-sized content across pre-roll, digital and social. The humorous spots showed people in various inconvenient situations using the spray, and the social ads lasted all of one second.

Sales of Jamieson Vitamin sprays were 111% above forecast during the campaign period. Awareness of the product increased from 13.6% pre-campaign to 61.1% by mid-campaign.

The campaign achieved over nine million impressions and five million video views, 24% higher than projected. The media spend for Vitamin Sprays was 75% lower than the average spend by Jamieson to support a new product launch.

### Special K takes on self-doubt

Category | Brand Reawakening  
Agency | Leo Burnett

Kellogg’s Special K played an important role in women’s lives during the 1980s, when nearly 60% of Canadian women dieted. By 2003, that number had dropped to 27%. Women were no longer interested in starvation and deprivation diets, and the brand had failed to keep up.



Special K identified a new target: the “new feminine,” which comes in all shapes, sizes, ages and ethnicities and shares one characteristic – self-doubt. The “#OwnIt” campaign focused on what women can change while encouraging them to accept what they can’t.

Launched nationally in September 2015, “#OwnIt” challenged women’s relationship with food and rallied them to ditch their doubt. It was supported by a \$5-million budget across TV, pre-roll, social, online and print, and launched with a 60-second film called “Change.”

After falling for 10 straight quarters, Special K’s volume increased 4% during the nine-month campaign period, while the ready-to-eat cereal category declined 1%. “#OwnIt” delivered a 324% ROI and increased Special K’s brand affinity by 38%, and its brand meaning by 21 points.

➤ See the full cases and credits at [strategyonline.ca](http://strategyonline.ca)

## Quebec media changes the face of poverty



Category | Matching Message to Medium  
Agency | TAM-TAM\TBWA

Quebec was facing the rise of “the new poor”: low-income families who don’t have enough money for basic necessities, like housing and food, but who don’t live on the street. La grande guignolée des médias (the Media’s Big Food Drive) wanted to demonstrate that poverty is closer than we think, even if it isn’t always easy to spot.

Launched in November 2015 in Quebec with a budget of less than \$50,000, the campaign included a fake Kijiji ad featuring a nearly new car on sale for a ridiculously low price. Prospective buyers heard a recording of the car owner, who was obliged to sell it after losing her job. At the end, people were invited to make a donation.

In grocery stores, signs hanging under the express checkout read: “For you, this is the express checkout. For some, 8 items is all they can afford.” Shoppers were given the opportunity to donate at the cash. TV and radio spots also presented “new poor” situations.

The campaign reversed a decline in donations, leading to an increase of \$600,000 (35%) during the period.

## Super C will not compromise

Category | Retail  
Agency | Publicis Montreal

Super C was having trouble shaking its reputation for low quality. It had improved its offering while maintaining low prices, but with Maxi and Walmart starting to match those, Super C lacked any positive differentiation.

The discount chain shoppers the brand was targeting don’t necessarily have lower incomes; they are smart shoppers who don’t want to pay more for an almost identical product. Super C saw an opportunity to show it wouldn’t compromise quality for price.

Launched in January 2015 in Quebec, “Zéro Compromis” used a new spokesperson, celebrity Guy Jodoin. It played on the ambiguity surrounding his sexual orientation to announce his coming out of the closet – as a Super C shopper. Follow-up executions invited Quebecers to join the growing “Zéro Compromis” movement.

Super C saw a 5% increase in sales in the first five months of the campaign, eight times the growth of the category (0.6%). Its 2015 market share increased by 6.5% – 55% of which was attributable to an increase in basket size and 45% to increased store traffic. Media investment was 35% lower compared to the previous year, and there was no special pricing or promotional activity.



## Interac advocates for a debt-free January

Category | Seasonal  
Agency | Zulu Alpha Kilo

No matter how prepared you think you are, the January credit card bill hits like a ton of bricks. The joyful hangover from the holidays quickly becomes something much worse – a debt hangover. Interac saw an opportunity in getting Canadians to consider the January bill while running it up in December.

Launched nationally in November 2015 and supported by a \$4-million budget, “Merry January” was led by a 60-second film in cinema, online and TV, featuring a last-minute holiday shopper whose imagination runs wild in a toy store. The toys come to life singing “Debt, debt, debt, debt, debt,” convincing the shopper to pay with Interac instead of credit. Additional online videos featured a festive, Griswold-like family putting a twist on traditional carols. The campaign also included OOH, print and digital executions.

