



2021 Effie UK Report • In partnership with Ipsos



Foreword



There's a tendency to see effectiveness as an outcome. The bar graph at the end that proves success. But effectiveness doesn't work that way. It has to be an everyday orientation if it's to be an outcome.

Making effective marketing isn't easy. It requires insight, inspiration, passion, creativity and rigour. All guided by a relentless everyday focus on effectiveness.

The finalists and winners of our 2021 Effie Awards UK competition demonstrated those qualities in abundance and, what's even more impressive, they did it the first year of the pandemic. We know how big the challenges were, but for each brand the nature of the challenge varied. It's uplifting to see how problems were solved and opportunities were seized when the chips were down.

Contained within the pages of this report are all the insights from their outstanding work in one accessible hit. It provides the relevant, essential learnings for brands now as the industry navigates 2022.

Many thanks to the brilliant team at Ipsos for working with us to make this report happen. Together, we hope it provides inspiration for the months ahead.

JULIET HAYGARTH | Managing Director Effie UK



At Ipsos we are committed to helping our clients and their agencies develop the most creative and effective advertising to deliver brand growth. As such it is an absolute pleasure once again to partner with Effie to bring you inspiration from the 2021 awards for your future campaigns.

I think it's safe to say that 2020, the period reflected in this report, was a tough year for everyone. The pandemic brought about a shift

in the way that we live and relate to others, the likes of which most of us will never have experienced before. In this report we see the impact of that rapid change in the world on brands, creative and media. Brands that flexed to the context while remaining true to themselves prospered.

There is no doubt that doing things differently can deliver effectiveness. This year, Winners haven't only broken category conventions creatively but also in their use of media. This is particularly demonstrated by some of the smaller brand entries who were able to switch investment to TV, some for the first time, and use TV in novel ways. We can only hope that 2022 is the year normality returns to the world but even if not this report and the associated case studies bring to life lessons learnt from these 'unprecedented' times that have implications even for the most ordinary of future years.

ELEANOR THORNTON-FIRKIN | Head Creative Excellence, Ipsos

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1

Challenge, Context, Objectives

This year, context was everything. The challenge was to know how to adapt to the context in a way that made sense for your brand

Those who adapted quickly to the Covid situation thrived

Sticking with a strategy over the long term through a period of crisis worked well for established brands

2

Strategy, Insight(s) and Strategic Idea

For many adapting to the situation was absolutely necessary but ensuring that they stayed close to the needs and motivations of their audience was at the heart of success

To do this multiple streams of data were needed – both broad societal information and specific audience insights had a role to play during Covid

3

Bringing the Strategy and Idea to Life

In 2020 TV really came to the fore. Audiences confined to their homes, watched more TV and TV rates fell making the medium more affordable for all. As a result, we saw all entrants moving towards this as their primary touchpoint

Innovative use of creative on TV and capitalising on the changing media buying environment meant that even the smallest campaigns could utilize TV to drive increased effectiveness

4

Results

Effie Winners are more likely to demonstrate Revenue Growth than others

This year however not everything was about sales when it came to effectiveness. For some effectiveness was measured by simply staying in business and for others in lives saved

CHAPTER 1

Challenge, Context, Objectives

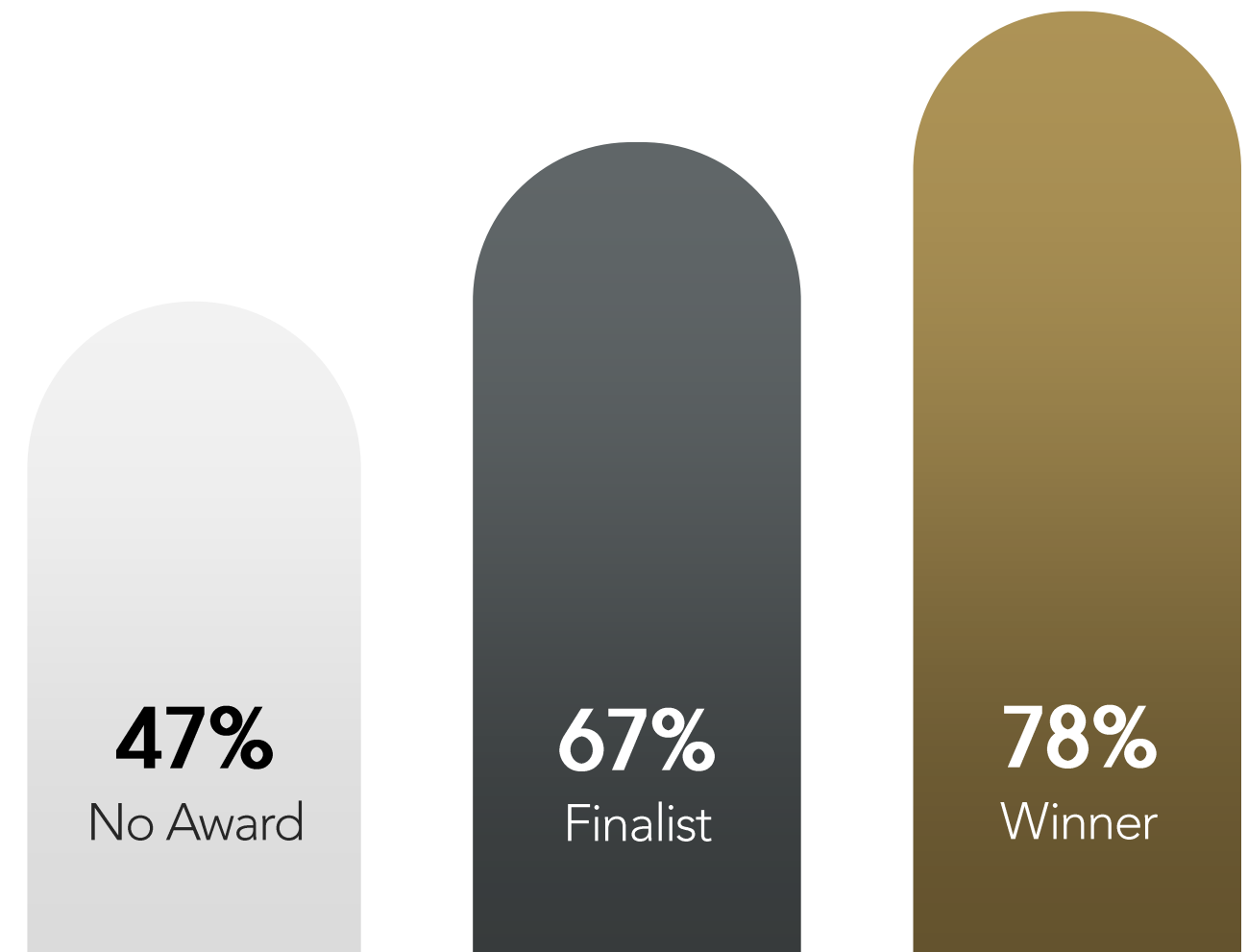
When it comes to objectives, our winners are clearly focussed on purchase

Marketers will agree that while every campaign, regardless of success, should have clear objectives and effectiveness is defined (either in part or completely) by the ability to deliver on these objectives.

When we look at the type of objectives stated by our 2020 entrants, purchase type objectives were stated by all Finalists and Winners and 70% of entrants. However, Winners were much more likely to say that purchase was their primary objective. Showing that a focus on purchase from the start of planning a campaign is more likely to deliver on the ultimate effectiveness for that campaign.

In 2020, a year when Marketers had more issues to grapple with than ever before in the face of the pandemic, this type of focus helped them come out on top no matter the contextual challenge they were faced with...

