



effieAwards
South Africa



ASSOCIATION FOR
COMMUNICATION
& **ADVERTISING**



The 2025 Trends Report in
partnership with Ipsos

effie

Effectiveness comes from deliberate choices, what the campaign is trying to achieve, how strategy is orchestrated, and how ideas are brought to life.

01 Intent: The Job to Be Done

Effectiveness begins with clarity of intent.

Winning campaigns are deliberate about whether they are building awareness, driving penetration, or earning advocacy – and that this clarity shapes every decision that follows.

This **discipline around intent creates the conditions for effectiveness**, especially in an environment where budgets and attention are under pressure.

02 Orchestration: How Strategy Shows Up

Once intent is clear, effectiveness is determined by how well strategy is orchestrated across spend, channels, and formats.

This **orchestration allows campaigns to maximise impact without over-extending budgets**, proving that effectiveness is less about intensity and more about alignment.

03 Execution: Where Impact is Won or Lost

Ultimately, strategy only becomes effective when it is brought to life creatively. Execution is where campaigns either cut through or blend in, and where attention is converted into memory and action.

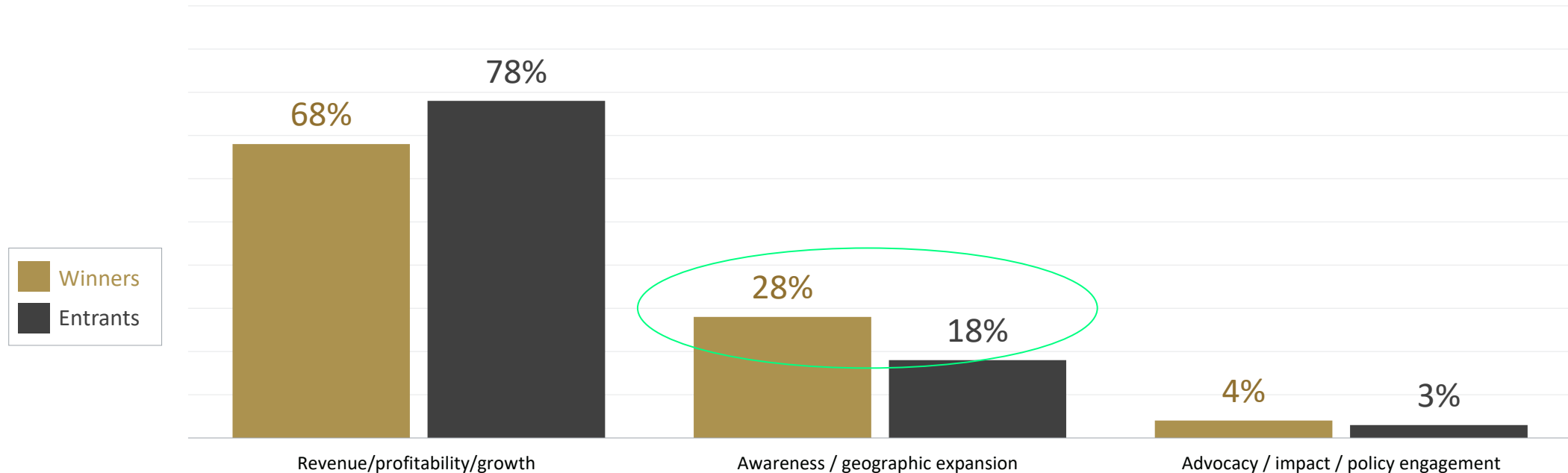
Winning campaigns consistently use creative devices – humour, emotion, drama, and distinctive style – to break category norms and earn attention in cluttered environments.

