DIGIDAY
MEDIA AWARDS
EUROPE

This year's winners of the **Digiday Media Awards Europe** proved just how successful video has become as a medium for brands. For each, video was the star in their winning campaigns, though how they employed the medium varied.

From telling stories highlighting the LGBTQ+ community to producing authentic content and highlighting diversity overall, brands delivered unparalleled reporting and gained a deeper understanding of audiences and personalized interactions with users. Subscription programs roared ahead for some winners; major breaking stories cemented the clout of others as they crafted campaigns to ensure retained ownership of the story but achieved as much impact as possible.

In this guide, explore all the 2022 Digiday Media Awards Europe winners — including a quick rundown of the campaigns and insights into why they won and what marketing teams can learn from them.

Publisher of the Year | PinkNews

PinkNews

Program

As the world's most-read and watched LGBTQ+ media brand, PinkNews reaches up to 60 million unique users per month across its website, app and social media platforms. The content PinkNews produces aims to uplift marginalized voices and highlight the diversity of the LGBTQ+ spectrum. Through its editorial coverage in 2021, PinkNews reported on HIV/AIDS, transgender rights and the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. With a distinctly queer perspective, PinkNews is able to contextualize world events in an authentic way that challenges the mainstream narrative around LGBTQ+ topics, and strategic use of platforms like TikTok and Snapchat enables the publisher to engage with young audiences to empower them to be themselves.

Insights

With six new shows launching on Snapchat in 2021, PinkNews has garnered over 6.1 million subscribers on the platform and has grown its revenue from the channel by 400% compared to 2020. Beyond its increasing follower numbers and revenue, PinkNews is using its online presence for good, like when it hosted an online panel discussion including all of Northern Ireland's foremost party leaders, where they unanimously agreed to ban conversion therapy. A historic apology was obtained from one party leader for past homophobic marks by her fellow party members. Overall, PinkNews is using its platform to inspire acceptance and more extensive social change.

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PinkNews

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OPINION

Cis people get gender-affirming healthcare over the counter. Why can't trans folk have the same?

VIC PARSONS | NOVEMBER 19, 2021 | SAVE FOR LATER

Stock photo of hormone pills. (Photo By BSIP/UIG Via Getty Images)

Gender-affirming healthcare for trans and non-binary people is being attacked, legally and politically, in the UK.

We've seen this with Keira Bell's well-funded court case, which almost succeeded in making it so that trans kids needed court approval to get puberty blockers; we see it with the fact that the trans healthcare crisis means that a trans person in London going to their GP today for a referral to a gender clinic might wait as long as 26 years for a first appointment, going by the current rate of intake; and we see it every time a politician bleats about "only women having cervixes", a lie that comes as many trans men and non-binary are struggling with access to timely cervical screenings and reproductive healthcare.

Transphobic rhetoric about how gender-affirming surgeries are "mutilation" and lies about how hormone replacement therapy leads to "sterility in 100% of cases" are widespread, shared by blue-tick "gender critical" activists, heterosexual newspaper columnists, and steadily creeping into parliamentary debates.

But why are cis people so bothered about gender-affirming healthcare for trans people, when they themselves get gender-affirming healthcare all the time?

Let me explain with a story. A couple of years ago, a housemate of mine was prescribed a testosterone-blocking medication called spironolactone by her GP. She has PCOS and the doctor said that spironolactone would help treat some of the symptoms she was experiencing, like increased hair growth on her body and face.

She left the appointment, prescription literally in hand, and picked up the medication from the chemist a few minutes later. After trying spironolactone she realised that she liked the side-effects of that even less, so she stopped taking it. And then, she asked me if I knew any trans women who might want the meds she had left over – because trans women, too, are prescribed spironolactone to block their testosterone.

But the vast majority of trans women in the UK can't get spironolactone from their GP. If they wanted to block their testosterone, which many trans women do, they'd start with a GP appointment, which would lead to a referral to a gender clinic, then a wait of several years before a psychiatric assessment and a clinical diagnosis of gender dysphoria. Then, they could be prescribed a testosterone blocker – and, most likely, also the hormone oestrogen.

This inequality in access to hormones is not limited to spironolactone. When I wanted to try taking testosterone, I first had to go to my GP for a referral that meant I then spent several years on an NHS gender clinic waiting list. Finally I had two hours-long appointments, one with a social worker and one with a clinical psychologist, discussing everything from my childhood to my sex life to my mental health. I received the precious diagnosis of gender dysphoria, which permits me to obtain gender-affirming hormones and surgery. Then, finally, I was prescribed testosterone gel.

If I'd been a cis man, say in my forties, struggling with a low sex drive, depressed and feeling a bit moody, then I also might've gone to my GP as a first port of call. But there the similarity ends. As a cis man, my GP could order a blood test and, if my testosterone levels were low, send me to a specialist (after a wait of weeks, rather than years) who could prescribe me testosterone gel. Note: no several years spent waiting, and no need to obtain a clinical diagnosis to prove myself.

In both cases, testosterone gel is being used as a gender-affirming treatment. But the way the same medication is prescribed is hugely different.

Gender-affirming healthcare: Not just for trans people!

It's not only hormones that cis and trans people alike use to affirm their genders.

Boob jobs? Gender-affirming surgery. Hormone replacement therapy for menopausal cis women? Gender-affirming healthcare. Hair transplants for balding men? Gender-affirming treatment. Viagra? Gender-affirming healthcare, definitely.

I would, and happily will, argue that in many cases a cis person who is going to the gym, getting tattoos, shaving their legs, wearing a bra, dying their hair

Latest Posts

GAMING

Major e-sports tournament pulled from Abu Dhabi after backlash over LGBT+ rights abuses

MAGGIE BASKA - FEBRUARY 23, 2022

US

Yet another horrific law attacking trans kids just inched closer to reality in Alabama

MAGGIE BASKA - FEBRUARY 23, 2022

US

Florida lawmaker pulls cruel 'Don't Say Gay' amendment requiring schools to forcibly out students

LILY WAKEFIELD - FEBRUARY 23, 2022

TRANS

Black trans woman awarded $1.5 million after being wrongfully jailed on 'bogus' drugs charges

VIC PARSONS - FEBRUARY 23, 2022

Most Engaged Community | VGTV

Program

When VGTV, the video-producing arm of VG, Norway's biggest newspaper, noticed a lack of well-produced content for Gen Z girls, it decided to create a podcast targeted toward them. Partnering with influencer Linnéa Myhre, the podcast 'Give Me All the Details' profiles Norway's hottest celebrity gossip and entertainment news in a true-crime style. It was so well-received that VGTV has released a bestselling coffee table book that featured hundreds of photos, extra material and the uncut podcast scripts, as well as a TV series hosted by Myhre called 'When We Ruled the Internet,' featuring six bloggers who opened up about the ups and downs of their careers, money and regret.