% stating Purchase as their primary objective



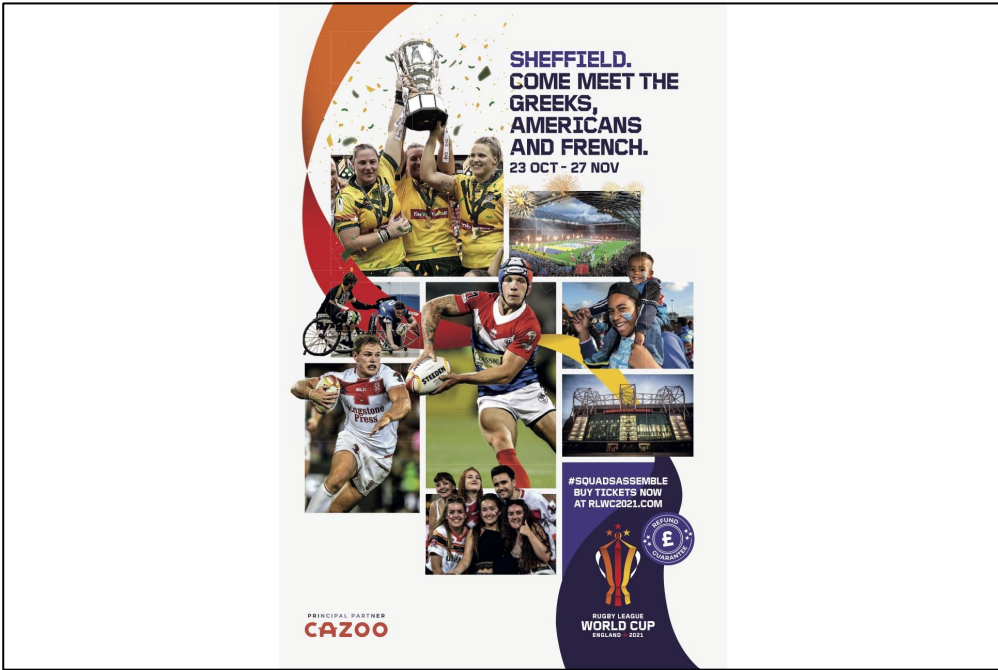
This year the challenges presented by brands were heavily influenced by the constraints of the Covid context...

If we compare and contrast the situation of three of our winners the breadth of the challenges that brands had to overcome is clear...

For McDonald’s effectiveness was about growing market share while managing demand. They needed to ensure that as the country and their restaurants reopened, they balanced driving demand with the capacity that a partial opening could deliver



For the Rugby League World Cup they needed to drive demand for a sport that few people understood, for an event that non fans very rarely attended, at a time that people weren’t certain they would actually be able to use the tickets



For Aldi reducing their shortfall in share of the lucrative Christmas market was a long-term strategy. Starting back in 2016, the Kevin the Carrot campaign had been working hard for them since that point and no matter the type of Christmas any of us were experiencing Aldi needed once again to create salience and maintain Christmas growth



Effie Case Study: McDonald's 2020: The Power Of Leading In a Crisis

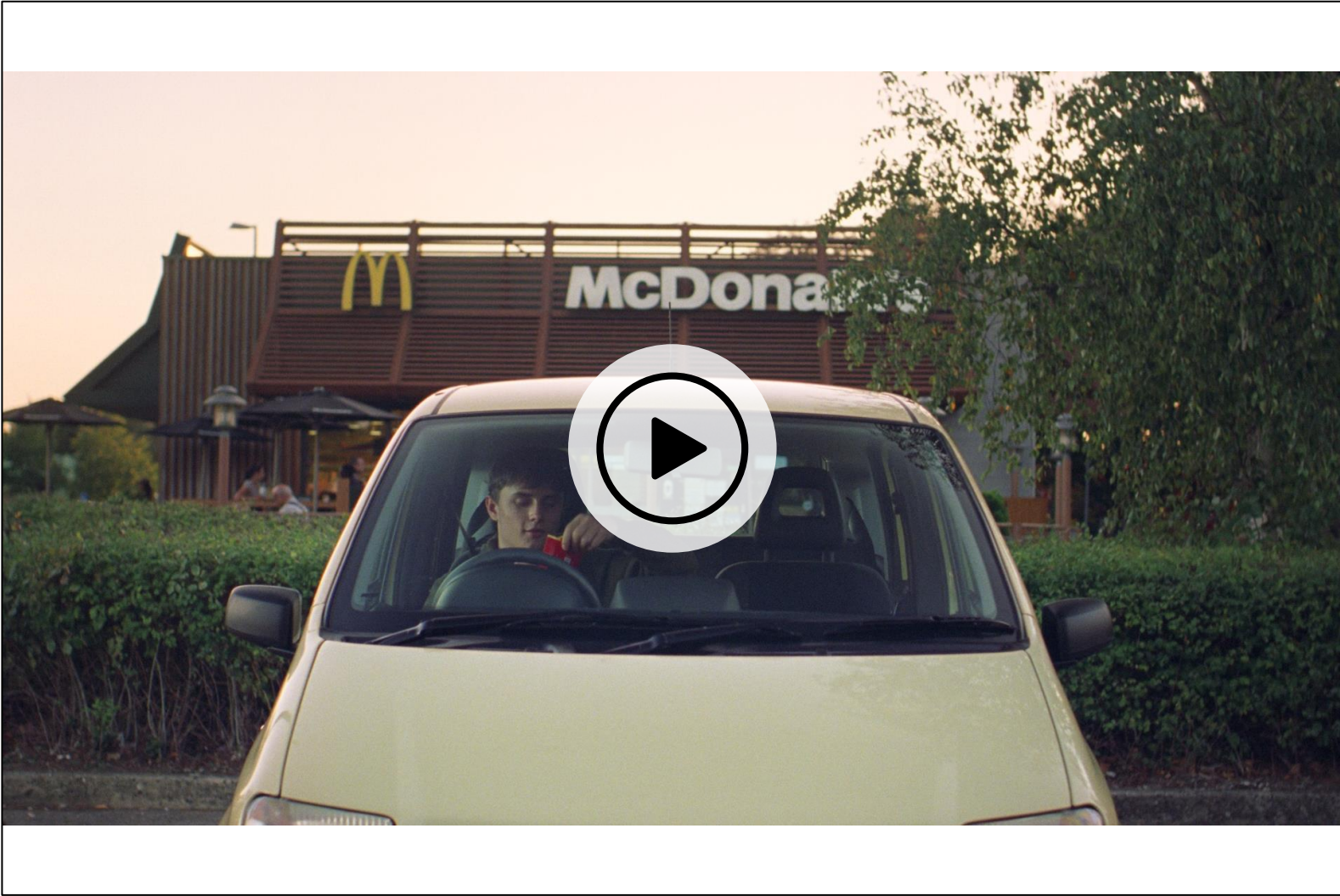
Example of reacting to the context while maintaining brand voice

Brand/Client: McDonald's (United Kingdom)

Lead Agency: Leo Burnett
Contributing Agency: OMD

“ This is the story of how McDonald’s turned around its brand and business fortunes, in the face of a global pandemic and 6 weeks of complete business closure. This is also the story of how we did this by bravely looking beyond short-term survival, to instead focus on growing the long-term health of the brand. But most of all, this is the story of how McDonald’s stole a march on the category and established a new all-time high market share, by genuinely listening to what its customers were going through and then answering with the behaviour of a true leader. ”

Watch the Case Video: [here](#)



BRONZE:
Rising to the
challenge of 2020

CHAPTER 1

Challenge, Context, Objectives

KEY FINDING

Embrace the constraint: adapt quickly but stay true to your brand voice

Effie Case Study: How the Rugby League World Cup 2021 (RLWC2021) sold tickets a year out from the tournament by offering hope for people to be together again

Example of use of insight and media choices to deliver effectiveness

Watch the Case Video: [here](#)

Brand/Client: Rugby League World Cup 2021

Lead Agency: McCann Manchester
Contributing Agency: Goodform Ltd, Hatch PR

“ This paper is the ultimate sporting underdog story. Representing an underfunded sport, with an underfunded media and production budget of £387k (during times of Covid), it will tell the story of how the Rugby League World Cup 2021 (RLWC2021) overcame a lack of interest in the sport to achieve £5.05m in ticket sales - a year out from the tournament beginning - to a largely new audience by focussing on the power and hope of togetherness. Ultimately, it will show how the desire to be together again outweighed cynicism to the sport to deliver a campaign ROMI of 1,191%.”