01 Intent- The Job to Be Done

How Winners Think About Growth

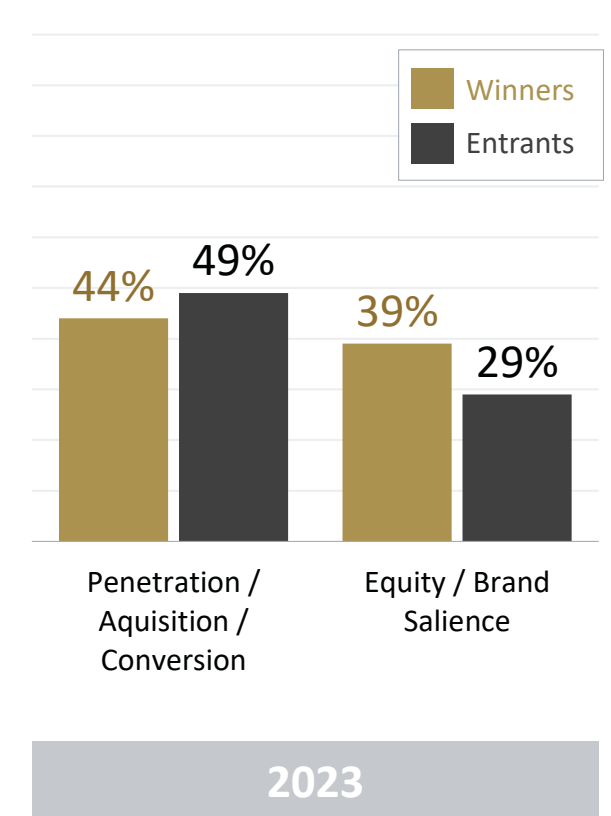
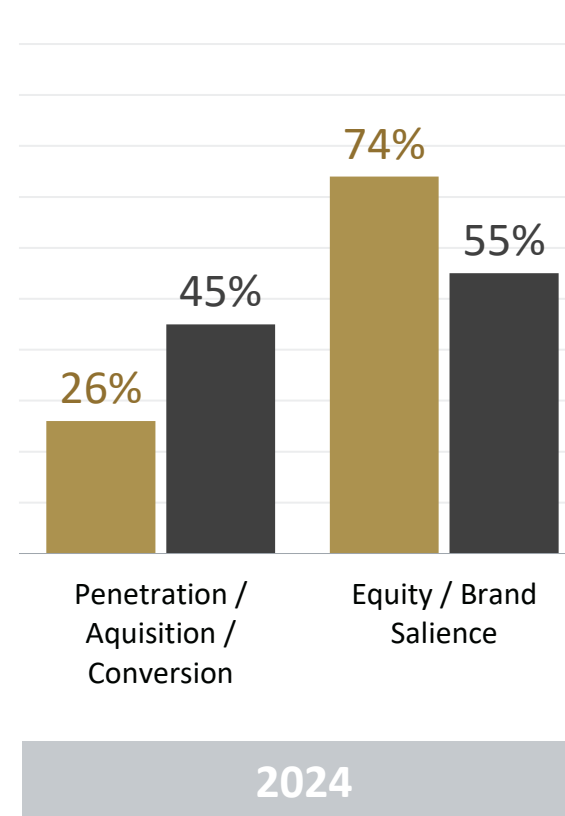
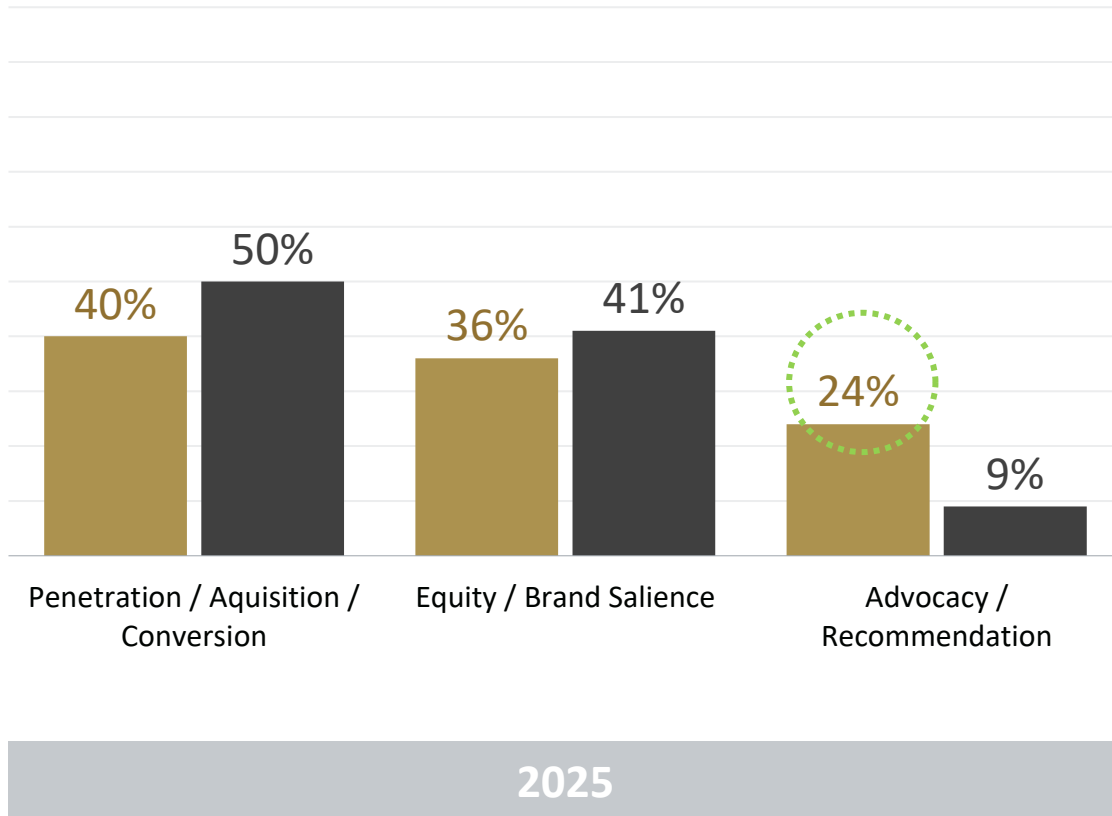
Business Objectives: Winning campaigns pair PROFIT with PRESENCE.

Both winners and entrants prioritised commercial outcomes such as revenue and profit.
However, winners were more likely to invest in awareness-building activity alongside these objectives.



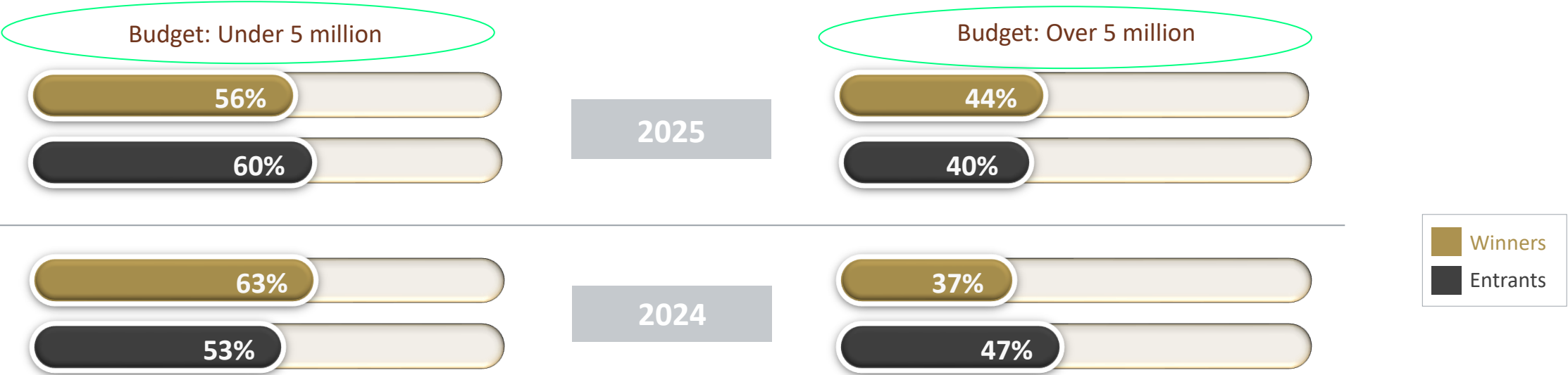
Marketing Objectives: Winners BUILD share of mind – then MONETISE it.

