



WAVEMAKER  
*in* CANNES

2024  
**THE MEDIA  
WRAP**

**Wavemaker**







# WAVEMAKER *in* CANNES



**The whirlwind that is Cannes International Festival of Creativity slowly stopped spinning on Friday! The fertile exchange of ideas, inspiration and opinions, deepening of bonds, founding of new friendships and dreams of those shiny Lions over for another year.**

It was a happy one for our global Wavemaker family of clients, teams and partners. We bagged a majestic 20 Lions – 1 Grand Prix, 2 Gold, 8 Silver and 9 Bronze – with our brilliant agency partners. **DoorDash** rocked the festival with a Titanium Grand Prix for their Superbowl work **All-the-Ads** from Wavemaker and W+K in the US.

Wins from our sister agencies **Mindshare** and **EssenceMediacom** brought the **GroupM** total to an amazing 90 Lions, 53% up year-on-year. And with **WPP** named **Most Creative Company**, it was a top week for the entire network.

Those are the stats – now for the takeouts! In this, our annual **Media Wrap**, we bring you the marketing and creative themes that will **feed your imagination, your brand and your growth** in the next 12 months. Expertly curated from 26,753 entries at Cannes, enjoy!



**Nic McCarthy**  
Global Head of Creative Excellence





# FUN FOR FUN'S SAKE



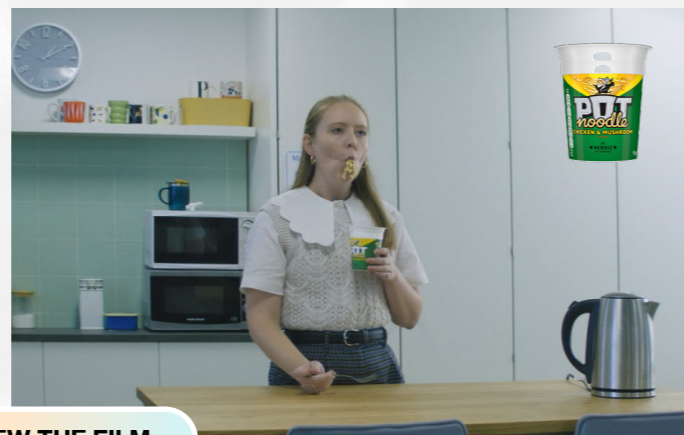
**Put simply, humour works. Especially when it comes to broad-reaching brand campaigns. Marketers of everything from electronics to fast food to packaged goods know it. And consumers respond to it. According to research from Oracle, 90% of consumers say they're more likely to remember a funny ad and 72% would select a humorous brand over the competition. Humour delivers an 11-point increase on Kantar's distinctiveness measurement.**

But between a relentless wave of serious purpose-driven marketing and five years of geopolitical strife and pandemic, there hadn't been much love for laughter. In fact, our ad doldrums started well before then. Research from Kantar found that humour in advertising had been dropping consistently since 2002, with major dips seen around the 2008 financial crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The good news is that humour is making a comeback. Last year, over half the Film Lions winners (52%) were intentionally funny – a Film Grand Prix went to **Apple's RIP, Leon**, a darkly comic tale of a lizard and his pet-sitter. In 2022, just one in every 10 Cannes Lions Grand Prix and Gold winners employed humour.

This year Cannes introduced a new humour category to the Cultural & Context sections that sit across all Lions.

Humour, of course, is subjective. And when **Unilever's Pot Noodle** brand rolled out an advert featuring aggressive slurping sounds, a significant portion of the audience found it off-putting rather than enticing. Instead of pulling the spot, the Mindshare client decided to have a little fun with it. Using data and targeting, it personalised digital ads with remixed audio so that online fans would hear sounds that they enjoyed – babies laughing, race cars, sound effects – rather than the slurping. The ad was even put back on TV with replacement sounds perfectly matched to the interests of the people watching.

