

2025 Category Definitions

Refer to the Entry Kit for full details on categories and entry requirements.



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INDUSTRY CATEGORIES

- Agricultural, Industrial & Building
- Automotive - Aftermarket
- Automotive - Vehicles
- Beauty & Fragrance
- Beverages: Alcohol
- Beverages: Non-Alcohol
- Business & Office Supplies
- Culture & The Arts
- Delivery Services
- Education & Training
- Electronics
- Entertainment & Sports
- Fashion & Accessories
- Finance
- Food
- Gaming & E-Sports
- Government & Public Service
- Health & Wellness: Health, Fitness, & Wellness
- Health & Wellness: Healthcare Services
- Health & Wellness: OTC
- Health & Wellness: Rx - Consumer/DTC
- Health & Wellness: Rx - Devices
- Health & Wellness: Rx - Professional
- Home Furnishings & Appliances
- Household Supplies
- Insurance
- Internet & Telecom
- Leisure & Recreation
- Media & Entertainment Companies
- New Product or Service Introduction
- New Product or Service Line Extension
- Non-Profit
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- Pet Care
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- Retail
- Snacks & Desserts
- Software
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SPECIALTY CATEGORIES

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- Youth Marketing

BRAND CONTENT, ENTERTAINMENT, & EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING

- Brand Content & Entertainment
- Brand Integration & Entertainment Partnerships
- Experiential Marketing

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT

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- David vs. Goliath – Traditional; Situational
- Local Market Success
- Marketing Disruptors
- Renaissance
- Small Budgets
- Sustained Success
- Timely Opportunity

COMMERCE & SHOPPER

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- Challenger Brand Solution
- Crisis Response/Critical Pivot ***UPDATED**
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- Experiential Commerce Marketing
- Media Innovation
- Multi-Brand Shopper Solution
- Multi-Retailer Program
- New Product or Service Introduction
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- Sustained Success

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- Artificial Intelligence (AI) ***UPDATED**
- Direct to Consumer
- Engaged Community
- Influencer Marketing ***UPDATED**
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- Social Media ***UPDATED**

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- Disease Awareness & Education: Charitable/Research Funding
- Disease Awareness & Education: Non-Profit
- Disease Awareness & Education: Pharma/Corporate

MARKETING INNOVATION SOLUTIONS

- Business/Product/Service Innovation
- Customer Experience

MEDIA

- Data-Driven
- Media Content Partnerships ***UPDATED**
- Media Idea
- Media Innovation
- Media Strategy

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- Environmental: Brands; Non-Profit
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TOPICAL & ANNUAL EVENTS

- Crisis Response/Critical Pivot ***UPDATED**
- Current Events
- Seasonal Marketing

DEFINITIONS

INDUSTRY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

Agricultural, Industrial, & Building: All related products, materials, tools, and services.

Automotive - Aftermarket: Gasoline, motor oil, tires, batteries, paint, quick-lube, oil change, muffler, transmission, windshield wipers, enhancements, etc.

Automotive - Vehicles: Cars, trucks, motorcycles, vans. Both brand and model advertising.

Beauty & Fragrance: Includes cosmetics, fragrances, hair products, nail products, skincare treatments, salons, etc.

Beverages - Alcohol: Beer, champagne, liquor, wine, hard seltzers, wine coolers, etc.

Beverages - Non-Alcohol: Diet and non-diet soda, coffee, tea, juices, milk, milk substitutes, bottled water, sparkling water, etc. *(For energy drinks, please see [Health, Fitness & Wellness](#) in the industry category)*

Business & Office Supplies: Business cards & professional printing, office equipment including printers, copiers, supplies, furniture, etc.

Culture & The Arts: Museums, plays, immersive experiences, music organizations and festivals, concert series, cultural festivals, theatre festivals.

Delivery Services: Couriers, package/freight shipping, food & drink delivery, grocery delivery, flower/gift delivery, overnight delivery, package tracking, international service, etc.

Education & Training: Includes all educational organizations and institutions, training programs, job/career sites, etc.

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

INDUSTRY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

Entertainment & Sports: Includes all forms of entertainment, including movies, TV shows, podcasts, books, music, comics, games, toys, entertainment apps, etc. Sporting events such as the Super Bowl, sports teams, etc. (See [*Gaming & E-Sports*](#) category for video games.)

Fashion & Accessories: Includes all apparel, accessories, jewelry, styling services, clothing rentals, etc.

