

E-1503-670

Refreshing the Legend: How Zlatý Bažant Radler Rode Back to Fame

| Product | Category Entered |
|--------------|---|
| Zlatý Bažant | Best of Europe: Seasonal/Current Events |

We are looking forward to seeing your work in this year's competition. As you work on your submission, you may wish to download the **Entry Form template** which can be used as a guide when crafting your submission, allowing for easy collaboration with team members and partner companies. The template outlines the Written Entry Form, along with tips to consider when answering each question. Before submitting your entry, responses to each question must be copied into this entry portal.

ELIGIBILITY.

To be eligible, work must have run in Europe and data must be isolated to the country(ies) in Europe presented in the case. The entered work must have run at some point between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2025. Work that ran after the cut-off period may not be submitted. Provide results for the eligibility time period, as well as results and data prior to the eligibility time period that will help judges evaluate the success within the time period. In addition, results that fall after the end of the eligibility period that are directly tied to the work submitted are fine to submit through the entry period. Test efforts are not eligible.

Best of Europe - Effie Partner Track: Gold & Grand winners from 2024 Effie programs in the Effie Europe region (see eligible markets in the 2025 Effie Europe Entry Kit) may enter. To enter, case must have run during the 2025 Effie Europe eligibility period and should provide updated work and results for the new eligibility timing.

Best of Europe – non-Effie markets: Markets without an Effie program are welcome to participate. Any effective marketing effort that ran in a country in the Effie Europe region that you can tell a great results story about should be considered. Specifically, any campaign that ran between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2025 may be submitted.

Review full eligibility information at the [Effie Europe website](#).

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS & REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION

- Failing to adhere to the Effie Eligibility rules. Data presented must be isolated to Europe, and the Effie eligibility period is 01/01/24 - 31/03/25. Results that illustrate the effectiveness of the case can be collected outside of the eligibility period but must be tied directly to the marketing activity within the eligibility time frame. Results directly tied to work are eligible throughout the entry season (no date cut-off).
- Entry does not meet category definition requirements.
- Agency names/logos are published in the entry form or in the creative materials. Do not include any agency names in your sources – this includes agency names other than your own.
- Data not sourced.
- Including screen grabs or other images of your creative elements in your written entry form.
- Directing Judges to External Websites.
- Missing Translation.
- Violating Creative Example (Reel, Images) Rules.

TOP TIPS

We are in the business of marketing. Your entry should be written with your audience, Effie judges, in mind. Judges are your industry peers. Address questions they may have within your responses. Entrants are encouraged to ask colleagues who don't work on the brand to review the entry. Limit industry jargon and define all industry terms.

RESOURCES

Review the key resources before starting your entry:

- **ENTRY KIT**
- **EFFECTIVE ENTRY GUIDE**
- **EFFIE EFFECTIVENESS EXPLAINED**
- **CASE STUDIES**
- **MORE RESOURCES**

ENTRY DETAILS

NATIONAL EFFIE PROGRAM (IF APPLICABLE)

List the Effie Program

in the Effie Europe

*region where the
campaign won Gold or
Grand Effie (if
applicable).*

Effie Slovak Republic

ORIGINAL CATEGORY (IF APPLICABLE)

List the original

*category in which the
campaign won a Gold
or Grand Effie in.*

Instant impact

Brand Name

*List the specific brand
name here (not the
parent company
name)*

Zlatý Bažant

Brand Description

*Provide a brief (1-5
words) description of
the type of
product/service
entered. Do not
include the brand
name. Examples:
Airline; Cosmetic,
Credit Card;
Streaming Service.*

Non alcoholic radler beer

Dates Effort Ran (Total)

List the start/end dates of the effort, even if it goes beyond the Effie eligibility period.

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| Date From | 2024-06-01 |
| Date To | 2024-10-13 |

Efforts that are ongoing should leave the end date blank in the Entry Portal.

Dates presented in this case

List the start/end dates for the effort, as it pertains to the data presented in this case.

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| Date From | 2024-06-01 |
| Date To | 2024-10-13 |

Regional Classification

Select all that apply.

Please note that if your effort is Multinational, your entry must be isolated to adhere to the eligibility parameters for your Effie program.

National

Countries Presented in This Case

Please select only the countries presented in this case.

Slovakia

Please indicate all countries where this work ran.

Slovakia

Industry Sector

Classify your brand/product by one of the available industry sectors, or choose Other.

Food & Beverages (Non-Alcoholic)

Industry/Category Situation

Select one.

In Decline

MARKET / LOCAL NUANCE BACKGROUND

Please explain any relevant cultural or local trends, unique to your market(s), that generally shape the marketing environment and/or influence audience response to marketing efforts. (For example, if the government controls all the major media outlets, this may mean that the audience regards products/services they see advertised in this media as having some form of government approval.) Be sure to explain why these factors are relevant. You can also use this space to address the competitive landscape in your market(s). This general background will help the judges better understand and

Slovakia's beer market has been in long-term stagnation, with radlers comprising 14% of total volume—a significant share compared to neighboring countries. Zlatý Bažant Radler 0,0, the original Slovak radler brand, had lost cultural relevance and faced a sharp four-year sales decline, competing against Birell, an aggressive, high-spending rival with 52% larger media budget. Consumers, disillusioned by pessimistic socio-political sentiment (Eurobarometer 2023), increasingly favored lighthearted, optimistic brands. To regain emotional connection and category leadership, ZBR needed to reclaim its role as a culturally relevant brand in Slovak life. The answer: a bold, culturally resonant summer campaign centered on two beloved Slovak symbols - the nostalgic “water bike” and national sports icon, cyclist Peter Sagan.

evaluate the more specific story you tell in the remainder of your entry.

This question should be crafted with the judges in mind. While judges are European marketers, they may not be familiar with the unique nuances within the market(s) in which your case ran. Provide them with any context that will help them better understand your local challenges and marketplace.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GIVE THE JUDGES AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CASE THEY ARE ABOUT TO READ BY PROVIDING A SUMMARY FOR EACH OF THE ITEMS BELOW. A ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY IS RECOMMENDED FOR EACH LINE.

The Challenge:

(Maximum per line: 20 words) **ZBR was losing category leadership and cultural relevance after four years of sales decline amid aggressive, high-spend competition pressure.**

The Insight:

(Maximum per line: 20 words) Slovaks crave humor and optimism, especially in summer, and to emotionally connect with nostalgic icons and national heroes.