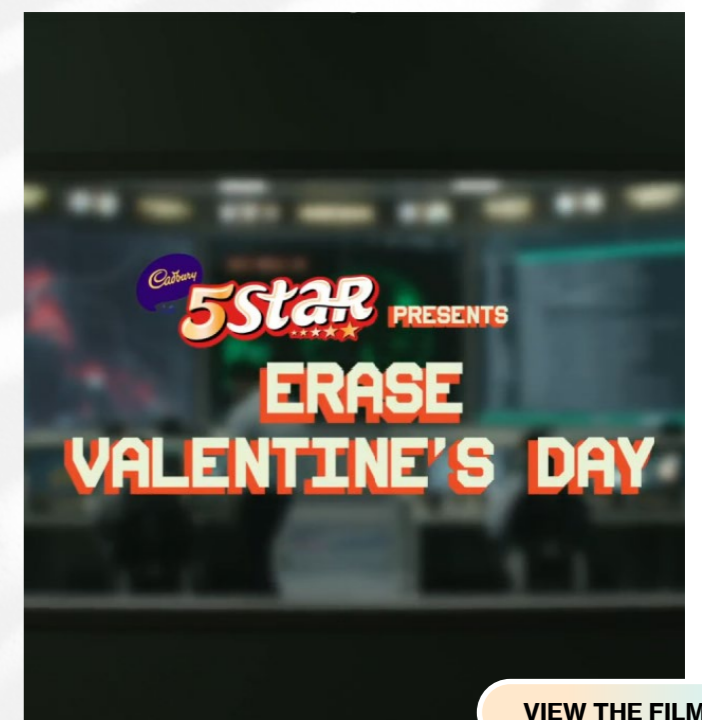


[VIEW THE FILM](#)

In China, **Coca-Cola Co's Sprite** had a little fun with a cultural trend. Riffing off the prestige of 1982 Chateau Lafite Rothschild wine – a Pop Culture touchstone across decades of movies that also happens to be incredibly expensive – Chinese social-media users had started jokingly referring to something more affordable to help them celebrate milestones: 1982 Sprite. Unfortunately, there were no vintage bottles of Sprite. But the **EssenceMediacom** client saw an opportunity. It officially launched 1982 Sprite in special packaging, starting with a live-stream auction for the first bottle. It opened Sprite Chateaux in locations across China so that soda connoisseurs could enjoy an immersive experience.

Eating candy and doing nothing sounds like fun to millions of people the world over. But Valentine's Day can be a drag if you've got no one to spend it with. **Cadbury's 5 Star** in India figured it could help those people have a good day with a time travel stunt that would erase the holiday entirely. The **Wavemaker** client launched a ship called the Cringe Crusader that sailed in the vicinity of the International Date Line, crossing it at 11:59 pm on February 13 and going directly to 12:01 am on February 15. Those on board didn't have to worry about the holiday, but rather could 'Eat 5 Star, do nothing.'

[VIEW THE FILM](#)



[VIEW THE FILM](#)



# COMMUNITY MULTIPLIER

**According to Cannes, work entered into its new humour category 'should use wit and satire to provide amusement and create memorable, laughter-inducing connections with audiences'. Perhaps the most important word in that requirement is 'connections'.**

More and more, brands are learning to lean in and connect with communities as a central part of their marketing. That could be why entries into the Social & Influencer Lions have grown by 21%.

Social gives brands the ability to connect. But the best brands strive for more than a one-off or momentary connection. They actively seek to be led by communities and to learn from them.

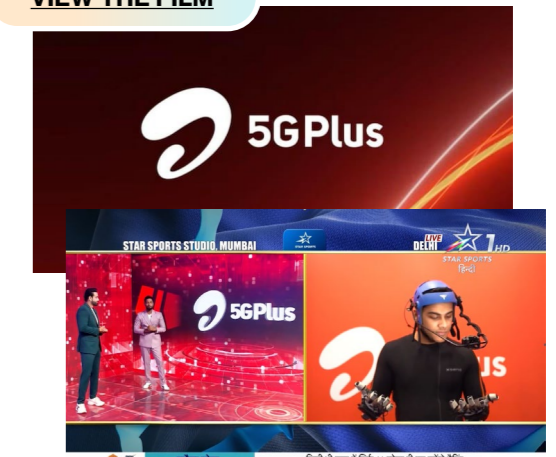
Mindshare research found that almost half (46%) of global consumers say their community influences their decisions and behaviours. That goes beyond the physical world: 48% of 18-to 44-year-old global respondents engage in digital communities.

