



# GO FOR GROWTH

Creative strategies that have been proven to  
help brands grow

Part 2 of 5 of the **LIONS Creativity Report**,  
the ultimate benchmark for impactful creativity

THE FOAMY HAIRCUT | BRAHMA  
AFRICA CREATIVE DDB, SÃO PAULO  
GOLD CREATIVE EFFECTIVENESS LIONS







# Invest in organic growth

“Leaders enlarge their industries,” said Marcel Marcondes, Global Chief Marketing Officer, AB InBev, at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity 2023. “That means moving from growing at acquisitions to becoming great at organic growth. And whenever a company decides to grow organically, it means growing through the brands. The brands inevitably become the most important assets for a company that wants to grow.”

Yet many marketers struggle with implementing a culture of creative effectiveness and/or securing investment in creativity from CFOs. Nearly three quarters of CMOs admitted they had failed to deliver against profitable growth objectives, according to data shared by PWC at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity.

The Creative Impact track co-curated by LIONS and WARC at this year’s Festival offered practical help to brands seeking to embed a culture of creative effectiveness. And lessons from winning work outlined in this report show brands including Mondelez and Renault that, like AB InBev, are growing both their businesses and their categories. Use their tried and trusted creative approaches as inspiration for your brands.

“When clients come to us with a problem it’s not just a creative problem. It’s a business problem. How can we look at that problem with the widest definition of creativity?”



**AMRITA RANDHAWA**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | PUBLICIS GROUPE SEA  
JURY PRESIDENT, CREATIVE STRATEGY LIONS 2023



# Takeaways

These three strategies from 2023 Lion-winning work will help guide you towards growth.

1

## Invest in a strong brand platform

Take the time to identify what your brand stands for. This doesn't necessarily have to relate to brand purpose or corporate social responsibility. Chocolate brand Cadbury has enjoyed considerable growth since it identified generosity as its brand platform in 2018 (see page 7).

2

## Reframe barriers as opportunities

Consider how to look at barriers as creative opportunities. This might include pivoting, taking a risk or engaging new audiences that you hadn't previously considered. Take, for example, Brahma's 'Foamy Haircut' that built fame for the beer brand thanks to a creative constraint (see page 10).