Insights

VGTV anticipated that reaching a young female audience would be challenging, given that its average site visitor was a middle-aged man. Armed with the knowledge that young audiences are more likely to connect with people and stories than brands, the podcast series was created to appeal to this preference. The podcast quickly became a success, garnering about 60,000 per week, with 90% of the audience being women and 70% between 25 and 34. Partnering with Myhre has also helped the podcast and its spinoff products gain momentum from her online following, where she often posts behind-the-scenes content and engages with the fan community.

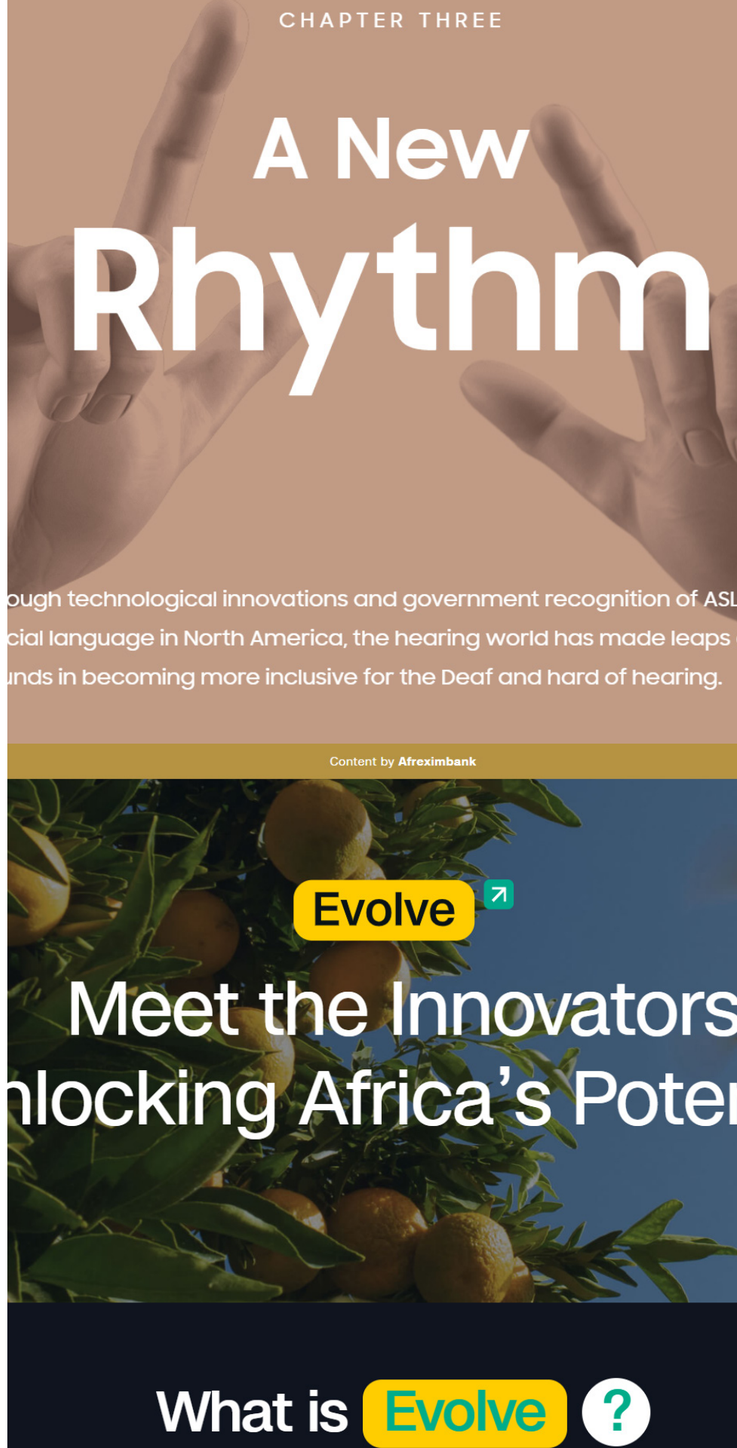
Best Content Studio | CNNIC Create

Program

As CNN International's global in-house brand studio, Create produces powerful and dynamic storytelling for brands that speaks to CNN's audience. Create sets itself apart with its innovative, bespoke ad-tech, communications expertise and rich audience insights and by prioritizing sustainability in its work. The team became the first branded content studio to use Albert, a tool to certify carbon neutrality on productions, and has taken steps like directing virtually to cut back on travel, cutting back on paper use on sets and using LED lights. Create has also emphasized a commitment to accessibility with a fully accessible website to reach people with sense-oriented disabilities where audio and sign language narration of stories are available.

Insights

Create has proven that doing good for people and the planet doesn't need to come at a cost to business outcomes. This year, the team has worked on 193 campaigns for 132 clients, and its bespoke CMS-based solution has enabled 120 high-quality, custom sites to be brought to market in just hours for over 50 advertisers. Working with Albert, Create has produced 16 films that were certified carbon neutral by encouraging better-informed decisions during pre-production and shooting. New technology and techniques enabled the London-based team to create branded content for Afreximbank that took viewers on a tour of Africa without traveling on location, resulting in about 14.71 tons of carbon saved.



Best Brand Launch/Event

The Economist Group

ECONOMIST IMPACT

Program

With the realization that The Economist Group's audience was turning to its capabilities within the public policy and thought leadership spaces to help them make critical business decisions, the decision was made to launch a new brand: Economist Impact. Featuring a global team, the new brand sheds light on policy choices through benchmarks, economic and social impact analysis, white papers, forecasting and scenario modeling, all focusing on addressing critical issues at the intersection of people, planet and progress. The brand was launched at the United Nations General Assembly during their Sustainable Development Goals session.

Insights

Economist Impact partners with stakeholders that are also vital audience segments — corporations, foundations, NGOs and governments — to take on challenges such as sustainability, health and globalization to spur change and progress. And the brand and its mission have caught on quickly. Launch campaigns resulted in substantial social platform growth for the brand, including on LinkedIn, where the audience's engagement rate is 4.99% compared to the industry benchmark of 2%. Following the lead of its groundbreaking launch event, Economist Impact now hosts over 80 events in over 30 countries that bring global thought leaders together.

