

IPSOS B&A

WHAT EFFECTIVENESS LOOKS LIKE IN IRELAND

Learnings from the 2025 Effie
Awards Ireland



Advertising Insight

Ipsos B&A combines unrivalled knowledge of the Irish market with the international expertise of Ipsos.

Our advertising and communications expertise spans audience and cultural insight, campaign development, creative evaluation, brand tracking, media research and campaign effectiveness.

We bring quantitative evidence and qualitative understanding together to show not only what worked, but why it worked and how brands can build on it.



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2025 Irish effie AWARDS



50
ENTRANTS



4
GOLD



33
FINALISTS



5
SILVER



17
WINNERS

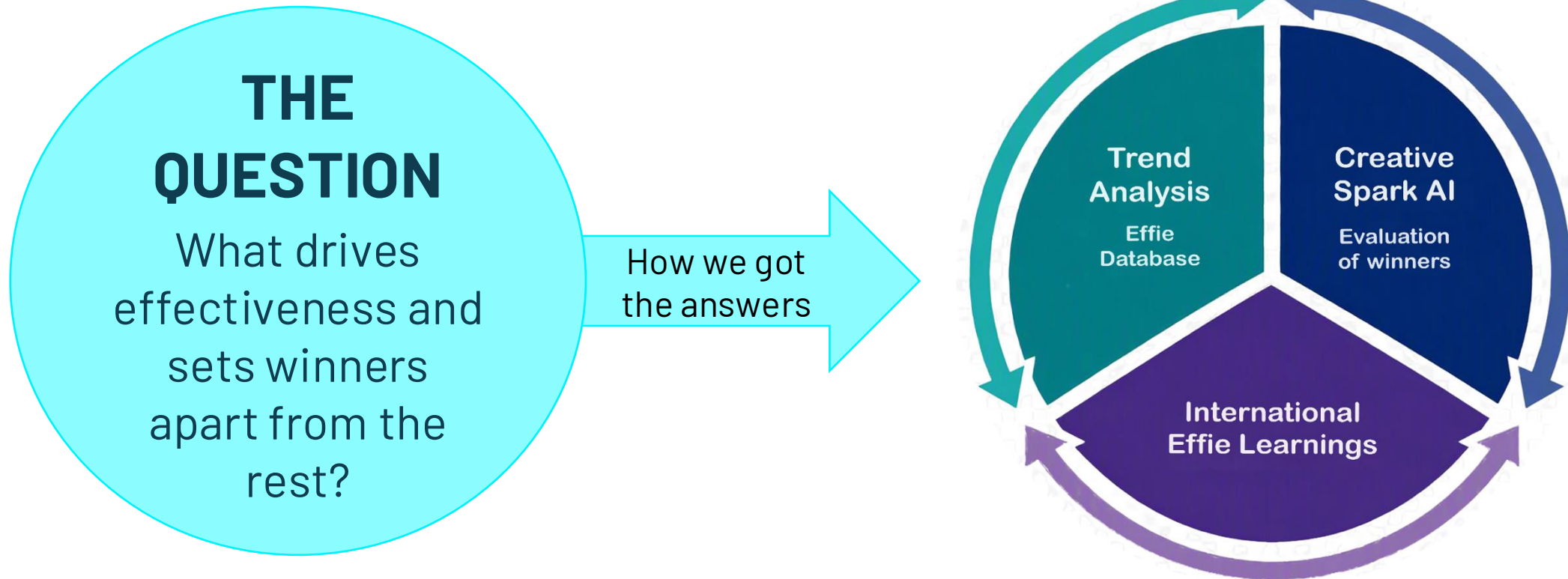


8
BRONZE



The question we wanted to answer

Effie entries tell us not only which campaigns succeeded, but how that success was constructed and demonstrated. We examined the 2025 cases to identify the strategic, evidential, channel and creative characteristics that distinguished the winners.



Key Points

Know what you want to achieve at the outset and be focused – singular objective, ideally linked to your bottom line.