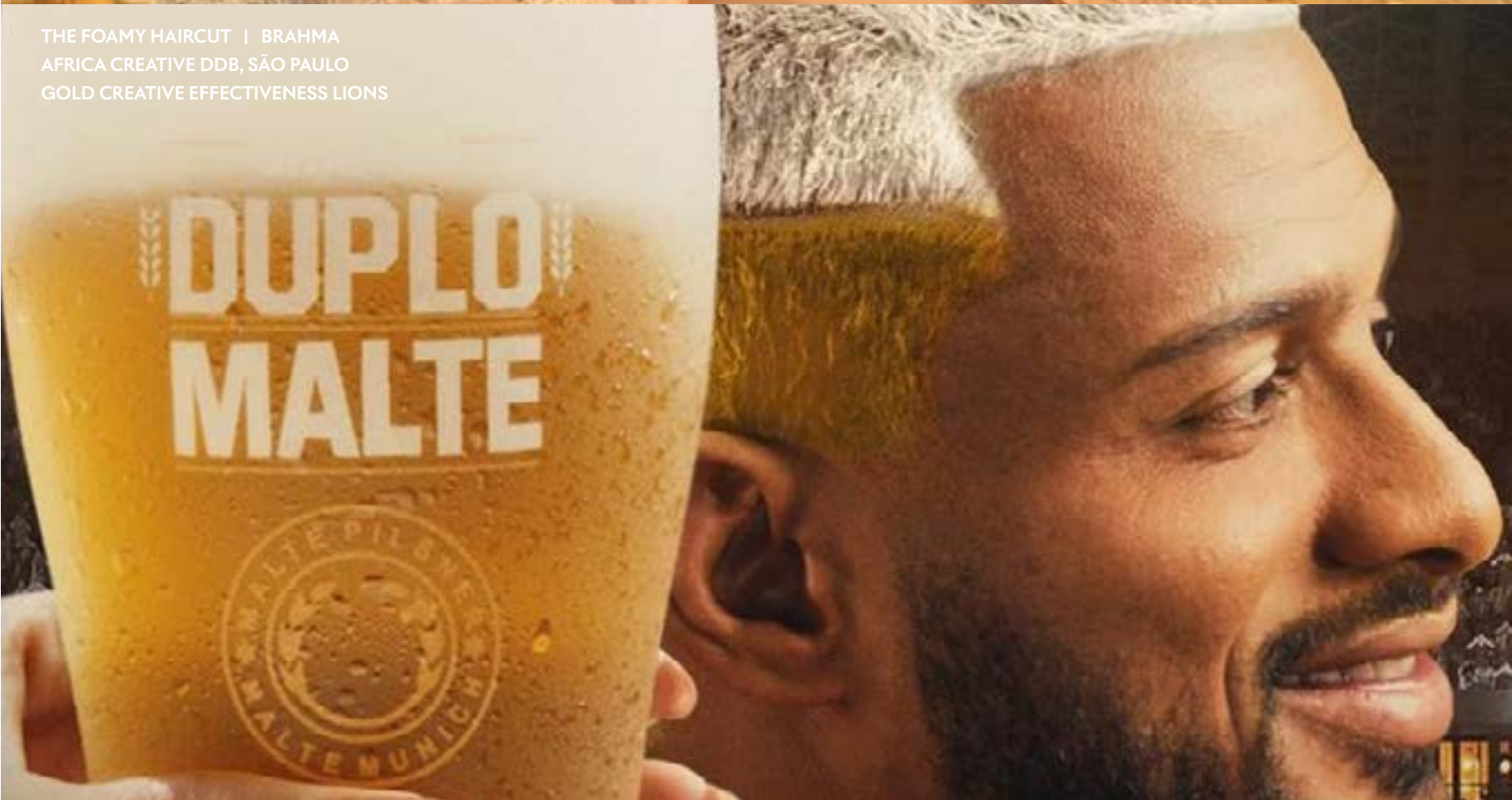
3

## Invite the audience in

More than half of the shortlisted or winning entries for this year's Creative Effectiveness Lions used participation. Technological advances make it easier than ever to work with your audience, so consider what this would look like for your brand.



SHAH RUKH KHAN-MY-AD | MONDELÉZ  
OGILVY, MUMBAI  
GRAND PRIX CREATIVE EFFECTIVENESS LIONS



THE FOAMY HAIRCUT | BRAHMA  
AFRICA CREATIVE DDB, SÃO PAULO  
GOLD CREATIVE EFFECTIVENESS LIONS



FLIPVERTISING | SAMSUNG  
CHEP NETWORK, SYDNEY  
GRAND PRIX SOCIAL AND INFLUENCER LIONS





# 1 Invest in a strong brand platform

A strong brand platform can consistently drive robust business results because it's clear what the brand stands for. Consider the ['You're Not You When You're Hungry'](#) platform for Snickers. Since launching in 2010, it has become a classic example of creative effectiveness. It has also reached the top of the WARC/LIONS Creative Effectiveness Ladder, achieving 'enduring icon' status.

Another chocolate brand, Cadbury, had a successful year at the 2023 Cannes Lions, and like Snickers, it boasted a strong brand platform. Since 2018, Cadbury's brand platform has been generosity. Its 'Shah Rukh Khan-My-Ad' initiative for Cadbury Celebrations took the Grand Prix in the Creative Effectiveness Lions this year, having won Titanium in 2022.

This section explores Cadbury's creative effectiveness journey and highlights other 2023 winning work that demonstrates the long-term value of a strong brand platform.