GOLD:
Small Budgets

BRONZE:
Entertainment
and Sports

BRONZE:
Rising to the
challenge of 2020

CHAPTER 1

Challenge, Context, Objectives

KEY FINDING

Embrace the constraint: understand how the macro context has affected people's lives and attitudes to fuel insights that can be harnessed for effectiveness

Effie Case Study: How Aldi keeps on winning Christmas with Kevin the Carrot

Example of keeping faith with a long-term campaign during a crisis

Brand/Client: Aldi UK Ltd


Lead Agency: McCann Manchester

Contributing Agency: Universal McCann Manchester

“ During Christmas the battle for consumers’ attention and wallets is fierce. Aldi needed to reduce its seasonal sales shortfall by convincing shoppers that despite its low-prices it could deliver a show-stopping Christmas. As the real magic of Christmas comes from the power to see the most everyday things in the most amazing way, Aldi adopted its most everyday item - a 3p carrot - as the brand spokesperson. Over four years Kevin the Carrot helped Aldi reduce its seasonal sales shortfall and become the fastest growing supermarket at Christmas. ”

Watch the Case Video: [here](#)



 **BRONZE:**
Sustained
Success - Services

CHAPTER 1

Challenge, Context, Objectives

KEY FINDING

Sticking with your long running campaign through periods of crisis is effective for established brands

CHAPTER 2

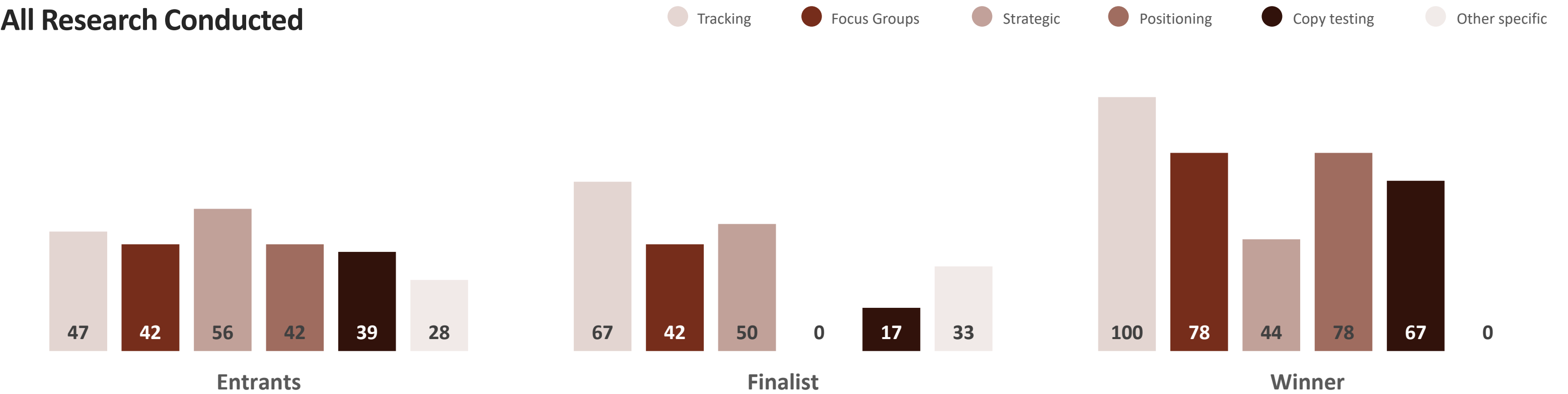
Strategy, Insight(s) and Strategic Idea

Doing the right research is important: Winners managed uncertainty through multiple research streams to a much greater degree than others

In general, having a continuous learning cycle from early research into tracking and back round again allows Marketers and Agencies to flag and identify brand issues, understand the whys from qualitative research, and inform creative development through early exploration of ideas. Closing the circle in tracking can be used alongside business metrics to understand performance of the campaign.

In 2020 specifically: research really came to the fore. In our winning cases, research was deployed to understand the mood of the nation, to evaluate the needs and motivations of audiences in that moment and to understand the constants vs the changes that the Covid crisis had thrown up.

All Research Conducted



Effie Case Study: We Are The NHS: Then, Now, Always

Example of bringing together multiple research streams to inform campaign strategy during the Covid crisis

Brand/Client: NHS England

Lead Agency: MullenLowe London, Mediahub UK

Contributing Agency: MMC, 23Red, Freuds, Manning Gottlieb OMD

“After years of real-term funding cuts, staff shortages and costly recruitment practices, we narrowed the staff shortfall, delivered unprecedented applications, and built a future-facing NHS recruitment legacy. We’ve done it in a year where securing the future NHS workforce was fundamental to protecting the nation’s health as Britain faced its greatest threat since World-War-Two with Covid-19. “Then, now, always” is a rallying call to arms; an intimate, authentic celebration of the million+ staff who tirelessly care for the sick and put their lives on the line. This is not a story of success. This is a story of survival.”

Watch the Case Video: [here](#)



SILVER:
Positive Change –
Social Good: Non-Profit

CHAPTER 2

Strategy, Insight(s) and Strategic Idea

KEY FINDING

Multiple streams of research, both broad societal trends and specific audience insight, underpin the most effective work

CHAPTER 3

Bringing the Strategy and Idea to Life

Historically, more channels has meant more effective work and that held true in 2020

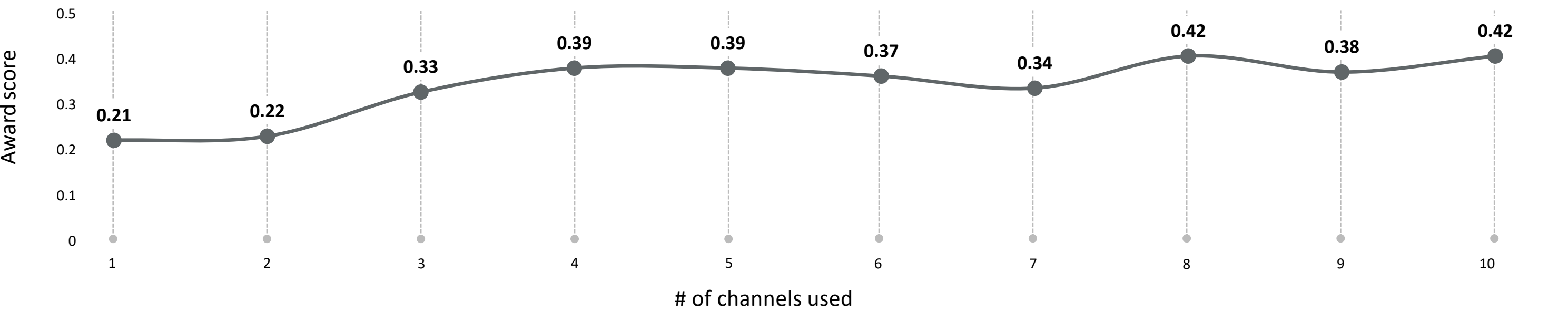
The number of channels used by marketers has grown significantly over the past decade, and the general trend through Effie history is that more channels means more effective work

In the UK, in 2020, using more channels is a hallmark of our winners. While, in this difficult year for both creative production and media buying, we saw the absolute number of channels used declining, e.g. Winners were down from 15 channels last year to 12 channels this year: on average, winners used more channels vs all entrants

Number of channels reported in 2021
(used in 2020):