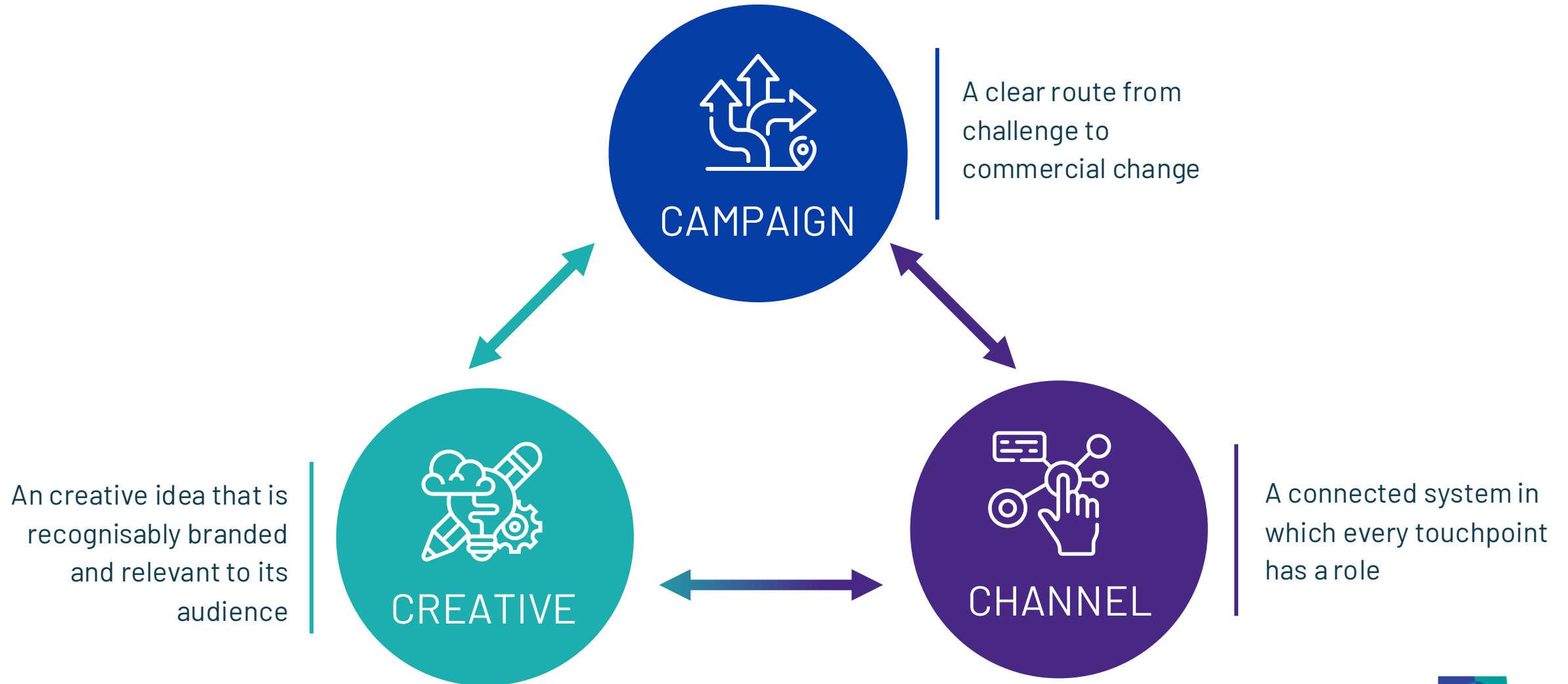
Understand your audience, their world, their motivation and pain points – deliver with empathy, relevance and emotion.

Broaden the channel mix, but tailor campaign execution by channel, driving engagement.



Introducing the effectiveness system: The 3C's

The winners did not rely on one element alone. Effectiveness emerged from how the three worked together.



CHAPTER 1: CAMPAIGN



**Effective campaigns
start with a clear route
to change**

*"Creativity without strategy is called art.
Creativity with strategy is called advertising."*

- Jef Richards



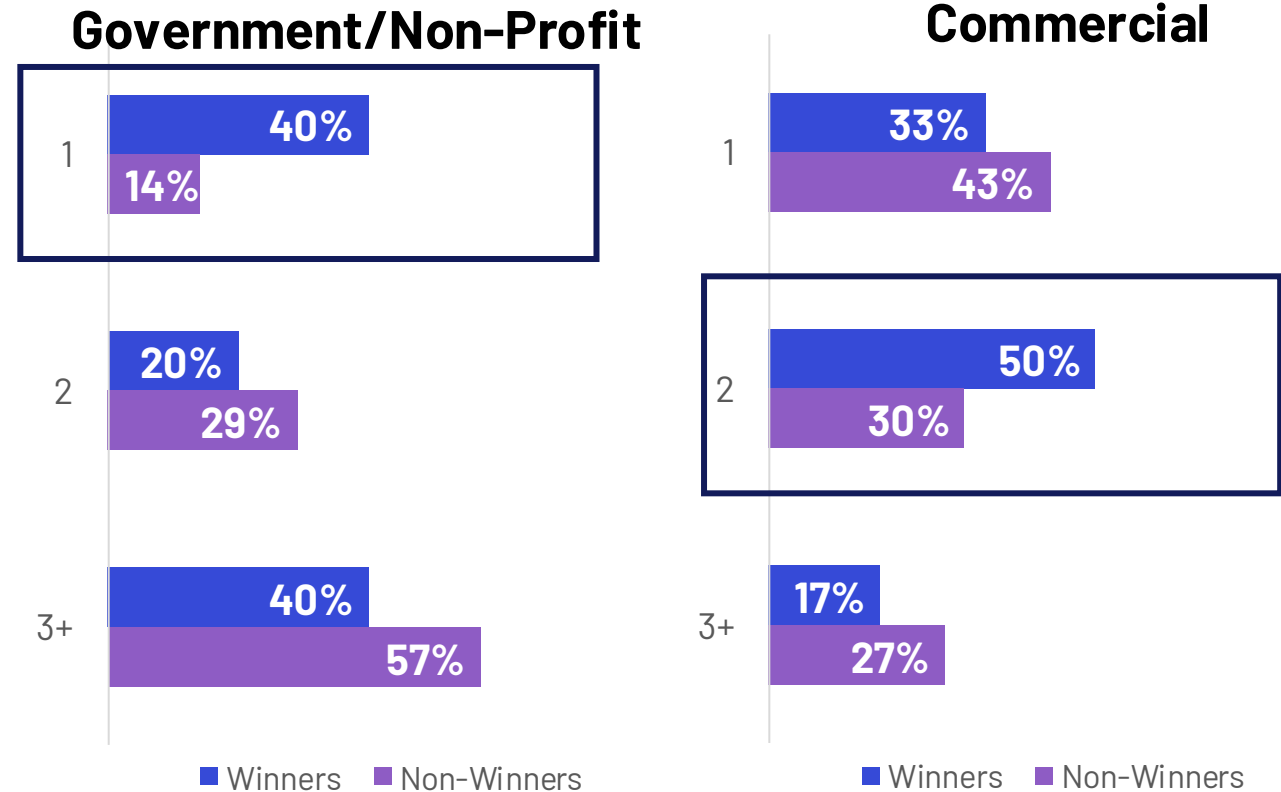
Effectiveness starts with focus

Campaigns with a more focused number of business objectives tend to be more effective.



