

TAKING A LOOK AT CANNES LIONS THIS YEAR

Ahead of the marketing masses flocking to the French Riviera, we took a moment to think about what we're expecting

**white
label**
Making Drinks Famous



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Which recent campaigns have really made an impression on you and do you think any of them stand a chance at this year's festival?

There's one piece of work that I'd put my hard-earned marketing dollar on winning big. It's smart, funny, and more importantly, **it instantly made me think, "Damn, I wish I'd thought of that"**. Aired during this year's Super Bowl, it's Tide's **'It's a Tide Ad'**. It was a simple, subliminal and infuriatingly clever idea that saw them totally own the Super Bowl. After pointing out that every ad in which someone is wearing pristine clothes free of any stains is effectively a Tide ad, David Harbour says, "So, does this make every Super Bowl ad a Tide ad? I think it does, watch and see." And that was that... Every time an ad came on everyone looked at each other thinking, "Tide?". Damn, even the game itself became a Tide ad.

Another product-centric ad that caught my eye (and made me blush) was Absolut Vodka's **'Nothing to Hide'**. As well as being hilarious (because it features naked people) **it makes one of the drinks industry's largest and arguably most "mass-produced" vodkas feel human**. It also manages to communicate wholesome values without ever feeling worthy or preachy. Oh, and did I mention it's got naked people in it?



Which trends do you expect to dominate at Cannes Lions this year?

Cannes Lions has traditionally favoured creativity that's driven commercial success. While continuing to be at the core of the judging criteria, that approach is now being applied to creativity that shifts culture by challenging perspectives, galvanising public opinion and effecting social good.

Feminism has already proved to be a theme favoured by the judging panel in previous years and I see no reason for that to change in the year of #MeToo.

Let's just hope it's the good stuff like T-Mobile's **'We Are Equal'** and not predictable femvertising like Covergirl's **'I Am What I Make Up'** Ft. Shelina Moreda, which suggests that you need to be a female bike racer with long eyelashes.

Which talks will you be attending and why?

I'll try to split my time equally between speakers I think are directly relevant to White Label and our day-to-day work as Drinks Marketing Specialists, those I think I'll be able to learn from and also a few more left-field talks that just catch my eye.

From the first category I'll definitely catch **'Wake Up With the Economist'** on Monday 18th featuring Syl Saller (CMO of Diageo). From the second I'll be attending **'Creativity on the Couch: What Psychoanalysis Can Tell Us'** hosted by PHD Worldwide because I think appropriate application of psychological theory can help strategists and planners to really deliver. Finally, two other talks that caught my eye, which are perhaps a little indulgent but of personal interest are **'What Brands Can Learn from Hip Hop'** (The Annex) and **'Sex, Drugs, Rock 'n' Roll and Advertising'** (BBDO).

Do you believe that Cannes Lions is still relevant?

There's no doubt that Cannes Lions is in a challenging period. Given the continued rise of digital in all forms, it's hard for a festival that has always been viewed as the bastion of traditional advertising creativity to keep its hold. The festival's solution has been expansion through the introduction of new categories and sub-festivals like Innovation, Entertainment and Digital Craft - but that makes it harder and harder to navigate. A win in some of the categories feels a little like getting a degree in Klingon from the University of Narnia - great if that's what you're into, but not the same as a 1st in PPE from Oxford. The industry has been calling for a reduction in the number of categories until it's blue in the face, but where there are categories there is cash, and it's also worth noting that the people calling for fewer categories are the very same people entering the awards.

The fact is a Cannes Lion remains the most prestigious of prizes and I've never met a Strategist or a Creative Director who doesn't want to hunt a Lion (OK... bad choice of phrasing).

Do you feel data will play less of a role in advertising going forward with the new GDPR laws that have just come into effect? And how do you think these new laws will affect the atmosphere at Cannes this year? Positively or negatively?

Data is here to stay: it plays a role in almost every aspect of advertising from idea generation, delivery and measurement. If anything, I think GDPR will have a positive impact on advertising because **we'll need to create ever more compelling reasons for people to not only come to brands, but also to return to them.**

As important as it is to understand and implement GDPR from a business perspective, I'm sure I'm not alone in hoping that this year's festival isn't too preoccupied by it. Just like consumers, we're still clearing our inboxes. I'm optimistic it will have little affect on the atmosphere at Cannes - unless people don't show up because they forgot to opt into the emails. Cannes Lions is supposed to be a festival of creativity, so I assume most of the data junkies will be stopped at customs anyway...

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