9	10	12
Entrants	Finalists	Winners

More Channels = More Effectiveness



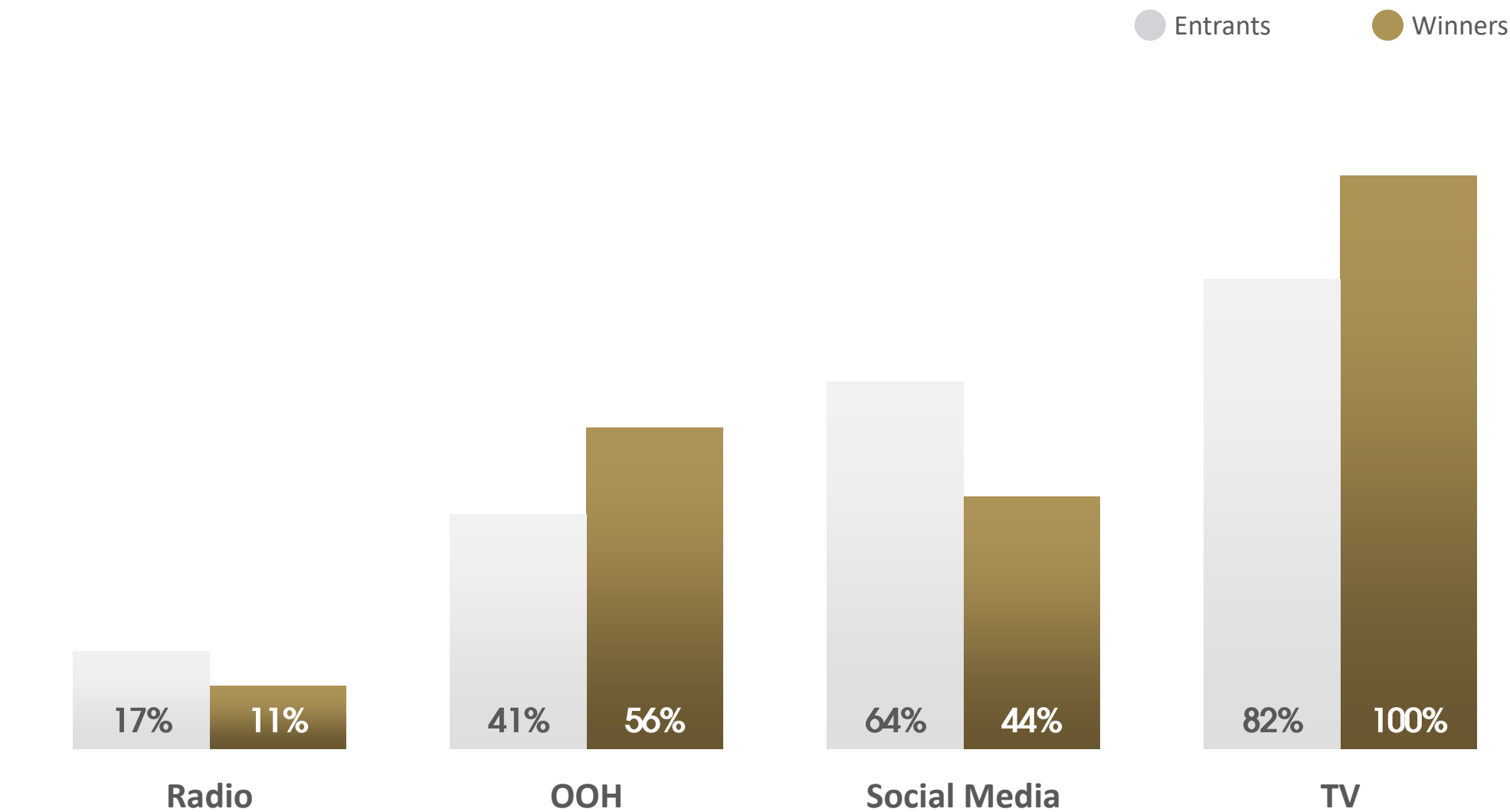
Data from all Effie entries, where available, 1969–2019, prepared by Mark Ritson @ Effie Next 50 Summit

n=4,855

TV use was prevalent across both Entrants and Winners.

TV as a vital channel for success is **reflective of the overall learnings that we have seen emerge from Effie around the world.** It was heavily used this year by both Entrants and Winners.

Main touchpoints used



Data from Effie 2020 Entries, Main Touchpoints utilized

CHAPTER 3

Bringing the Strategy and Idea to Life

KEY FINDING

Winners use more
channels than others

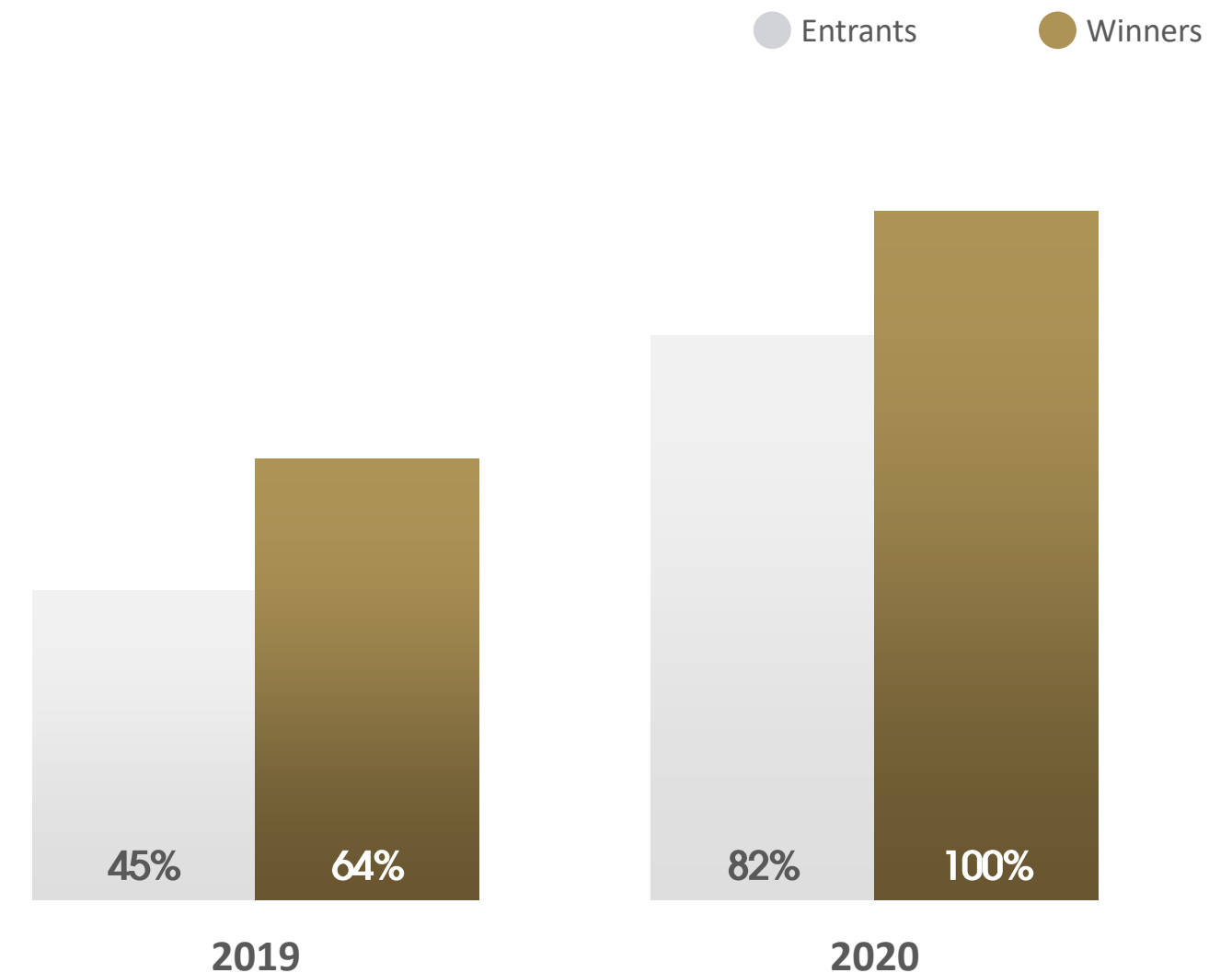
Broad reach channels,
TV in particular, still
drive effectiveness

TV has been used to a much greater extent in 2020 than in 2019

In 2020, as we were confined to our homes, TV viewing increased by 5% year on year* across all forms of Broadcaster TV. It is unsurprising then that the smart money followed the audience and therefore we see in our entries that no matter the level of award, the budget of the brand or the challenge they faced, TV was the channel of choice in 2020. The reasons for TV use state in the entries broadly fell into these three areas:

- **The media buying environment enabled more brands to use TV in the mix this year.** One of our finalists, Pink Lady took the opportunity that presented itself in agile media buying to move all their money from OOH to TV and take advantage of lower prices to expand their reach with their target audience
- **TV's continued power to change collective perceptions.** Aldi, in their Grand Prix paper showed how TV was at the heart of changing perceptions of the Aldi brand for the better over a 10 year campaign
- **The broad reach and ubiquity that TV can deliver quickly.** Cazoo: needing to achieve 'name fame' in its first year and a sense of scale to reassure potential customers that the brand had the reliability and quality to make buying a car online an acceptable purchase option

TV



*Thinkbox TV viewing report 2020 based on BARB / Broadcaster stream data / IPA Touchpoints 2020

Data from Effie 2020/2021 Entries, TV used as Main Touchpoint

Effie Case Study: From ‘Who?’ To Hero: How Cazoo disrupted the used car market in 12 months

Example of the use of TV to build credibility for a brand (and category)

Brand/Client: Cazoo

Lead Agency: Engine UK

Contributing Agency: Goodstuff, Kantar Millward Brown, Folk Research



In early 2020, ‘cazoo’ meant a plastic musical instrument. By the end of 2020, Cazoo was an established player in the used-car marketplace. It'd become the fastest British business to achieve unicorn status, with expected 2021 revenues approaching £1billion. Marketing played a critical role. It turned a completely new, unknown brand name, into a familiar, trusted one. It convinced consumers that the notion of buying a used car online, without seeing it – let alone test driving it – is a good idea.

Achieving that in 5 years would've been remarkable. Achieving it in 1 year is arguably unprecedented.