Communities passionate about music, gaming and sport are the stars of this high-growth trend, allowing brands into their territory in return for brilliant fan access and experiences. Consider the mutually beneficial relationships springing up between marketers and women's sports at the moment (one of the big topics at Cannes in this Olympic and Euros year).

Build the right kind of connections and your messaging can be boosted into the stratosphere. But real communities cannot be created artificially, it's an organic process in both digital realms and the physical world.

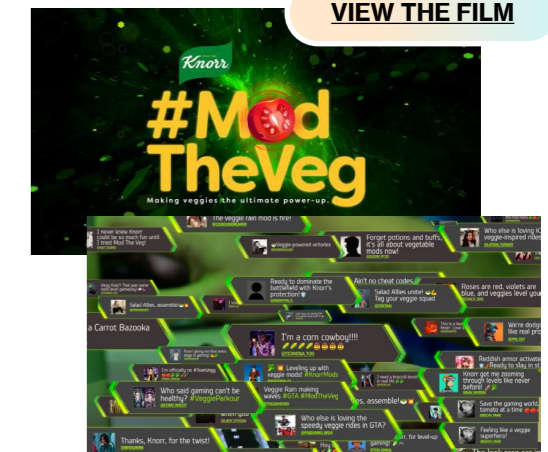
The sports community was the entry point for **EssenceMediacom** client **Airtel** when telecom marketers ran into some resistance to 5G in India. To build excitement and overcome skepticism, Airtel turned to the country's most important event for its favorite sport – the eight-week cricket Premiere League tournament. Merging virtual and real worlds, Airtel and partner Star Sports, teleported passionate cricket fans into the Star Sports studio enabling them to interact with their cricket heroes. It provided fans with the sort of access that they dreamed of in a way that only 5G could enable.

VIEW THE FILM



While traditional sports is a known quantity for marketers – and an increasingly expensive one – the world of eSports and gaming is still fairly nascent, but with fans as passionate as those of any soccer club and players who are often more approachable for viewers and brands alike. **Unilever's Knorr** brand tapped into this community for a daunting mission: make vegetables cool. Vegetables' real-world issues carried into the digital world. When they did appear in gaming environments – which wasn't often – they weren't as desirable as other in-game fuelling options. So the company turned to gamers and developers to help it 'mod veggies' in some of the world's top video games, making vegetables the ultimate power-up. Vegetables appeared as armour and means of transport, weather patterns and power-ups – even as playable characters that gave gamers a chance to form bands of 'salad allies'. The mods were launched online and featured in eTournaments around the world.

VIEW THE FILM



**Oreo** is a brand around the world for people of all ages, but in SE Asia it was seen as a snack for children. **Mondelēz, a Wavemaker client**, wanted to grow by shifting the market from mothers to GenZ. So the world's No1 cookie turned to the community of the world's No1 K-Pop girl band, BlackPink. They started by creating bespoke black and pink cookies as well as the packaging to match. These were distributed via an exclusive pre-sale to K-Pop fans who flocked to social media (and a secondary sales market). After that, the company went wide, collaborating with BlackPink for a new song and video, then launching the product across stores in the region. This was followed by an AI-driven media campaign that let fans get custom-tailored messages from their favourite band member in real time. A partnership with **TikTok** let fans transform themselves into virtual members of the band – and band members posted some of these to their own personal profiles, driving massive spikes in engagement and sales.



