

LOCAL SUCCESS WITH PRESS

The results are in, the winners announced and the prizes have been distributed. Yes the annual NAB Student Creative Newspaper Awards saw outstanding entries from AUT, Axis Adschool and Whitecliff College of Art and Design.

And the winners are [insert drum roll] Laura Donegan and Sarah Comer of Axis Adschool for their “No Future with Emissions” campaign for Toyota.

“Simple, effective and good use of the newspaper environment,” commented Matt Bale from OMD, one of 5 judges this year. The other judges included Matt Simpkins of DraftFCB, Ben Peglar and Rene Van Wonderen of M&C Saatchi and Sarah Stuart from the Herald on Sunday.

This year’s brief was to create a newspaper campaign around sustainability. The concept of “Think Global, Act Local” fits well with newspapers’ ability to connect with local communities. As always the brief encourages students to think big and create a newspaper campaign specifically for the medium.

But this leads me to thinking, why is it that we don’t see newspaper-specific ads winning at international competitions? That is ads written and designed with the medium in mind. Both the winning ads at the World Press Awards (Tide Ultra) and most recently Cannes Press Lions (Energizer) were visual ads, relying on the image to tell the entire story for the brand.

As noted by the Canadian Cannes Press judge, “Visual impact plays an important role in getting past the short-list. Even if some of the pieces were great at capitalizing on the newspaper medium...” (Paulette Arsenault, Partner and Chief Creative Officer at PALM Arnold Communication in Montreal, Canada).

In fact the top 9 prizes at Cannes this year were visual print ads, with the exception of the Netherlands’ 1974 Volkswagen Recall single newspaper ad and India’s Female Foeticide single newspaper ad.

It’s getting harder for newspaper ads to win an award at Cannes. It has been suggested by creatives that because English is not the first language of up to 70 per cent of jury members there is a tendency for the panel to go for simple bold images over more challenging ads.

"The trouble is the cleverer you get the easier it is to disconnect with the people [judges] who are scanning the ads," says David Nobay Executive Creative Director Droga5. "Print advertising is about engaging your audience locally and those ads are not getting up."

Clemenger BBDO Wellington got it right with their simple bold images for LTNZ “Sleep Before You Drive” ads which won a Gold Press Lion this year - congratulations! Not only visually impressive, but the message is easily understood worldwide.

So what are New Zealand’s best press ads? The ones that connect with their local audience. Whilst they may not always win a Cannes Lion, World Press Award or even an Axis Award, they will win over the readers.

“Thinking specifically for the medium is the best way of creating great ads that can connect and engage,” says DDB’s Dave Brady who was responsible for the ‘clusterbomb’ newspaper campaign during his time at DraftFCB.

“Stop doing magazine ads and start doing newspaper ads that use the medium for all its advantages, like the fact that its daily,” says Jeneal Rohrback, consultant and lecturer at Axis Adschool. “This is what I discussed with the students and why they’ve created great work for the NAB newspaper competition.”

You can view all the winning press work - student newspaper ads, Newspaper Ad of Month and Cannes Press Lion winners - at www.nabs.co.nz. If you missed out on a gong at Cannes you’ve still got a chance of winning the big prize, The Newspaper Ad of the Year and it’s \$10,000 prize, announced next month.

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