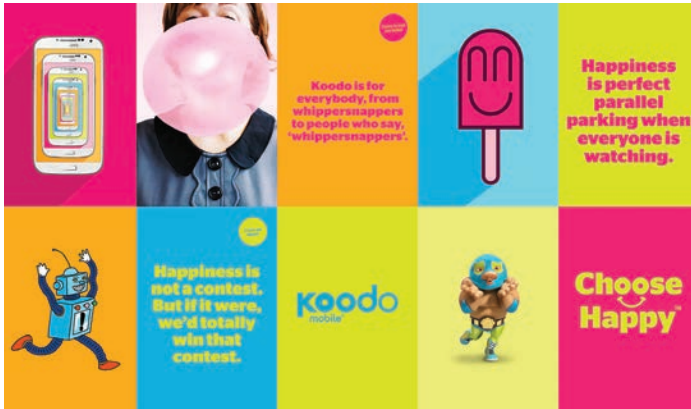
Over the campaign period, there were 40 million more Interac transactions than the same period the previous year, representing 5% growth. Almost all key brand and ad tracking measures increased significantly as a result of the campaign.

While “Be in the Black” had been building the Interac brand since 2014, this holiday campaign resulted in a significant jump in Interac Debit card usage during the 2015 holiday period versus the previous year.



BRONZE

## Koodo makes a positive case



Category | Technology  
Agency | Koodo Mobile

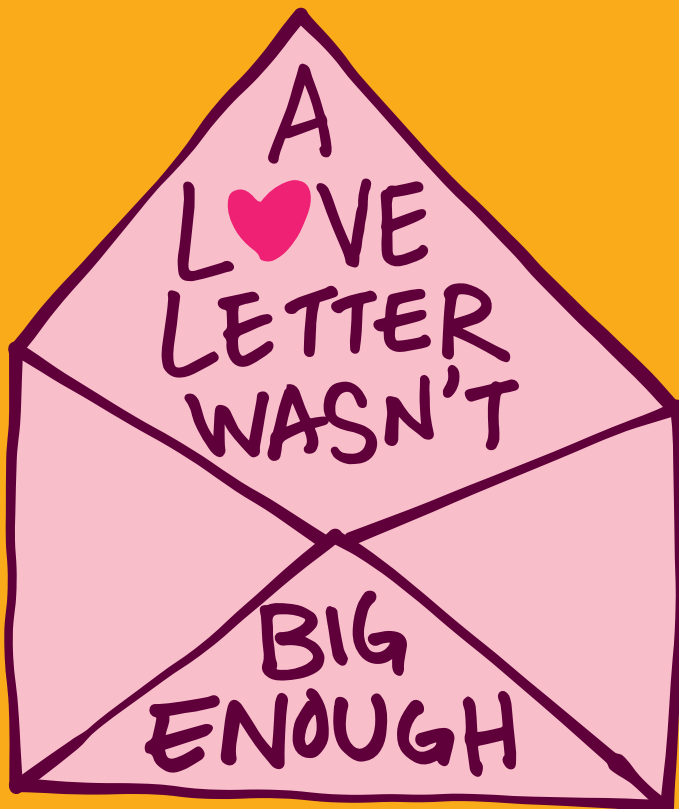
People love to complain about their telecom provider. It's practically a national pastime. But Koodo has remained a bit of an exception: even as discontent rose overall among telecom

customers, the brand's subscribers gave the company a best-in-category 87% favourability score.

Still, people weren't recognizing Koodo as the preferred alternative. Non-customers gave the brand the lowest favourability score, at only 19%. It needed to highlight its customer experience to win over disgruntled customers from other carriers.

"Choose Happy" launched in April 2015, using bright colours and images to exude fun and happiness and mobile bliss. The campaign targeted 18- to 34-year-olds across TV, cinema, OOH, print, in-store, digital pre-roll, digital display advertising, social and paid search.

The first month saw a 23.6% increase in new subscribers versus the month prior. Brand consideration among the core target increased 55% during the campaign period, putting Koodo on par with the Big Three national providers and significantly ahead of other value providers. Koodo's 2015 media budget was lower than 2014, giving the brand a 16% share of voice among its "value" competitors, and there were minimal changes to Koodo's distribution during the campaign period.



**Camp Jefferson,**

**Thanks for all your hard work  
and the fantastic results on the  
Choose Happy campaign!**

**We're so happy we chose you.**

**Love,**

**All your friends at Koodo**

**Choose Happy™**

**koodo**  
mobile®

## BRONZE

# Coke bottles shareable music

Category | Seasonal  
Agency | The Hive

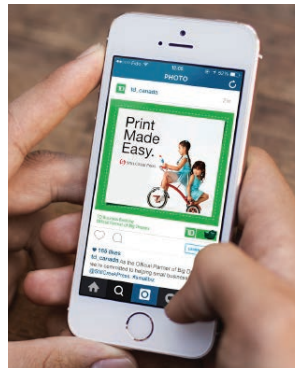
For teens, summer soundtracks are as essential as road trips and first kisses. Music can influence behaviour, especially among the younger generation, but the festival and concert giveaway space was already crowded. Coca-Cola needed a new way to show the relationship between youth, the brand and music.