Finance: Financial products and services including: overall corporate/brand image and capabilities of a financial institution or specific products or services including credit/debit cards, reward/loyalty cards, financial planning, mobile payment services, retirement funds, investment, home banking, loans, mortgage, mutual funds, etc.

Food: Fresh, packaged, and frozen foods. (For snacks & desserts, see the [*Snacks & Desserts*](#) category.)

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

Government & Public Service: Municipal or provincial economic development, lotteries, utilities (i.e. electricity conservation messages), membership drives, educational institutions/organizations, recruitment, armed forces marketing communications. Includes political messages and special interest/trade group communications.

Health & Wellness - Health, Fitness & Wellness: Unregulated products/services focused on consumer health and/or promoting a healthy lifestyle. Includes digital health products, fitness trackers, health/fitness apps, exercise equipment, nutraceuticals, vitamins, energy bars and drinks, etc.; fitness studios; weight loss and fitness programs, training camps and facilities, etc.

Health & Wellness - Healthcare Services: Efforts developed for hospitals, health insurance companies, referral services, dental and medical care services, pharmacies, or chronic care facilities. Efforts may be targeted to healthcare professionals, patients, and/or consumers.

Health & Wellness - OTC: Efforts for products that are sold without a prescription that address specific health conditions. Efforts may be targeted to healthcare professionals, patients and/or consumers. Only products that address a specific health condition should enter this category - there are separate categories for [*Beauty & Fragrance*](#), [*Health, Fitness & Wellness*](#), and [*Personal Care*](#) efforts.

INDUSTRY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

Health & Wellness - Rx - Consumer/DTC: Efforts for prescription required drugs that are directed to patients and/or consumers. Entrants must detail any regulatory challenges that impacted the effort.

Health & Wellness - Rx - Devices: Efforts that were developed for devices that address specific health conditions that require a prescription for surgical placement, use or purchase. Efforts may be targeted to healthcare professionals and/or patients. Entrants must detail any regulatory challenges that impacted the effort.

Health & Wellness - Rx - Professional: Efforts for prescription-required drugs and other healthcare products that are directed to healthcare professionals. Entrants must detail any regulatory challenges that impacted the effort.

Home Furnishings & Appliances: Kitchen and laundry appliances, air conditioners, carpeting, furniture, decorator's supplies, paint, wallpaper, etc.

Household Supplies: Cleaning products, waxes, detergents, floor-care products, fabric softeners, paper products, lawn care, etc.

Insurance: Marketing promoting specific products or services related to insurance and the capabilities of financial institutions offering these services. All types of insurance are eligible (home, auto, financial, life, travel, business, etc.), except for health insurance service providers. (*Health insurance companies, see [Healthcare Services](#).*)

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

Leisure & Recreation: Products and services aimed at hobbies, leisure, and recreation, including, but not limited to: dating services/apps, wedding planning platforms, personal development/improvement programs/apps, genetics/ancestry testing services, sporting and camping goods/services, etc.

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

INDUSTRY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

New Product or Service - Introduction: Efforts used to introduce a new product or service that is not a line extension. Brand new products or new products in a new category are required to enter this category instead of their industry category. Address the category situation and how your product/service was new and the situation you faced as a result of it being new. For example, what specifically was new? Why did the newness matter?

New Product or Service - Line Extension: Efforts used to support a variation of an existing product that shares the same brand name and is in the same category as the existing product and shares the same characteristics as the parent but offers new benefit (flavor, size, package, type, etc.). New extensions can either enter this category OR an industry category. Address the category situation, how your product/service was new and the situation you faced as a result of it being new. For example, what specifically was new? Why did the newness matter? *(For Commerce & Shopper efforts, enter the [Commerce & Shopper: New Product or Service Introduction category](#).)*

Non-Profit: Not-for-profit organizations of all types including charitable, social, civic, advocacy, trade, special interest, religious, etc. Includes membership drives, recruitment, fundraising, etc. *(Non-profit health advocacy & awareness campaigns, see the Specialty Categories -> [Health & Wellness - Disease Awareness & Education category](#).)*

Personal Care: Soap, oral care, face & body lotions and cleansers, basic eye and ear-care products (e.g. cotton swabs, eye drops, etc.), deodorants, feminine hygiene products, razors, shaving cream, etc. *(For items focusing on beauty, see [Beauty & Fragrance category](#).)*

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

Professional Services: Includes services such as accounting, consulting, legal, staffing, recruiting, real estate, domestic services, etc.