#1 in the Food sub-sector (FMCG) in Cannes Lions

**Shah Rukh Khan-My-Ad**  
2018-2023,  
based on points

# Consistency is key: Mondelēz's 'Shah Rukh Khan-My-Ad'

Mondelēz-owned Cadbury Celebrations recognised that small businesses in India would not have the budget to hire Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan for an ad. So, in post-pandemic India, it gifted them his star power by making him the face of Cadbury Celebrations during Diwali 2021.

Using AI, machine learning and geo-targeting, Cadbury Celebrations created hyper-personalised ads for more than 130,000 stores.

This generated a 35% growth in business for the boxed chocolate brand.

## Takeaway:

**Maintain brand platform principles across geographies.**

Stay consistent to a brand positioning to help household name brands deliver long-term growth.

[SHAH RUKH KHAN-MY-AD](#)

SHAH RUKH KHAN-MY-AD | MONDELÉZ  
OGILVY, MUMBAI  
GRAND PRIX CREATIVE EFFECTIVENESS LIONS



# The Creative Effectiveness Lions Jury's View: 'Shah Rukh Khan-My-Ad'



**DEVIKA  
BULCHANDANI**

GLOBAL CEO | OGILVY  
JURY PRESIDENT

"It was a real initiative for a real brand that had massive reach. Generosity is Cadbury's core brand equity – something which it has built upon for years. And the sales results were undeniable."



**MICHAELA  
LYON**

INTEGRATED MARKETING | HSBC  
JUROR

"It drove the brand, there were product sales attached to it, and there was also an ambition to do something for the community. A smart idea that can do all three things is a Grand Prix."



**ETE  
DAVIES**

EMEA CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER | DENTSU CREATIVE  
JUROR

"The dominant part of this idea was the strategy to help local retailers. It was enabled through the AI and machine learning and is skillfully and artfully done: it doesn't allow the technology to become the centrepiece."



# Brand journey: Cadbury and generosity 2018–2023



## Mum's Birthday

A young girl pays for a bar of Dairy Milk for her mother's birthday gift with a plastic coin, some buttons and a beloved miniature unicorn. The shopkeeper considers the unorthodox currency carefully...before giving her the Dairy Milk along with her change: the unicorn.

VCCP, LONDON



SHORTLISTED, FILM LIONS

## Generosity Bar

To show that there's a glass and a half of goodness in everyone, Cadbury invited people to sacrifice the extra milk from their chocolate bar and donate it to people in need in the Philippines. The work achieved a reach of 83 million people, generated 165m media impressions and led to 200,000 glasses of milk being donated via an NGO addressing malnutrition.

OGILVY, SINGAPORE



SHORTLISTED, MEDIA LIONS

## WIP - Easter

Cadbury used Easter egg hunts to strengthen human connection. It built a platform based on Google Maps, where customers could hide digital Cadbury eggs for their loved ones to find – and delivered physical eggs to those who completed the game. Cadbury received over 2.25m site visits and sold out of eggs a week before Easter Sunday.

VCCP, LONDON



SHORTLISTED, DESIGN LIONS

## Can Purpose Rediscover Its Purpose?

Over the last five years, generosity has delivered more than \$1bn in revenue for Cadbury, and Kantar has included the brand for the first time in its top 20 most valuable food and beverage brands. At 41:44, Mie-Leng Wong, SVP Global Brands, Mondelez, says: 'If purpose is grounded in strong consumer insight, based in product truth, connected to a long-term commitment and a business growth strategy, it can create that shared value for consumers, societies, business and the environment.'

OGILVY, SINGAPORE



GOLD OUTDOOR LIONS

2018

2019

2021

2023

# How it got made



## Explain where Cadbury Celebrations were in the market prior to this work.

**SN:** It's been the most popular brand for decades and a huge chunk of our sales comes at Diwali. During the pandemic, our chocolates weren't an essential product, yet because of our generosity platform, people came out and supported us and small sellers, and that was a beautiful gesture that worked in our favour. Our generosity was reflected in a 30% uplift in the market.

This campaign generated a tremendous amount of goodwill in hearts and minds. It showed us, as a leading brand, how you should build the category. Every festival, we do something that helps our sellers. It's a tradition because sellers are such an important part of our ecosystem. The 200,000 ad campaigns made for those small businesses with Shah Rukh Khan will be the only ad campaign they'll ever create.