The "Play a Coke" campaign gave every 500mL Coca-Cola bottle a playlist, accessible by downloading an app. The brand worked with Spotify to make the lists and tap into how teens were consuming music.

The campaign ran nationally between May and July 2016, supported by a \$2-million budget. Custom playlists were created for McDonald's, Mac's/Couche Tard and Landmark cinemas, and social media influencers were given their own bottles to share.

Coca-Cola's baseline sales for the campaign period increased 3% versus 2015, leading to a share gain of 0.9 points. "Favourite brand" score with teens increased by four points. The "Play a Coke" app garnered 122,500 downloads – five times the objective.

"Play a Coke" was the sole promotional effort during the 2016 summer and it had a similar spend to "Share a Coke" (the previous summer's campaign). Availability and pricing did not change.



# TD dreams with small business owners

Category | Services  
Agency | Leo Burnett

TD had advertised its commitment to helping small businesses grow, but the message hadn't stuck. Small business owners actually believed the opposite about the big bank. But the brand saw an opportunity with Small Business Month to promote the entrepreneurs its services help, rather than promoting itself.

It launched the six-week "Official Partner of Big Dreams" program nationally in September 2015, providing ad space to small business customers on TD's media platforms, such as billboards. A supporting campaign across digital and in-branch signage was introduced to further entice small businesses to meet with the bank's small business managers.

The campaign ran for six weeks across OOH, print, social media and digital with a \$1-million budget. Online appointment bookings increased 300% from the prior year, increasing incremental in-branch traffic by 43%. The campaign drove a 7% lift in new account openings and ROI of \$4 for every \$1 spent. TD's consideration among small business non-customers increased 25% from the prior year.

# Rediscovering Nature Valley

Category | Sustained Success  
Agency | Cossette

Kids these days. All they care about are video games and mobile devices, spending half as much time outdoors as they did 20 years ago. Nature Valley saw an opportunity to highlight this diminishing connection to nature.

The "Rediscover the Joy of Nature" campaign interviewed three generations of families about what they did for fun as kids. The emotional video (viewed more than 25 million times globally) contrasted how today's youth spend their free time compared to their parents and grandparents, who remembered fishing or hiking.

The campaign used a seeding strategy with YouTube and Facebook, and a Twitter promoted trend. Influencers pushed the video through social and the brand geo-targeted moms on social media to promote real-time events.

During the launch period, the campaign generated a 14.3% sales increase, with a 7%-to-10% increase in the subsequent months. Nature Valley's average market share in the first year was 21.2% versus 18.8% in the six months prior. Share peaked at 24.8% following the launch.



➤ See the full cases and credits at [strategyonline.ca](http://strategyonline.ca)

Kudos go to the CASSIES jury, which deliberated over comprehensive case studies to choose this year's winners. Go to [strategyonline.ca](http://strategyonline.ca) to read the full bios.

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# MARKING TERRITORY, FROM WORK WEAR TO CASUAL

FORTY-YEAR-OLD RETAILER MARK'S HAS COME A LONG WAY FROM ITS ORIGINS SUPPLYING INDUSTRIAL CLOTHES TO A BOOMING OIL TOWN. BY MARK BURGESS

**M**ark Blumes was unpractised at biting his tongue. He couldn't do it in the late 1970s, when he was managing the bargain basement section in the Calgary Hudson's Bay and felt the corporation wasn't catering to the city's blue-collar core. He got himself fired as a result and put his severance toward his own store where he could do things his way, creating a haven for the working man.

Forty years later, that store is a retail behemoth. After dropping the "Work Wearhouse" in a 2010 rebranding by McCann, Mark's has 380 locations across the country

and stands as an unrivalled depot for industrial and casual men's wear.

The company's namesake isn't around for the 40th anniversary, though. Blumes's divisive approach saw him pushed out in 1995 ("I created the reasons why I'm no longer there, by my lack of charm," he told the *Financial Post* in 2001) and nearly bankrupt by the time Canadian Tire acquired Mark's in 2001 for \$116 million (he didn't see a penny). He died the following year.

