



EFFIE 2021

Entry guide

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Scoring & Judging
Overview

Scoring Section 3:
Bringing the Idea to Life

Top Entry Tips

Scoring Section 4: Results

Scoring Section 1:
Challenge, Context &
Objectives

Advice from Specialty
Juries

Shopper Marketing

Positive Change

Scoring Section 2: Insights
& Strategic Idea

SCORING

Judges are asked to evaluate specific criteria in scoring a case's overall effectiveness, and to provide separate scores analyzing specific attributes on the following:

Challenge, Context & Objectives	23.3%
Insights & Strategic Idea	23.3%
Bringing the Idea to Life	23.3%
Results	30%

The judges' scores determine which entries become finalists and which finalists are awarded a Gold, Silver or Bronze Effie. Each level – Gold, Silver, Bronze, finalist – has a minimum score required in order to be eligible for advancement. It is possible that a category may produce one, two, three or four winners of any level or perhaps no winners at all.

JUDGING PROCESS



Judges review ~10 entries in a judging day. Clear, concise, and cohesive entries stand out. Tell a story, linking each section of the entry form to the next. As you write, think about how you can streamline your case into an easy read for the judges.



Judges will be looking at your case with a critical eye. Think through questions they may have and address them in your case.



Judges are matched with cases that do not prove to be conflicts of interest – judges cannot score cases from a brand they work on or a competitor of that brand. It is important to provide clear context for the brand's industry, as judges may not be aware of category nuances. Limit industry jargon & define any industry terms.

Two Phases of Judging

- ✓ The written case is reviewed before the creative work.
- ✓ Judges score each case individually.
- ✓ Judges provide written feedback for each case.

TOP ENTRY TIPS

1. “Start with the **executive summary** before you try to write individual sections. Get your overall story really strong, crisp, clear, and inspiring.”
2. “Be sure to provide **context**; most judges don’t know your category or what success looks like.”
3. “**Concise written entries stand out**. They are not only refreshing - they encourage high marks.”
4. “The entrants who build their cases from a place of **honesty, authenticity and simplicity** vs. marketing jargon were really the strongest.”
5. “Ensure that the ‘insights’ somehow tie to a human behavior. **A data point is not an insight**, it’s what the data point means to your brand, target or audience that makes it an insight.”

TOP ENTRY TIPS

6. “Remember that communications strategies include both creative and media strategies not just tactics.”

7. “Make sure your creative reel doesn’t just reiterate what you said in your entry. Use it to complement that information.”

8. “Connect results to objectives very clearly. Don’t try to fake it and write objectives to meet existing results. We can tell and will ding you for it.”

9. “Advertising principles should apply to case studies too: write them in a way that **engages judges**, focus on how your campaign helped achieve your brand's objectives and don't over-complicate it. Less is more!”

10. “Check for grammar, typos, math and inconsistencies.”

TOP ENTRY TIPS

BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY...

- ❖ Ask a strong writer or editor to review your case for spelling, grammar, logic flow errors, mathematical miscalculations, etc.
- ❖ Review the entry to ensure it speaks to the entered Effie category.
- ❖ Share the case with someone who doesn't work on the brand, or even in the industry. If the case makes sense to someone who doesn't work in marketing, it is probably a good case.
- ❖ Have senior team members on both the client and agency side review the case to ensure it is well-rounded in context and personality.
- ❖ Think about what the judges may be skeptical of & address it.
- ❖ Review formatting requirements & reasons for disqualification.
- ❖ Ensure all data throughout the entry includes a specific, verifiable source.

JUDGE ADVICE: "Write your entry not for a member of your team but for someone who knows absolutely nothing about your category, client, or client's business problems. Take special care to answer all questions (and sub-bullets therein), as they were designed to be answered in that manner for a reason."

TOP ENTRY TIPS

ENTERING MULTIPLE CATEGORIES

Review the definition of the category you are entering to ensure your case is eligible. Some categories require specific information to be included in your entry and judges will deduct points if this information is not included. If you are unsure of your category, review past winning cases or reach out to Effie with your concerns.

Entrants can submit an effort into a maximum of 4 categories, with no more than 1 Product/Service category and no more than 3 Specialty Categories. You are not required to enter a product/service category – you may enter four specialty categories instead.

When entering multiple categories, ensure each submission speaks to the entered category. Judges evaluate effectiveness within the context of the category definition, so it is important that you clearly articulate your effectiveness in that category.

JUDGE ADVICE: “Craft your entry per category, instead of creating one case that fits all.”

