

Publicis Groupe shifts spend on award shows, other events to AI initiative

#NEWSWATCH: In an effort to cut costs and shift spend towards its new professional assistant platform, Publicis Groupe's newly appointed CEO, Arthur Sadoun, has forbidden all of its agencies from participating in award shows, trade shows and any other paid promotional efforts for the next year, which means it will sit out of the 2017 Cannes Lions Festival.

 By [Jessica Tennant](#) 21 Jun 2017



Arthur Sadoun, Publicis Groupe's new CEO. [YouTube: Publicis Groupe](#)

The holding company is "looking for 2.5% cost synergies for 2018", wrote CEO Frank Voris of the Groupe's financial services unit, Re:Sources in an internal memo, which further states that it "will not participate in any vendor conferences, industry trade shows and/or award shows effective July 1."

He said this is mandatory and that no exceptions will be made. The "award/trade show ban is effective for the entire Group not just Re:Sources," as quoted [in an article on Adweek](#).

The agency network affected includes Leo Burnett, Saatchi & Saatchi, Publicis Worldwide, BBH, Marcel, Fallon, Mslgroup and Prodigious.

This was reported the same day as the launch announcement of Marcel – a professional assistant that uses AI and machine learning technology to connect more than 80,000 employees across 200 disciplines in 130 countries – indicating that the saved resources will go into developing the platform, which is scheduled to launch in June 2018 when the Group will resume its participation in industry events.

It's named after one of Publicis' existing agencies, Marcel and the Group's founder Marcel Bleustein Blanchet.

In the video Sadoun says, “for the next 12 months, we will make Marcel a priority in terms of investments because we need to choose our battles. We will pause our involvement in festivals, award shows and industry events for a year.”

Mark Tutssel, global CCO of Leo Burnett Worldwide and chair of Publicis Communications’ global creative board, adds: “Make no mistake, we won’t be giving up our award-winning standards during this period.”

The announcement was met with a couple of positive responses on Twitter:

“ Arthur makes a great move investing in core capability for [@PublicisGroupe](#) the next year over award shows: <https://t.co/gNTGjC0LBz>— zachary jean paradis (@zacharyparadis) [June 20, 2017](#) ”

“ As a client I think this is a good move [#Publicis](#) bars agencies from awards. Too many award shows <https://t.co/rwWgdf61bf>— brian fisher (@briafish) [June 21, 2017](#) ”

I think it's a bold move which demonstrates the Group's commitment to bringing big ideas to transform the business of its clients and one that could potentially change the way the industry operates as a whole. Comment below to let us know what you think.

For more:

- [Publicis Groupe Forbids All of Its Agencies From Participating in Awards Shows in 2018](#)
- [Publicis Groupe to halt all spend on award shows and events in 2018](#)
- [Publicis withdraws from all awards, invests money in AI platform instead](#)

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