Watch the Case Video: [here](#)



BRONZE:
New Product
or Service
Introductions

CHAPTER 3

Bringing the Strategy and Idea to Life

KEY FINDING

Past proof of effectiveness encouraged brands to use TV in 2020 and the media buying context enabled its use by a wider set of brands

OOH also saw a rise in use in 2020 in the most effective campaigns

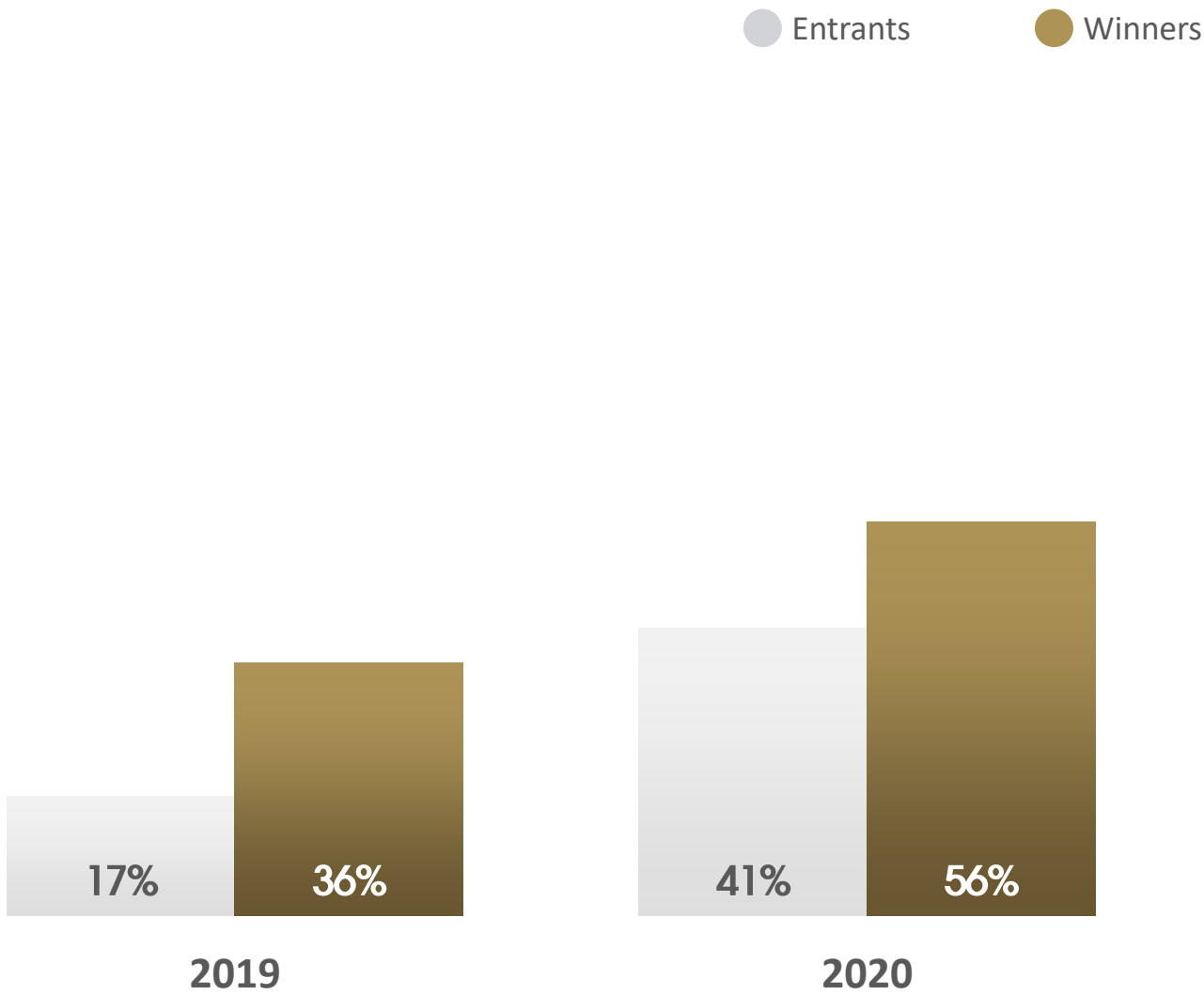
Despite people being out and about less in 2020 due to long periods of lockdown OOH was still an important element of the mix for the majority of our winners.

OOH with its ability to be both national and localised was a key component of some of our award winners. Particular examples are:

NHS Covid App: The OOH was localised by featuring the local Tiering level, helping as part of the overall campaign, to create the sense that everyone was downloading the app to protect their loved ones

Rugby League World Cup: OOH had locally tailored messaging announcing people could find the tournament ‘on your doorsteps’ and encouraged them to bring their ‘squads’ to watch the other squads participating in the tournament

OOH



Data from Effie 2020/2021 Entries, TV used as Main Touchpoint

CHAPTER 3

Bringing the Strategy and Idea to Life

KEY FINDING

OOH with its broad reach and localisation opportunity is particularly effective for campaigns that are grounded in togetherness

Facebook and Instagram are used by the most effective campaigns

For Winners, Social Media channels as primary touchpoints remained at the same level of use in 2020 as in the previous year.

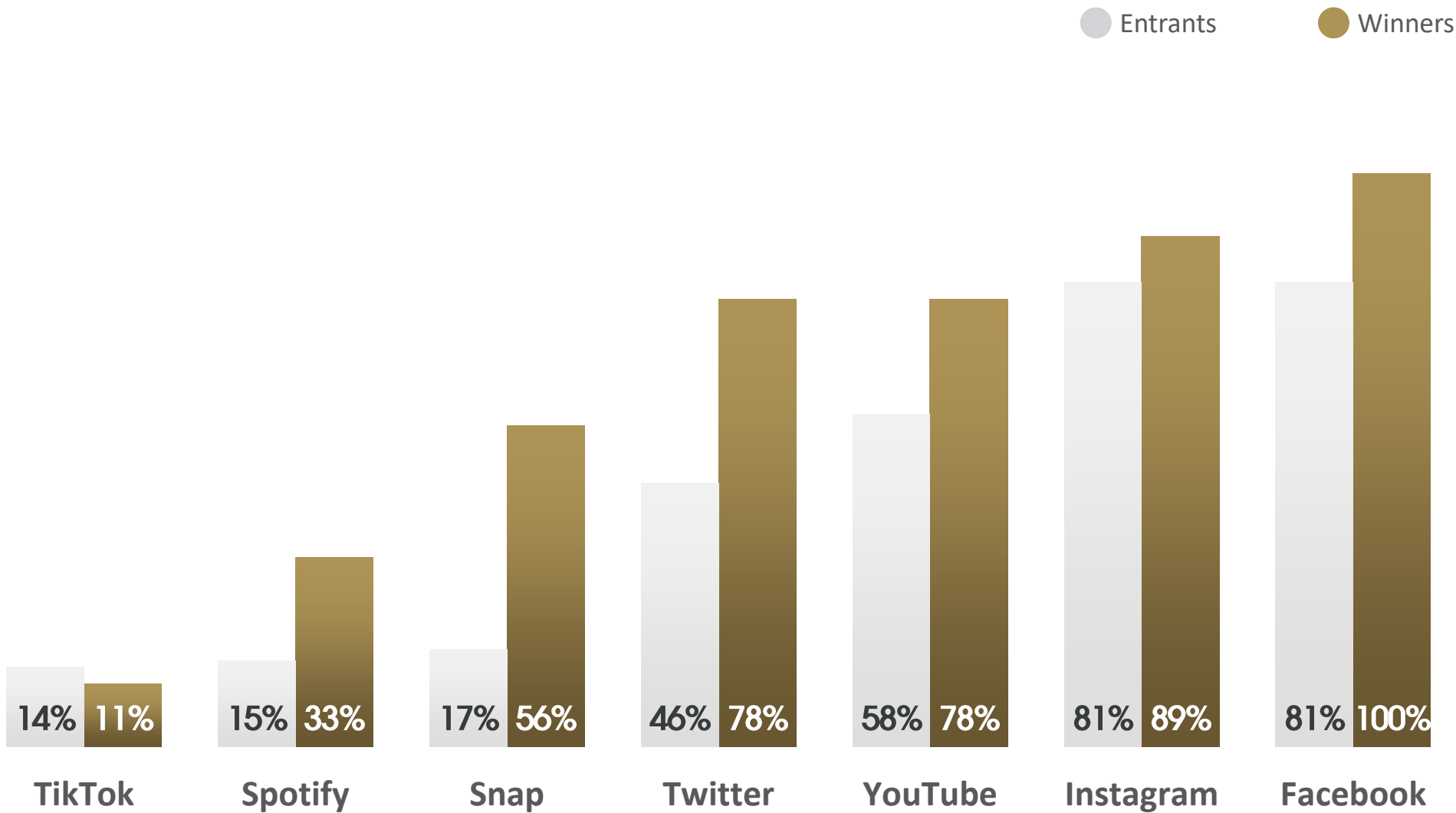
However, when we look at any use of the channel, in line with overall media choices, Winners use more social media channels than entrants.