Best Revenue Diversification Strategy

House Beautiful + Hearst UK

HouseBeautiful

Program

The House Beautiful team decided to transition the brand from a pure media brand, dependent on circulation and advertising revenues, to a homestyle shopping brand that connects consumers with brands for their homes. With this model, House Beautiful can take a share of revenue on sales at multiple touchpoints. From the House Beautiful Marketplace, where products are sold at a higher margin and the brand owns customer data, to fast-track licensing partnerships and an accelerated affiliate content-to-commerce offering, House Beautiful has implemented strategies that have grown its share of diverse revenues well above its goal.

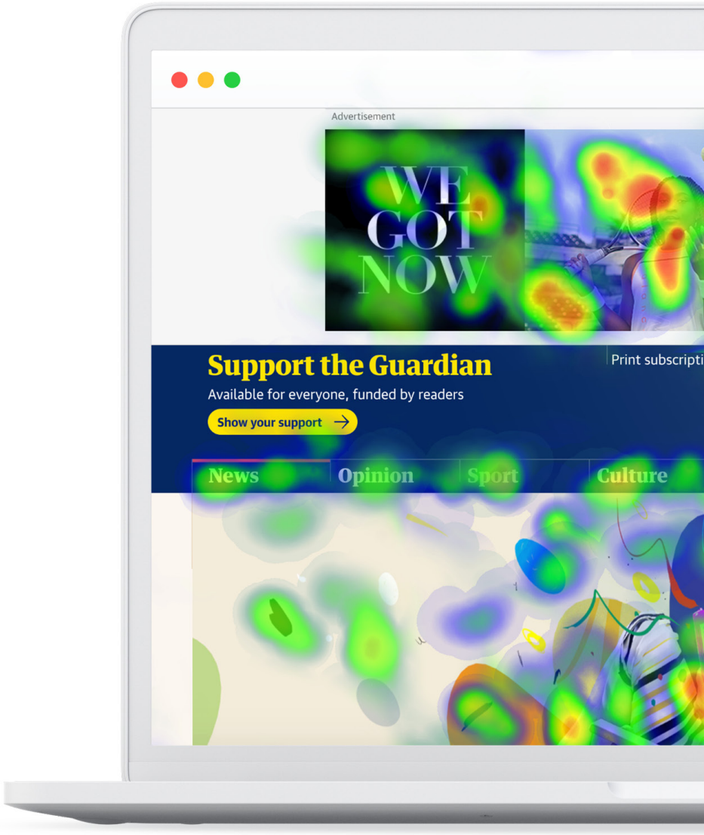
Insights

The team's initial goal was to grow the brand's share of diverse revenues to over 40%, and in 2021, that share reached 47%. Licensing revenue increased 18% over 2020, with 500 new products added, and while the House Beautiful Marketplace just launched in November 2021, it has already accounted for 2% of revenues in 2022. These efforts have also given the brand more valuable first-party data, with the total amount increasing 8% year-over-year, and everything combined has made House Beautiful's profit margin 20% higher than Hearst's target, making it one of the most profitable in the portfolio.

Best Digital Product Innovation

Mediahub UK

M E D / A H U B



Program

Described as an attention platform serving Mediahub clients, Mediahub ARC is helping challenger brands gain a competitive advantage. With the loss of the third-party cookie, privacy regulations and eroding trust in standard performance metrics, viewability has become a standard measurement, even though it doesn't guarantee that an ad was seen. Mediahub ARC leverages eye-tracking research, data on publisher site clutter of competing ads on the page, and dwell-time on-screen technology that converts eye-tracking attention into real-time, cookieless optimization tags. With custom bidding algorithms, the technology ignores viewability to point toward formats that drive higher attention rates.

Insights

Using this innovative technology to pinpoint high-attention formats has resulted in promising outcomes so far. When used for New Balance's 'We Got Now' campaign, attention-optimized advertising drove 14% higher lift for prompted awareness and 8% higher lift for spontaneous awareness. And a campaign with Western Union found that high-attention placements and formats drove 4.7 times more transactions compared to low-attention formats, wrestling in a 24% lower CPA. With this technology, marketers are able to inform planning choices around ad formats and publishers that command human-eye attention within uncluttered, optimized environments, aligning the needs of brands, publishers and users for better advertising experiences.

Best Subscription or Membership Product

VGTV

Program

VGTV, which produces video for Norway's VG newspaper, created and branded a new content universe for young girls, and in the course of it, the program's podcast became a book and then a TV series. Identifying that there was a lack of well-produced content for Gen Z, the team hired influencer Linnéa Myhre. In the new podcast, 'Give Me All the Details,' Myhre takes a deep dive into Norway's juiciest celebrity stories and happenings in the entertainment world. The stories are analyzed in an intriguing true-crime style. 'Give Me All the Details' quickly established itself at the top of the podcast lists. VGTV published behind-the-scenes content and extra material on a connected Instagram account, and Myhre engaged with the fans. Exploring spin-offs, VGTV next created a coffee table book featuring hundreds of pictures, extra material and uncut podcast scripts. The team next launched a TV series. In 'When We Ruled the Internet,' Myhre invites six bloggers to a beautiful castle, where they open up about money, regrets, and ups and downs in their careers and celebrity lives. And the universe keeps expanding; next up is a board game.

Insights

'Give Me All the Details' established VGTV's position as a distributor of innovative content designed to target Millennials — 90% of the audience is women; 70% are aged 25–34 years and totaling 60,000 listeners per week. The book was the first published by VGTV and a new source of income, selling nearly 6,000 copies and landing on the top-10 bestseller list for several weeks at Ark, Norway's biggest bookstore. As for 'When We Ruled the Internet,' the team has logged close to 10,000 subscription sales and more than 1 million views. Significantly, 91% of those who bought a subscription were women, a sign that the campaign is reaching its target audience (typically, 40% of the subscribers are women).

Best Publisher Platform | The Ozone Project

THE OZONE PROJECT

Program

Created by four leading UK publishers, News UK, The Guardian, The Telegraph and Reach, Ozone is a digital advertising platform designed to help publishers build a more sustainable digital future. The platform, built with flexibility in mind, offers advertisers easy, transparent campaign activations at scale across premium publisher websites. Powering both the demand and supply sides of the business, the platform offers three routes to revenue growth — Managed Demand, Revenue Manager and Biddable Management — with each part designed to put control back in publishers' hands while bringing them closer to their advertiser partners.