## How did you select him?

**SN:** We started with the idea of bringing in the biggest brand ambassador and it had to be someone from sport or cinema. We felt movies were bigger and more universal for India. It had to be a mega-star with pan-Indian appeal.

**GB:** He is the one person who has the universal ability to cut through.

## Explain the AI behind the work. How did you make it accessible for those small business owners who may not have been that knowledgeable about tech?

**SN:** As a custodian of creativity, I've always said that technology is the tool you play with, not the idea. We had to make sure that the tech part was so simple that all people had to do was submit basic info to generate their ad.



**SUKESH NAYAK**

GLOBAL CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER | OGILVY MUMBAI



**GANAPATHY BALAGOPALAN**

DEPUTY CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER | OGILVY MUMBAI

## “It showed us how to build the category”

Ogilvy's Ganapathy Balagopalan, Deputy Chief Strategy Officer, and Sukesh Nayak, Chief Creative Officer, explain how generosity and the right mega-star helped Celebrations grow sales by 30% in India.





# 2 Reframe barriers as creative opportunities

Creativity is about problem-solving and overcoming obstacles. “You need marketers who look at barriers and understand how to creatively convey brand values in the face of what other people think. This is where creativity excels,” said Lina Polimeni, Chief Corporate Brand Officer, Eli Lilly, in this [‘CMOs in the Spotlight’](#) session from Cannes Lions 2023.

Dealing with barriers in a creative manner can be transformative for business, category, culture and community. The following pages show how a range of food and drink brands have behaved authentically to navigate barriers including advertising bans and category-leading brands with bigger media budgets.



# Find quirky avenues Brahma: 'The Foamy Haircut'

Faced with a ban on alcohol sponsorships on football jerseys in Brazilian tournaments, beer producer Brahma had to show up in a new and attention-grabbing way. It jumped on cultural conversations around footballers' hairstyles, inviting players to style their hair so it looked like the foam on a Brahma beer. It generated 415m impressions and 37.6m spontaneous media impressions. Brahma became inextricably connected to football, and sales of the beer increased by 39%.

Creative Effectiveness Lions Juror Liane Siebenhaar, CSO, Accenture Song Germany, said: "It was consistent to the brand but also got into pop culture, creating a lot of impact for the brand when it was being restricted during a challenging time."

## Takeaway:

### Take advantage of loopholes.

When faced with a barrier, reframe it as a beautiful constraint to help steer you towards other ways to drive conversation and sales.

[THE FOAMY HAIRCUT](#)

THE FOAMY HAIRCUT | BRAHMA  
AFRICA CREATIVE DDB, SÃO PAULO  
GOLD CREATIVE EFFECTIVENESS LIONS





# An authentic voice can lead to growth

These 2023 Lion winners show how the right tone is key to overcoming barriers.

BRING HOME THE BUD | BUDWEISER



WIEDEN+KENNEDY, NEW YORK

TITANIUM LIONS

## Budweiser 'Bring Home The Bud'

When beer sales were banned from football stadiums in Qatar, sponsor Budweiser promised to send the country that won the World Cup all of the beer it couldn't sell. Kicking off with one witty tweet – 'Well, this is awkward' – #BringHomeTheBud generated 225bn impressions and \$400m in earned media. It also made up more than 70% of all sponsor mentions.

## Wendy's 'Still Fresh. Never Frozen'

Wendy's overtook Burger King to become the second most popular fast food chain in the US following its investment in Wendy as an authentic frontwoman on social platforms. Wendy is likeable and funny, and her 'fresh' voice underpins the chain's commitment to using fresh meat. This is a key message for the challenger chain that's consistently outspent by the competition.