The Strategic Idea/Build:

(Maximum per line: 20 words) Reposition ZBR as a “Legendary Slovak Refreshment” by reviving two icons: the water bike and cyclist Peter Sagan.

Bringing the Strategy & Idea to Life:

(Maximum per line: One sentence - 20 words) A cross-media summer campaign combining nostalgic imagery, TikTok-relevant music, emotionally resonant storytelling and national hero.

The Results:

(Maximum per line: 20 words) +21% sales growth, #1 category growth position reclaimed, record brand equity and persuasion—all on 5% lower budget compared to last year.

Why is this entry an outstanding example of effective marketing in this Effie entry category?

Summarise your case by focusing on how your results related directly back to your challenge and objectives. When entering multiple categories, it is important to customise your response for each category. If judges have questions about your eligibility in this category, they will refer to this response.

(Maximum: 150 words)

In a category ruled by function, with nation clouded by pessimism, we proved that optimism and nostalgia can beat even the biggest beer spender.

And all we needed was one summer.

ZBR reversed a four-year sales decline with a +21% YOY lift, reclaiming category leadership growth from its biggest - and 52.6% higher spending competitor. Despite a significantly lower media budget, the campaign delivered record breaking results in brand persuasion, emotional impact, and consumption preference—all within a concentrated two-month summer burst and a follow-up wave in September.

In a declining category, this case proves that culturally resonant storytelling and emotionally led branding can outperform bigger spenders, restore relevance, and drive both short- and long-term growth.

SECTION 1: CHALLENGE, CONTEXT & OBJECTIVES

- 23.3% OF TOTAL SCORE

This section covers your strategic business context for your marketing activity, alongside your key business challenge and objectives.

Please provide the necessary context on your industry category, competitors, and brand/asset so the judges, including those unfamiliar with your brand/category, can evaluate your entry. Outline why your business challenge was the right opportunity to grow and the degree of ambition represented by your objectives.

1A. Before your effort began, what was the state of the brand's business and the overall category in which it competes? What was the strategic challenge for your business? Provide context on the degree of difficulty of this challenge.

(Maximum: 400 words; 3 charts/visuals)

Zlatý Bažant Radler 0,0 (ZBR) was Slovakia's first radler and once a national favorite, pioneering the category since 2011. But by 2023, ZBR had lost both market leadership and emotional resonance. Sales had declined year after year: -4.7% in 2021, -17.9% in 2022, and -16.8% in 2023 (Source: Nielsen, 2020–2023). This decline was not isolated, as the category leader, ZBR's fall also dragged down the entire radler segment, which represents 14% of the Slovak beer market.

The category was under intense pressure from its main competitor, Birell, which executed aggressive, high-spend, year-round campaigns. **Birell became the dominant voice in the market, achieving the highest share of voice across the entire beer category — not just among radlers, while ZBR fell to 8th place in media spend** (Source: DDS, Media GRPs, 2023–2024).

Compounding the problem was the cultural environment. Slovakia has ranked among the most pessimistic EU countries in recent Eurobarometer surveys. Amid political disillusionment and economic stagnation, Slovak consumers sought optimism, humor, and escapism and gravitated toward brands that delivered joy.

ZBR's prior communication focused on rational product features: no alcohol, no sugar, and natural ingredients. This functional approach lacked emotional resonance, particularly in a market where people craved levity and optimism. ZBR had become forgettable. The brand's once-legendary status was eroding, especially among younger audiences who had no emotional tie to its origins.

In this context, the strategic challenge was enormous:

- Reverse a severe and sustained sales decline,
- Compete with a high-spending rival with year-round visibility,
- Reclaim the brand's "legendary" status in a culturally meaningful way,
- Reconnect with multiple audience generations in a single campaign.

And we had to achieve this within a **narrow seasonal window** — summer, when radlers are most consumed. And with a **lower media budget** than our competitor.

1B. WHAT WERE THE BUSINESS, MARKETING AND CAMPAIGN/ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES THAT YOU SET TO ADDRESS YOUR CHALLENGE? WHAT WERE THE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS) SET AGAINST EACH OBJECTIVE? PROVIDE SPECIFIC NUMBERS/PERCENTAGES FOR EACH AND BENCHMARKS WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

RESPONSE FORMAT

List each objective individually.

- *We have allowed for:*
 - one key business objective (required)
 - up to 3 Marketing (Customer) and Activity (Comms.) objectives (1 required, 3 maximum for both types).
- *If you had fewer marketing and activity objectives, that is fine, please leave the fields blank.*
- *For each objective, provide brief context for why you chose it, state the KPIs and benchmarks.*

Unsure which objective type to select? [View guidance here.](#)

Business Objective

Objective #1 should
be your primary
campaign objective,

Reference 1

then you may list up to three supporting objectives.

For each objective, you may include up to three charts/graphs.

Objective - Overview & KPI

State your objective here.
(Max: 30 words)

Reverse four-year sales decline and achieve YOY growth in volume.

Rationale - Why the objective was selected and what is the benchmark?

(Max: 75 words, 3 charts/graphs)

After four consecutive years of decline—and a sharp -16.8% drop in 2023 alone—reversing the sales trajectory became a critical survival goal for ZBR. The Slovak radler category was stagnating, and the brand faced an aggressive competitor with 52% more media spend. In this context, simply stabilizing sales would have been a strong result. However, ZBR aimed higher: to achieve a full turnaround.

Measurement - How did you plan to measure it?

(Maximum: 30 words)

Planned to measure YOY volume growth in 2024 vs. 2023, with a target of at least +10% increase.

Tagging - What keywords best describe your objective type?

(1 Required. No Maximum)

Volume (growth/maintenance/easing decline/volume share)

Marketing Objectives

1

Objective - Overview & KPI

State your objective here.
(Max: 30 words)

Restore ZBR's position as "radler I drink most often" by +8% (2pp).

Rationale – Why the objective was selected & what is the benchmark?

(Max: 75 words, 3 charts/graphs) The clearest indicator of brand loyalty in the category is frequency of consumption, being the radler “consumed most often.” This had dropped sharply, especially among Gen Y.

As a heritage brand, ZBR needed to restore habitual consumption to reclaim category leadership. Using last year’s brand usage score (down 2pp) as a benchmark, our goal was a +2pp. Achieving this would signal repeat purchase intent, and return ZBR to being the radler chosen most often.