But the occasionally coarse founder, known for speaking his mind with a cigar hanging out of his



Clockwise from top left: Scenes from the anthem spot that launched Mark's 2013 "Ready For This" positioning; a 2016 jeans ad shows products for men and women; and "Date Night," also from 2016, highlights the retailer's winter-ready parkas.

mouth, left his mark. The store's product innovation, omnichannel approach and blend of private-label and name brands are all legacies of Blumes.

The first Work Wearhouse opened in Calgary in 1977. Launched at the height of Alberta's oil boom, the new stop for rugged apparel was an instant hit: Blumes grew the business to more than 40 stores by 1981.

Steve Bottoms worked with Blumes at HBC as a student, and would later join Mark's Work Wearhouse as head of in-house creative agency Cooper Hayes before working on the brand's account for two decades as CEO of Calgary's Watermark Advertising Design.

"He was a genius, a bit of a mentor ... an outrageous human being – the opposite of political correctness," Bottoms says of Blumes. "But he had this big, big heart and this intense admiration and respect for the working guy. His love for the customer was so profound in comparison to the operational efficiency of the department store at the time."

This original commitment to the blue-collar worker was tested early. The company's expansion was perhaps too much too soon. It took on debt, leading it to go public in 1981 to raise money. Later that year, Alberta entered a recession, with unemployment reaching 11% as interest rates and inflation also rose. The working man suddenly wasn't as desperate for new gear, and the store had to look beyond its base.

Rick White, who took over as Mark's president last year, remembers how Calgary "basically shut down." The company learned early that it would have to attract a larger demographic "in order to stabilize the business and not be held to the whims of what was happening in the oil patch and in the industrial world," he says, a branding shift Mark's is still undergoing today.

It met with some resistance as it tried to attract casual wear name brands, though. Some were reluctant to partner with a retailer called "Work Wearhouse," not seeing it as the best place to position their products. "It forced us to go the route of the private label," says VP of innovation, industrial and footwear Iain Summers, who has been with the retailer for 31 years.

Denver Hayes and Wind River were born, offering quality products exclusive to Mark's. "That's been our concept right from the start," Summers says. "Innovation" became a buzzword decades later, but Mark's started early. In the mid-1980s, the store offered non-shrinking flannel. The whole back page of a flyer told the story of how its buyers had searched the world for the material, which it found in Russia, Summers says.

Wrinkle-resistant khakis followed. A 1994 TV spot by Watermark put Denver Hayes against Dockers. A blindfolded woman compares the fabric on two men's seemingly identical khakis before choosing the one she prefers: Denver Hayes, priced \$10 below its competitor.

Another one from 1996 showed a blond woman in a black dress with a stopwatch in each hand, timing how long it takes two men in their underwear to get ready for a date: one with Denver Hayes wrinkle-resistant cotton pants, ready to throw on straight out of the dryer, one with another brand. "Other cotton pants can put a wrinkle in your plans," she says, before heading off arm-in-arm with the Denver Hayes man.

Some innovations didn't take off. "Pop-bottle jeans" in the early '90s, made by reweaving the polyester from pop bottles into denim, failed to connect with consumers. "We were too far ahead for the customer to grasp it," Summers says. "The whole environmental movement hadn't kicked in."

It wasn't the last time Blumes, whom Summers hailed as "an idea guy," was perhaps correct but early – a small consolation in the business world. By the mid-'90s, long before e-commerce had any traction, Blumes was convinced that retail was going omnichannel.

"He saw the future. He just saw it too early and he saw it too aggressively," Bottoms says. "He made it a bit of a Waterloo moment, where he pushed himself to the edge and forced the board to either go his way or push him out." They chose the latter option.

Perhaps more than a battle over e-commerce, the move marked a release in tension over the store's direction. In a 2001 interview with the *Financial Post*, Blumes said, "This will sound self-serving, but my role was to protect the interests of the working man. The company went margin crazy. You can't make the same margins selling work wear as you can selling ladies sweaters."

The founder who had always catered to the blue-collar worker – he had even produced a country song in 1986 called "The Oil Patch and Me" – was gone, paving the way for more dramatic changes.

Mark's bought competitor Work World in 1996, but the most significant moment came in 2001, when Canadian Tire purchased the company and its 325 stores. It was a natural fit: "It's the same customer base and Canadian Tire didn't do apparel in a big way," White says.

A gradual shift in the nature of work had already been impacting the retailer. A decade of globalization meant fewer blue-collar jobs and less demand for work wear. Office clothing was also changing: casual Friday was colonizing the entire week, allowing Mark's to pitch its innovative articles – wrinkle-resistant pants and shirts, stain-repellent khakis – to a broader segment.

"If you could get away with not wearing a tie to work, that fed into our wheelhouse," Bottoms says.