STILL FRESH. NEVER FROZEN | WENDY'S



VMLY&R, KANSAS CITY

BRONZE CREATIVE STRATEGY LIONS

M&M'S - SPOKESCANDIES ON PAUSE | M&M'S



BBDO, NEW YORK

GOLD CREATIVE STRATEGY LIONS

## M&M's 'Spokescandies on Pause'

M&M's duped the US into thinking it had cancelled the 'spokescandies', replacing them with actor Maya Rudolph. It sabotaged its Super Bowl spot with a deliberately weird commercial fronted by Rudolph...before reintroducing the beloved characters. It earned 25.2bn impressions – over four times the Super Bowl average.







“Mars is a family-owned business and if you think about a family, people never agree. Half of them thought it was great because we were generating conversations that mattered in society. And the other half asked: ‘what the hell are you doing?’ We were clear about what we were doing and why we were doing it. We had fun with it and kept coming back to the heart of the brand: humour. It’s been about sharing and fun for the past 80 years. That’s our north star.”

**RANKIN CARROLL**

CHIEF BRAND OFFICER | MARS WRIGLEY



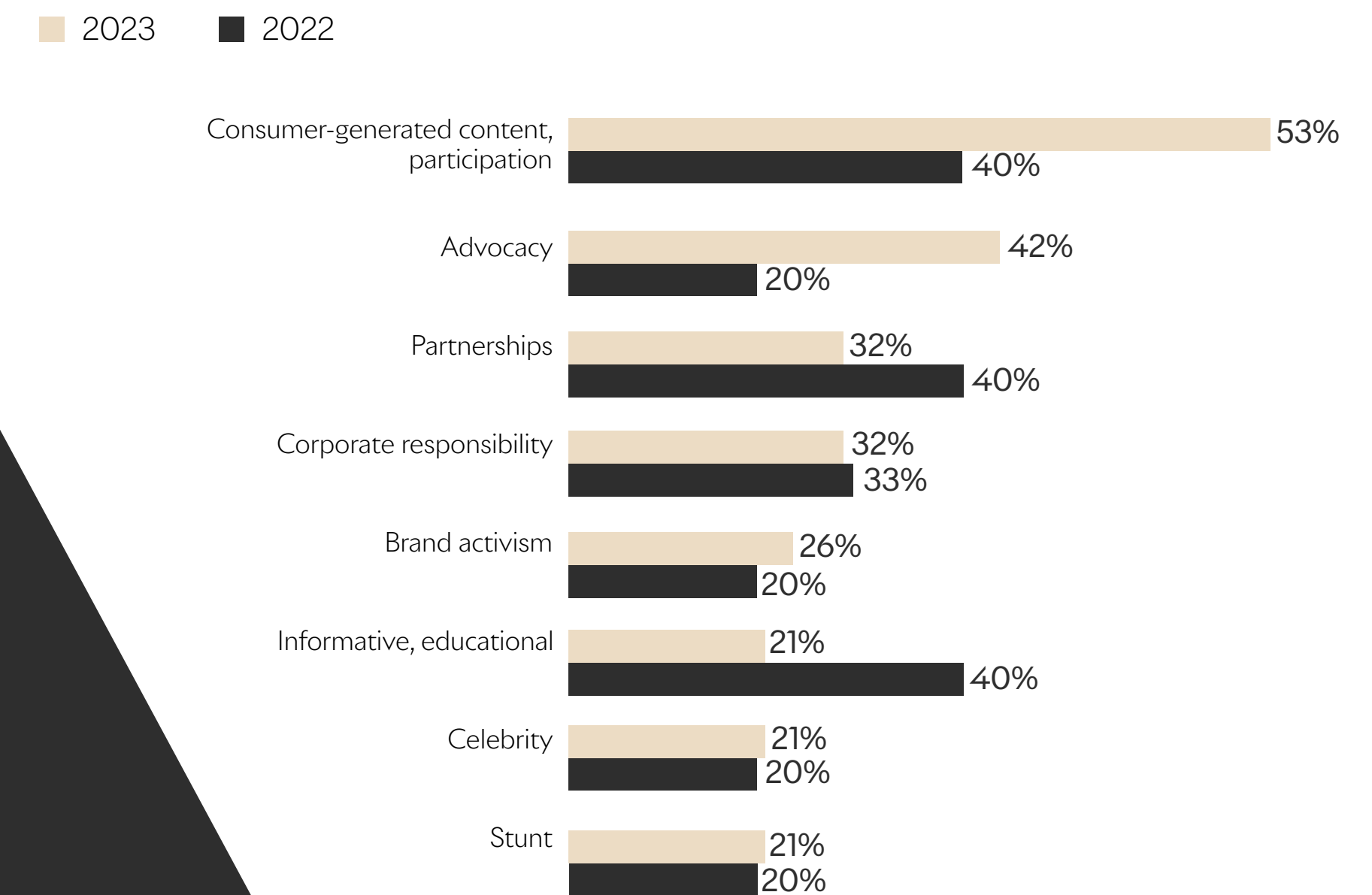


# 3 Invite the audience in

More than half – 53% – of shortlisted or winning Creative Effectiveness Lions entries used consumer-generated content or participation as a creative strategy. That’s a significant increase from 40% in 2022.

Add a participatory mechanic into creative work to appeal to audiences in attention-grabbing and unique ways.

2023 shortlist vs 2022 shortlist (selected objectives)



Source: WARC



# Use audience-owned infrastructure

## Renault: ‘Plug-Inn’

A lack of electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities, particularly in rural France, is slowing down the country’s uptake of EVs. Plug-Inn, nicknamed by Renault ‘the Airbnb for plugs’, is a peer-to-peer app connecting EV drivers with other people’s home chargers, to minimise the risk of running out of power while on the road. This business model created what Renault describes as “the fastest-growing recharging network for all brands... and soon for all countries”, positioning itself at the centre of the switch from diesel- or petrol-powered vehicles to electric.