Measurement - How did you plan to measure it?

(Maximum: 30 words) Consumer survey tracking brand preference by Kantar

Tagging - What keywords best describe your objective type?

- You may have more than one objective of the same type.
- Unsure which objective type to select? View guidance here.

Consideration

2

Objective - Overview & KPI

State your objective here. Increase brand equity by driving +10-point uplift in Kantar scores for “Meaningful,” “Different,” and “Enjoyment.”

(Max: 30 words)

Rationale – Why the objective was selected & what is the benchmark?

(Max: 75 words, 3 charts/graphs) Kantar benchmark scores for Meaningful, Different, and Enjoyment had been stagnant in 2023 and needed uplift for long-term brand strength. We didn't track Salient since it has been super high for years.

Measurement - How did you plan to measure it?

(Maximum: 30 words) Kantar Brand Attributes Tracking

Tagging - What keywords best describe your objective type?

- You may have more than one objective of the same type.
- Unsure which objective type to select?
View guidance here.

Changes in Specific Brand Attributes

Activity Objectives

- 1

Objective - Overview & KPI

State your objective here. Drive short-term brand persuasion and campaign impact metrics up by +10 points compared to 2023 benchmarks.

(Max: 30 words)

Rationale – Why the objective was selected & what is the benchmark?

(Max: 75 words, 3 charts/graphs) To drive short-term impact in a limited summer window, we needed more than emotional resonance—we needed action. That required sharply lifting persuasion and campaign cut-through.

Strong scores in persuasion, recall, and overall impact were vital to turn brand equity gains into real business results. In 2023, these metrics had stagnated.

With little time to reverse a multi-year sales decline, we targeted a +10-point lift as proof the campaign was breaking through, converting, and driving sales.

Measurement - How did you plan to measure it?

(Maximum: 30 words) Kantar short-term effectiveness scores: impact, persuasion, short-term lift.

Tagging - What keywords best describe your objective type?

- You may have more than one objective of the same type. Advocacy / Recommendation
- Unsure which objective type to select? Sales potential

[View guidance here.](#)

Section 1: Sourcing

You must provide a source for all data and Nielsen Slovak market data, 2020–2023 DDS, Media GRPs, 2023–2024

facts presented anywhere in the entry form. The below field may only be used to list sources of data provided in your responses above, do not include any other information.

For goals - Heineken uses Kantar metrics across all markets

Recommended

Format: Use footnotes in your responses above and list each source numerically below. We recommend each source include the following information:
Source of Data/Research, Type of Data/Research, Dates Covered. Do not include agency names in your sources. [View detailed guidelines here.](#)

SECTION 2: INSIGHTS & STRATEGY - 23.3% OF TOTAL SCORE

This section covers the key building blocks of your strategy.

Explain to the judges why you chose the audience you did. Outline your key insight(s) and how they led to the strategic idea or build that addressed the business challenge the brand was facing.

2A. Define the target audience(s) you were trying to reach and explain why it was/they were relevant to the brand and the challenge. Did your audience change over time? If so, describe how and why.

Describe your audience(s) using demographics, culture, media behaviors, etc.

Explain if your target was a current audience, a new audience, or both. What perceptions or behaviors are you trying to affect or change?

Commerce & Shopper Cases: Be sure to highlight the shopper's motivations, mindset, behaviors, and shopper occasion.

(Maximum: 300 words; 3 charts/visuals)

Zlatý Bažant Radler 0,0 (ZBR) had seen consistent year-over-year volume declines. Once a category founder, the brand was no longer the top-of-mind choice. Our challenge was to revive love for ZBR — which meant reconnecting with people who once loved it but had stopped caring.

We worked with three audience tiers:

1. Primary audience: Generation Y(ages 30–45)

This was the original ZBR generation — they started drinking Radler when it launched in 2011. We weren't introducing the product; we were reigniting emotional memory. Now in a more hectic life stage, they face emotional fatigue from ongoing social and economic instability. We needed to remind them of the carefree, lighthearted summers of their youth.

2. Secondary audience: Generation X(ages 45+)

This group skews toward traditional beers but has familiarity with ZBR. **They appreciate authenticity and nostalgia**, and are less drawn to performance-based marketing. We aimed to present ZBR not as trendy, but timeless — a brand with heritage, humor and emotional credibility.

3. Tertiary audience: Generation Z(ages 18–30)

A rising generation with low alcohol consumption, often preferring functional drinks. **We positioned ZBR as a relevant non-alcoholic alternative** by tapping into their love for summer aesthetics, retro culture, and platform-native content.

Across all segments, we identified shared emotional drivers:

- **Craving for joy, lightness, and humor in an increasingly negative world**
- **Affinity for nostalgic summer experiences, especially among Slovaks**
- **Openness to local cultural references and “in-jokes”**

Rather than fragmenting the message across audiences, we developed a unifying emotional insight that could resonate differently but meaningfully, with each group. ZBR didn't need to be everything to everyone, it needed to be something deeply human and joyful to each generation.

This strategy allowed us to balance short-term persuasion with long-term brand building, while ensuring each cohort could find its own reflection in the campaign.

2B. Explain the thinking that led you to your insight(s). Clearly state your insight(s) here.

Clarify how the insight(s) were directly tied to your brand, your audience's behaviors and attitudes, your research and/or business situation. How would this unique insight(s) lead to the brand's success and how did it inform your strategic idea.

(Maximum: 300 words; 3 charts/visuals)

ZBR's problem wasn't awareness — it was affection. It had become functionally present but emotionally invisible.

Quantitative and cultural research revealed two converging forces that shaped our insight:

1. Macro-social insight

Slovaks are among the least optimistic nations in Europe (Eurobarometer 2023). Decades of political turbulence, inflation, and pandemic fatigue have made the public emotionally exhausted. Brands that entertained, surprised, or made people laugh performed better across emotional and sales metrics (System1, 2020). The public wasn't looking for performance — **they were craving positivity.**

2. Category insight

While ZBR literally translates to “cyclist,” its competitor Birell had claimed all the serious, performance-led cycling territory. So we looked at what *our people* actually did in the Slovak summer: they rode water bikes in gravel lakes with friends. Not to get fit, but to relax with friends. It wasn't a joke. It was real, joyful behavior. Water biking is iconic in Slovakia. And always done in a group.

Together, these insights gave birth to our creative springboard:

“What if we reframed cycling from a performance activity into a social summer ritual?”