Insights

With the platform's design coming from major publishers, it prioritizes maximizing the value publishers can retain from their inventory and data. So far, it's delivering revenue solutions of over 250 UK domains, where it has increased total publisher revenues by over 50% and has driven 65% yield growth from existing programmatic business. With its centralized solutions, the platform has reduced the overall resource footprint required of publishers and has reduced data leakage events by 75%, thanks to its server-side connections. As the platform expands outside the UK, it's creating global industry change.

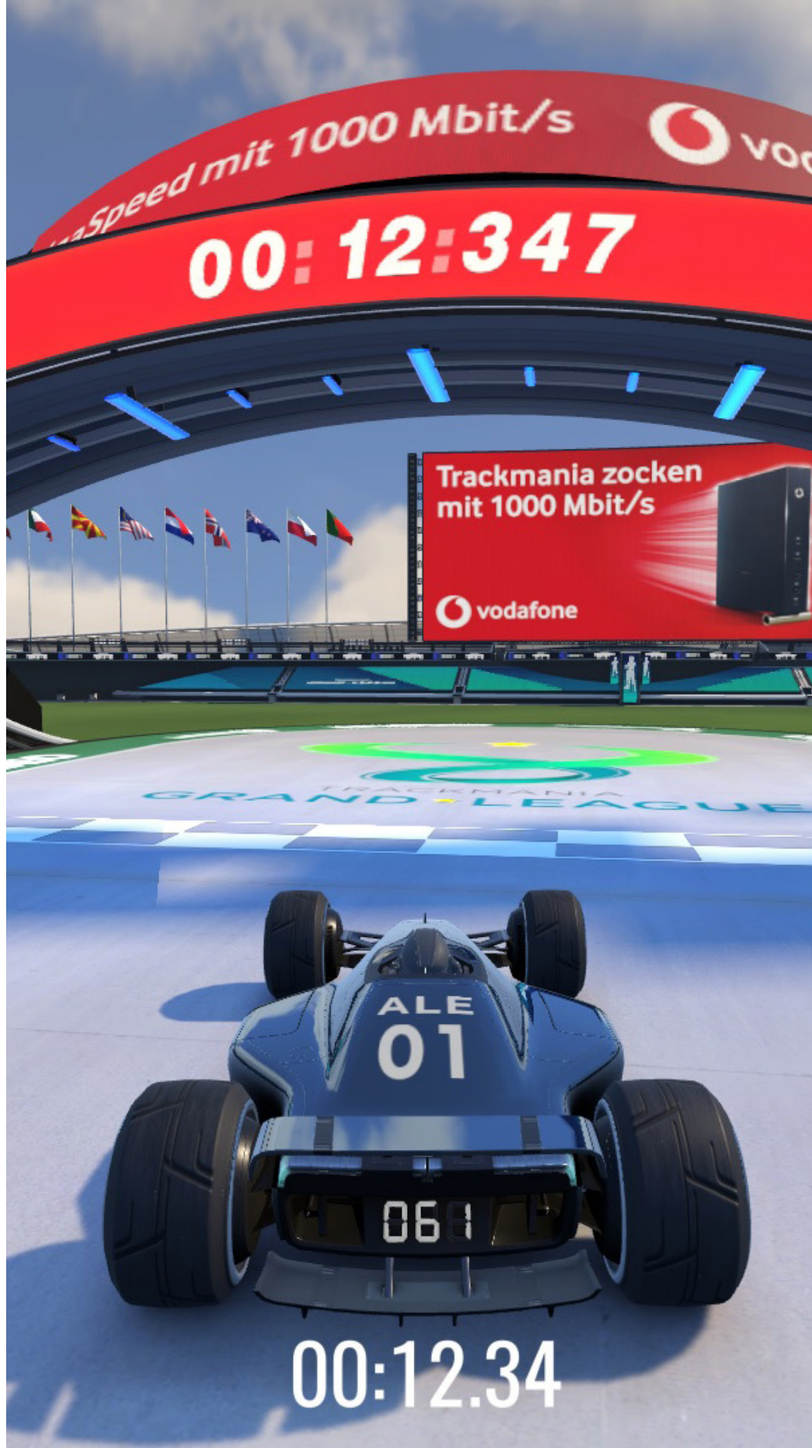
Best Ad Tech Platform | Anzu.io

Program

Anzu was the first-ever, cross-platform programmatic in-game ad solution, allowing advertisers to blend highly engaging, non-intrusive banner and video ads into mobile, PC, console and Roblox games. The platform combines non-intrusive in-game brand ads directly into the gameplay, where they appear on 3D in-game objects where users might expect to see them in the real world. With the platform, advertisers can non-intrusively reach over 3 billion global players, while developers can monetize their games to enhance the overall experience. In partnership with Moat, Anzu includes a first-to-market viewability measurement for cross-platform in-game ads, ensuring that advertisers pay only for IAB-recognized viewable impressions.

Insights

Anzu's innovative technology and collaborations enable advertisers to get the most out of their investment with fraud detection, advanced targeting, brand uplift measurement and analytics. The company is committed to putting gamers first and ensuring that the gameplay experience is never compromised. Using the platform, Klara achieved an ad viewability rate of 95% compared to the 64% average and a VCR of 81.2% compared to the 56% market average. Similarly, Samsung saw 94% average viewability for an in-game campaign promoting a new smartphone compared to a 50% market average, 21% more ad recognition than average and a 3% memorability boost.