ENTRY GUIDANCE

Challenge,
Context &
Objectives

23.3%

Insights &
Strategic Idea

23.3%

Bringing the Idea
to Life

23.3%

Results

30%

100%

SCORING SECTION 1:

CHALLENGE, CONTEXT & OBJECTIVES

This scoring section is the glue that shapes the other elements of the case. Elements are assessed for both suitability and ambitiousness within the framework of the strategic communications challenge.

Keep in mind that judges are looking for:

- ❖ Context that clearly frames the situation and the category, especially what success looks like in that particular category.
- ❖ Clear objectives & KPIs that relate to the business challenge, and are not retrofitted to match the results of the case.
- ❖ Explanation of the significance of the objectives.
- ❖ The challenges of the marketing goal(s) in relation to the category/industry.
- ❖ Who the target audience is (attitudes, behaviors, culture, etc.), and why.

Judges often say that if this section is weak, the entire entry weakens because the context is needed to understand how big the idea was and how profound the results were.

JUDGE ADVICE: “Telling me what your objectives were, and more importantly telling me why those objectives matter, is the difference between passing through Round One and not.”

SCORING SECTION 1:

CHALLENGE, CONTEXT & OBJECTIVES

JUDGE ADVICE

“The best cases clearly articulated the challenge for the brand, the category and competitive landscape, and what the overall goals were. They also had KPIs that aligned well to that challenge that were clearly not retro-fitted to the resulting outcome.”

“Provide context, including the significance of the business problem, goals, objectives and of course the results. It’s hard for judges to tell if a 0.3% lift is a good, or great, for your category or the given size of your business.”

“You shouldn't have 10+ objectives just because you have 10+ data points you want to share in the results section. It's clear when cases are trying to share every positive number they have, rather than focusing on what's most important to the campaign goals.”

SCORING SECTION 2:

INSIGHTS & STRATEGIC IDEA

Judges evaluate how inventive and effective the Idea and Strategy were in meeting the communications challenge.

Keep in mind that judges are looking for:

- ❖ Insights. State your insights and explain how you came to them.
- ❖ An understanding of why these insights are uniquely positioned to address your challenge.
- ❖ An explanation on how the insight informed the strategic idea, brought to life the creative execution and ultimately, the results.
- ❖ The strategic idea that drove the effort and led to a solution. This is not your tagline – it is the core idea that drove your effort and led to your results.

JUDGE ADVICE: “The idea needs to tie directly back to the consumer insight and not be the tactical execution that was deployed. The idea needs to be crisp, but also tell the judge enough detail so that it is easy to understand how the team arrived at this idea and why it is meaningful to the brand and campaign.”

SCORING SECTION 2:

INSIGHTS & STRATEGIC IDEA

JUDGE ADVICE

“Insights need to feel new and different, with a sense of tension and actionability. The idea needs to take the insight and activate it in an interesting, compelling and useful way. And, most importantly, in a way that helps achieve your stated objectives.”

“The idea is the pivot which turns the smart analysis of the problem into a unique solution that none of our competitors could emulate. Too many idea statements were generic and displayed no deep consumer understanding.”

“Really bring your insight to life. How did you find it? Why is it an insight and not just a piece of information about your target or your challenge? How does that insight relate to what else is happening in the category, or what is happening with the consumer? How is your brand uniquely positioned to take advantage of that insight?”

SCORING SECTION 3:

BRINGING THE IDEA TO LIFE

In this section, entrants should articulate the communications strategies and how the idea was brought to life. Ensure your response details the 'why' behind your choices.

Keep in mind that judges are looking for:

- ❖ A communications strategy that includes both the creative and media strategies –not just tactics.
- ❖ The direct connection between the communications strategy and the objectives and insights.
- ❖ The importance of each media/communication channel used for the case, and how each was used –why were these right for your audience and idea? Why did you choose these over others?
- ❖ A clear depiction of how the campaign was executed in the public marketplace. Was there a 'path' consumers were meant to go on, and what was it?
- ❖ The evolution of your communications over time. Did they change and how?

SCORING SECTION 3:

BRINGING THE IDEA TO LIFE

Investment Overview:

- ❖ Entrants will provide details on owned/earned/paid media, sponsorships, and communications touchpoints in the Investment Overview. Use the Budget Elaboration field to provide additional context for judges.

JUDGE ADVICE: “Integrate the media strategy and show how it links to the full execution as well as, potentially, how it evolved with the campaign.”

SCORING SECTION 3:

BRINGING THE IDEA TO LIFE – CREATIVE REEL

The creative reel is your place to show examples of your work not repeat the written case.

Judges are required to review the written case before watching the creative reel – use the creative reel to showcase your creative work.

No results may be included in the creative reel.

Keep in mind that judges are looking for:

- ❖ At least one complete example of each integral touchpoint.
- ❖ The strategic idea in action – how it was brought to life.