And then came the cultural unlock:

What if Slovakia's most celebrated cyclist — Peter Sagan — finally conquered the last cycling frontier: the water bike?

That absurd, joyful idea didn't come from a trend report or a client brief. It came from looking at the summer habits of real people and treating them with love and wit.

2C. What was the core idea or strategic build you arrived at using your insight(s) that enabled you to pivot from challenge to solution for your brand and customer?

(Maximum: 200 words)

Our strategic platform was:

Zlatý Bažant Radler – “Legendary Slovak Refreshment.”

We weren't just selling a beverage. **We were reigniting cultural pride.** ZBR wasn't invented in Germany or brewed for global taste profiles. It was *our* Radler. To reawaken that sense of ownership, we built the brand idea around a shared, joy-filled national symbol: the water bike.

This was a form of “cycling” no competitor could credibly owned. And it was the *opposite* of performance. It was collective. Nostalgic. Low-stakes fun. Just like ZBR. The idea's strength came from how naturally it mirrored the brand's emotional purpose.

To cement this as a *legendary* moment, we added one more layer. National cycling legend Peter Sagan. Not endorsing the drink, but humorously pedaling a water bike like it was a Tour de France victory lap. It was the last cycling frontier he hadn't conquered. Until now.

This core idea connected three dots with clarity and charm:

- **It honored the emotional past (nostalgia,youth,carefree summers)**
- **It made the brand relevant in the now (humor,culture,local insight)**
- **And it opened the door to future flexibility (any social summer ritual can now be ZBR territory)**

It worked not because it was complex, but because it was simple, true, and deeply Slovak.

Section 2: Sourcing

You must provide a source for all data and facts presented anywhere in the entry form. The below field may only be used to list sources of data provided in your responses above, do not include any other information.

Eurobarometer, 2023
Orlando Wood—“Lemon”, System 1, 2020

Recommended

Format: Use footnotes in your

responses above and list each source numerically below.

We recommend each source include the following information:

Source of

Data/Research, Type of Data/Research,

Dates Covered. Do not include agency names in your sources. [View detailed guidelines here.](#)

SECTION 3: BRINGING THE STRATEGY & IDEA TO LIFE - 23.3% OF TOTAL SCORE

This section relates to how you built a compelling creative and channel plan i.e. how and where you brought your strategy to life. And how you tested for ongoing optimisation.

Help the judges evaluate your entry by demonstrating how you created work that targeted and motivated customers effectively. Outline how your creative and channels plans worked together to drive results.

3A. Describe the key elements of your plan that activated your strategy. Outline any components that were active in the effort e.g. all integral communications, promotions, CRM program, customer experience, pricing changes, etc. that were a part of your effort.

(Maximum: 300 words; 3 charts/visuals)

The strategy was activated through a multi-platform campaign that prioritized emotional impact and cultural resonance over media scale. The goal was to re-establish ZBR as a “Legendary Slovak Refreshment” by making the brand inseparable from summer, humor, and shared joy.

Hero Film (TV & Online Video):

The central creative asset featured Peter Sagan “conquering” a water bike on a gravel lake. It introduced water biking as the most refreshing form of cycling

— humorous, nostalgic, and inherently Slovak. The film ran on national TV and YouTube.

Content Series (Social Media):

A parody series, “Training for Water Cycling Season,” launched on Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. It humorously mimicked influencer sports content, with Sagan as coach and product cameos as hydration tips. These native assets deepened relevance, particularly among Gen Z.

Print & OOH:

We took over the back cover of *Cyklistika* magazine and renamed it “Vodná Cyklistika” (Water Cycling). Copy mirrored traditional sport design language with ironic twists. OOH placements on the other hand was product driven, showing whole product range on a water bike.

Influencer:

We send radlers to selected influencers during summer months to enjoy on water bikes and on the lakes, from where we got native content. But main influencer was Peter Sagan.

PR:

Due to connection to national sports hero on unusual bike, media caught up and we got media coverage.

Timing Shift:

Instead of launching in spring like competitors, we delayed our major push to June–July, aligning with peak “water biking” season to boost both mental and physical availability.

Second wave was planned at the end of summer - Sept-Oct.

This integrated and consistently humorous campaign made the brand inescapable — emotionally and physically — across touchpoints.

3B. Outline the key building blocks of the creative executions for your main marketing vehicles e.g., endline, call-to-actions and format choices. If relevant, include any important changes that optimised the creative while the activity was running.

(Maximum: 300 words, 3 charts/visuals)

The creative platform was built on **reinterpretation** — taking familiar assets and giving them a fresh, absurd, and emotionally rich twist.

Core executional elements:

- **Big Idea:** “Legendary Slovak Refreshment”
- **Hook:** Water biking as the freshest and most joyful form of cycling
- **Hero:** Peter Sagan, completing his “final cycling challenge” — on a pedal boat

- **Soundtrack:** “Sarà perché ti amo” — retro, upbeat, and trending
- **Location:** Gravel lake, a deeply Slovak setting tied to leisure, fun, and memory
- **Tone:** Playful absurdity mixed with cultural authenticity

Visual Style:

We leaned into analog nostalgia — grainy textures, retro costumes, and exaggerated framing to reflect home-video aesthetics. The absurdity of Sagan's performance was grounded by the believability of the setting.

CTA (implicit):

No hard push — the call to action was to emotionally associate ZBR with shared summer joy. This indirect method worked better for a legacy brand trying to regain emotional trust.

Optimization:

Based on early digital performance, we expanded social edits with even more niche humor (e.g. training tips). These Gen Z-targeted edits tapped into meme logic and boosted engagement significantly.

Branding Discipline:

ZBR appeared consistently across touchpoints — not just via product visibility, but through a distinctive tone of voice built on humor, sociability, and cultural self-awareness. This approach unified retail, digital, experiential, and media platforms under one clear brand world.

Cross-generational resonance:

- **Millennials saw their carefree youth reflected back**
- **Gen Z saw ironic authenticity and memeability**
- **Gen X saw themselves as part of the joke**

3C. Outline the rationale behind your communications strategy, experience strategy and channel plan. Explain how the integral elements worked together to drive results. If relevant, explain how you changed your spend across channels as part of your campaign optimisation.

(Maximum: 400 words; 3 charts/visuals)

Communications Strategy:

We needed ZBR to re-enter Slovak culture not as just a beverage, but as a *feeling*. So we built the comms strategy around reclaiming *emotional leadership*, not media leadership.