Best Custom Advertising | Havas Media Global

havas
media group

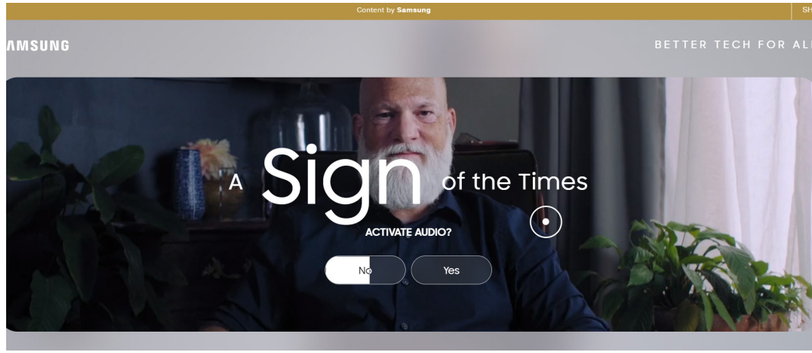
Program

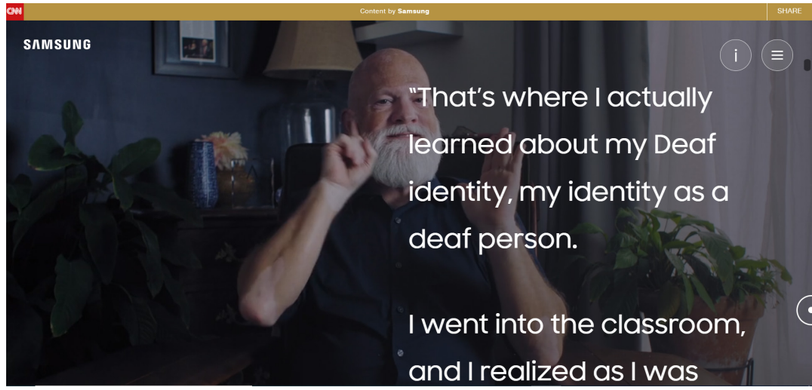
Partnering with Roblox, a platform that is currently at the forefront of the rapidly growing metaverse industry (with 43.2 million daily users), Hyundai and the Roblox team created a meaningful connection with their young target audience, as over half of U.S. kids and teens under the age of 16 played on the platform in 2020. The teams created a game on Roblox and called it 'The Hyundai Mobility Adventure.' HMA is a role-playing game that allows players to drive around in Hyundai vehicles, customize their avatars and participate with friends in various events around the town. The media plan was based on influencers, critical as they have a strong gaming community on Discord and YouTube. The teams created six pieces of content showcasing four influencers playing HMA. Furthermore, coinciding with the release of 'Spider-Man: No Way Home,' Spider-Man creative was integrated to produce yet another experience — 'Hyundai X Spider-Man.

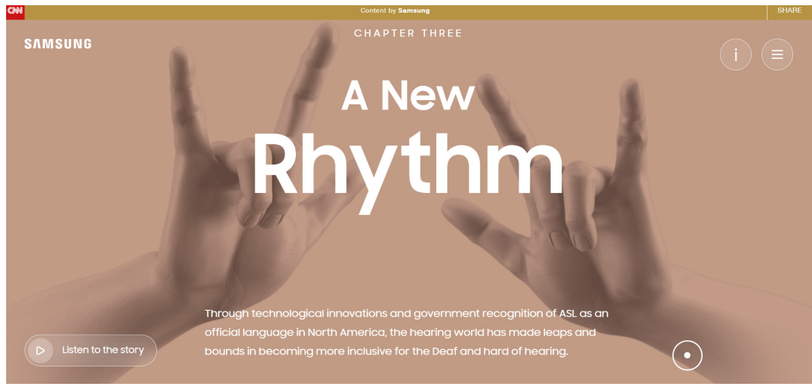
Insights

The Roblox activation reached more than 1 million players through in-game adverts and influencer content. In the follow-up phase, after launching successfully, 'Hyundai X Spider-Man' achieved 7.2 billion impressions and 8.2 million clicks during the campaign period. The campaign was also featured in dozens of news articles from outlets such as Ad Age and Marketing Interactive. The six influencer content instances generated 405,717 views, 57,634 clicks and 246,188 gameplays.

Best Site Design | CNN Create + Samsung







Program

To help showcase that technology, even QLED TVs could break down barriers for audiences with sense-oriented disabilities, Samsung partnered with CNNIC's brand studio, Create, for 'Better Tech For All.' This branded content series acknowledged that basic TV features could prove challenging for the hard of hearing, deaf, people with low vision and the blind and showed how Samsung's best-in-class TVs are accessible to all. With three sites dedicated to separate user journeys, real-life examples provided insight into how hard-of-hearing people, for example, can watch TV through innovative Samsung technology.

Insights

The 'Signed with Love' site video content adds accessibility with the story signed by David Cowan, a deaf sign-language interpreter, as well as subtitles and audio. Custom 3D modeled hands in various sign language poses were also added to reiterate critical messages. This attention to detail highlights that 90% of websites do not offer full accessibility, and it was crucial to Samsung that it provided full accessibility in its campaign. The two-minute average dwell time on this site further demonstrates that the content captures the audience's attention and that they were spending time engaging with the site and David Cowan's story.

Best Podcast | The Economist Group

The Economist

Program

As one of the world's most widely recognized and well-read current affairs publications, The Economist produces short- and long-form videos and weekly podcasts, including 'The Intelligence,' a daily current-affairs podcast featuring the most extensive network of international correspondents in its category. 'The Intelligence' publishes each weekday and provides a fresh perspective on the events shaping the world, presented by journalist Jason Palmer and described by listeners as a podcast staple and consistently insightful. In 2021 it covered the latest on climate change, the continued response to the coronavirus and the economic upheavals in a world rocked by supply chain disruption and the continued cost of the China-U.S. trade war.

Insights

'The Intelligence' podcast launched in 2019, so to continue its growth and reach, the staff encouraged correspondents to record in the field, aimed to produce more "themed" shows and explore more of the human stories behind the headlines. One way they accomplished this was by covering parts of the world where democratic freedoms have long been threatened or are already firmly suppressed. 'The Intelligence' featured the Communist Party's tightening grip on Hong Kong and events within China itself, including the Party's centenary celebration.

Best Video Campaign

Social Chain + Amazon Prime Video UK

Program

Amazon Prime Video UK's Original series with TikTok, 'Just So You Know,' sought to amplify LGBTQ+ celebration and was directed, written and the soundtrack composed by three outstanding LGBTQ+ contributors to the creative arts. To promote this series, the objective with paid amplification was relatively simple: Get as many people as possible to watch the series. The campaign reached a high volume of users with great efficiency, amplifying the message of LGBTQ+ celebration beyond the community's safe walls. The campaign over-delivered on its return and performance. The talent actively engaged and shared the campaign content on their channels without being contracted, resulting in added value views and engagement extending across platforms.

Insights

The campaign surrounding the 'Just So You Know' series gained multiple pieces of national media coverage, both online and in print, widening the campaign's reach outside of TikTok. The sentiment from the campaign within the LGBTQ+ community was high, proving that Amazon Prime Video's storytelling ability authentically shone a spotlight on the community in a much-needed way. Within just two weeks, the series had over 17 million views.

Best Use of Video

Social Chain + Amazon Prime Video UK

Program

As the UK arm of Amazon's on-demand streaming service, Amazon Prime Video UK created the first-ever Amazon-TikTok Original series, 'Just So You Know.' This was inspired by season two of Prime Video's hit TV show, Modern Love and told the love stories of a new generation with modern talent replacing traditional celebrities. Six top LGBTQ+ creators recited video letters to the loves of their lives over footage of their chosen art form, whether that was choreography or drill music. The series achieved over 17 million views and over 230,000 active engagements within two weeks of going live.