Winning brands sequence growth: build salience first, then drive penetration, then unlock advocacy.



Spend: It's not about spending MORE. It's about spending in the RIGHT order.

Winning brands don't outspend entrants. They out-sequence them.



Amnesty International – Faeces Ink

BRAND: Amnesty International

AGENCY: Joe Public

Situation: How to reignite public attention around illegal school pit toilets.

Bring strategy to life:

Amnesty International created a newspaper insert unlike any other, printed with ink made from real human waste collected from those very toilets. It leveraged disgust to pierce a crisis-saturated news cycle and reignite public consciousness. Released around Youth Day and a looming sanitation deadline, the insert sparked 25 earned media stories, reached over 10m people.

Result: The campaign generated unprecedented engagement, raising mass awareness with a very small budget.



SILVER: Small Budget / Non-profit



BRONZE: Social Good



BRONZE: Media Innovation-Emerging & New Channels, Existing Channels /Media

10million People reached

1:155 Media ROI

25 Earned Media stories

02 Orchestration- How Strategy Shows Up

Winners use Channels as Tools, Not Tactics

MEDIA that works: Reach. Role. Weight.

The media landscape is fragmented. Reach begins with the right mix of channels – clarity and focus make them work.

01

PRESENCE

**BE EVERYWHERE
THAT MATTERS**

Broad presence across relevant channels is table stakes.



02

PURPOSE

**GIVE EACH
CHANNEL A JOB**

Scale, storytelling, and engagement each need a clear role in driving brand impact.



03

PRIORITISATION

**WEIGHT,
DON'T DIVIDE**

Allocate resources strategically to maximise impact, rather than dividing spend evenly.

Checkers – Little Shop Goes Extra

BRAND: Checkers

AGENCY: 99cents

Situation: How to reignite excitement by adding a modern, culturally relevant twist to the fourth edition of Checkers Little Shop campaign.

Bring strategy to life: By seamlessly integrating TV, social media, in-store, and eCommerce channels, the campaign maximized reach and engagement. Utilizing influencers and a user-generated content challenge, complemented by a TikTok-inspired TV commercial and interactive retail experiences, it spurred significant participation and excitement. Iconic music and community-driven moments transformed it into a cultural sensation, appealing to nostalgic adults and young fans.

Result: The campaign generated unprecedented engagement, deepened emotional ties to the brand, and drove significant lift in participation, and sales. It transformed into cultural moment, making 'Little Shop' a coveted collectible for both nostalgic and new shoppers.