VIEW THE FILM





# TAKING A STAND

**Purpose marketing isn't a new trend, but it's an enduring one. Purpose-led work has been a perennial winner at Cannes for at least a decade. More recently, in reaction to political trends around the globe, some brands have had pushback – and sometimes boycotts – for this sort of marketing which is seen by some as too progressive or 'woke'.**

Yet a number of brands are willing to take the risk to keep pushing for causes they think need championing and tackling topics that many would see as divisive. Where the real magic happens is when a brand can push an issue that ties directly to its own brand promise and purpose.

**Wavemaker client Novo Nordisk** is the maker of Ozempic and Wegovy, two weight-loss drugs that have been so successful, they likely don't need marketing at this point. But the issues of obesity and weight-loss can be extremely divisive, with a large swath of society – including medical professionals – forming preconceived notions of people with obesity that have the potential to damage their mental and physical health. Novo Nordisk wanted to change the way people with obesity are seen and treated, fighting bias and telling the truth about the causes of the disease. So it launched a four-part docuseries called **Thick Skin** which ran on AMC and Sundance TV in the US. The documentary focused on the struggles of four women with obesity – and others were featured during vignettes that ran in commercial breaks. The series, which reached 11.6 million households, drove massive social conversation, shifted the perception of viewers and empowered those with obesity to speak openly about their struggles.



Dutch telecom company **KPN**, a **Mindshare client**, tackled the issue of teen safety online. That's no small task in a world in which 33% of teens engage in sexting – a normal part of development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – but also a world in which one in 100 fall victim to online shaming. The company collaborated with Meau, the biggest singer-songwriter in the Netherlands, in an attempt to make the internet safe for everyone. The team came up with **Piece of Me**, a song and video built around heart-wrenching real stories. The film showed how forwarding without consent can ruin someone's life and shifted the blame from the victim to the person who forwards. The song not only trended on **YouTube** and **Spotify** but passed **Beyoncé** on the charts – and led to the largest nationwide debate about online shaming.







# WAVEMAKER *in* CANNES



- COFFEE & CREATIVE CURATION.** Left to right → **Arthur O'Neill**, Joint Head of Invention Worldwide, Mindshare; **Nic McCarthy**, Global Head of Creative Excellence, Wavemaker; **Sarah Walker**, CEO UK & EMEA, Choreograph.
- OUR SHOCKWAVES WINNERS.** Left to right → **Lenka Powell**, Client Lead; **Nick Mitchell**, Strategy Lead; **Calvin Draper-Wright**, Delivery Lead – all Wavemaker UK
- THE INTERSECTION OF SEARCH & THE COMMUNITY.** Left to right → **Stuart Bowden**, Global Chief Strategy & Product Officer, Wavemaker; **Amy Benford**, VP, GM, Integrated Marketing & Advanced Advertising, Colgate-Palmolive; **Roxy Young**, CMO, Reddit.
- TOMORROW'S SHOPPING EXPERIENCE: Fries, Flowers and Everything in Between.** Left to right → **Kofi Amoo-Gottfried**, CMO, DoorDash; **Toby Jenner**, Global President, GroupM Clients and Global CEO, Wavemaker.
- GAMING WITH PURPOSE.** Left to right → **Alex Altman**, Global Client President, Wavemaker; **Kim Dirckx**, Global Head of Sustainability, Strategic Partnerships & Innovation, L'Oréal.
- NEXT GENERATION INNOVATION: AI IN MEDIA.** Left to right → **Catherine Lautier**, VP, Global Head of Media & Integrated Brand Communication, Danone; **Mathias Chaillou**, Chief Media Officer, L'Oréal; **Sarah Salter**, Global Head of Innovation and Platforms; **Surabhi Pokhriyal**, Chief Digital Growth Officer, Church & Dwight; **Matt Groshong**, Business Development Director, NVIDIA.
- THE FUTURE OF SHOPPING.** Left to right → **Sam Bukowski**, Global Head of Commerce, GroupM; **Wayne Purboo**, VP, Amazon Shopping Video, Amazon Live; **Pedro Cavalcanti**, Digital Transformation Director, Colgate-Palmolive.
- TOMORROW'S SHOPPING EXPERIENCE: Fries, Flowers and Everything in Between.** Left to right → **Kofi Amoo-Gottfried**, CMO, DoorDash; **Toby Jenner**, Global President, GroupM Clients and Global CEO, Wavemaker.
- WAVEMAKERS AT THE GROUPOM ROOFTOP.** Left to right → **Stuart Sullivan-Martin**, Worldwide Chief Strategy Officer and Global Head of Creative Solutions; **Alexia Pilavachi**, Global Client Lead; **Alastair Bannerman**, Global Client President; **Oli Saunders**, Global Head of Addressable Solutions.
- MORE TO IMAGINE WHEN YOU LISTEN.** Left to right → **Susan Jurevics**, Chief Brand & International Officer, Audible; **Sharb Farjami**, CEO, GroupM NA.
- THE BALANCING ACT OF DELIVERING SHOPPER-TAINMENT.** Left to right → **Sharb Farjami**, CEO, GroupM NA; **Julie Haleluk**, Global Head - Growth, Amazon Shopping Videos; **Catherine Lautier**, VP, Global Head of Media & Integrated Brand Communication, Danone.
- THE INFLUENCABLES.** Left to right → **Anna Hickey**, Global Client President & Consultancy Lead, Wavemaker; **Brigitte King**, Global Chief Digital Officer, Colgate-Palmolive; **Tim Castree**, VP, Global Marketing, Amazon.