Insights

Prime Video UK demonstrated its storytelling ability on the small screen with real people while shining a spotlight on the LGBTQ+ community and the love stories they have to share but are rarely given a chance to. The 'Just So You Know' series depicted what connection means to Gen Z and proved that love in the time of TikTok often supersedes the traditional romance seen on the big screen. With 14% of TikTok users defining themselves as LGBTQ+ — more than the average internet users — and 75% saying the platform is a place they can openly express themselves, it was clear TikTok was the right place for this series.

Best Use of Social

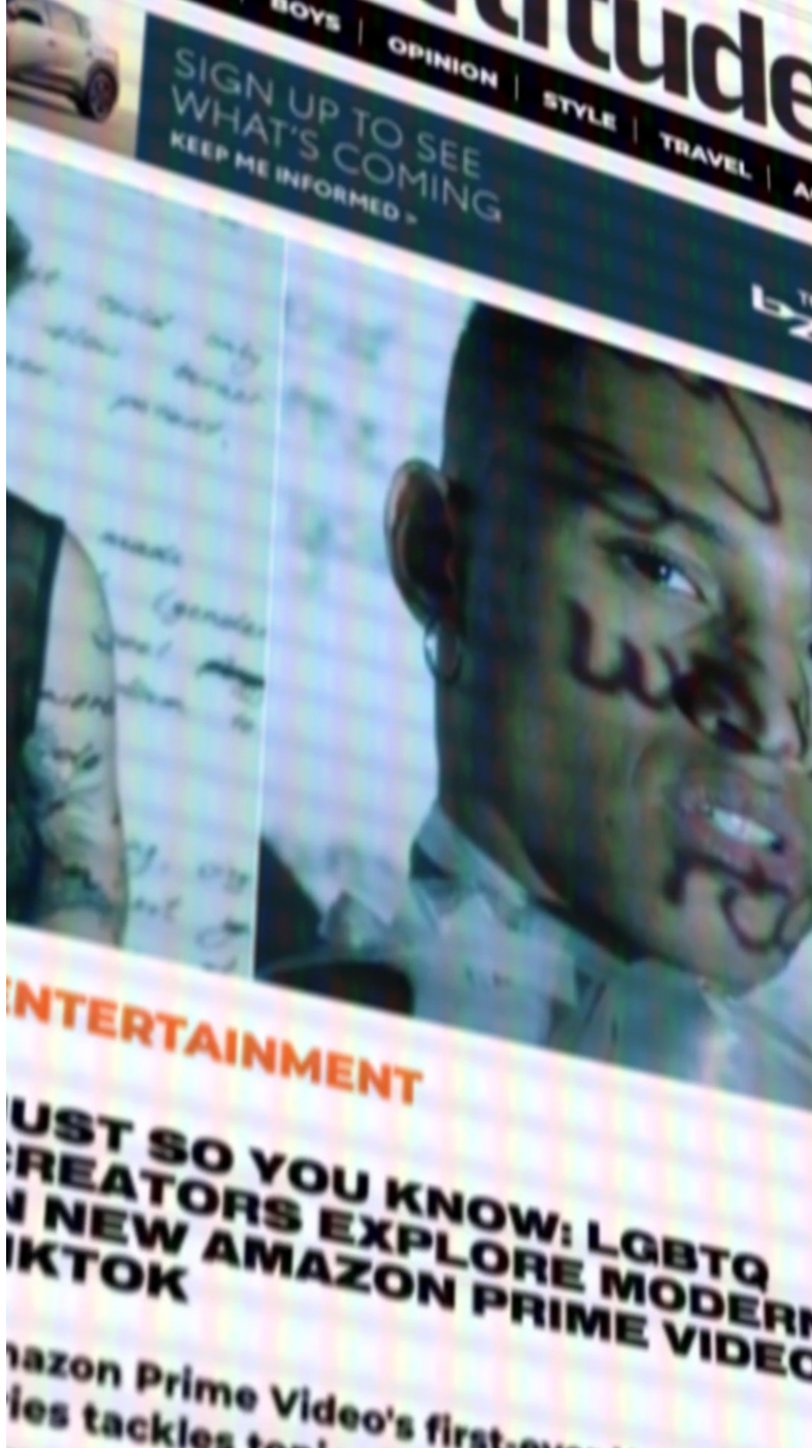
Social Chain + Amazon Prime Video UK

Program

As the creator of the first-ever Amazon-TikTok Original series, 'Just So You Know,' Prime Video UK knew that a video series specific to social media was where the future of entertainment was moving. And with this series being a new generational spin on the hit show 'Modern Love,' it was only fitting to appear on a platform where much of the LGBTQ+ community felt at home. Three out of four users say TikTok is a place where they can openly express themselves, and 14% of TikTok users define themselves as LGBTQ+ — more than average internet users. With this in mind, Prime Video UK employed an aggressive paid amplification strategy to get as many eyes on the series as possible. Following the campaign for 'Just So You Know,' Prime Video UK's TikTok account saw an uplift in overall engagement of 11%.

Insights

By depicting what connection means to Gen Z, this series highlights that love in the time of TikTok often supersedes the traditional romance seen on the big screen. For the LGBTQ+ community, this series highlighted the love stories they are so rarely allowed to share.



Best Branded Content Program

News UK + Google

Program

Together, Google and News UK created The Funday Times Discover — an integrated campaign across print, digital and social, demonstrating how Google was helping families make the most of their post-lockdown summer with innovative and fun technology in a trusted environment. The supplement was released in four installments throughout June, encouraging families to get out into nature and enjoy the summer. The Funday Times Discover featured puzzles, quizzes and fun facts and enabled families to interact with every page using Google's features. For example, Google's AR animals could appear in your living room, while Google Lens allowed families to discover more about plants.

Insights

When many families were cooped up at home, this campaign was a fun way to encourage families with young children to make the most of their post-lockdown summer. The supplement aimed to inspire and educate children and adults with a unique and futuristic experience, seamlessly integrating Google's innovative features into the content to create a dynamic showcase of how to transform curiosity into exciting first-hand experiences, making learning a fun, new experience for many. The Funday Times Discover was well received by readers, with 99% taking action, 76% being happy with the partnership, and 68% wanting to find out more about Google.