Government/non-profit winners understand the importance of prioritising more limited budgets on just a single business objective.

Commercial winners have slightly greater possibilities with multiple business objectives, but less success when exceeding two business objectives.



In the Denmark 2025 Effie Analysis, the sweet spot for commercial was 2-3 objectives.

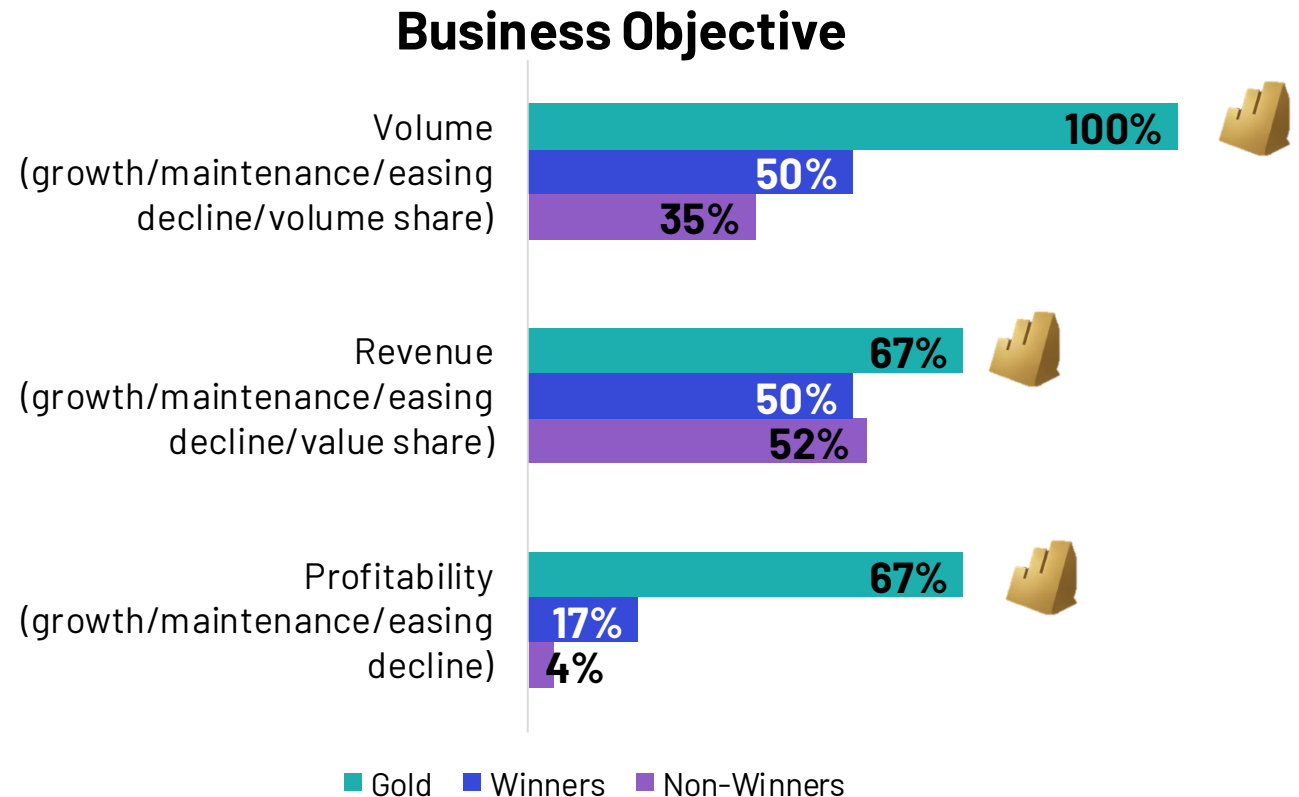
Commercial impact matters

The most successful campaign had a clear link to the bottom line at the campaign outset.



The strongest cases establish a clear link between marketing activity and commercial outcomes prior to campaign launch.

Gold winners are significantly more likely to define success in terms of profitability and volume growth rather than other business objectives in isolation (e.g. brand transformation, environmental/social impact, new product launch).



Research supports focus throughout the campaign

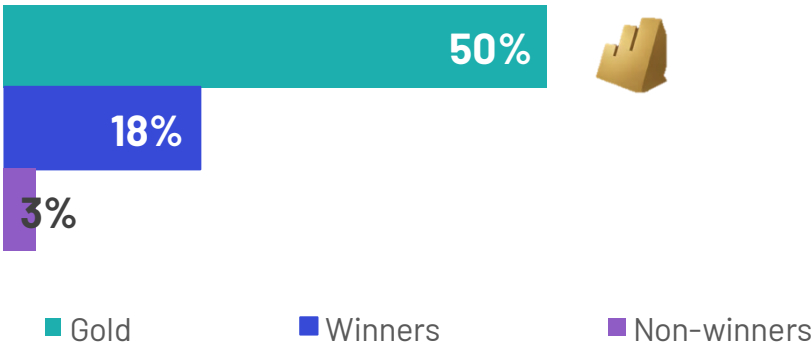
Overall, the strongest cases appear to use research both to shape strategy and to optimise execution throughout the campaign. And to make sure, we understand the lives of our audience.



