

# **effie** AWARDS

ASIA PACIFIC



**writing a  
successful entry**

Awarding Ideas That Work.®

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# strategic communications challenge & objectives

The definition of the Strategic Communications Challenge is the glue that shapes the other elements of the case. The Strategic Communications Challenge should be clearly understood. Elements are assessed for both suitability and ambitiousness within the framework of the Strategic Communications Challenge.

How did each area relate to the state objectives and were the objectives fully explained? Entrants should detail what objectives they had and why they are significant in the context of their situation. If the entrant did not have objectives upfront or they were open-objectives, they should explain this. Judges consistently state that they can tell when objectives have been retrofitted and down score entries because of this.

- Provide context about the category, marketplace, company, competitive environment, and the degree of difficulty of this challenge. Lack of context is one of the most common judge complaints.
- Who is the audience you are trying to reach? Describe their attitudes, behaviours, culture, etc. Why are they your target?
- Explain why your objectives are significant for your brand. Provide prior year benchmarks when available.

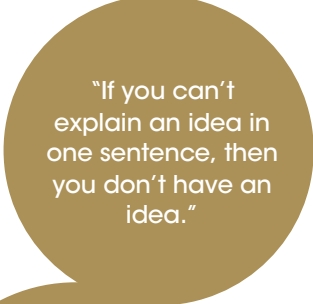
"If the Strategic Challenge section was weak, it weakened the entire entry because the context wasn't there to understand how big the idea was, or how profound the results were. After reviewing these entries today, it's apparent that this section is key to a strong entry."

"The biggest weakness was in setting and rationalising objectives. Goals were cited without any basis for why they should be at a particular level – no context of previous performance, competitive, relationship to business objectives, etc."


# Idea

Judges evaluate how inventive and effective the idea and strategy are in meeting the Strategic Communications Challenge and how closely the Idea, Strategy and Results address the Challenge.

- Share your insight and how it originated. What research was done that resulted in the insight or awareness of opportunity or revised/validated it after the fact?
- Did you adapt your strategy as a result of new things learned in the field?
- Explain how the big idea addressed the challenge.
- Remember to state your answer to this question in one sentence. This is not your tag line - it is the core idea that drove your effort and led to your results.



"If you can't explain an idea in one sentence, then you don't have an idea."



"Clearly explain how you arrived at your insight and why it's relevant to your marketing challenge."

## bringing the idea to life

Judges are looking to see why you chose specific media channels – how do they relate to your strategy and audience? Is the creative work effective? Does it address your objectives? Entrants should articulate their **media and creative** strategy.

- Explain why you selected the media channels – why were these right for your audience and idea?
- Tie your insights and strategic challenge into your communications strategy.
- Did your communications change over time? Explain how.
- Explain the effect of the other marketing components that were active during the time of your campaign/effort.

“Don’t waste time in your video retelling what you have already presented in the written entry. Use the video to show the depth and breadth of how you brought the idea to life.”

### Paid Media Expenditure

Paid media expenditures (purchased and donated), not including agency fees or production costs, for the effort describe in this entry. Given the ‘spirit’ of this question use your judgement on what constitutes fees, production and the broad span that covers media – from donated space to activation cost.

- **Traditional and non-traditional paid media.** Examples: purchase of a TV spot, purchase of a mobile ad, etc.
- **Out-of-pocket activation cost.** Examples: for something like an event, what did it cost of have the pop-up store? What did it cost to buy the key search terms on Google?
- **Value of donated media.** Example: if you are a film festival, did a sponsor give you 2 hours worth of free TV ad time? Estimated what it would have cost you if you had paid for it.

“Tie the communications strategy directly back to objectives and insights. Without that, it’s just a media plan, not a communications strategy.”



# bringing the idea to life

## Owned Media and Sponsorship

- **Any owned media.** Examples: company owned real-estate, either physical or digital, that acted as communication channels for case content – e.g. corporate website/ social media platforms, packaging, branded store, fleet of buses, etc.
- **Any sponsorships that provided communications benefits.** Example: As part of a sponsorship of the tennis finals, I received free ad space for my logo during primetime.

Only the integral elements of your communications strategy need to be displayed on the Creative Materials – either the Creative Showcase in PDF or the 3-min Creative Video. If you talk about how important a channel was to your strategy, do not leave it out from Creative Materials – this will cause judges to wonder if you were trying to hid something by leaving it out.

“Explain the media strategy. Entrants mentioned TV and print ads but didn’t always mention where they ran and how they appealed to the target.”

## results

**Judges are looking for direct correlations between real objects and results.** (For example, if the objective is to improve brand awareness, the proof cannot be an increase in sales.)

If you achieved additional results, explain what they were and why they are significant. If you did not achieve a particular objective, explain this.

Do not leave judges any unanswered questions or a sense that the situation you set up was not the real situation you actually faced.

"The strongest cases immediately and overly tied back to objectives."

"Results are critical. Show how your results tie back to the challenge and objective, and focus on how the big idea drove these results specifically."

Make a compelling argument why the communications is linked to the results achieved rather than a different factor and make a compelling argument regarding why the results you achieved are significant.

Entrants must demonstrate how they met or exceeded objectives using quantitative and behavioural metrics or other measurement tools.

**Entrants should provide context - what is the industry norm? What were the pre and post measures?** Entries range from small cases in regional markets to nationwide blitzes. Judges take into account the environment in which each case exists. **It is important to include category context as judges may not be aware of your particular category.** (For example, a small percentage move in a highly-segmented, high volume category is more difficult to achieve than a large percentage change in a small, less competitive or non-competitive category.)

"Anticipate objections/ questions and address them. Exhaustively eliminate variables. Prove your work led to your results."

## results

Likewise, a large sales increase for a product that has never advertised before might be less impressive than a smaller sales increase for a product that has no budget increase but changed its marketing communications strategy.

- Restate your objectives/KPIs in the results section so judges can easily reference this information. Provide context with historical data. Industry benchmarks, competitors, etc.
- Retrofitting your objectives in on of the most common judge complaints.
- For confidential information, proof of performance may be indexed if desired.
- If you cannot provide certain business results, explain why you cannot or why they are less important. Think through creative and meaningful ways to present the significance of the results you cannot share. For example, the results achieved were the equivalent of opening a new 200,00 sq. foot store in that market.
- Explain why the results you are presenting are important. How did the results tie together and impact the brand and business?
- Explain how you know it was your marketing efforts that led to the results.
- Eliminate other factors in the marketplace that could have contributed to your success. Judges value honesty.
- Including results after the qualifying period will result in disqualification.
- Entrants must source all data.

**Contact the APAC Effie Team for any questions!**

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