Best Brand Partnership

International Paralympic Committee + Allianz

INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE

Allianz

Program

To mark 15 years of partnership, the International Paralympic Committee collaborated with Allianz to provide a platform for Para athletes to discuss their empowering and inspirational stories. The result, 'A Winning Mindset,' is a podcast series like no other. The Paralympic Games and the athletes at the heart of the episodes receive global awareness and worldwide adoration every two years, driving a cultural shift in how disability is perceived and providing listeners with crucial learnings that they can apply to their personal and professional lives. The podcast touches on motivation, well-being, support networks and teamwork. New for season two, the collaboration recognizes both the athletes and the coaches, guides, family and friends who sparked their confidence along the way. In an increasingly divided world, the focus is on having the right team while bringing to life Allianz's brand promise of "Confidence in Tomorrow."

Insights

The stories that 'A Winning Mindset' carries resonate with audiences ready for a shift in perspective. Since its launch, it's earned more than 142,000 listens across numerous podcast platforms, with 4,700 listeners per episode on average. 'A Winning Mindset' is also reaching more than 50 million podcast posts across the Paralympic Games' social platforms. At the same time, Facebook and Instagram have hosted more than 27 million video views on Allianz's social media channels. Meanwhile, over 25 Allianz markets shared the podcast on internal and external channels. As a brand awareness play, the team has taken gold, again, in its new season's efforts.

Best Story | ITV News

itv NEWS

Program

On December 7, 2021, ITV News revealed a leaked recording of staff at No. 10 Downing Street joking about a Christmas party thrown during the lockdown. Despite frenzied speculation about Christmas parties at No. 10 following an initial story by The Mirror, no evidence emerged, and government officials held firm that there had been no parties. The ITV team had had the video in question for some time, but due to its sensitive nature and the need for a robust public interest defense to run it, they were waiting for the right time and opportunity to act. With each denial that emanated out of No. 10, it became clear the video had the potential not only to blow a hole in the official narrative. After great diligence and legal consideration, it became clear that the ITV team would need to move fast. As well as the main article, which documented the most damning parts of a mock press conference, as well as retracing what restrictions were in place around that time, ITV wanted to add depth to the coverage with a timeline explainer around some of the Christmas parties and events as well as the government denials. The social strategy around the story was to tease the video and drive as many people as possible to the ITV News website.

Insights

The video embedded in the tweet has garnered 10.7 million views so far. The tweet was retweeted 8,000 times, and the story became the most read on ITV's website with 1.58 million views with a further 900,000 via Apple News. Of the traffic to the website, more than 50% of it came via Twitter, exceeding the typical referral rates from that platform. The following day Allegra Stratton, a former colleague who'd been at the center of the video, was the first to resign, yet the impact has yet to play out fully. The scandal has already cost several people their jobs but could cost the Prime Minister his post.

Best First-Party Data Strategy

News UK

Program

Nucleus is News UK's first-party data strategy, aiming to integrate and make actionable the first-party data from the organization's diverse brand portfolio to enable greater personalization and content recommendation. Nucleus unifies previously disparate data sets, allowing News UK to leverage its first-party content and customer data alongside campaign data to serve customers and advertising partners better. Nucleus also unlocks a single view of the customer, who they are and their unique behaviors across all of News UK's Sun, Times and Wireless touchpoints. It provides additional learning — from customer behavior, previous campaigns, recommendations for in-flight optimization and measuring ad effectiveness to creating new opportunities for clients and internal teams.

Insights

Utilizing the single view of the customer, Nucleus Content Recommendation has enabled News UK to create its recommendation tools for consumer-facing websites, enabling the business to suggest more personalized content, advertising and offers, thereby increasing retention and engagement. Furthermore, the insights generated by the Nucleus tools Discover, Plan and Measure led News UK to develop Nucleus Emotional Targeting. This type of contextual targeting allows brands to advertise based on the emotional context in which they sit, resulting in response rates that are twice the average of standard campaigns and in line with the best demographic targeting. News UK has lowered its dependency on third-party cookies by showing the value of advanced contextual advertising.

Journalist of the Year

Paul Brand — ITV News

itv NEWS

Program

Paul Brand is UK Editor for ITV News. His brief includes providing analysis and context to major domestic issues while providing new details and angles that will change established narratives and frame perspectives through which these stories are seen. He has covered issues and broken stories on subjects as wide-ranging as conversion therapy, the care sector, Covid passes, security policy and several political stories. Brand garnered international attention this year when he blew the Partygate story open after obtaining a secret recording of No 10 Downing Street staff gathering indoors during the lockdown.

Insights

The Partygate story sent shockwaves worldwide, leading to Allegra Stratton's resignation. Brand has continued to lead the way with a string of other exclusives that blow holes in the No.10 position. The pickup, engagement and reaction to his first scoop were immediate and palpable. Every rival news organization ran the story, and its actual impact has yet to play out fully. Beyond Partygate, Paul has delivered a series of agenda-setting exclusives across a range of national reports, constantly breaking on digital-first and using his own platforms as well as the ITV News accounts to deliver maximum impact.

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il proves Downing Street staff
ks party at height of lockdown

CORONAVIRUS | DOWNING STREET | BORIS JOHNSON | Monday 10

aul Brand
K Editor

UK Editor Paul Brand reports on the email providing the first evidence
he Number 10 garden

Best Newsletter

The Telegraph — Front Page

Program

Helmed by a dedicated team of two, Front Page is The Telegraph's most significant newsletter, published twice daily during the week and every weekend morning. The newsletter is a true workhorse in catering to two distinct audiences — paying subscribers and registered users who have provided an email address in exchange for limited access to onsite content and ungated newsletters. For registered users, the newsletter acts as a virtual shop window. It builds brand awareness by offering prospects a glimpse of The Telegraph's content and encourages conversion to full access to the publisher's commentary, analysis and reporting, onsite and in-app.

Insights

Front Page has driven a strong response, especially among new users, drawing 15% of newsletter sign-ups on registration and building audiences for other newsletters, driving 2 in 5 sign-ups from newsletters. Average open rates increased 2.3 percentage points year-over-year and unique clicks by 5%. The Telegraph's hardest working newsletter for acquisition last year generated more than half the total subscriptions from newsletters. Targeting registered users with optimized promotions increased subscriptions from the offer link by 47% year-over-year, and post-segmentation, the opt-out rate for subscribers dropped 39% year-over-year.

Editorial Team of the Year

POLITICO Europe

POLITICO

Profile

POLITICO Europe covers the people, power and politics in Europe. The newsroom's goal is to disrupt the traditional media landscape and speak to the people making decisions about politics and policy in Brussels, London and beyond. Its coverage is fiercely impartial, bold and balanced and reaches the most influential people in the political bubble. Its journalism lives online; in POLITICO Pro, our real-time policy intelligence service for professionals; in daily morning newsletters; in print; and comes to life with POLITICO Live.