While Birell outspent us, our goal was not to out-shout, but to out-feel. Every detail — from soundtrack to casting to visual humor — was designed to build a sense of warmth, national pride, and clever absurdity.

Experience Strategy:

ZBR thrives when consumed socially — so we mirrored that in our experience planning. From the lake setting to festival activations, we focused on “shared summer rituals”, that reflect how Slovaks actually experience summer. The campaign’s strength came from *echoes* — each touchpoint repeated the story in a way that added cultural texture.

Channel Plan Rationale:

We created a full-funnel experience by combining:

- **TV + YouTube Hero Film:** Emotional anchor; broad reach
- **Social Video Series:** Daily relevance and youth appeal
- **Print & OOH:** Reimagined analog media using playful twists on national cycling tropes accompanied by product centric billboards
- **PR & Influencer:** Generated media buzz through influencer coverage and unique connection that media loved to talk about

Media Timing Optimization:

We made a bold decision: to delay the campaign to *actual summer months* — June–July — instead of launching in April like our competitors and another short wave at the end of summer in September. This decision aligned better with consumer mood, boosted cultural relevance, and helped ZBR “own” the summer moment. Followed by second wave in Sept-Oct.

Dynamic Adjustments:

Social content was optimized weekly based on engagement rates. The “Training Tips” series outperformed brand ads, so we shifted more budget to promote those organically native pieces.

Internal Buy-In:

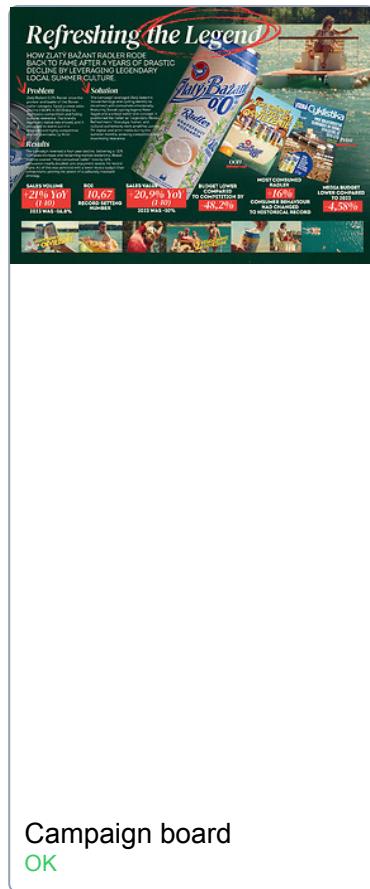
This was the brand’s boldest creative in years. Success depended on internal belief. We created a toolkit for local sales teams, including “Water Cycling FAQ” sheets and Sagan-branded merchandise for retail activation.

This orchestrated approach — combining native humor, cultural rituals, smart media timing, and cohesive storytelling — made ZBR part of Slovak summer again. Not through persuasion, but through presence.

Key Visual

You have the option to upload a single image to accompany your explanation in this section to show how you brought your strategy and idea to life. It may be a media plan, a marketing mix visual, a flowchart, a calendar, a storyboard, etc.

You do not need to upload a copy of any of your creative images for judging here, as judges will view those on the creative examples tab.



Section 3: Sourcing

You must provide a source for all data and facts presented anywhere in the entry form. The below field may only be used to list sources of data provided in your responses above, do not include any other information.

Recommended

Format: Use footnotes in your responses above and list each source numerically below. We recommend each source include the following information:

Source of Data/Research, Type of Data/Research, Dates Covered. Do not include agency names in your sources. [View detailed guidelines here.](#)

SECTION 4: RESULTS - 30% OF TOTAL SCORE

This section relates to your results. Here you need to be able to demonstrate the impact your effort has had on your business/brand/cause objectives - attributable to the activity and its elements and taking into account other factors. You will need to provide a result corresponding to each objective listed in your response to question 1B.

4A. How do you know it worked? Explain, with category, competitor and/or prior year context, why these results are significant for the brand's business. Results must relate back to your specific audience, objectives, and KPIs

RESPONSE FORMAT

You have up to 350 words and 5 charts/visuals to set up your results. Then, for each objective provided in Question 1B, you are required to provide a corresponding result.

ELIGIBILITY REMINDERS

1. Provide a clear time frame for all data shown – either within your response or via the sources box.
2. All results must be isolated to Europe.
3. Work must have run in the eligibility window of 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2025. Results after 31 March 2025 that are directly related to work that ran in the eligibility window can be included until the entry deadline.
4. All results must correspond to a data source. Include results and data prior to the time period that helps assess effectiveness during the time period.

Results Overview

(Maximum: 350 words, 5 charts/visuals)

We knew this campaign had to deliver across three strategic levels: reverse long-term decline in sales, reignite brand energy, and change behavior among lapsed and new consumers. We tied each level to specific KPIs with aggressive benchmarks.

Sales:

After years of decline (−17.9% in 2022, −16.8% in 2023), we achieved +21% growth in 2024. This surpassed not only our own performance but outpaced category growth (+14.7%) and Birell, our main competitor (+16.6%). Products were frequently sold out in-store — a first in years.

Brand Perception & Comms:

We beat 2023's campaign by a margin of 30+ points across every Kantar metric (brand impact, enjoyment, difference, persuasion), reaching historic highs for the brand. This confirmed that our strategic shift toward cultural, emotional, and humorous storytelling landed strongly with all audiences.

Behavioral Change:

We doubled target lifts in habitual consumption ("most often drunk") and purchase intent. The brand regained its role in daily summer routines and built strong reappraisal among Gen Y and Z.

The campaign's emotional resonance also made it highly shareable. TikTok content featuring the soundtrack and water bike humor drove organic engagement, while the brand was adopted into memes and pop culture content — rare for an FMCG beer brand.

Business Objective Results

Provide results that correspond to each of your objectives from Question 1C here. You are required to provide a result for each objective.

To re-order the way your objectives/results appear, return to Question 1C and re-order your objectives using the 'nudge' button.

For each result, you may include up to 3

1

Objective - Overview & KPI

State your objective here.
(Max: 30 words)

Reverse four-year sales decline and achieve YOY growth in volume.

Rationale - Why the objective was selected and what is the benchmark?