Restaurants: Quick service, casual dining, mid-scale, fine dining, tablecloth, and any other restaurants.

Retail: All retail companies (online and/or brick and mortar) with general or specific merchandise such as department stores; clothing, shoes or jewelry stores; grocery stores; home and garden stores; movie/bookstores; discount/bulk retailers; pet care; toy stores; specialty stores; convenience stores; etc.

INDUSTRY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

Snacks & Desserts: Ice cream, candy, chips, cookies, bakery items, nut, fruit and vegetable snacks, popcorn, etc.

Software: Software, groupware, operating systems, SaaS/IaaS, and Cloud based services, software/apps stored locally on a computer/tablet/mobile device, etc.

Transportation: All transportation methods: air, train, bus, taxi, rideshare services, subway systems, bike shares, scooter shares, car rentals, ferries, etc.

Travel & Tourism: Cruises, hotels, resorts, amusement parks, travel websites and booking services, travel tours, tourism campaigns, etc.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

AUDIENCE CATEGORIES

For some marketing efforts it's all about targeting a specific group of consumers to drive awareness and convert them into customers and clients. These efforts are aimed at engaging with a target audience to build a stronger relationship and communicate better with them.

Business-to-Business: For marketing efforts from businesses targeting other businesses. Includes B2B efforts for any type of product or service, from any marketplace segment.

Multicultural: Any effort whose success was dependent on effectively and authentically connecting with a specific cultural or ethnic group. If the entry had multiple audiences, it is necessary to demonstrate results for the specific audience detailed in the entry and the potential halo effect on the wider audience. Identify any elements in the creative work or strategy that are specifically directed to this community and any relevant cultural differences, dynamics and/or nuances, traditions, values, linguistic characteristics, and their significance with respect to your submission. *Note:* Judges may not be familiar with the brand's particular segment, so showcase and explain details that may be missed to help them understand cultural nuances and context.

Youth Marketing: This category honours efforts that successfully communicate to teens or young adults. The entry should be written in a way that identifies how the case was created and specifically directed to this audience, and how it succeeded. Identify any elements in the creative work or strategy that are specifically directed to the youth market and any relevant dynamics and/or nuances, trends, values, linguistic characteristics, and their significance with respect to your submission. *Note:* Judges may not be familiar with this particular youth audience, so showcase details that may be missed.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

BRAND CONTENT, ENTERTAINMENT, & EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING CATEGORIES

As with all Effie categories, you can enter whether your work brought the brand to life as the entire marketing effort or as part of the larger marketing program. If the content was part of a larger campaign, demonstrate the contribution of the content as part of that campaign.

Brand Content & Entertainment: For efforts that effectively reached their audience through the creation of original branded content that is not advertising. The core of the entry should be content designed to be consumed/ experienced and sought out by the consumer for entertaining or informative reasons. Entrants must detail the content, how it related back to the overall brand and business goals, how it was distributed to, and shared by, the audience, and the results it achieved for the brand and business. Branded content may be produced and distributed by either publishers or independently and can include longform entertainment. *Note:* Judges will expect to understand why branded content was chosen as a tactic.

Brand Integration & Entertainment Partnerships: This category honours brands that have effectively reached their audience via strategic integrations and entertainment partnerships. Submissions should detail how the brand was seamlessly interwoven in an engaging way. Detail the strategic reasoning behind the partnership – why was this partner chosen over others? Clearly explain the selection process of the partner, and how this partnership led to the results that met the brand objectives.

Experiential Marketing: This category is to showcase brand experiences beyond traditional advertising – work that truly brought a brand or product to life and interacted with a specific audience to achieve desired objectives should be entered. It may include a re-invented product demo, re-imagined pop-up, or a “brick and mortar” retail overhaul; it may have created a new game, an alternate or virtual reality experience, or an interactive/immersive film experience that effectively showcases a new product or brand personality. Award winners will show how the brand is reaching out to their audiences to establish meaningful relationships, memorable, engaging experiences, and unique connections. Entrants must address how the experiential marketing related back to the overall brand strategy. Judges will expect to understand the ‘participation’ in the experience as a core factor. This category is for the following types of experiential marketing: Live, Digital, Hybrid

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT CATEGORIES

Marketing efforts that helped their companies achieve business success against extraordinary odds.