BRONZE: Omni-Channel Shopper Solution/
Commerce & Shopper

9.4%

increase in basket size – additional
purchase to qualify for minis

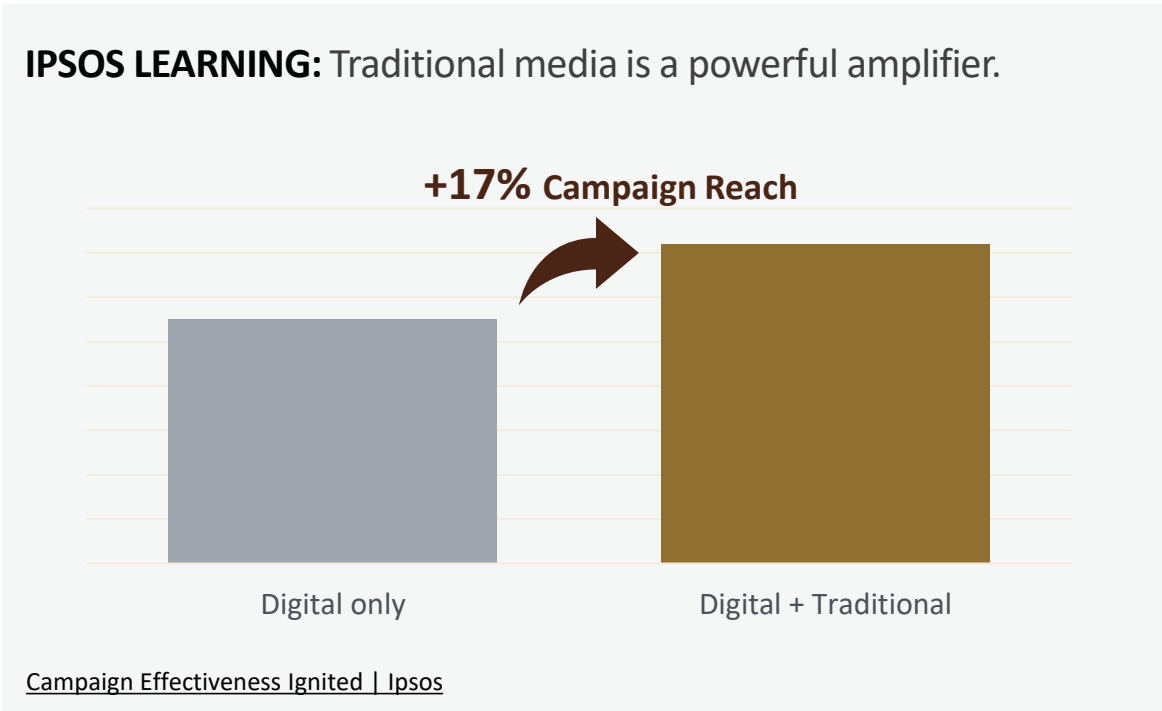
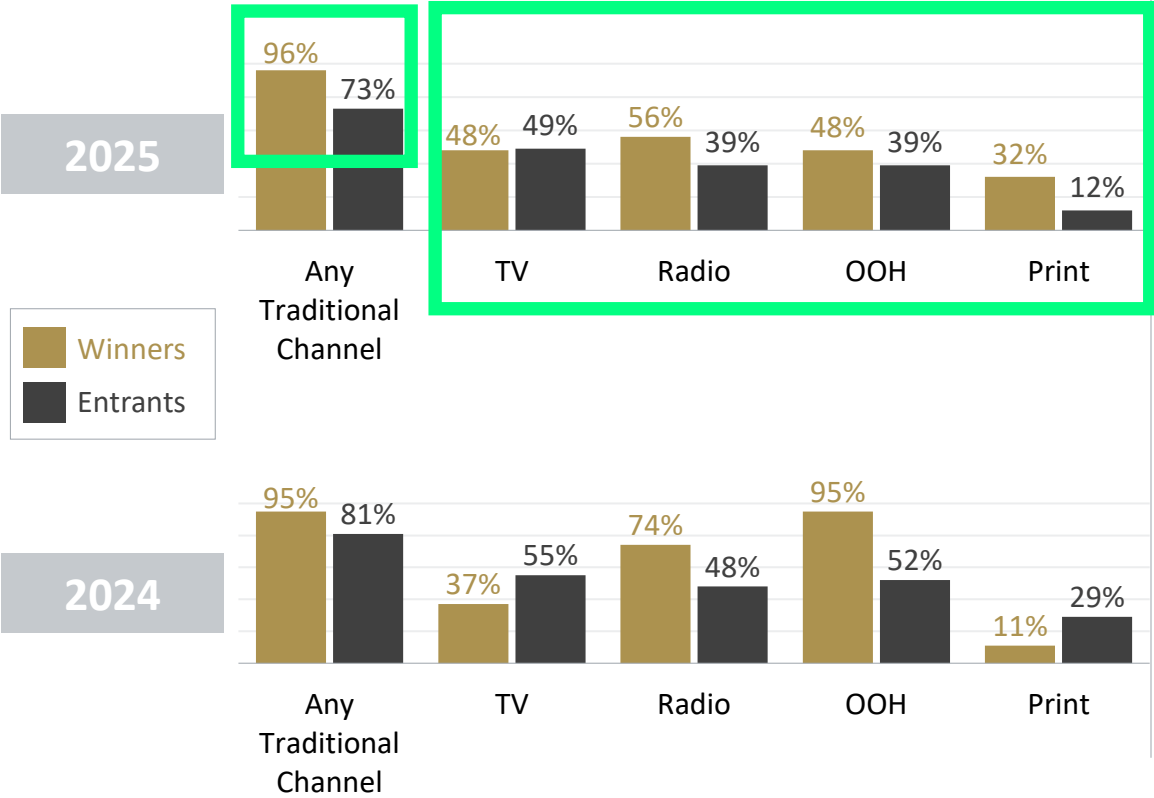
+140 000 New Customers

89.1 Million video views

90% Positive Sentiment

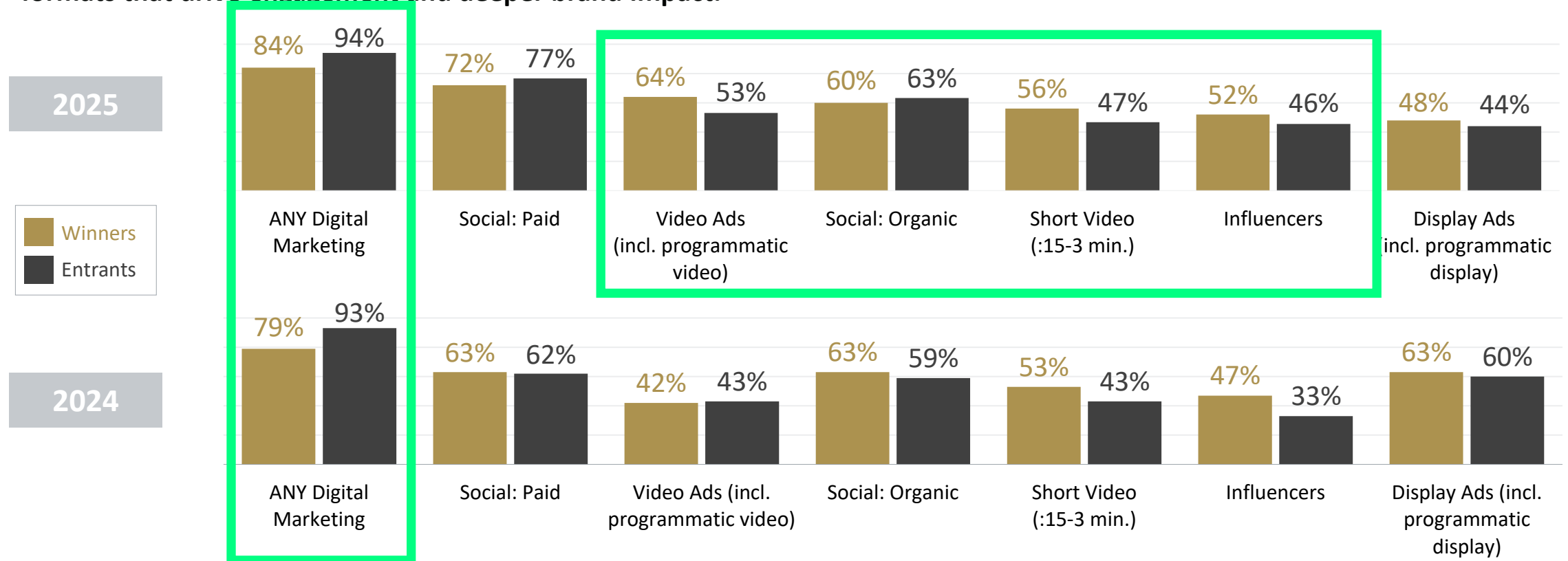
Traditional Channels: Winners ADAPT their channel mix as OBJECTIVES evolve.