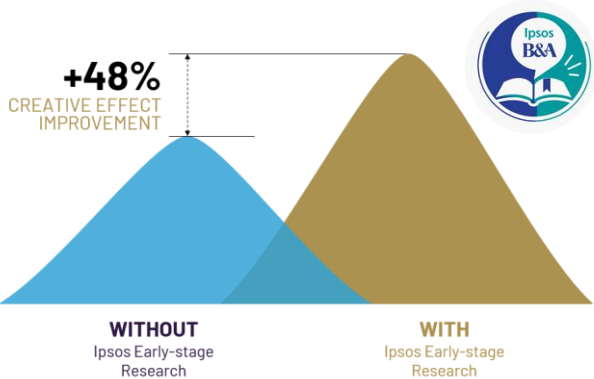
PRIMARY RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative approaches, particularly focus groups, are significantly more prevalent among winners as their primary research approach.

Used focus groups as Primary Method



Average Number of Research Methods Used



The ability to validate, refine and optimise creative before launch is associated with a **48%** improvement in creative effectiveness

Source: Data Based on 500+ Ipsos cases

Research supports focus throughout the campaign

Overall, the strongest cases appear to use research both to shape strategy and to optimise execution throughout the campaign.



RESEARCH METHOD MIX

50%

of Gold winners used copy testing as part of their research



Copy testing stands out as one of the strongest differentiators, used by 41% of winners versus just 6% of entrants and finalists.

100%

of Gold winners used tracking as part of their research



Having a continuous finger on the pulse of the brand, correlates strongly with creative effectiveness (and with the ability to prove it!)

Research supports focus throughout the campaign

Overall, the strongest cases appear to use research both to shape strategy and to optimise execution throughout the campaign.



The most effective campaigns make sure they keep a continuous finger on the pulse of their brands, through Tracking research. They ensure campaign resonance and empathy significantly more through qualitative exploration and validate impact much more through creative execution copy-testing.

PRIMARY RESEARCH METHOD

Focus Groups

RESEARCH METHOD MIX

Copy Testing

Tracking

Broader range
of methods

The role of spend/consistency

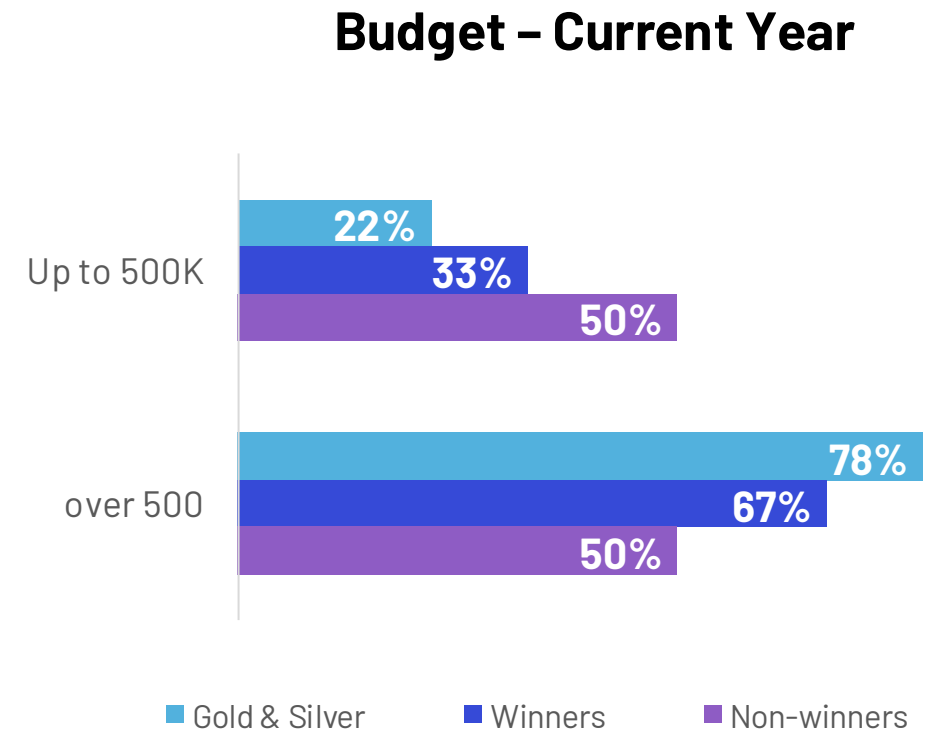


While larger-budget campaigns are more likely to reach Gold and Silver status, almost one in four top-performing cases achieved success with budgets under €500k – underlining the importance of creativity.

Winners are somewhat more likely to come from larger-budget campaigns – bigger budgets create more opportunities to reach audiences, generate impact and sustain activity over time.

However, with winners across the spend levels, effectiveness is also driven by the quality of strategy, execution and measurement rather than investment alone.

Creatives with emotional engagement and clear brand linkage, combined with a broad media mix, can help lower budget campaigns.



CHAPTER 2: CHANNEL



**Effective channel
systems combine reach
with clearly defined roles**

*“A wealth of information creates a poverty
of attention.” - Herbert A. Simon*



The strongest campaigns turn channel presence into channel orchestration.