- Winners: 5
- Entrants: 3

Facebook and Instagram are the most popular choices for all. While Twitter and YouTube also feature more often in the mix for Winners.

From the award entries it's clear that it is not just the choices that you make that lead to effectiveness, but just as important is using the right tactics for each channel and platform.

Social platform used



Data from all Effie 2020 Entries, Specific Social Platform used

CHAPTER 3

Bringing the Strategy and Idea to Life

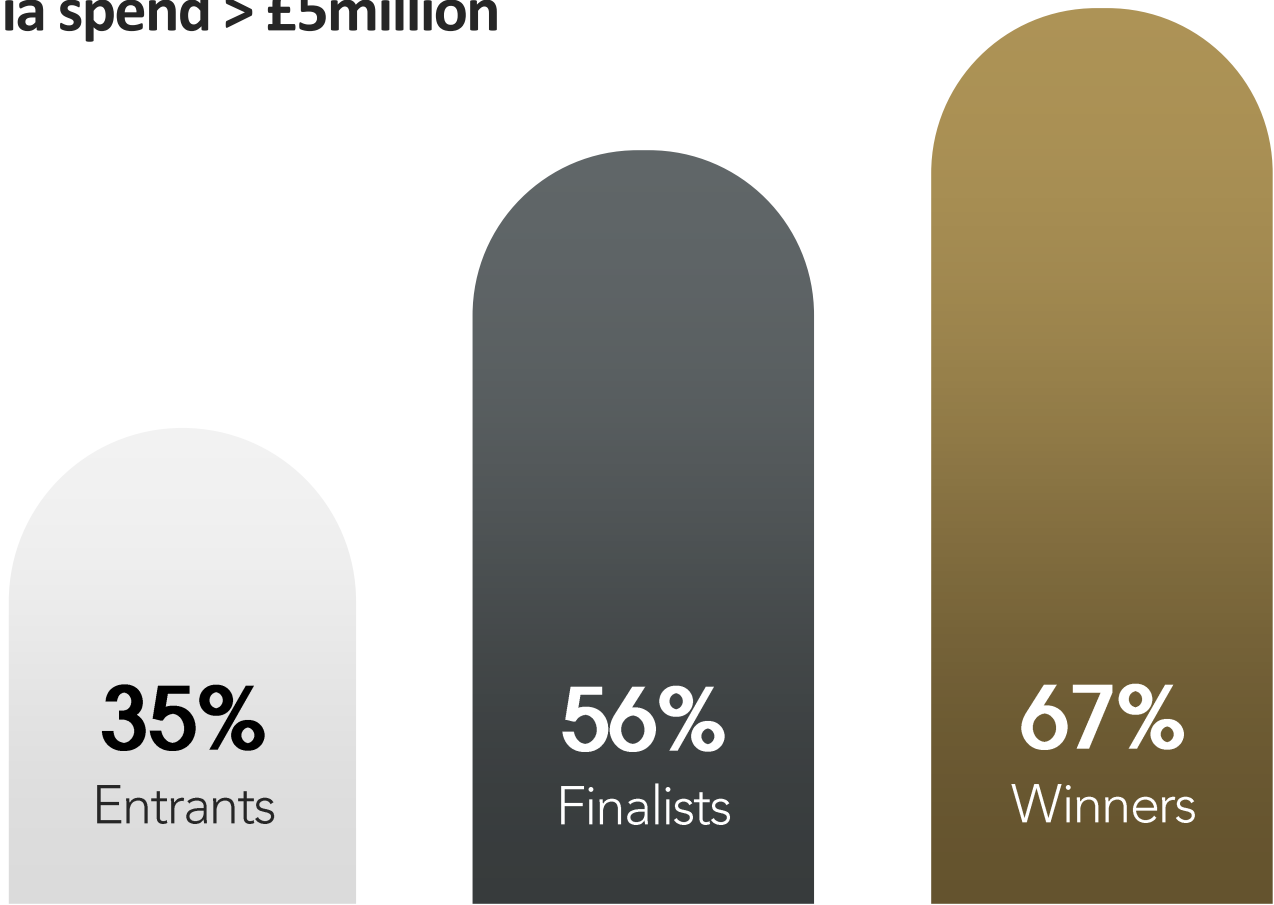
KEY FINDING

While Social Channels are often secondary touchpoints, carefully thought through specific platform use is a tactic at the heart of effectiveness

Winners tend to spend more overall but big budgets aren't the only key to success

As a result of the channel mix used by our Winners they are more likely to spend more on their campaigns when compared to finalists or entrants.
Entrants tend to have much smaller budgets than for Finalists or Winners.

Media spend > £5million



However, the remaining third of our Winners are proving that effectiveness is achievable with smaller budgets as they spend under a £1 million on their campaigns.

Winners: Media spend



Data from all Effie 2021 Entries, claimed media expenditure

Whatever your budget doing things differently is the key theme to 2020's effective campaigns

In this age of clutter, distraction and media overload, a consistent theme to the most effective campaigns (of all spend levels) is their ability to “break” conventions for marketing and communications.

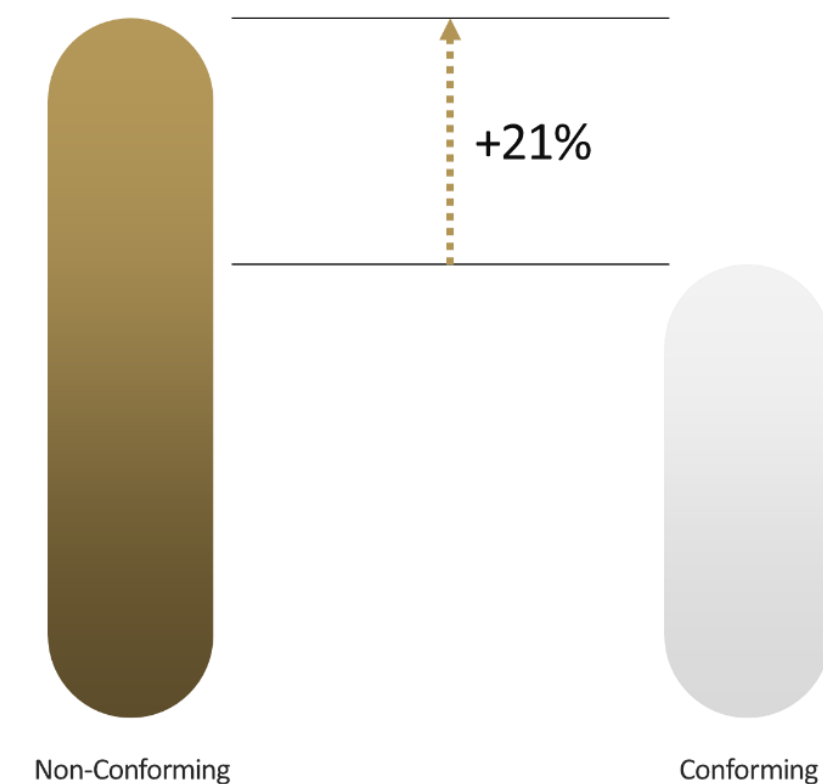
In the previous pages we have seen how some campaigns did this through their media choices. But this is also true of creative. As demonstrated by our Effie Entrants, and particularly by our Winners, breaking these ‘rules’ enables campaigns to punch above their weight and to deliver more effectively vs competition.

Why does breaking the rules work? People simply do not pay attention to advertising they have already seen, our brains screen them out. People need sufficient novelty to gain their attention.

Going outside established category ‘rules’ is more likely to generate strong Brand Attention and therefore be the cornerstone for effectiveness. This is ably demonstrated by the case of **eve sleep** (next page) who chose to partner with Channel 4 and encourage their viewers to switch off their TVs. This theme continued through other media channels, intercepting people at the moments they should go to sleep. By moving away from the category conventions of a product demo to the needs of the consumer they created a truly effective campaign.