Winning campaigns consistently include at least one traditional channel far more often than entrants. Beyond simply using these channels, winners adapt their channel mix to the job of the year, shifting from reach-led salience (radio, OOH) building to richer, more persuasive channels (TV) as growth deepens.



Digital Channels: Entrants do MORE digital. Winners do SMARTER digital.

Entrants chase volume across digital channels; winners focus on the formats that drive engagement and deeper brand impact.



A black and white photograph of a woman with glasses and a white lab coat, sitting at a table and pointing at a document. She is looking down at the document with a focused expression. To her right, there is a white box and some papers. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a laboratory or office setting. A large white percentage '94%' is overlaid on the left side of the image, and the text 'KNOW THE FACTS' is overlaid on the right side.

94%

KNOW
THE
FACTS

The Gates Foundation – #ForeverWena

AGENCY: Ogilvy

Situation: To overcome ineffective top-down health messaging was essential to connect with youth. The goal was to reshape attitudes around HIV testing and sexual health, through authentic, trusted approach deeply embedded in their digital world.

Bring strategy to life: The campaign crafted a credible influencer ecosystem that resonated with young audiences, be leveraging influencers to initiate genuine dialogues. Supported by on-the-ground activations, multi-platform content, and earned media the message was seamlessly integrated into platforms familiar to youth including social networks, popular TV shows, and cultural happenings. This transformed sexual health messaging into a vibrant, community-driven movement.

Result: The campaign redefined the narrative around sexual health, converting stigma into a sense of self-worth. Through Influencers driven authentic engagement, it ignited national conversations, significantly boosting awareness, participation, and trust among young audiences. By embedding the message within the digital environments youth uses, the campaign proved the powerful impact of genuine peer-led influence.



BRONZE: Influencer Marketing



BRONZE: Disease Awareness & Education:
Non-profit

500% Uplift HIV Testing

62.4M Earned Media

99% Positive Sentiment

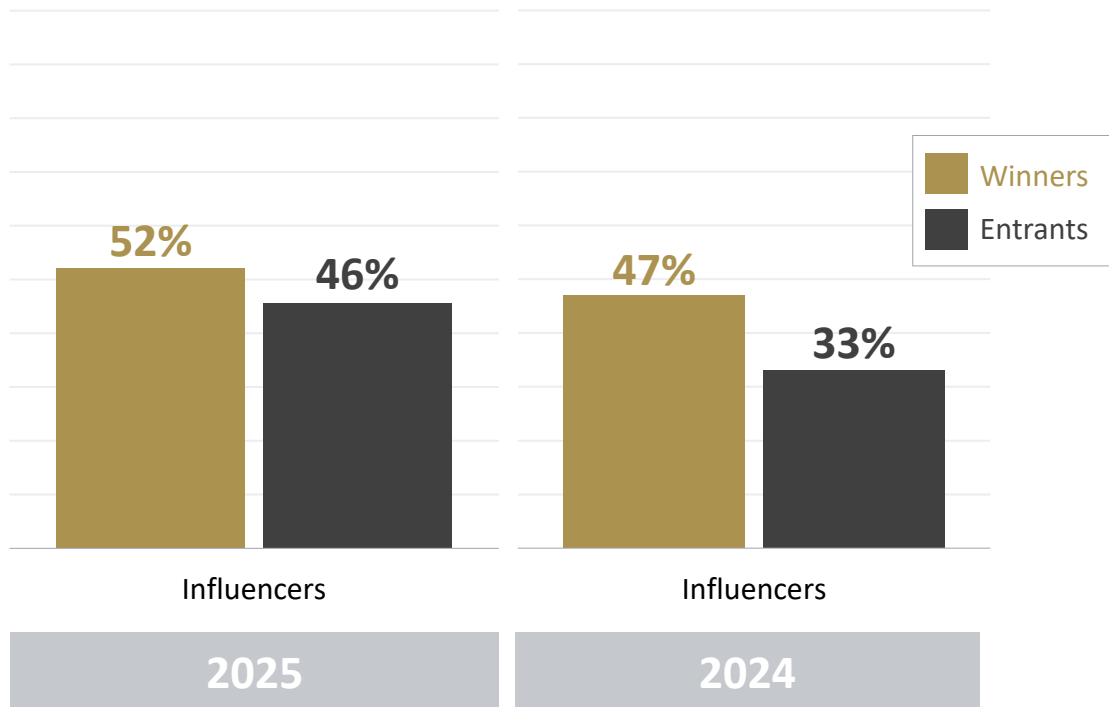
19 points Salience

19 points Difference

422 influencers were empowered to make HIV prevention aspirational rather than clinical

Influencers: Star power can HELP – or DISTRACT.

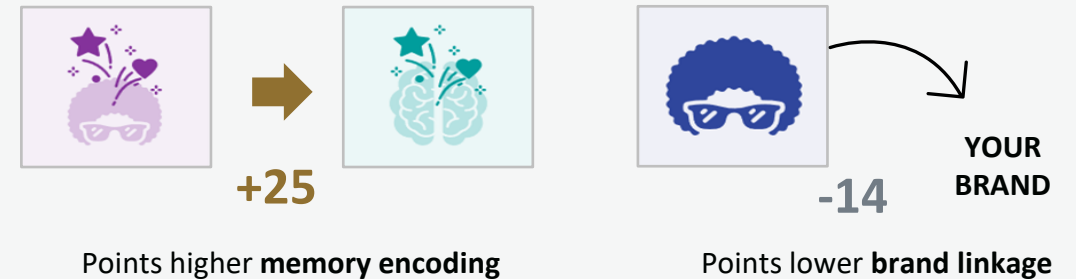
Influencer marketing has grown – but faster among entrants – reflecting broader platform and cultural trends.