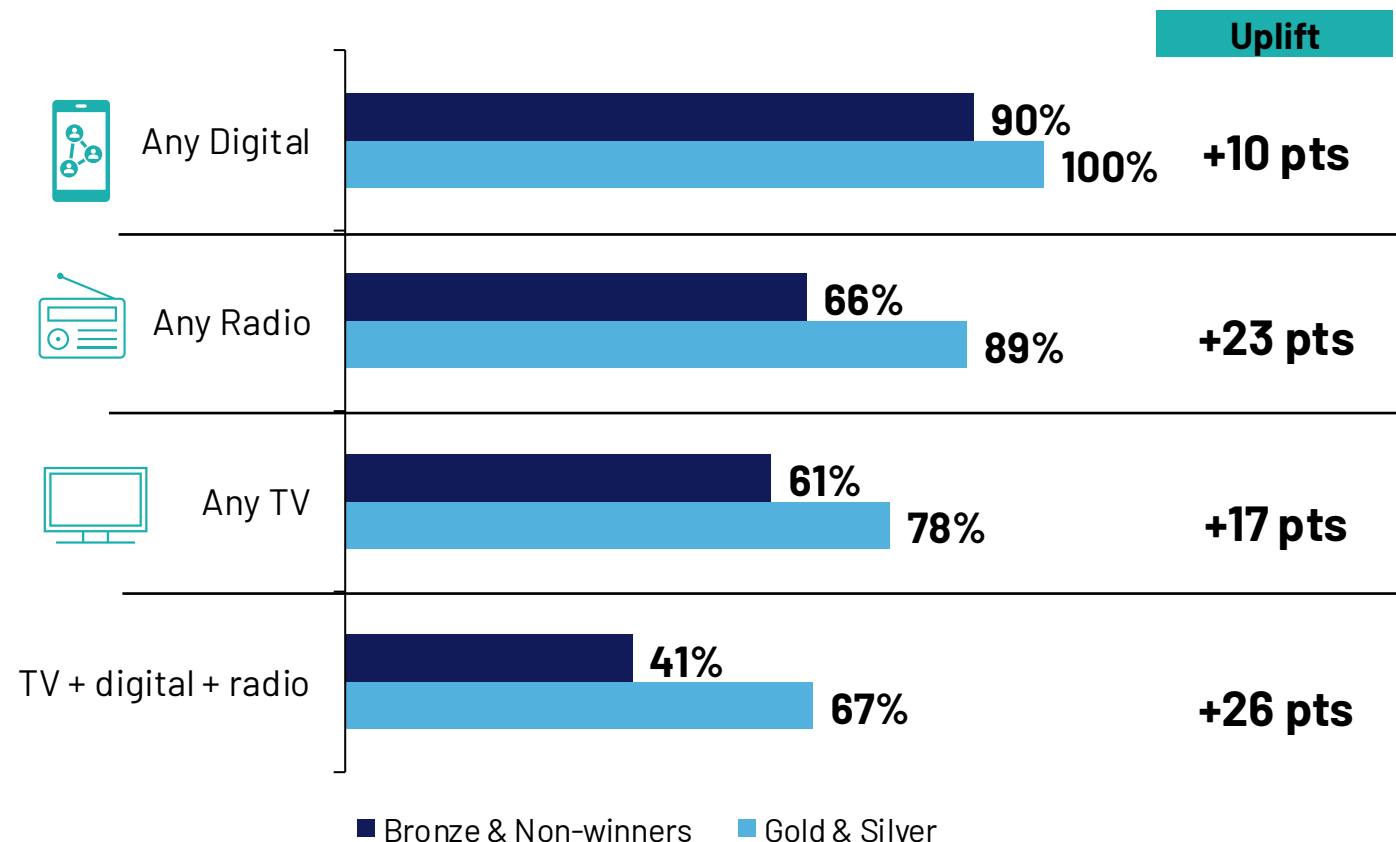
Effectiveness comes from connected combinations.

It is the combination of channels that creates the clearest distinction

2/3 Of Gold and Silver winners used TV, Radio, and Digital

There is no single media formula for effectiveness, and the right mix will always depend on the audience, objective and creative idea.

However, **the strongest campaigns appear more likely to combine digital capability with the scale and amplification offered by broadcast media.**