JUDGE ADVICE: “The creative reel should showcase all of the work that I've just read about and want to see. I would rather clearly see the different executions over hearing setup.”

SCORING SECTION 3:

BRINGING THE IDEA TO LIFE

JUDGE ADVICE

“Too many people focused only on the creative execution. Talk about how you reached your audience in effective ways in the same breadth and depth that you talk about the creative idea.”

“With so many channels available to marketers now, part of the challenge is conveying how you achieved reach across them. How and why did you place importance on some over others?”

“Keep the storytelling and results out of the creative reel, and highlight the creative, especially the different executions. The more different types of creative shown, the better. I took the judging seriously and read through the PDF carefully, so there was no need to duplicate the story - what I was missing was how everything was brought to life.”

“Be sure the written case and video complement each other and do not repeat each other. It isn't about the quality of the video itself but more about the content.”

SCORING SECTION 4: RESULTS

Judges are looking for direct correlations between the objectives and the results of a case.

- ❖ Explain how the results impacted brand and the brand's business.
- ❖ Make a compelling argument around why the communications led to the results achieved.
- ❖ Provide context with historical data, industry benchmarks, competitors, etc.
- ❖ If you achieved additional results, explain what they were and why they are significant.
- ❖ Eliminate or attribute other factors that could have contributed to your success.
- ❖ When key metrics are withheld without explanation, judges may assume it is because the results were weak.

JUDGE ADVICE: “Tie together the story of how your work drove the results -the best cases did this seamlessly, the worst cases just threw the results out there as somehow a self-evident proof of the value of the work without explaining why or how.”

SCORING SECTION 4: RESULTS

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 and year-over-year context, as judges may not be knowledgeable of the nuances of your particular category. For example, a small percentage move in a highly segmented, high volume category may be more difficult to achieve than a large percentage change in another category. Explain your situation to the judges.

Charts and graphs are useful tools to present your data clearly. If needed for confidential reasons, proof of performance may be indexed or provided as percentages. If you cannot provide certain business results, explain why you cannot or why they are less important. Think through creative & meaningful ways to present the significance of the results you cannot share. For example, the results achieved were the equivalent of opening up a new 200,000 square foot store in the region.

SCORING SECTION 4: RESULTS

JUDGE ADVICE

“Make sure you provide context. If you show results, help the judges understand if the results are good and why. Explain what the numbers mean.”

“There was a significant amount of obvious hyperbole and loose connection to strategic goals. Entrants should focus on using the results to tie up their story in a neat bow.”

“Think through the logic flow of your entry to ensure that everything leads the judges to the right KPIs and results.”

“Don't fudge the results. Your peers will know. Honesty is more effective. We have all had wins and we have all had fails. Every campaign does not need to be perfect.”

“Admit more and provide real-world context: give credit to things like economic trends in addition to your campaign. You'll gain credibility by being honest about all the factors that created success.”

SPECIALTY JURY FEEDBACK

SHOPPER MARKETING CATEGORY

“Clearly outline the business challenge, and how it related to the brand, the shopper audience and the retailer.”

“The best cases really tied the solution to a clear problem and shopper insight. This made for a very insightful approach and solid plan.”

“It takes more than simply being a retailer or having retail components to qualify ideas for shopper marketing. Focus your entry on the detailed integration of how you drove trips and conversion.”

“The cases that stood out did a good job of outlining the business challenge that was inclusive of the brand, shopper, and the retailer.”

“Take time to write a great case study that reads like a story and has the facts to back it up. Define who the consumer is and who the shopper is; are they one in the same or different and who are you speaking to?”

SPECIALTY JURY FEEDBACK

POSITIVE CHANGE CATEGORIES

“Be sure to describe the social issue being addressed with some detail, and why it was a good fit for your brand and/or organization.”

“The scope of the behavior change is very important to address. Help judges understand how wide the effect was and what that meant.”

“Clearly link the marketing to the change achieved – the award recognizes the most effective marketing that drove behavior change of a sustainability goal. Make sure as part of this to articulate what the change in sustainable behavior meant for the brand and organization.”

“What was it about this initiative that was sustainable? Tell us in a nutshell what the increase in sustainability is.”

“Provide clear, true results – a clear sense of how the needle moved in terms of actual awareness of the issue and change.”

GOOD LUCK TO ALL!

Wishing you success in this year's competition!

Disclaimer: The insights presented in this guide come directly from the jury. These statements do not represent the opinions of The Effie® Awards organization, board of directors, steering committee, or staff –all comments and data presented –except for the specified Effie advice –are straight from the industry executives who dedicated their time to serve on an Effie Jury.