IPSOS LEARNING

While ads featuring well-known influencers are more memorable ...

... their star power can overshadow your brand



Influencer Marketing: A tool with Midas touch

03 Execution: Where Impact is Lost or Won

How winners make the creative work harder

When CREATIVE does the heavy lifting: Attention. Brand. Action.

Great campaigns succeed because they navigate today's challenges. To be effective, creative must:

01

GET NOTICED

BREAKTHROUGH

Grab attention in a crowded media landscape so the ad is seen and remembered..

02

CONNECT TO THE BRAND

BRAND ASSOCIATION

Make the brand unmistakable and meaningful, linking creative impact directly to the brand identity.

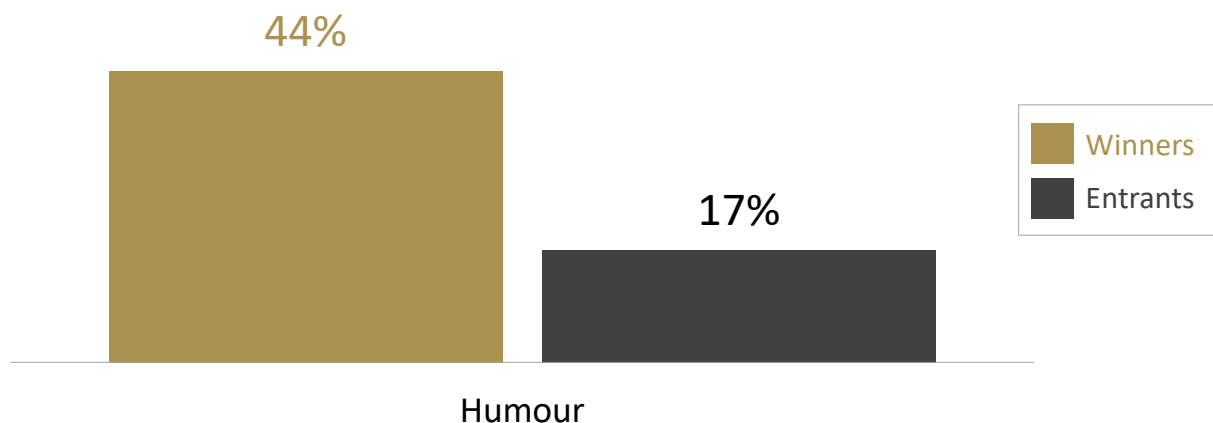
03

ELICIT A RESPONSE/ TRIGGER BRAND IMPACT

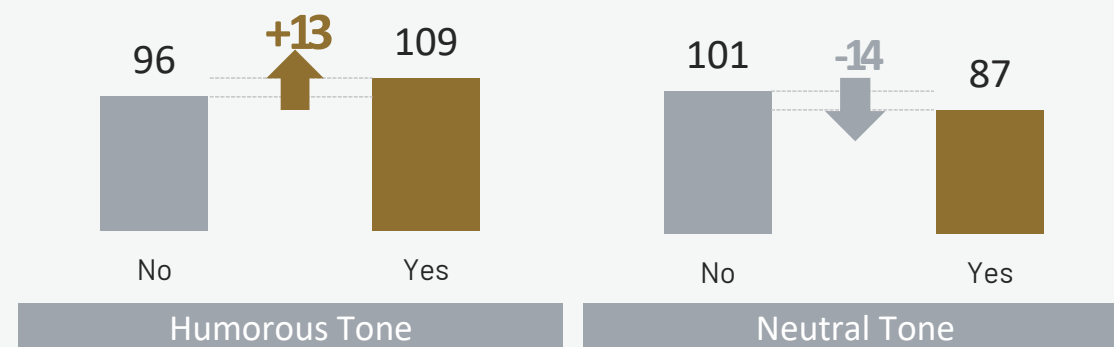
Drive consumers to think, feel, or act differently in ways that strengthen the brand or influence behaviour.

Humour: Laughter earns ATTENTION.

Humour doesn't guarantee effectiveness – but it earns the chance to be effective.
It is a powerful creative tool, increasing attention, enjoyment, and memorability.
But its effectiveness depends on how tightly it is linked to the brand and message.



IPSOS LEARNING: Breakthrough Index



Based on Ipsos Creative Excellence Database Meta-Analysis

3 DAYS TO



2024 ELECTIONS

**RAMAPHOSA: WE WILL CONTINUE
WORKING TO END LOAD-SHEDDING**



17:02 | IR TOMORROW'S GRAN PREMI DE CATALUNYA | GRIQUAS TROUNCE PUMAS 46-24 TO CLAIM THE INAUGU

MR D— How MR D got SA's vote of approval

AGENCY: M+C Saatchi Abel

Situation: In South Africa's hotly contested election with 350 plus parties all promising 'delivery' Mr D seized the moment to prove who delivers.

Bring strategy to life: Instead of avoiding the tension of national elections, Mr D leaned in- using wit and cultural fluency to tap into political fatigue and subvert the noise. With a single, powerful idea, "We deliver to all parties" the brand hijacked election media spaces, sparked organic engagement, inspired earned media, and drew other brands into the campaign. The campaign is about smart cultural timings, satire, collaboration, and brand-led humour that positioned Mr D as the only brand actually delivering on its promises.

Result: Rather than add to the political noise, the brand highjacked the moment, raising purchase intent, public and media interest. Generating 27 million earned impression, drove positive sentiment, demonstrating that a single-minded idea can power a brand to win when it matters most.