Prioritising engagement over passive exposure

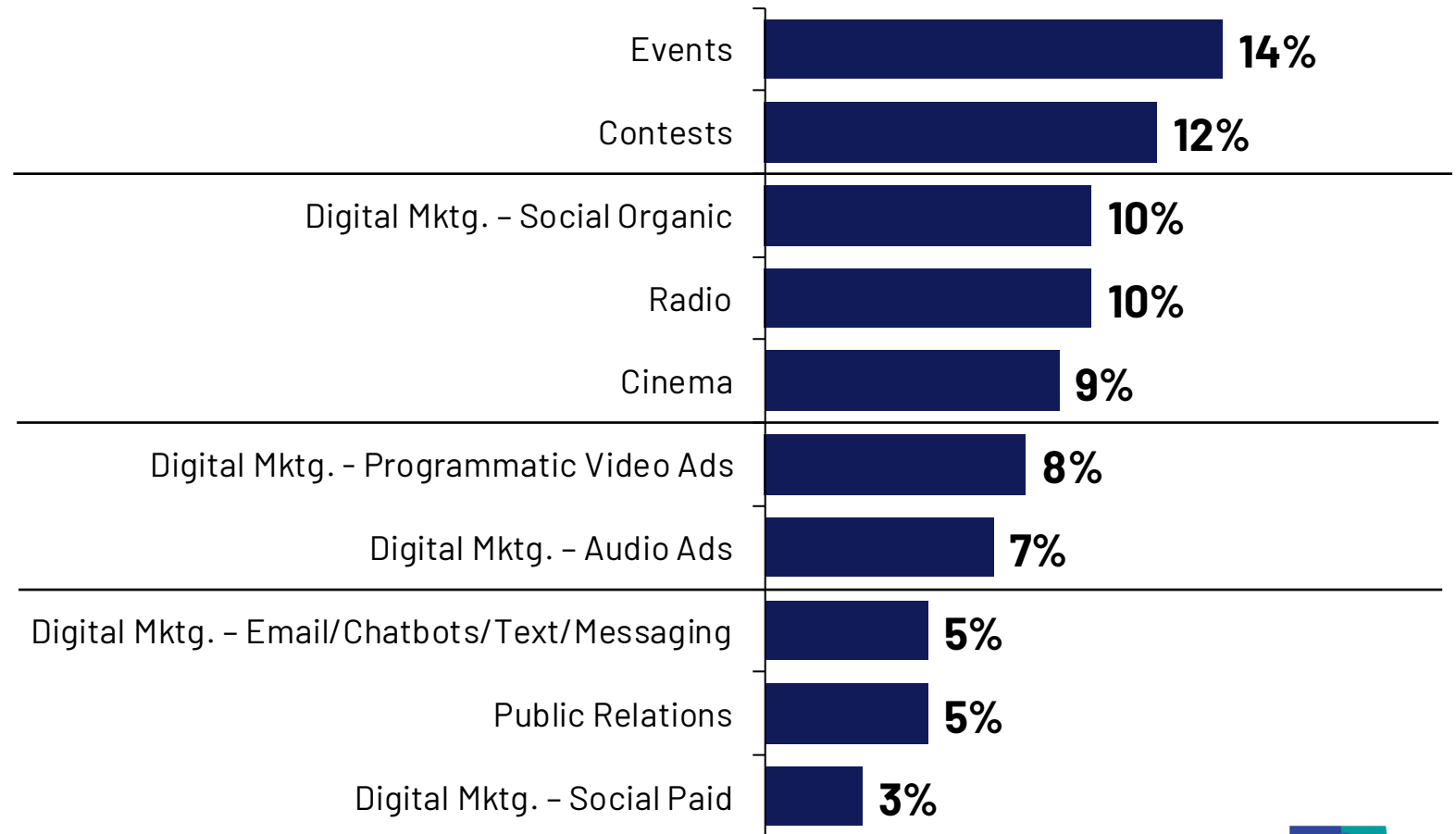
Effective campaigns were more likely to get consumers actively involved rather than simply exposed to messaging.



Winning campaigns are more likely to employ events, contests and organic social, indicating a greater focus on consumer participation and demand capture.

Earning engagement may matter more than simply buying impressions.

Channel used – difference between winners & non-winners



Events help bring campaign ideas to life

The best campaigns don't just reach people, they involve them

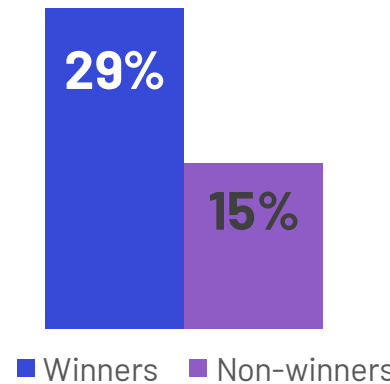


Events appear disproportionately among winning campaigns, with usage almost double that of entrants and finalists.

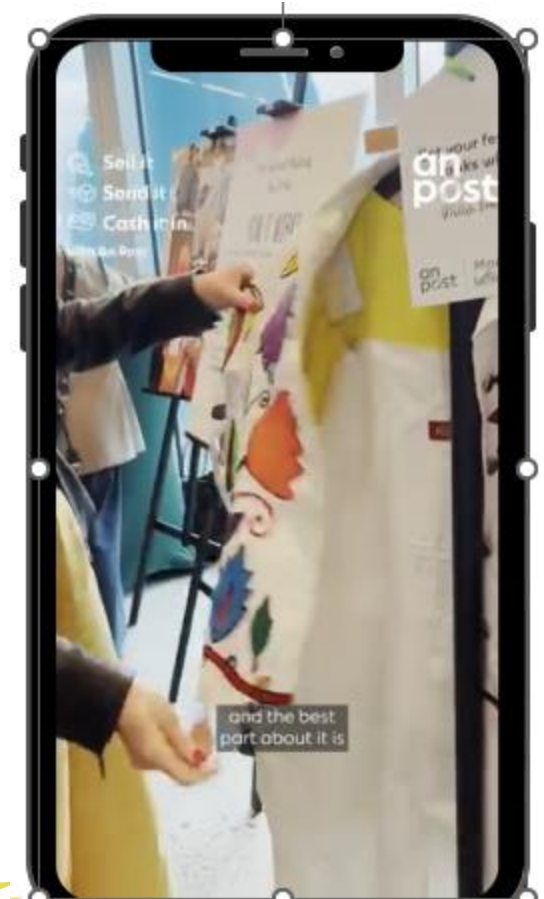
 **50%** of Gold winners used events.

