

A NOTE TO MARKETERS

Marketers expect their agency partners to account for results and to provide value for money and a measured return on investment because the business environment gets tougher by the day.

The APEX awards champions greater accountability on the part of agencies by rewarding communications campaigns that work. Successful entries systematically provide evidence of the effectiveness of our marketing communications as opposed to the effects of other non-communication variables. An APEX case study is an effectiveness paper and will be of invaluable use within a marketer's own organization. The evidence suggests that if a marketer and agency form a team to produce a paper, it has a very beneficial effect on their working relationship.

Writing an effectiveness case study often means the asking of questions that aren't normally asked and finding answers to that which involves important analyses and measures understanding of the dynamics of a company's most important asset(s) – its brand(s).

A completed APEX case study can be used to vindicate the key role that marketing plays in the company and to validate the investment in communications to the company's Board of Directors and Shareholders.

Winning an APEX can increase the attractiveness of the company or brand to new recruits.

If there are concerns regarding confidentiality, please note the following:

- All judges sign a confidentiality agreement.
- Marketing activity is by its nature in the public domain and even the thinking behind it is history after a year or two. The usefulness of data to others can be significantly disguised by selective presentation and masking (e.g. indexing). Much basic market data (Nielsen, etc.) is likely to be available to major competitors anyway because it is syndicated.

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- Bear in mind that the information or data contained in APEX submissions is usually at least a year or more out of date by the times it is published in any format. For example, a case study entered for APEX 2013, will likely relate to campaigns that ran in 2011 or 2012.
- It is also true that most qualitative research findings about consumer attitudes and behaviour or reactions to communications campaigns in a given market will be revealed to competitors in their own group discussions.

Entering APEX will be a rewarding experience to both Marketers and their agency partners because it will enhance reputations and create an excellent showcase opportunity for the partnership, brands and brand custodians. Apart from the publication of winning case studies in the ACA's APEX Case Study books, the chances are excellent that these case studies will also compete in the international arena.

There are no known cases of any competitive disadvantage resulting from publication.

It is important to note that whilst APEX is not about creativity in a traditional sense and effectiveness is in no way positioned against creativeness. In fact, inasmuch as it is generally believed that effective communications campaigns are creative campaigns, it is incumbent that Marketers encourage their agency partners that have won creative prizes to put the real seal on their achievements by demonstrating how the campaign added value to the brand(s) and achieved a measured return on investment for their clients' businesses. After all, that is what business of communications should be all about!

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