Creative Strategy Lions Jury President, Amrita Randhawa, Chief Executive Officer, Publicis Groupe SEA, said: “This was category re-definition, a new revenue model for the brand, and it created a real cash value exchange for its consumers. It showed true category leadership in terms of being open to other brands and advancing electric vehicles.”

### Takeaway:

**Consider the issues your customers have using your product.**

Find innovative ways to fix problems. Your solutions may be used for your competitors’ products too, but you’ll be seen as an innovative brand and category leader.

[RENAULT – PLUG-INN](#)

RENAULT PLUG-INN | RENAULT  
PUBLICIS CONSEIL, PARIS  
GRAND PRIX CREATIVE STRATEGY LIONS



Renault presents





# Ask the audience

These 2023 Lion-winning brands show how involving the audience can generate results.

GSD&M, AUSTIN



SILVER CREATIVE STRATEGY LIONS

## Popeyes ‘Chicken Wars’

Chicken chain Popeyes sold out of its 10-week sandwich supply in eight days. How? It engaged Black Twitter, a highly influential, hyper-creative group of Twitter users that it had specifically targeted as its audience, following a year of strategic planning.

MISCHIEF @ NO FIXED ADDRESS, NEW YORK



BRONZE CREATIVE B2B LIONS

## Heinz ‘Tip for Heinz’

Restaurant-goers became brand advocates for Heinz through this direct approach. By involving its fanbase, Heinz received 279 leads that it converted to real business wins. Restaurants listened to their customers and switched to Heinz.

CHEP NETWORK, SYDNEY



GRAND PRIX SOCIAL AND INFLUENCER LIONS

## Samsung ‘Flipvertising’

By asking consumers to search for the right words to win a Samsung Galaxy Z Flip4 phone, this initiative challenged traditional targeting approaches. Galaxy Z Flip4 sales rose by 32% week on week following the campaign launch.

COLENZO BBDO AUCKLAND



GRAND PRIX RADIO & AUDIO LIONS

## Skinny ‘Phone It In’

New Zealand telco Skinny honoured its pledge to keep prices low by encouraging its audience to contribute the voice-over to its radio ads. Skinny acquisitions went up 34% year on year.





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