The advantage may stem from their ability to move audiences from passive observers to active participants.

Used Events



A winning campaign example



Source: An Post, Sell it Send It Cash it In Event

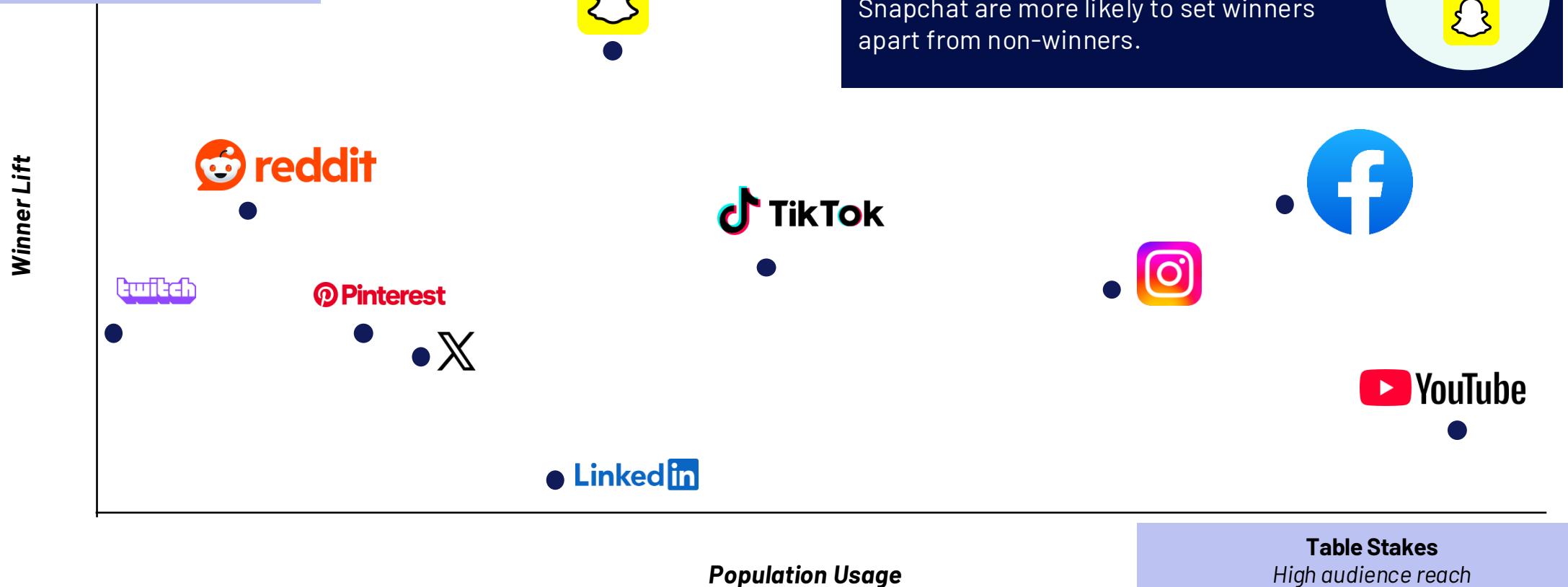
Social platforms that separate winners from non-winners

Winning campaigns don't simply follow audience scale. They disproportionately invest in platforms that amplify participation and unique for the audience.



Differentiating Channels

Bigger difference in usage between winners & non-winners



Cinema is a distinctive strength within the Irish market

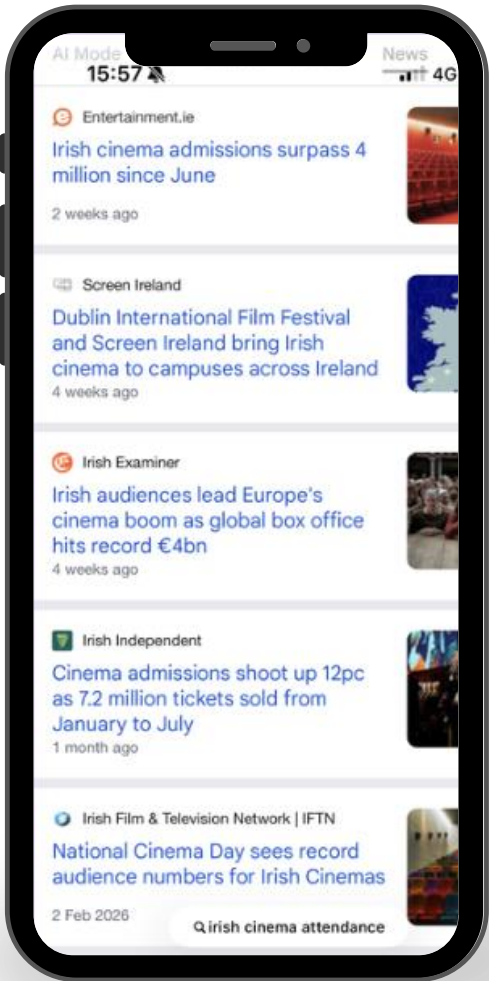
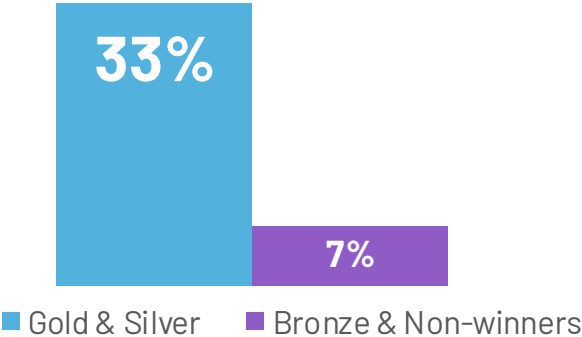
Irish campaigns appear to derive greater effectiveness value from cinema



Cinema appears relatively rarely across the dataset, yet its usage increases steadily with campaign success.