Ipsos Best Practices: Breaking category ad conventions creates greater Brand Attention

Likelihood of top quintile database placement (Branded Attention)



Based on 2015 cases, Ipsos Creative Excellence, Database Meta-Analysis

Effie Case Study: Getting the nation to 'Switch Off'

Example of doing things differently in both creative and media

Brand/Client: eve sleep

Lead Agency: Creature, Goodstuff
Contributing Agency: Pearl Metrics, Kode, Grand Central Recording Studios

“ This paper is about how, in spite of the dual pressures of a reduced (and comparatively tiny) spend and competitive behemoths piling in on eve’s ‘sleep wellness’ positioning, eve was able to not only survive; but thrive. This paper is not about incremental change or successful testing – it’s a story of how a (currently unprofitable) young brand had to spend radically more efficiently to maintain the brand, build trust, and grow quality perceptions, traffic and revenue. How? By claiming the higher ground; By finding new ways into proven channels; By building a highly efficient creative vehicle ”

Watch the Case Video: [here](#)



CHAPTER 3

Bringing the Strategy and Idea to Life

KEY FINDING

Highly effective campaigns often have higher levels of spend

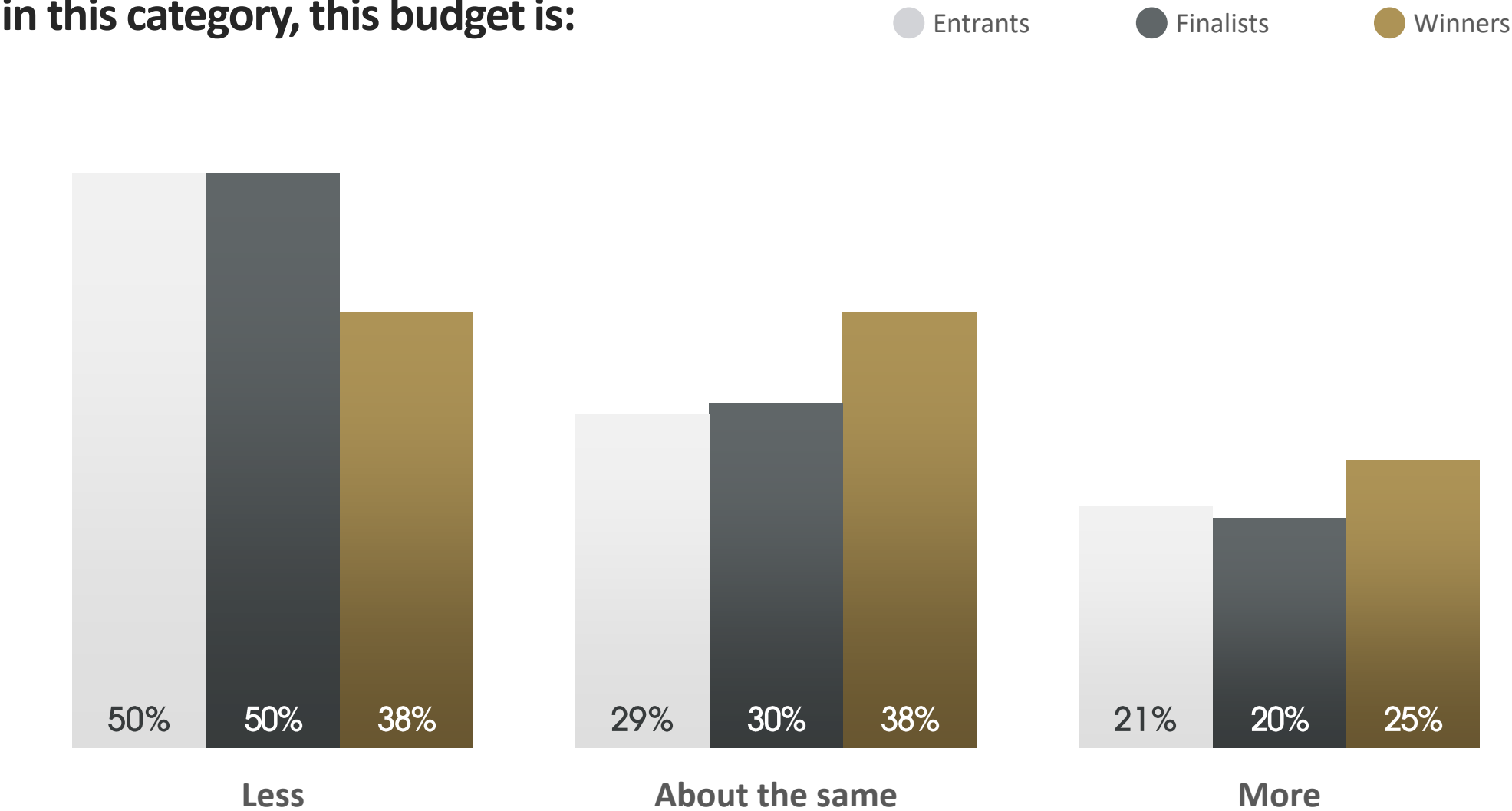
Capitalising on changing media buying environments and being creative with media choices enables smaller campaigns to be effective

Despite often having bigger budgets than others, the majority of Winners are not outspending the competition

For many of the brands submitting papers, even if they are what most would consider ‘big brands’ in their categories with big budgets, they still have less to spend than the market leader. They, therefore, need to adopt the mindset of a challenger brand.

Winners are only a little more likely than others to have more to spend than competition.

Compared to other competitors in this category, this budget is:



Data from all Effie 2021 Entries, media budget vs competition

Effie Case Study: Stealing Softness: How a kleptomaniac koala stole share in a stagnating category

Example of investing in ESOV to drive brand growth

Brand/Client: Essity UK Ltd

Lead Agency: Publicis Poke

Contributing Agency: Zenith Media, Blue Chip Marketing (UK) Ltd

“ We were a tiny 5 year old brand squaring up to a 75 year old behemoth in a low interest category that was becoming increasingly commoditised. And shoppers thought we were a "passive" copy of the much-loved brand leader - when they thought of us at all.

But we beat those odds by putting good, old-fashioned, best practice marketing principles front and centre: creating distinctive assets, investing in brand-building channels, and staying rigorously single-minded... allowing us to beat the competition at their own game. Our approach drove market-beating growth and booming brand metrics for five years straight.



Watch the Case Video: [here](#)



SILVER:
Sustained Success
- Products

CHAPTER 3

Bringing the Strategy & Idea to Life

KEY FINDING

Highly effective campaigns do not always need to outspend the competition

CHAPTER 4

Results

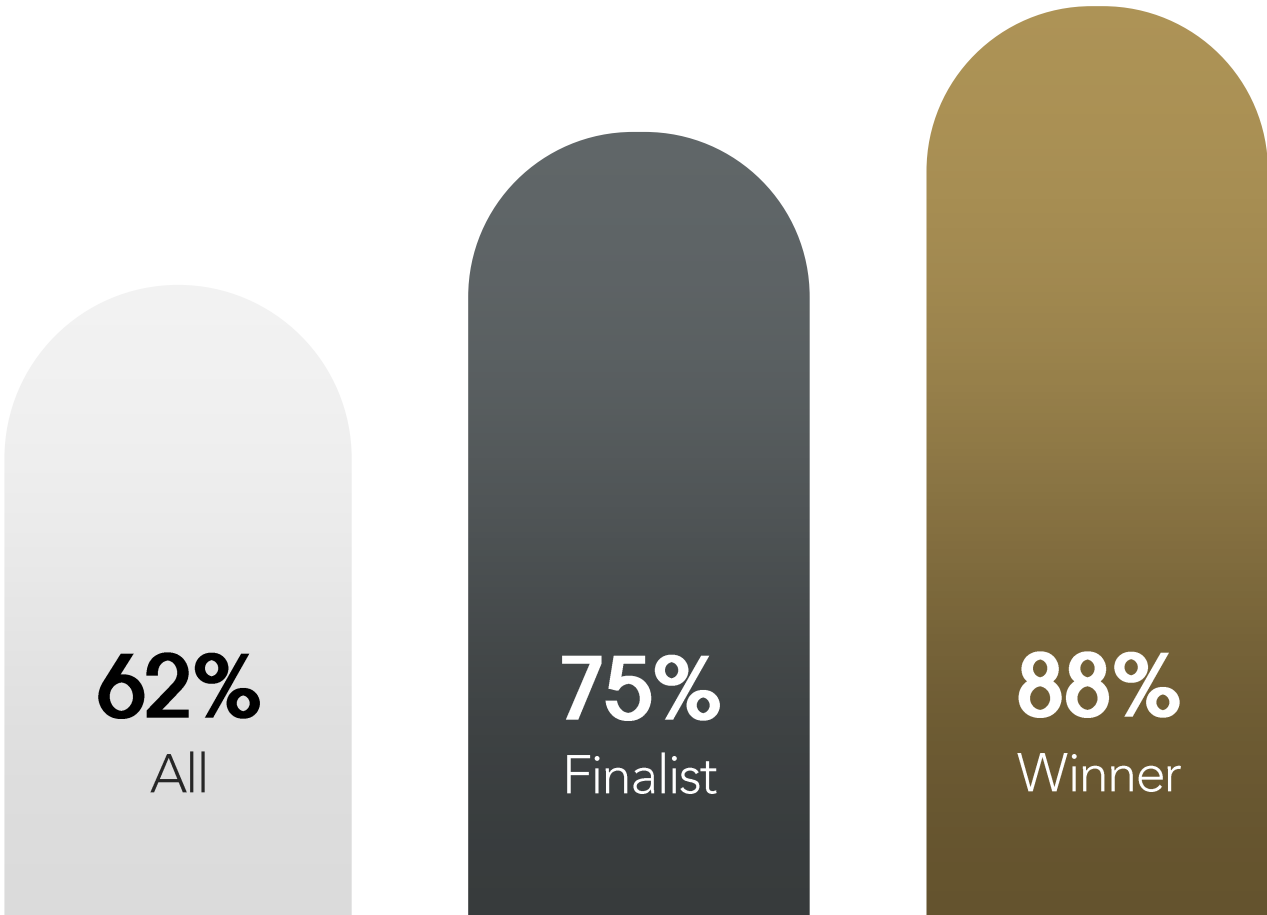
Revenue growth is most likely to be claimed by winners