BRONZE: Timely Opportunity

BRONZE: Current Events

+16% Lift in purchase intent

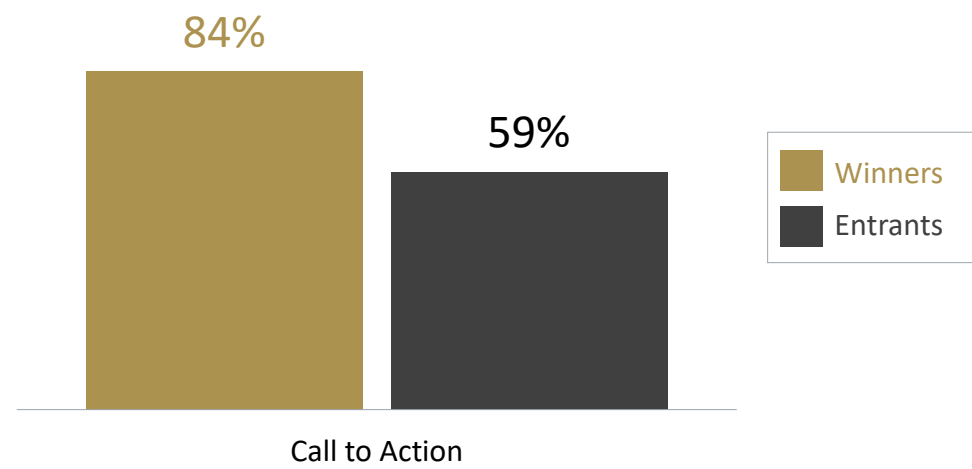
+104% Sales Surge

27million Earned Impressions

+97% Positive Sentiment

Call to Action: Attention is earned. ACTION IS PROMPTED.

Winning campaigns are far more likely to include a clear call to action. Effectiveness isn't just about creating attention or emotion, but about clearly signalling what the audience should do next.



City Lodge – “SOS”

Turn post-arrival panic into conversion by building an emergency accommodation platform, letting guests geo-locate their nearest City Lodge in real-time and book discounted stays instantly.

-  **GRAND EFFIE:**
Travel & Insurance
-  **GOLD:**
Travel & Tourism
-  **SILVER:**
Marketing Disruptors
-  **SILVER:** Media/ Innovation-
Emerging
& New Channels,
Channels/Media



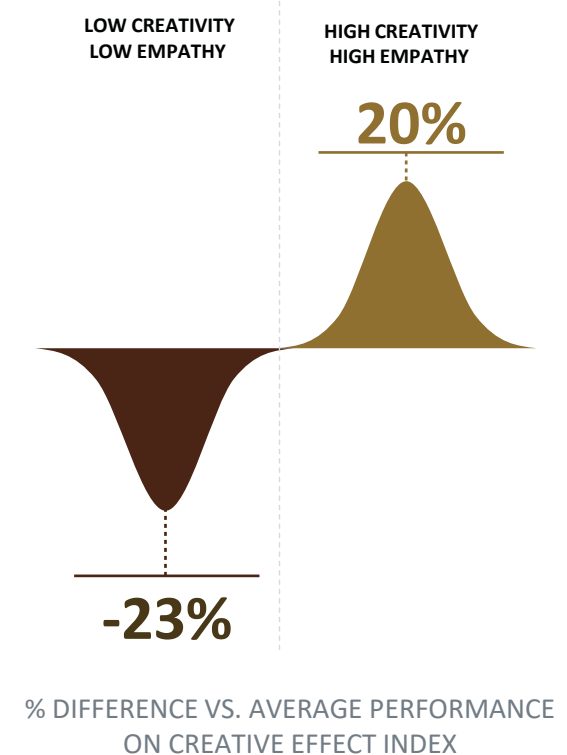
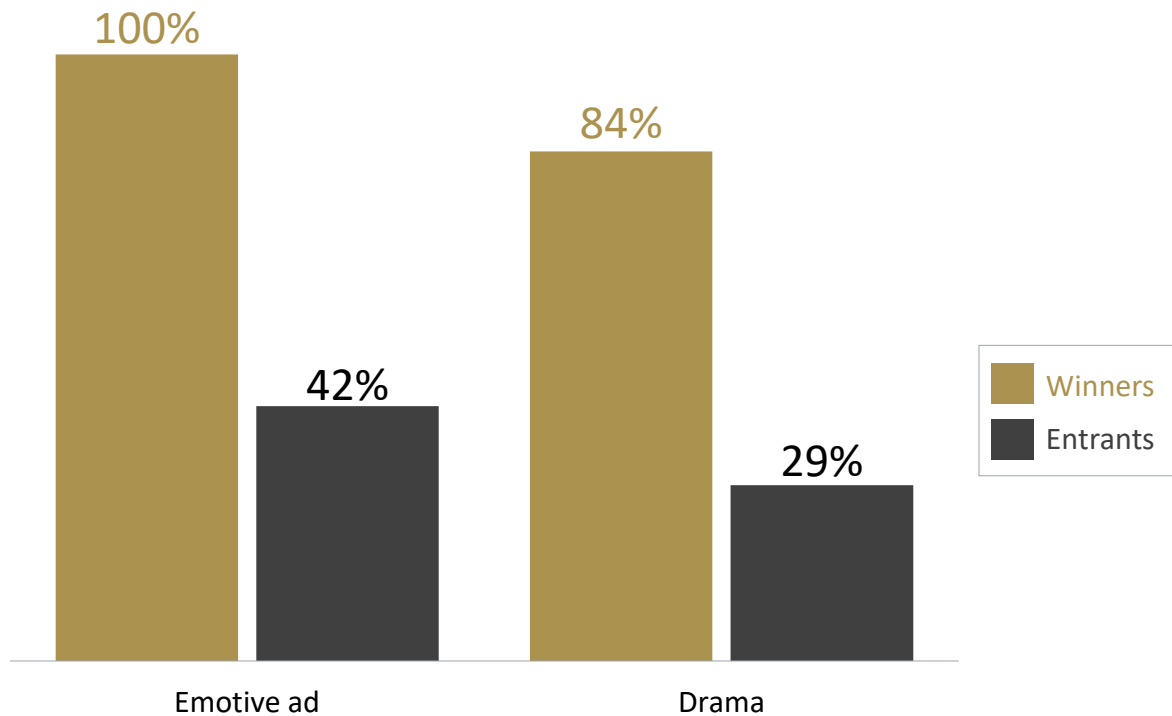
[City Lodge Save Our Stays - YouTube](#)