(Max: 75 words, 3 charts/graphs)

After four consecutive years of decline—and a sharp -16.8% drop in 2023 alone—reversing the sales trajectory became a critical survival goal for ZBR. The Slovak radler category was stagnating, and the brand faced an aggressive competitor with 52% more media spend. In

charts/graphs.

this context, simply stabilizing sales would have been a strong result. However, ZBR aimed higher: to achieve a full turnaround.

Measurement - How did you plan to measure it?

(Maximum: 30 words)

Planned to measure YOY volume growth in 2024 vs. 2023, with a target of at least +10% increase.

Tagging - What keywords best describe your objective type?

(1 Required. No Maximum)

Volume (growth/maintenance/easing decline/volume share)

List Result

(Maximum: 30 Words)

+21% YoY growth in 2024 after four years of double-digit decline.

Context

Explain, with category, competitor, and/or prior year context, why these results are significant for the brand's business.

(Maximum: 75 words, 3 charts/visuals)

2024 marked a full turnaround in commercial performance. While the market grew +14.7%, ZBR outpaced the category (+21%) and surpassed Birell (+16.6%), despite having significantly lower media budgets. We ran out of stock in many retail locations during peak months, exceeding Heineken's forecasts and restoring the brand's leadership role in Radlers.





Marketing Objectives Results

1

Objective - Overview & KPI

State your objective here.

(Max: 30 words)

Restore ZBR's position as "radler I drink most often" by +8% (2pp).

Rationale – Why the objective was selected & what is the benchmark?

(Max: 75 words, 3 charts/graphs)

The clearest indicator of brand loyalty in the category is frequency of consumption, being the radler "consumed most often." This had dropped sharply, especially among Gen Y.

As a heritage brand, ZBR needed to restore habitual consumption to reclaim category leadership. Using last year's brand usage score (down 2pp) as a benchmark, our goal was a +2pp. Achieving this would

signal repeat purchase intent, and return ZBR to being the radler chosen most often.

Measurement - How did you plan to measure it?

(Maximum: 30 words)

Consumer survey tracking brand preference by Kantar

Tagging - What keywords best describe your objective type?

- You may have more than one objective of the same type.
- Unsure which objective type to select?
View guidance here.

Consideration

List Result

State your corresponding result here.

We beat the target +16% in "Radler i drink the most often"

Context

Explain, with category, competitor, and/or prior year context, why these results are significant for the brand's business.
(Maximum: 75 words, 3 charts/visuals)

We exceeded both the behavioral target by 2x:

- "Radler i drink the most often": +16%
- And even raised interest in consideration - "Consider buying": +6%

This proved that the campaign not only drove sentiment but also habit change — especially among Gen Y and new Gen Z drinkers.



2

Objective - Overview & KPI

State your
objective here.
(Max: 30 words)

Increase brand equity by driving +10-point uplift in Kantar scores for
“Meaningful,” “Different,” and “Enjoyment.”

Rationale – Why the objective was selected & what is the benchmark?

(Max: 75 words,
3 charts/graphs)
Kantar benchmark scores for Meaningful, Different, and Enjoyment had
been stagnant in 2023 and needed uplift for long-term brand strength.
We didn't track Salient since it has been super high for years.

Measurement - How did you plan to measure it?

(Maximum: 30
words)
Kantar Brand Attributes Tracking

Tagging - What keywords best describe your objective type?

- You may have more than one objective of the same type.
- Unsure which objective

type to
select?
View
guidance
here.

Changes in Specific Brand Attributes

List Result

State your
corresponding
result here.

We beat previous campaign by 30–50 points across all relevant Kantar
metrics.

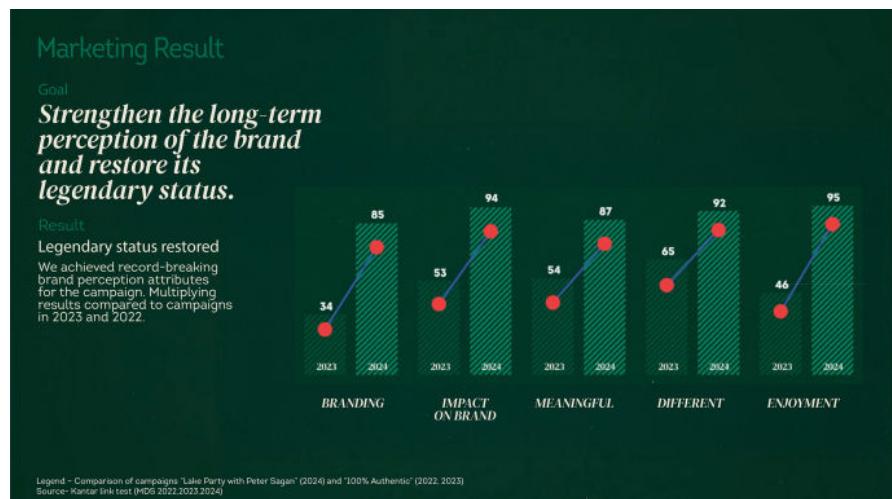
Context

Explain, with
category,
competitor,
and/or prior year
context, why
these results are
significant for the
brand's business.
*(Maximum: 75
words, 3
charts/visuals)*

Compared to 2023, the campaign delivered record brand scores:

- Branding: +51 pts (34 → 85)
- Enjoyment: +49 pts (46 → 95)
- Meaningful: +33 pts (54 → 87)

All results are from Kantar Link tests and represent the brand's best
performance in over 5 years.



Activity Objectives Results

1

Objective - Overview & KPI

State your
objective here.

Drive short-term brand persuasion and campaign impact metrics up
by +10 points compared to 2023 benchmarks.

(Max: 30 words)

Rationale – Why the objective was selected & what is the benchmark?

(Max: 75 words, 3 charts/graphs) To drive short-term impact in a limited summer window, we needed more than emotional resonance—we needed action. That required sharply lifting persuasion and campaign cut-through.

Strong scores in persuasion, recall, and overall impact were vital to turn brand equity gains into real business results. In 2023, these metrics had stagnated.

With little time to reverse a multi-year sales decline, we targeted a +10-point lift as proof the campaign was breaking through, converting, and driving sales.

Measurement - How did you plan to measure it?

(Maximum: 30 words) Kantar short-term effectiveness scores: impact, persuasion, short-term lift.

Tagging - What keywords best describe your objective type?

- You may have more than one objective of the same type. Advocacy / Recommendation
- Unsure which objective type to select? Sales potential

View guidance here.