Whether it's business success achieved over the long term, with a small budget or when you're a small player in the market.

Corporate Reputation: Marketing efforts that promote corporations, not exclusively their products. Includes sponsorships, image, and identity. In addition to presenting metrics related to the reputation, entrants are encouraged to also address how these metrics relate to the business of the brand and why they are important.

David vs. Goliath (Traditional): This is an award for smaller brands, or new/emerging brands that are less than five years old making inroads against big, established leaders, taking on "sleeping giants," beyond their current category and set of competitors to tackle a dominant leader. Entrants must detail the business challenge, the competitive landscape, and how the business succeeded despite the odds. Define your competitive landscape, including the market difference between the David and Goliath to demonstrate why the brand was a Traditional David. *Note:* Judges will deduct from the case without sufficient proof that the submitting brand is a Traditional David.

David vs. Goliath (Situational): This is an award for larger brands that are successfully competing at a disadvantage in their market. Entrants must detail the business challenge, the competitive landscape, and how the business succeeded despite the circumstantial odds. Define your competitive landscape, including the market difference between the David and Goliath to demonstrate why the brand was a Situational David. *Note:* Judges will deduct from the case without sufficient proof that the submitting brand is a Situational David.

Local Market Success: Campaigns whose success demonstrably flows from local market insight and relevance. Target market could be based on regional demographics, psychographics, or any other factor relevant to the market it is in.

Marketing Disruptors: For efforts that grew the business/brand by changing the marketing model in ways that drive the industry forward. A marketing disruptor of any size can enter. Detail the marketing challenge, the competitive landscape, and how the brand succeeded by changing the existing marketing model for the brand/category. *Note:* Judges will deduct from the case without clear articulation regarding how the marketing was disruptive for the brand/category.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT CATEGORIES (cont.)

Renaissance: For rebirth campaigns. To enter, your brand must have experienced a downturn of several years and a period of at least six months of upturn sales. Entrants must detail the business challenge, the situation of the brand, the competitive landscape and how the effort succeeded. Note: The entry must address the previous marketing investment and strategy as part of the context. Also, provide detail on the length of the renaissance.

Small Budgets: Cases eligible for this category must represent the only communications efforts for this brand (brand defined as listed in the "brand" question of the Effie entry form) during the time period that the effort entered ran. To be eligible, an entry may not be for a line extension. Effie defines line extension as: a variation of an existing product with the same brand name and same category but with a new characteristic, a derivative of the product or service that offers modified features without significantly changing price; a product bearing the same name and offering a varied option (e.g. new flavour, diet version, etc.). Value of donated and non-traditional media as well as activation costs must be included. Total investment may be no larger than \$150,000.

Sustained Success: Efforts that experienced sustained success for at least three years are eligible for entry. At a minimum, include at least three years of creative work and case results, and include the current competition year's results. Work must have a common objective in both strategy and creative executions; with a continuation of core executional elements (e.g., spokesperson, song, theme, tagline, etc.) that demonstrates effectiveness over time. As part of the entry, specifically address how the effort evolved over time (e.g., media choices, targeting, insights, new products/services, etc.). Answer all questions for the initial year and describe how/why change occurred over time.

Note: There is a special entry form and different creative requirements for the Sustained Success Award. The creative requirements, including different rules for the creative reel, can be found in the [**Sustained Success Entry Form**](#). To enter you must be able to provide data about the case in its first year (before August 31, 2022), at least one interim year, and the most current competition year (9/1/2023 - 12/31/2024).

Timely Opportunity: This category spotlights effective strategic efforts that were able to generate desired results as a direct outcome from a single significant moment of activity. Cases should show how the brand or product/service was put in an intensely bright spotlight to create immediate, measurable, unexpected, and unconventional impact. The best examples include live experiences, moments, stunts, and tactics, online and offline, perhaps amplified through PR, social media, digital engagement, or even the use of content created in the moment to fuel paid campaigns.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

COMMERCE & SHOPPER CATEGORIES

Honouring the most effective integrated campaigns based on a specific shopper insight and designed to engage the shopper and guide the purchase process to achieve conversion. An effort may be entered into a maximum of two Commerce & Shopper categories.

Category/Aisle Evolution: Some of the most impactful efforts occur when a deep understanding of shoppers' attitudes, behaviors, and needs lead to innovative category/aisle evolution, whether in-store, online or both. Entrants must outline how the effort utilized shopper activation at shelf or shopper awareness of evolution to enhance the shopping experience and drove greater engagement, conversion, and category growth. Successful entries in this category will be sustainable evolutions and not simply promotional in nature.