76.6% Hotel occupancy

- 88:1 ROI**
- 74.66% + Organic search increase**
- 62%+ Positive Brand Sentiment**
- 46%+ Increase in Spontaneous Brand Recall**

Emotive & dramatic storytelling: EMOTION makes the BRAND matter.

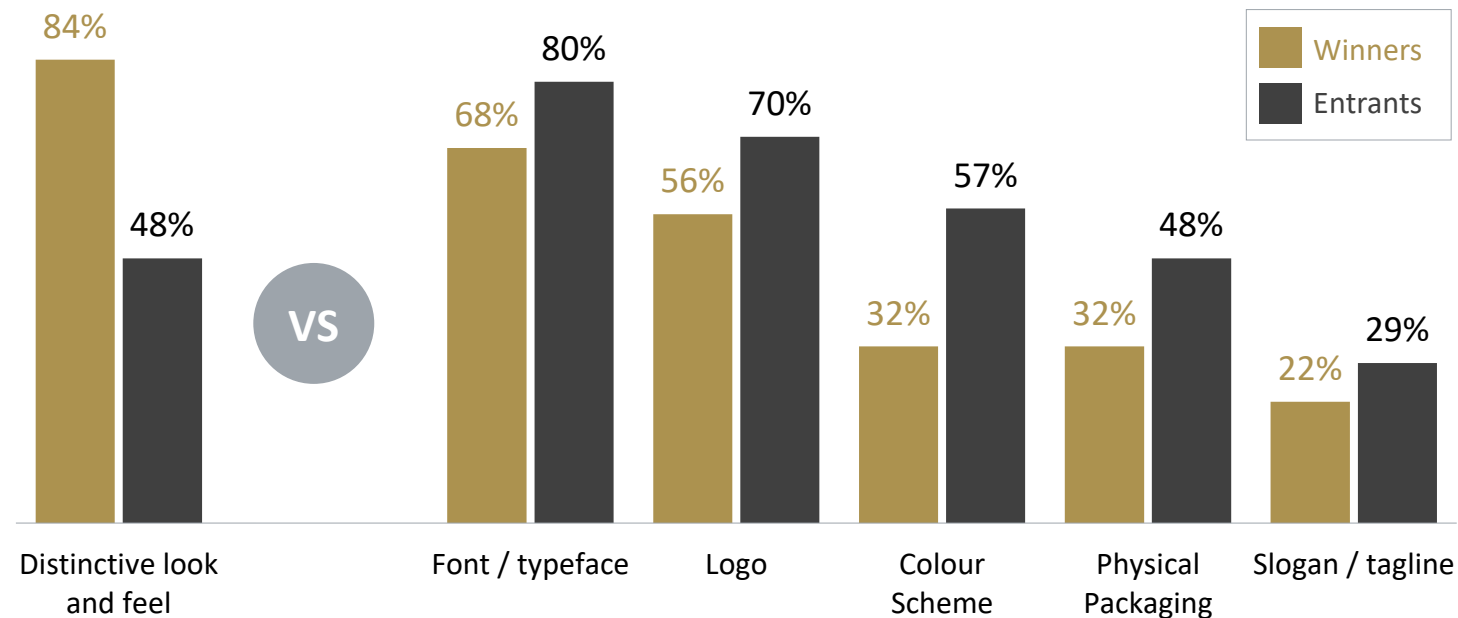
Dramatic storytelling increases memorability and long-term impact. Emotional engagement supports both brand-building and behavioural response.



Source: Ipsos Global Ad Testing Meta-Analysis (n=1,734 cases)

Distinctiveness: Capture attention and Make the BRAND UNMISTAKABLE.

Recognition alone isn't enough. *Ideas* make the brand unmistakable. Entrants make more visible use of distinctive brand assets across logos, colours, fonts, and packaging. Winning campaigns, by contrast, rely less on asset-heavy branding and more on creative ideas, storytelling, and execution to build distinctiveness and meaning.



Unique stories are

+103%

more likely to drive
attention potential

Stories which make the
brand different are

+84%

more likely to
drive brand relation

Source: Ipsos Global Ad Testing Meta-Analysis (n=1,734 cases)

Americans spend \$12 billion
on Halloween in 2023

BBC

How effectiveness is really built

Winning isn't about doing more. It's about doing the right things, in the right order, for the right job, every time. Effectiveness comes from combining intent, scale, channel purpose, and creative execution – not just doing more.

01

Intent before tactics

Winning campaigns start with a clear job to do – building salience, driving penetration, or earning advocacy – and let that intent shape spend, channels, formats, and creative choices.

02

Balance scale with depth

Winners secure broad reach and repetition first, then layer in richer, more persuasive formats to move people down the funnel – from awareness to action to advocacy.

03

Use channels with purpose

Effectiveness doesn't come from being everywhere. Winners assign clear roles to channels, anchor on reliable platforms, and adapt their mix as objectives evolve.

04

Make creative do the heavy lifting

Humour, emotion, drama, distinctive look and feel, and a clear CTA work together to cut through clutter, break category norms, and convert attention into behaviour.

