

Be proud, be brave, be pioneering



By Leigh Andrews

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Gareth McPherson is executive creative director at Publicis Machine, the agency responsible for client Hasbro's Cannes Lions-shortlisted and D&AD Pencil-winning work. He shares insights gleaned from the calibre of work awarded top accolades on the recent global advertising awards circuit, and shares advice on making sure we bring home more of those big wins next year.



McPherson says the agency is really pleased that its [Trivial Pursuit campaign](#) for client Hasbro made it to shortlist status at Cannes Lions 2016, and says it's encouraging to know that the [Cannes predictors](#) also anticipated it would do great things this year.

"Of course we would've liked a win, but it's great for the brand and the agency to be recognised with the best on this international stage."

Describing that "international best", McPherson says this year saw strong pieces triumph in the Print category at Cannes Lions 2016. Overall, the winning works were strong, single-minded ideas which were either crafted well with copy or with visual. He adds that the

winning Grand Prix work for McWhopper really captured people's attention and spoke to a hot topic... "It had gravitas and reach far beyond the printed ad itself. It was boosted well with PR, social media and other mediums and the talk-ability of the idea was its strength."

That's something to keep in mind as more agencies around the world get to grips with producing integrated work that resonates with audiences on multiple levels. When it comes to outdoor print in particular, McPherson says one has to be mindful of the medium and execute appropriately. "Outdoor is a tough medium as you are working with limited space in terms of copy and visual understanding."

Calculated risk and strong partnerships

Their Trivial Pursuit work was also awarded a 2016 D&AD Wood Pencil. McPherson explains that D&AD is one the most talked about and admired creative award shows in the global industry, and that to win in any category is a huge honour, regardless of colour of pencil, as a D&AD Pencil is recognised as a "shining symbol of the very highest creative achievement". He feels the 'reveal' type format is great, as it gets all eyes on the event itself – much like the live judging process at Cannes, where the individual shortlists are only revealed once the Festival of Creativity has begun. "Ultimately, it promotes the work behind each award, which inspires us all to create great work," he says.

It's true that winning at any of the main global creative award shows is an incredible achievement for local agencies, because this actually counts towards creative points in our local agency rankings, as the [Creative Circle of South Africa](#) recognises these award shows and a measurement of points has been put in place that contribute to the final creative rankings of local agencies.

So if your work is winning locally and abroad, your agency ranking will be far greater.

Speaking of the fact that South Africa didn't bring home any top honoured Black Pencils this year, McPherson says we should be proud of our work regardless, but note that in order to create pioneering work, strong partnerships with clients are key, as is an element of bravery and calculated risk. There are also elements that form part of the process of creating great campaigns that actually play a part in diluting the work, so clients and agencies alike should be mindful that they play a pivotal role in steering great ideas through a process that creates either excellent or mediocre work.

Duly noted! For more on Publicis Machine in particular, visit their [Press Office](#) or follow their [Twitter feed](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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