Purchase type objectives were stated by all Finalists and Winners and 70% of entrants. However, Winners were more likely to show evidence of revenue growth than others.

Of course not all our Winners were concerned with revenue growth. On the next page you will see a case study for the NHS Covid App, here success is measured by the prevention of infection and death.

And following that, our Grand Prix Winner Aldi demonstrated that planning and sticking to a long-term strategy and campaign can deliver both revenue growth and market share in the longer term.

Revenue growth claimed as result of campaign



Data from all Effie 2021 Entries, claimed Results

Effie Case Study: NHS Covid-19 App Launch: Saving lives with an app

Example of using behavioural science combined with a human insight to deliver take up of the ‘product’

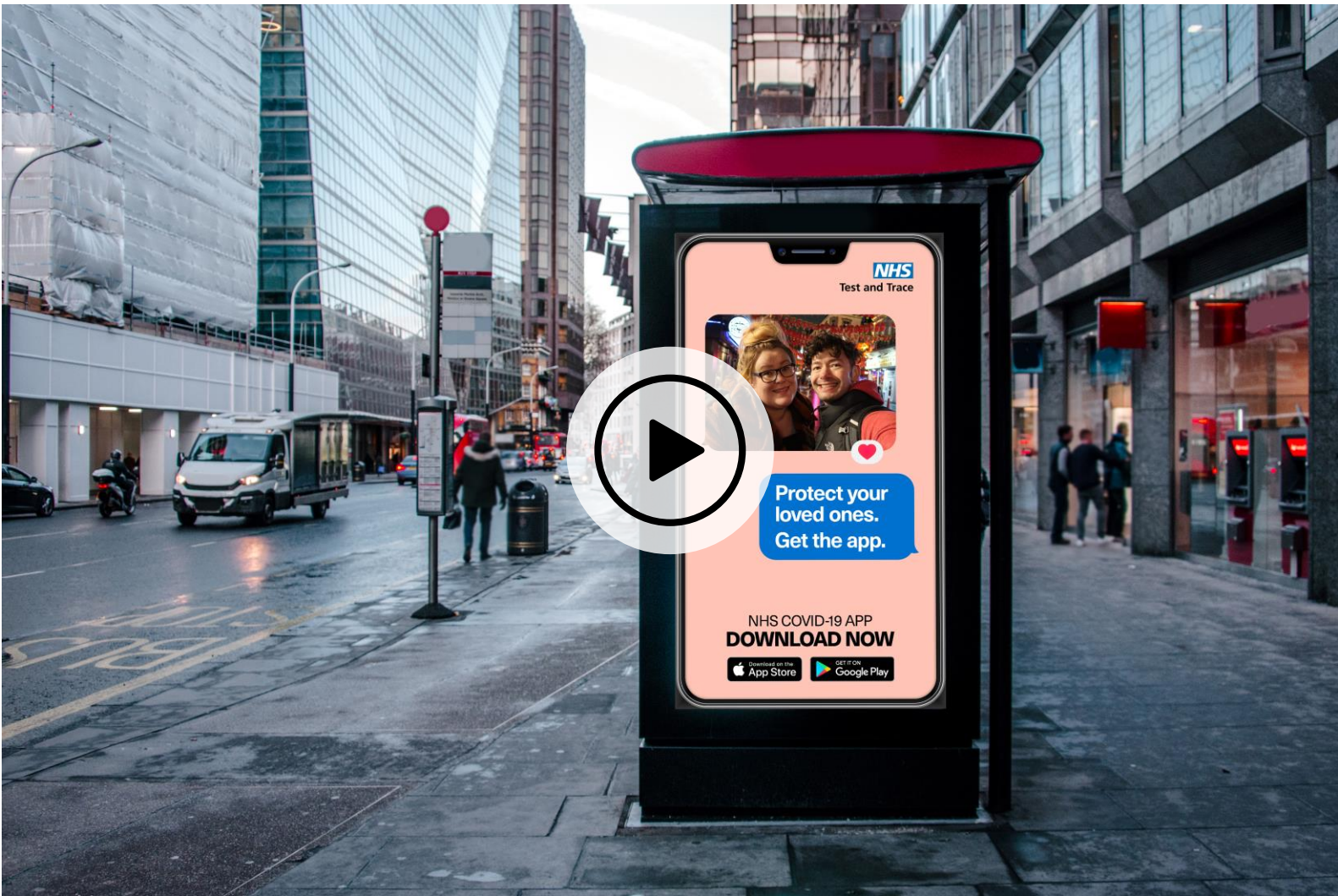
Brand/Client: Cabinet Office

Lead Agency: MullenLowe London, OMNIGOV at Manning Gottlieb OMD

Contributing Agency: MMC, Topham Guerin, 23Red, Freuds

“ It would literally have been a crying shame if the NHS Covid-19 app launch had not been successful. As ever these days, there were plenty of people happy to cast doubt on the technology & peddle conspiracy theories. Yet here was technology that could genuinely make a difference by isolating cases & preventing forward infection...as long as we could overcome the widespread negativity. We would get just one shot at the launch. By understanding people’s underlying motivation & leveraging behavioural science, we more than doubled the download level of other countries. This directly prevented 594,000 infections & 8,700 deaths. ”

Watch the Case Video: [here](#)



SILVER:
New Product
or Service
Introductions

Effie Case Study: Aldi 2010-2020: How taking an alternative path took Aldi from Shame to Pride

Example of how embracing difference and sticking with it can grow market share in the longer term

Brand/Client: Aldi UK Ltd


Lead Agency: McCann Manchester

Contributing Agency: Universal McCann Manchester

“ Aldi achieved astonishing success in the UK grocery category over ten years by taking a fresh approach to marketing communications. Uncovering a powerful truth around embracing Aldi's point of difference, rather than trying to fit in with competitors, forged the way for a bold strategy that redefined the brand and reinvented Aldi to a supermarket people became proud to shop at. Between 2010 and 2020 Aldi grew by 295% and went from being a tiny player with 2% market share to the UK's no.5, with a market share of 7.9%. Aldi became the biggest retail success story of the decade. ”


Watch the Case Video: [here](#)

I like these beans.



They make you trump.

Like brands. Only cheaper.
See our new TV ad at [aldi.co.uk](#)



Based on prices from mysupermarket.com on 02/02/11. The cheapest competitive price has been used for Meller retail. This does not include others or multi-buys. Aldi prices and packaging correct as of 02/02/11.



GRAND:
Sustained Success
- Services

CHAPTER 4

Results

KEY FINDING

Effie Winners are **more likely** to demonstrate Revenue Growth vs others

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Effie Winners are more likely to demonstrate Revenue Growth than others

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For more info on the data and findings in this report, please contact:



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