Challenger Brand Solution: This is an award for smaller, new, or emerging brands that are making inroads against big, established leaders, taking on "sleeping giants," or moving into a new product/service field beyond their current category and set of competitors to tackle a dominant leader. (Challenger brands are defined as having less than 15% of branded market share in the product/service category.) Entrants must detail the business challenge, the competitive landscape, and how their business succeeded despite the odds. Requirements include a definition of the competitive landscape, including the market difference between the entered brand and its top competitors to demonstrate why this brand is a challenger. Note: Judges will deduct from the case if sufficient proof that the brand is appropriately classified as a challenger brand is not included.

Crisis Response/Critical Pivot *UPDATED: This category recognizes brands that successfully navigated significant structural and cultural shifts or moments of crisis (e.g., pandemic, social justice movements, political events) by effectively pivoting their marketing strategy or business activities. Entrants must clearly identify the pivot and explain how the messaging, campaign, production approach, or go-to-market strategy was adapted. Highlight the impact and effectiveness of these actions on the brand's success. Examples may include shifts in brand positioning, portfolio management, digital acceleration, and more.

Digital Commerce: This category is for campaigns that effectively used insights, strategy, creative, and analytics to drive digital shopper conversion. Show how, by utilizing data and a deep understanding of the shopper, the brand and/or retailer succeeded in a digital setting. A successful effort will combine strong shopper knowledge with digital marketing practices to increase conversion online. The effort must be based on a shopper insight(s) and be shopper-driven. Explain the strategy of how the effort went to market. Submissions in this category will be solely evaluated on digital commerce effectiveness.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

COMMERCE & SHOPPER CATEGORIES (cont.)

Experiential Commerce Marketing: This award features work that truly brought a brand, product, or retailer to life – either literally or virtually – and interacted with shoppers to influence conversion. You may have re-invented the product demo, re-imagined the pop-up store, led a “brick and mortar” retail overhaul, or created a new game/interactive film experience that effectively showcases a new product/brand personality. As long it truly came alive and worked. The winners of this award will show how brands and/or retailers are reaching out to audiences to establish meaningful relationships, engaging experiences, and unique connections. Entrants in this category must address how the experience related back to the overall brand strategy.

Media Innovation: This award showcases those who had the insight and creativity to change the way a particular media channel was consumed, or to create a new channel. The award goes to brands and retailers who went beyond the conventional approach to grab their shoppers’ attention and effectively engage them. Identify the specific target and how the campaign influenced conversion. Whether the effort was one execution or multiple, and/or used one engagement channel or multiple – the work must represent new and creative usage of the media channels (known, or that have not yet been met). Note: All entries must specifically address what was innovative and the conversion achieved. Write the entry to address the category and/or brand situation and provide clear articulation of how the media was used innovatively.

Multi-Brand Shopper Solution: Shoppers are looking for ways to tackle everyday challenges, whether it’s what to prepare for dinner or how to maintain a beautiful lawn – they seek all-in-one solutions. This award celebrates multi-brand/product/manufacture solutions that came together to address exactly what their target shopper needed. Entries into this category must address the rationale behind the creation of these differentiated shopper solutions. Brands may be from a single manufacturer or multiple manufacturers. Shopper solutions may be developed by manufacturer(s) and/or retailers.

Multi-Retailer Program: For campaigns that ran with a central idea and executed that idea via dedicated rollouts to three or more different retail chains. Cases in this category will highlight and explain both the cohesive thread working at each retailer, and the specific customizations that were done for each retailer. Entrants should outline the specific barriers and challenges in tailoring their solution to each retailer – elaborating on the nuances among the shopper segment and insights at each retailer, differences in retail environments, etc.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

COMMERCE & SHOPPER CATEGORIES (cont.)

New Product/Service Introduction: To enter this category, the case must address the commerce/shopper effort surrounding the launch of a new product/service. Whether it is the creation of a whole new brand, a new product from an existing brand, or a new line extension, submissions in this category need to present how shopper insights were leveraged to overcome the barriers faced by products/services being launched for the first time. If submitting an effort that was part of, or inspired by, a national campaign, explain how you adapted it for the shopper and the retailer.