And while the brand started selling women's clothing in 1995, it didn't start marketing it heavily until almost 10 years later. This picked up again in 2012 with a campaign using the tagline "Now welcoming women."

All these developments laid the groundwork for the





**Above:** Old flyers for the retailer show the durability of industrial wear and the functional benefits of its casual offering, like stain repellent, wrinkle resistant khakis.



most dramatic moment in the brand's evolution from blue-collar hub to top casual wear destination. In 2010, it dropped the "Work Wearhouse," rebranding as Mark's. It was time for younger Canadians to perceive it as more than "their dad's store," White says, and for the retailer to move from its reliable "Triple R" demographic (retired, reluctant to shop and reluctant to replace) to the "Triple C" (confident, casual Canadian) in the 30-to-50 range.

Customer research leading up to the rebranding showed the clothing and footwear industry valued at \$24 billion in Canada, compared to \$600 million for work wear and work footwear.

Mark's brought in more casual brands, including Helly Hansen, Columbia and Merrell, which the "Triple C" segment cares about, and began highlighting them in its marketing. It moved from the long-time "Clothes That Work" tagline it had been using since the mid-'90s to "Smart Clothes. Everyday Living" in 2010, and then to "Ready For This" in 2013 from ad agency Sid Lee. (Mark's replaced Watermark with McCann for the rebrand in 2010, then moved to Sid Lee but no longer has an AOR. It's currently working with Huge and Direct Focus. "I'd rather work with specialists in different fields," CMO David Lui says.)

Mark's new target consumer isn't a big shopper, preferring to be in and out of stores in 15 minutes, which has led to a "no-nonsense" marketing strategy, Lui says. "We talk to them directly, in plain language, with humour."

Working with Touché, the brand has also increased its programmatic advertising, allowing it to target its casual and industrial segments with different messages, so as not to alienate the old base. "It is a fine balance. But the channels open to us allow us to speak and be very relevant based on their likes and dislikes," Lui says.

Part of that communication shift has been the move from printed flyers to digital ones. Canadian Tire went digital with its flyers last year; Mark's followed with a successful Facebook flyer pilot in October, and Lui says there's "going to be a shift into a heavier digital spend."

The brand is also focusing more on e-commerce after launching a new website last year. While transactional, Lui says the sites are also meant to "emotionally engage" consumers, to share some of the technical product innovations and drive traffic to stores.

Touchscreens and other digital engagement tools at the stores have helped tell the products' stories. The Edmonton flagship debuted a "Winter Simulation" in 2009, a walk-in freezer to test coats at -40°C. Other stores have used ramps to test Mark's Tarantula Anti-Slip technology.

But if industrial wear takes up less space on the showroom floor, White says Mark's commercial side that sells uniforms, hospital scrubs, and protective equipment like safety glasses and anti-slip footwear has continued to grow.

Still, all the changes would have been a lot for the founder to take in, from the name to the "ladies' sweaters" (Mark's declined to provide numbers on its women's business, saying only "she plays a very important role").

Bottoms says that if Blumes could see the brand he founded today, with its 380 stores, the most surprising thing would be "the loss of reverence around the working man."

"The sales would prove what they've done is right and the customer rewarded them for the shift in focus. But I think he would be disappointed by that," Bottoms says. "Growth isn't always the best thing. Usually it's what kills specialty retailers. Mark's was a specialty retailer. It still is a specialty retailer but it's trying to be a bunch of specialty retailers under one roof. I think he would have preferred to keep it focused as a specialty retailer aimed at the working man and his family."

But Summers interprets the evolution differently. While Blumes likely wouldn't be thrilled about the new name, Summers says the founder would be pleased that Mark's is still a destination store, still an innovator (it's now focused on moisture management and temperature regulating products), and that it's maintained the marriage between private-label and name brands.

"He might be jealous that he's not running it," Summers says of Blumes. "That I know for sure."





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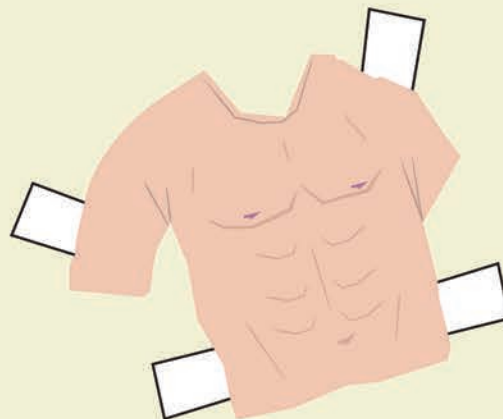
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