Impact

Over the past year, POLITICO Europe's newsroom's investigation revealed shortcomings in Amazon's handling of millions of people's data contributed to their receiving the highest fine for privacy violations Europe has ever handed and sparked wider scrutiny of Amazon's data practices. Reporting on Slovenian leader Janez Janša's war on journalists sparked a wide-ranging debate over the state of media freedom in the country. Its newsroom was the first to report on at least 30 EU nationals detained in immigration removal centers after trying to enter the U.K. without visas or residence status. In one of its most impactful stories, POLITICO Europe also answered the most sensitive question in British public life: What will happen when Queen Elizabeth II dies? Furthermore, in January 2021, POLITICO Europe launched 'Westminster Insider,' a podcast that lifts the curtain on how Westminster works. Playbook Paris, its first long-running French language product, has quickly become a must-read for Parisian political pundits. China Direct, written by EU-China Correspondent Stuart Lau and launched in January, has additionally scrutinized the EU's relationship with China.

POLITICO

Ad Operations Team of the Year

Ozone

THE OZONE PROJECT

Profile

In January 2021, News UK became the first customer for the newly formed Ozone Publisher Operations team – News Uk being one of Ozone's founding publishers, and handing over responsibility for their display and video advertising operations to the team. Ozone responded by building a center of excellence designed to meet the demands of premium publisher advertising operations. The center model included Ozone's team of five managing a News UK sales team of more than 70 across all the publisher's media brands, understanding historical setups and documentation during a three-month transition within a work-from-home environment and identifying efficiency savings, process improvements and SLAs to meet News UK's needs. Efficiencies included consolidating setups into a single line item, saving around 10 minutes (impression goal) and 30 minutes (tenancy) per setup and creating time savings of more than 100 hours per month. These time efficiencies across all News UK operations allowed for proactive initiatives throughout 2021, including providing sales with weekly OSIs accompanied by performance commentary and creating technical Operations escalation processes to resolve issues quickly.

Impact

Reinvigorating campaign processes had a further impact, reducing the workload on News UK's sales team, which no longer had to book multiple lines while helping commercial product teams implement brand metrics and in-app video offerings. For News UK, Ozone demonstrated markedly improved results while sales grew significantly, shown by average monthly figures in March–December 2021 versus pre-change averages in January to February 2021. These include order volume lift of 63%, line items to orders efficiency ratio decreasing to 6 to 1 from 8 to 1 and Impressions handled increasing 5x to 290 million. As the go-to operational team for News UK's business, Ozone's success is echoed by the publisher expanding the team to eight members, helping drive further operational excellence for clients and partners.

THE OZONE PROJECT

BEN WALMSLEY
Commercial Director
Publishing, News UK

"As a founding partner of Ozone, News UK has been an early adopter of Ozone's unique technologies and services. In particular, and over the past fourteen months, Ozone has taken responsibility for our publisher operations function, helping us maximise return on our direct-sold digital campaigns. We've enjoyed outstanding customer service and which, together with their knowledge and expertise, makes them an incredibly valuable partner."

MELISSA SHARPINGTON
Head of Digital
The Times & The Sunday Times, News UK

"Since out-sourcing our Ad Operations business to Ozone over a year ago, making a new business fully accountable for delivering all News UK digital ad campaigns, the team, quality of work and service has grown from strength to strength. It was a big change to operationally sit away from the business, but Ozone has been fantastic at ensuring collaboration with the sales team as much as possible, resulting in our ad campaigns running as smoothly, efficiently and effectively as possible - resulting in lots of happy clients."

RUSSELL PEDRICK
Director of Digital
Wireless Group, News UK

Best Contextual Targeting Offering

News UK

Program

Brands need to reach consumers based on demographics and meaningful metrics such as content consumption. In 2021 News UK launched Nucleus, its first-party data platform, bringing together the data assets of the business' diverse brand portfolio. Nucleus identifies the emotional context of the content on the publisher's platforms via advanced natural language processing. Research by Dr. Paul Dolan shows that emotionally arousing content increases ad engagement by as much as 45%. Data generated by Nucleus shows that specific product verticals perform better within different emotional context environments. For example, an adventurous emotional context is conducive to luxury brand advertising, while an amused context is suited to retail advertising.

Insights

To demonstrate the power of Nucleus, News UK ran simultaneous campaigns on behalf of a leading luxury automotive brand. One used standard demographic targeting on News UK's platforms, and one used a thrilling emotional context based on the advertising creative. The post-campaign analysis demonstrated that the click-through rates for both traditional and emotion-based targeting were 2x above News UK's campaign benchmarks on average. For News UK, emotion targeting unlocks a broader range of inventory for clients. It also challenges the stereotype of demography, helping clients reduce their reliance on the small, in-demand and hard-to-reach segments. Using emotion allowed News UK to access new, more scalable audiences, with no competitor messaging and no loss of performance.

Publishing Executive of the Year

Sarah Watson — director of product, PinkNews

PinkNews

Profile

As director of product at PinkNews, Sarah Watson has revolutionized the LGBTQ+ media brand's interaction with users, placing them at the heart of its content. With a luxury fashion and tech background, Watson's leadership has enabled PinkNews to understand its audience and users better and seamlessly navigate the publisher's ecosystem. Throughout 2021, Watson has focused on upgrading systems and services and future-proofing business for the next generation. Watson achieved this by focusing her team's strategy on three pillars — data, navigation and apps. Watson's work began with centralizing all PinkNews's customer data. Simultaneously, she upgraded its email service provider and led the re-design of all email communications, elevating the newsletter offering to cater to the publisher's most loyal and engaged readers. Coming from a mobile background, Watson also led a project to update the PinkNews navigation across the website, creating consistency across platforms and improving the overall user experience. Her most cherished project at PinkNews has been the relaunch of its iOS app, which has seen tremendous growth throughout 2021.

Impact

As a result of Sarah Watson's work to optimize the user experience of its website, traffic has grown from 2 million to almost 4 million new users per month. Upgrading its email provider and newsletter redesign has seen the delivery rate increase to 98% from 60%. Open rates now sit at around 30% — the industry average is 22% — and click-through rates have exceeded 8% (the industry average is 2%). Drawing on her past experiences at Net-a-Porter and Facebook, Sarah incorporated omnichannel features, such as saving articles so that readers can move seamlessly from app to web. Consequently, PinkNews has seen its bounce rate drop by 10%, and page views increase to 123.1 million in 2021 from 82.15 million in 2020. Following the success of its iOS apps, PinkNews also launched an Android version in 2021.

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