Omni-Channel Shopper Solution: Winners in this category will represent the best examples of manufacturers and retailers committed to providing effective omni-channel shopper programs. Enter brands that have ensured an effective, connected shopper journey and showcase how manufacturers and retailers are connecting the dots in their engagement strategies to ensure simple, seamless, effective experiences across the shoppers' path to purchase. In-store, online, customer service, loyalty programs, mobile apps, delivery services, social media, aisle disruption - it could entail anything - as long as the case illustrates how it was all connected to provide a fully integrated "shopper journey" from beginning to end.

Retail Media *UPDATED: This category highlights the success achieved through strategic collaborations between retail media networks and brands, driving measurable business growth for both parties. Whether digital or in-store, or omnichannel, demonstrate how your efforts were tailored to specific customer segments using data-driven insights. Showcase the use of multiple channels, both online and offline, to deliver a cohesive and effective campaign that resonates with your target audience and drives tangible results for both retailer and brand.

Seasonal/Event: This category features events, platforms, or programs that were created to meet the demands of the shopper that are driven by a season, holiday or cultural event. Entrants must explain the insight into their shoppers that led to adjusting product and/or creating events/seasonally based platforms and programs to be in line with their needs and shopping mindset during a specific time period. Innovative shopper events, strategically created by the retailer and/or manufacturer, may enter as well.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

COMMERCE & SHOPPER CATEGORIES (cont.)

Single-Retailer Program: For campaigns that ran with a tailored, retailer-specific idea and executed that idea at a single retail chain (mass merchants, supermarkets, drugstores, warehouse clubs, pure play digital commerce stores, specialty stores, etc.). The work in this category will provide insights as to how an effort was effectively designed to work with the retailer and the shoppers of that retailer. Entrants should elaborate on the specific shopper barriers affecting their brand at that retailer and how they addressed those issues in a customized way for that retailer.

Sustained Success: Commerce and shopper marketing efforts that experienced sustained success for at least three years are eligible for entry. At a minimum, you must include at least three years of creative work and case results, and you must include the current competition year's work/results. Work must have a common objective in both strategy and creative executions; with a continuation of core executional elements (e.g., spokesperson, song, theme, tagline, etc.) that demonstrates effectiveness over time. As part of your entry, specifically address how the effort evolved over time (e.g., media choices, targeting, insights, new products/services, etc.). Answer all questions for the initial year and describe how/why change occurred over time.

Note: There is a special entry form and different creative requirements for the Sustained Success Award. The creative requirements, including different rules for the creative reel, can be found in the [**Sustained Success Entry Form**](#). To enter you must be able to provide data about the case in its first year (before August 31, 2022), at least one interim year, and the most current competition year (9/1/2023 - 12/31/2024).

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

DIGITAL CATEGORIES

Honouring the most effective convergence of data, technology and all forms of creative that maximize end user engagement and conversion.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) *UPDATED: For the AI Category, entrants are required to showcase their effective use of artificial intelligence to drive meaningful business outcomes. This category recognizes outstanding campaigns and initiatives where AI was leveraged as a pivotal tool to achieve specific business goals, whether it be enhancing customer engagement, optimizing operations, increasing sales, or any other measurable objective.

Entrants must provide clear evidence of how AI was integrated into their strategy and demonstrate the tangible impact it had on their business growth and desired results. This includes detailed metrics, analytics, and any other relevant data that highlight the effectiveness of the AI implementation. The judges will be looking for entries that not only display creativity and technical proficiency but also a profound understanding of how AI can be harnessed to produce real, quantifiable success.

Direct-to-Consumer: This category is for effective marketing efforts from direct-to-consumer businesses. DTC efforts for any type of product or service, from any marketplace segment, are eligible.

Engaged Community: This category is about managing effective, engaged communities. Entrants are brands that are creating content, experiences, platforms, news, etc. that get their communities to grow, engage, share, act, or amplify messaging in a way that directly relates to the brand's goals. State clearly how the brand managed the community, defined effectiveness around the community, what they specifically achieved, and why the engaged community was significant for the development of the brand/business.

Influencer Marketing *UPDATED: This category recognizes brands that successfully partnered with influencers to achieve short or long-term marketing goals. Influencers can range from micro to macro and include social media personalities, brand ambassadors, and bloggers. Clearly define the strategy, target audience, and why the influencer was chosen. Highlight how the influencer engaged the audience, influenced consumer behaviour, and contributed to the brand's success by driving measurable business results.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

DIGITAL CATEGORIES (cont.)