# WAVEMAKER WINNERS



**TITANIUM**  
GRAND PRIX  
US – DoorDash - 'All-The-Ads'



**GLASS**  
SILVER  
The Lion for Change - India – Harpic India - **Harpic Loocator** - **#BeFreeToPee**



**GOLD**  
US – DoorDash - 'All the Ads' (Direct Lions, Use of Broadcast)  
US – DoorDash - 'All the Ads' (Brand Experience & Activation Lions, Retail Promotions & Competitions)



**SILVER**  
US – DoorDash - 'All-The-Ads' (Social & Influencer Lions, Real-Time Response)  
US – DoorDash - 'All-The-Ads' (Social & Influencer Lions, Multi-Platform Social Campaign)  
US – DoorDash - 'All-The-Ads' (Brand Experience & Activation Lions, Sponsorship & Brand Partnership)  
Canada – Molson - 'See My Name' (Media Lions, Use of Events & Stunts)  
UK – NHS Blood and Transplant - 'Waiting to Live' (Health & Wellness Lions, Outdoor: Ambient)  
Thailand – Colgate - 'The Boxer' (Film Craft Lions, Editing)



**BRONZE**  
Finland – Musti Ja Mirri - 'Adoption Live' (Media: Sectors Lions, Travel, Leisure, Retail, Restaurants & Fast Food Chains)  
UK – Mayor of LDN - 'Maaate' (PR Lions, Social Behaviour & Cultural Insight)  
Canada – KFC - 'Finger Lickin' Open Endorsement' (Social & Influencer Lions, Organic Reach & Influence)  
US – DoorDash - 'All-The-Ads' (Direct Lions, Real-Time Response)  
UK – NHS Blood & Transplant - 'Waiting to Live' (Direct Lions, Not-for-Profit / Charity / Government)  
India – Mondelez - 'Erase Valentine's Day' (Entertainment Lions, 360 Integrated Brand Experience)  
UK – NHS Blood & Transplant - 'Waiting to Live' (Brand Experience & Activation Lions, Single-Market Campaign)  
Canada – Molson - 'See My Name' (Brand Experience & Activation Lions, Sponsorship & Brand Partnership)  
Thailand – Colgate - 'The Boxer' (Film Lions, Consumer Goods)



**Congratulations to our wonderful clients and teams all over the world on bringing home 19 Lions – 1 Titanium, 2 Gold, 7 Silver and 9 Bronze. A special mention to DoorDash, awarded the Titanium Grand Prix for their stunning Superbowl work All-the-Ads. It was a terrific week for the whole network, with GroupM winning 90 Lions and WPP named Most Creative Company. Here's to 2025!**

**Toby Jenner,**  
Global President, GroupM Clients  
and Global CEO, Wavemaker