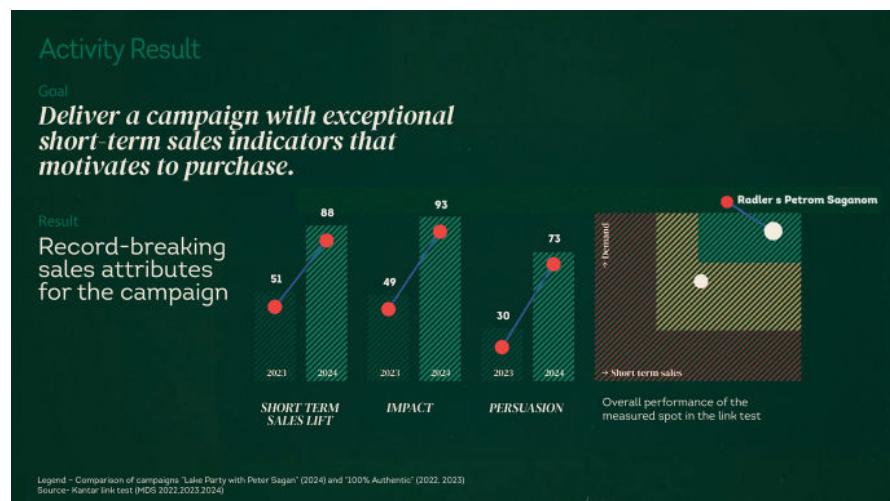
List Result

State your corresponding result here.

- **Short-term sales lift** scores increased from 51 in 2023 to 88 in 2024, demonstrating the campaign's immediate effectiveness.
- **Impact** from 49 to 93
- **Persuasion** 30 to 73

Context

Explain, with category, competitor, and/or prior year context, why these results are significant for the brand's business.
(Maximum: 75 words, 3 charts/visuals)



Additional Results

You may use this space to provide additional results achieved that you may not have had an initial objective for. This space may only be used for additional results beyond those that align with your listed objectives.

(Maximum: 150 words, 3 charts/graphs)

Extra result

Clear Proof That Legends Belong Together!

Peter Sagan has conquered another cycling milestone.

And he was even invited to a unique water bike race in Monaco.



"The Princess of Monaco invited Sagan to the race: This time, however, he did not compete on the road!"



4B. Marketing rarely works in isolation. Outside of your effort, what else in the marketplace could have affected the results of this case - positive or negative?

Select factors from the chart and explain the influence (or lack of influence) of these factors in the space provided. We recognise that attribution can be difficult; however, we're inviting you to provide the broader picture here in making the case for your effectiveness.

Business Events (e.g. changes in supply chain, government regulations)

Natural Events (e.g. weather, natural phenomenon, etc.)

Explain the influence (or lack of influence) of the factors you selected above.

The chart provided is a sampling of marketplace activities, but your response is not limited to these factors. We recognize that attribution can be difficult; however, we're inviting you to provide the broader picture here in making the case for your effectiveness.

(Maximum: 200 words; 3 charts/visuals)

Summer in 2024 was rather hot in Slovakia compared to 2023, this had helped the beverage segment in general. But our biggest win is outperforming the much bigger spending competition.

On the other side, we had shortage of aluminium for cans, which are the sole retail packaging format of ZBR. For brief time period we could not produce enough ZBR to keep up with the demand. This has affected the sales volume slightly.

Section 4: Sourcing

You must provide a source for all data and facts presented

Nielsen market data was used for volume share
Kantar data was used to track brand results and activity results
Media data was tracked by DDS

anywhere in the entry form. The below field may only be used to list sources of data provided in your responses above, do not include any other information.

Recommended Format:

Format: Use footnotes in your responses above and list each source numerically below. We recommend each source include the following information:
Source of Data/Research, Type of Data/Research, Dates Covered. Do not include agency names in your sources. [View detailed guidelines here.](#)

INVESTMENT OVERVIEW

The Investment Overview is reviewed as part of Section 3: Bringing the Strategy & Idea to Life, along with your creative work, as presented in the Creative Reel and Images for Judging. These elements together account for 23.3% of your total score.

PAID & DONATED MEDIA EXPENDITURES

Select paid & donated media expenditures, not including agency fees or production costs, for the effort described in this entry. If there were no paid media expenditures, please select "Under €50,000" and elaborate below. If there were no donated media expenditures, please select "not applicable" If the case did not run the year prior, select not applicable and provide context in the elaboration area below.

Paid Media Expenditure (Current Year)

Current Year/Time

Period: January 2024 – March 2025 €500-999 Thousand

Paid Media Expenditures (Prior Year)

Campaign Period:

Prior Year €500-999 Thousand

Compared to other competitors in this category, the budget is:

Select one.

Less

Compared to prior year spend on the brand overall, the brand's overall budget this year is:

Select one.

Less

Media Budget Elaboration:

Provide judges with the context to understand your budget.

What was the balance of paid, earned, owned, and shared media? What was your distribution strategy? Did you outperform your media buy?

In addition to providing context around your budget, if you selected

The 2024 media budget was 5% lower year-on-year, with reduced TV investment and a stronger digital focus. Production spend matched the previous year.

Rationale for media placements

We shifted activity from the cluttered April–May period to the peak summer months of June and July, enabling ZBR to stand out and dominate the season. Channels were selected for cross-generational impact: TV delivered mass reach, while digital and print provided targeted engagement for younger and niche audiences.

Channel integration

- **TV** anchored awareness and emotional storytelling.
- **Digital** - social, YouTube, TikTok drove shareable content and Gen Z engagement.
- **Print** connected with cycling enthusiasts, reinforcing the campaign's concept.

Not Applicable to either of the previous two questions, explain why you selected Not Applicable.

(Maximum: 150 words)

- **OOH** boosted product visibility.

Channel synergy

TV's emotional appeal extended online with humor and nostalgia. Print and special media offered targeted, culturally relevant touchpoints, creating depth and reinforcing the campaign message across all key audiences.

PRODUCTION & OTHER NON-MEDIA EXPENDITURES

Select a budget range for the key assets you developed to bring your idea to life. This should include hard pre and post productions costs, talent (influencer or celebrity fees), and any activation costs.

Production & Other Non-Media Expenditures

Select a budget range for the key assets you developed to bring your idea to life. This should include hard pre and post productions costs, talent (influencer or celebrity fees) and any activation costs.