Performance Marketing *UPDATED: This category celebrates the most impactful performance marketing strategies, where a combination of tactics generated significant, incremental results and conversions. Describe how you leveraged the synergy between your organic and paid ecosystems to create a halo effect, using data-driven insights, agile testing, and continuous optimization. Your submission should be performance-led, demonstrating how approaches such as (but not limited to) affiliate marketing, paid search, SEO, email campaigns, personalization at scale, influencer or sponsored content directly drove measurable outcomes like increased revenue or leads.

Note: There is a special [Performance Marketing Entry Form](#) that must be used when entering this category.

Social Media *UPDATED: This category celebrates campaigns designed around social media as the primary touchpoint, leveraging its influence to engage connected consumers. Focus on campaigns where social media was the core idea, not just an element. Provide a clear rationale for using social media, demonstrate its direct impact on audience behaviour, and show how it drove measurable business results.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

HEALTH & WELLNESS CATEGORIES

Honouring effective marketing within the healthcare industry. Disease Awareness & Education efforts must enter one of these categories – they may not enter Positive Change categories.

Disease Awareness & Education: Charitable/Research Funding: Efforts dedicated to generating funding/donations/support for research, treatment, and care of specific health conditions.

Disease Awareness & Education: Non-Profit: Public health and non-profit cause marketing efforts produced to raise awareness/education about specific health conditions. Efforts may be targeted to healthcare professionals, patients and/or consumers.

Disease Awareness & Education: Pharma/Corporate: Brand/client efforts designed to educate and/or promote health awareness. Efforts may be targeted to either healthcare professionals, patients and/or consumers.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

MARKETING INNOVATION SOLUTIONS CATEGORY

This category awards innovative single marketing and business activities or entire marketing programs. If communication was a significant element of marketing mix, work should be submitted in another category.

Business/Product/Service Innovation: This category awards innovative single marketing and business activities or entire marketing programs. Submit any action or business idea regarding innovation for the product, service, or business that has had an exceptionally positive impact on the market position. Examples of eligible activities in this category include: product/service innovation; change in packaging, both in terms of its appearance and size; design, technology or UX innovation for the business, product or service; consumer involvement in product development; operation change, etc.

Customer Experience: This category awards innovative single marketing and business activities or entire marketing programs. Submit any action or business idea regarding customer experience innovation that has had an exceptionally positive impact on the market position of a business, brand, product or service. Examples of eligible activities in this category include: design, technology or UX innovation for the customer experience; consumer involvement in product development; introduction/change of a loyalty program, introduction of a new distribution channel, etc.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

MEDIA CATEGORIES

These categories reflect the importance of the use of media in driving effectiveness and will be judged by experts within the media industry across brands, agencies, and media owners. Submissions must speak to the media channel choices and measurement methodologies.

Data-Driven: Data-driven is the application of data and/or technology to connect people to the brand at the right moment/s. These efforts should prove how they specifically utilized data to drive creativity or to optimize media to improve business outcomes (brand KPIs, ROI, performance marketing measures, etc.).

The best examples will recognize the interplay and application of data, inclusive of automation and AI, to engage with and/or deliver to a precise audience and achieve the best results. To enter, your case must detail the role that data had within the creative and/or media strategy in achieving the brand and business goals.

Submissions are expected to:

- Utilize personalized/custom-tailored creative messages.
- Explain how data impacted the media plan through clear measurement & analytics.
- Demonstrate the insights captured from data used to understand audience.

Media Content Partnerships *UPDATED: This category recognizes brand-media partnerships that created and activated original content beyond traditional advertising. These partnerships should showcase innovative consumer connections through integrated communication channels centered on creative and strategic content. Each activation channel should demonstrate how the media company contributed to the campaign's effectiveness and impact. Submissions must detail the strategic rationale for the partnership, the selection process, and how the partnership led to results that achieved the brand's objectives.

Media Idea: This category is about outstanding effectiveness as a result of media-led ideas. The line between what constitutes a creative idea and a media idea is blurring and there are occasions when the media idea drove the entire effort. Of course, media cannot exist without the content, but this award is intended to recognize those cases that were led by the media thinking – where the integration of media and message led to success. The award honours media-led ideas that are powerful enough to become the genesis of the marketing program itself, to the extent that the program would not have been successful without the strategic media idea.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

MEDIA CATEGORIES (cont.)