€200–500 Thousand

Elaboration on the Production & Other Non-Media Expenditures

Provide judges with the context to understand the selection outlined above. This is an opportunity to provide further context surrounding your budget, so judges have a clear understanding and do not question the information provided above.

The elephant in the room is of course the use of celebrity compared to the years before without celebrity. We signed 3 year deal with Peter Sagan and added the 1/3 of this deal into media budget.

As far as production of the campaign, the overall cost was the same as years prior. Each year ZBR has summer 360 campaign and the production cost is roughly the same.

(Maximum: 100 words)

OWNED MEDIA

Elaborate on owned media (digital or physical company-owned real estate), that acted as communication channels for case content.

(Maximum: 100 words)

Was owned media a part of your effort?

Elaborate on owned media (digital or physical company-owned real estate), that acted as communication channels for case content.

Yes : We published the campaign on our social media channels. Other than that no other owned media.

(Maximum: 100 words)

SPONSORSHIPS AND MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS

Select the types of sponsorships/media partnerships used in your case.

Choose all that apply. Then, provide additional context regarding those sponsorships and media partnerships, including timing.

(Maximum: 100 words)

Sponsorships

Select all that apply.

Not Applicable

Elaboration on Sponsorships and Media Partnerships

Provide additional context regarding your

nothing

sponsorships and media partnerships.

(Maximum: 100 words)

SOURCES

Investment Overview: Data Sources

You must provide a source for all data and facts presented anywhere in the entry form. The below field may only be used to list sources of data provided in your responses above.

Entrants may not include any additional context or information in the below field.

All data was from client and media agency

Recommended

Format: Use footnotes in your responses above and list each source numerically below.

We recommend each source include the following information:

Source of Data/Research, Type of Data/Research, Dates Covered. Do not include agency names in your sources. **[View detailed guidelines here.](#)**

ALL TOUCHPOINTS AS PART OF YOUR EFFORT

Select all touchpoints used in the effort, based on the options provided in the below chart. Within your response to Question 3, explain which touchpoints from the below list were integral to reaching your audience and why.

On the creative reel, you must show at least one complete example of each touchpoint that was integral to the effort's success. For example, if you mark 10 boxes below and 8 were key to the driving results and explained as integral in Question 3, those 8 must be featured on the reel.

All Touchpoints

Select all that apply.

Digital Mktg. – Influencers

Digital Mktg. – Short Video (:15-3 min.)

Digital Mktg. – Social: Organic

Digital Mktg. – Social: Paid

Digital Mktg. – Video Ads

Influencer/Key Opinion Leader

OOH – Billboards

OOH – Other Outdoor

Packaging & Product Design

Print - Magazine

TV

MAIN TOUCHPOINTS

From the list outlined above, select the three most integral touchpoints for your effort. List in order of most integral to least integral.

Main Touchpoint 1

Most integral
touchpoint.

TV

Main Touchpoint 2

#2 Most Integral
Touchpoint

Digital Mktg. – Short Video (:15-3 min.)

Main Touchpoint 3

#3 Most Integral
Touchpoint

OOH – Billboards

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Select all social media platforms utilised in your effort from the list below.

Social Media Platforms

Select all that apply, or
select Not Applicable.

Facebook

Instagram

TikTok

YouTube

CREATIVE REEL

The Creative Reel is the entrant's opportunity to showcase the creative work that ran in front of their audience to the judges. The reel is NOT a video version of the written case. Judges recommend spending at least 70% of the creative reel's time on examples of creative work.

The creative reel is not judged for the production quality of the reel; judges are evaluating only the creative work that ran in the marketplace as it relates to the challenge, insights, audience, and strategy.

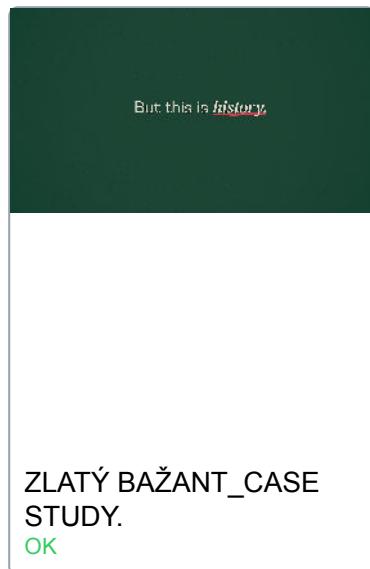
Specific, quantifiable results, agency names/logos, and competitor logos/work may not be included anywhere in the video.

The Creative Reel is viewed once the case has been read.

Creative Reel

3 min maximum (4 min for Sustained Success). 250 MB max., mp4 format. High Resolution: 16:9 at 1920x1080.

Do not include any agency names in the file name or anywhere in the reel. Give each upload file a unique name.



Creative Examples Presented in the Creative Reel - Select All

Select all that apply.

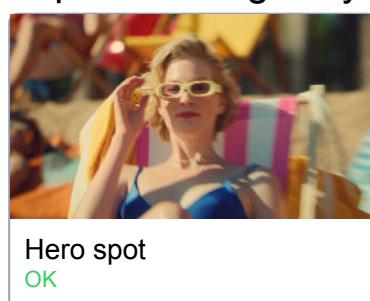
Digital Mktg. – Short Video (:15-3 min.)

Influencer/Key Opinion Leader

Print - Magazine

TV

Raw Creative Examples as Originally Aired - For Research Purpose



In what language the raw creative example aired?

Slovak

IMAGES OF CREATIVE WORK (2 Required, 6 Maximum)

Upload images of your creative work that ran in the marketplace.

Communications channels highlighted must have been also featured in your creative reel.

Judges review these images after they read your case and watch your creative reel. Images should complement your reel and help the judges better evaluate the creative elements that ran in front of your audience.

Images for Judging are an opportunity to:

- + Showcase work that is better seen as a still image vs. video format
- + Draw further attention to key creative elements

Images of Creative Work

Upload 2-6 images of your creative work that ran in the marketplace. Do not include agency names in the file name or within the images.

Technical Requirements:
.jpg/jpeg format



Key Visual
OK



Campaign b.
OK

Translation of Non-English Creative Work (If Applicable)

If your creative examples include non-English work, you are required to include an English translation either via subtitles within the creative OR

you may provide a
translation in the text
box below. This will
not be counted
towards your entry
form page limit.

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With Print Set JUDGING VIEW - PDF Version of the Written Entry for Judges