Media Innovation: This award showcases those who had the insight and creativity to change the way a particular media channel is consumed, or to create a new channel. The award will go to brands who reached out of the conventional approach to grab their audience and effectively engage with them. Whether the effort was one execution or multiple, and/or used one engagement channel or multiple – the work must represent new and creative usage of the media channels we know and love, or have not yet met. *Note:* All entries must specifically address what was innovative and the results achieved. Address the category situation and provide clear articulation of how the media was used innovatively and how the media strategy/plan optimized the results. This category covers Emerging & New Channels and Existing Channels.

Media Strategy: This category shines a light on exceptional media planning and execution. Winners will exceed expected outcomes, through intelligent modelling, purchasing and execution of the plan in market.

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

POSITIVE CHANGE CATEGORY

In collaboration with the World Economic Forum

The Positive Change Effies reward and celebrate the brands and non-profits that are promoting the greater good through purpose-driven marketing. The program has two tracks - Environmental and Social Good.

Environmental: For efforts that have measurably shifted audience behaviour toward more environmentally sustainable choices, and/or grown demand for more sustainable products and services by incorporating environmentally-conscious messaging into their marketing. Show how effective marketing programs that incorporate sustainable strategies can make a positive difference for brands and for the environment. Over and above the standard Effie requirements to demonstrate a positive impact on business, there are specific areas of interest that relate to this award. Efforts entered must have as one of their main strategic objectives changing audience behaviour towards more environmentally sustainable choices and environmentally conscious messaging must be a part of the marketing. Entrants should address how the sustainability goal relates back to the overall brand and business strategy.

Criterion for this award is the result of behaviour change toward more environmentally sustainable choices, with these elements being considered in judging:

- Awareness - Making the audience aware of a sustainable product, service or action.
- Trial - Trying the sustainable product, service or action for the first time.
- Product/Service Substitution - Switching to a more sustainable product, service or action.
- Change in Use - Using a product/service more sustainably than before or taking a more sustainable action.

Enter in one of the two sub-categories:

- Environmental: Brands
- Environmental: Non-Profit

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

POSITIVE CHANGE CATEGORY (cont.)

Social Good: For marketing efforts proven effective in solving/impacting a social problem or in expanding an existing program in ways that benefit our society. This is about creating positive societal and cultural change, challenging the established status-quo and changing accepted norms and stereotypes that create societal inequalities with inspired action. Examples include initiatives that tackle food poverty; access to healthcare or education; creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive society; or creating equal opportunities at work and in wider society for all members of our society. Any effort that sets out to give back in some way for the greater good is eligible to enter, and any/all marketing efforts, whether full campaigns or unique efforts within a campaign are eligible to enter as long as measurable results exist.

Note: Efforts focused on disease awareness & education must enter the [Disease Awareness & Education](#) categories – they are not eligible in the Positive Change categories.

Enter in one of three sub-categories:

- Social Good: Brands
- Social Good: Non-Profit
- Social Good: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

SPECIALTY CATEGORY DEFINITIONS (cont.)

TOPICAL & ANNUAL EVENT CATEGORIES

Entrants can enter a single effort into a maximum of one of the below categories.

Crisis Response/Critical Pivot *UPDATED: This category recognizes brands that successfully navigated significant structural and cultural shifts or moments of crisis (e.g., pandemic, social justice movements, political events) by effectively pivoting their marketing strategy or business activities. Entrants must clearly identify the pivot and explain how the messaging, campaign, production approach, or go-to-market strategy was adapted. Highlight the impact and effectiveness of these actions on the brand's success. Examples may include shifts in brand positioning, portfolio management, digital acceleration, and more.

Current Events: For cases that effectively leveraged immediate relevance, interest, or importance via a targeted marketing/PR strategy around current news and events (e.g., World Cup, Olympics, economic situations, social issues, etc.). Note: Annual events should enter the [Seasonal Marketing category](#).

Seasonal Marketing: Seasons, holidays and events allow marketers the opportunity to build strategic communications based on the time-based interests of their target audience. This category honours those efforts that effectively capitalized on a season, holiday or cultural event – key moments in the Canadian annual calendar - to drive results for their business. Examples of key seasonal events are Christmas, Diwali, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Valentine's Day, etc. Includes calendar-driven activities such as summer tourism blitz, RRSPs, Spring inventory clearout, Moving Day in Quebec, etc. Also includes seasonal brands, for example Cadbury's Creme Eggs.