Cinema's immersive, distraction-light setting may help strong ideas achieve greater impact.

Used Cinema



For many years, Ireland has had the highest cinema attendance per capita in Europe.

We also have the highest screen density per capita of any European country, with an average of one cinema screen per 10,000 people.

One third of cinema audiences in 2025 were aged between 15-34 with a further 20% aged 35-44.

Source: Pearl & Dean Media, 2026

Digital SEM: The future of search is conversational, not navigational

Being found is no longer enough; Success has shifted from winning a click to becoming part of the AI's recommendation set.

29% of winners used SEM versus **0%** of non-winners



From this...

Static information discovery

You **google** "best running shoes for flat feet."

You **click 3-4** listicle articles.

You open a few product pages, **read specs** and **reviews**.

You **manually compare** cushioning, stability, price, and brand.

You leave the product in your **basket for two days** and then decide to buy it.



To this...

Dynamic, conversational discovery

I'm a 38-year-old, 6'1", 210 lbs, running ~15 miles a week, flat feet, history of knee pain. I run mostly on pavement. **Which shoes should I try and why?**

"Do you prefer a softer or firmer ride? Any brands you've liked before?"

Narrows down to **3-5 specific models**.

Explains the trade-offs ("These are more stable but heavier, these are lighter but a bit less support").



51%

of all people using AI using it as alternative search engine

46%

of those who use AI use it for **learning or conducting research** (consistent across life stages).

Source: Ipsos B&A SOTT

CHAPTER 3: CREATIVE



**Effective creative is felt,
recognised and
remembered**

"At the end of the day, people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel."

Maya Angelou



Creative Effectiveness drives business growth



Creative quality is not a soft metric. Brands that create stronger creative consistently translate it into stronger commercial outcomes, from sales lift to long-term market value.

x11

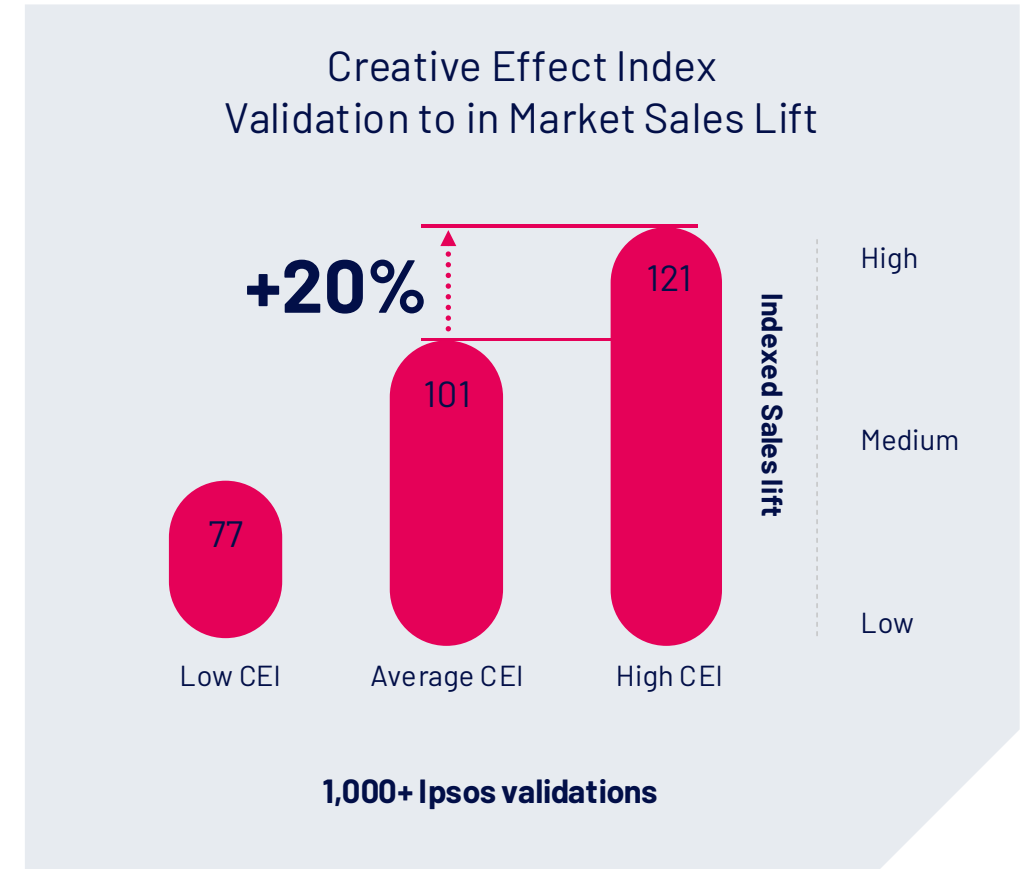


Market Shares Gains*

x3.5



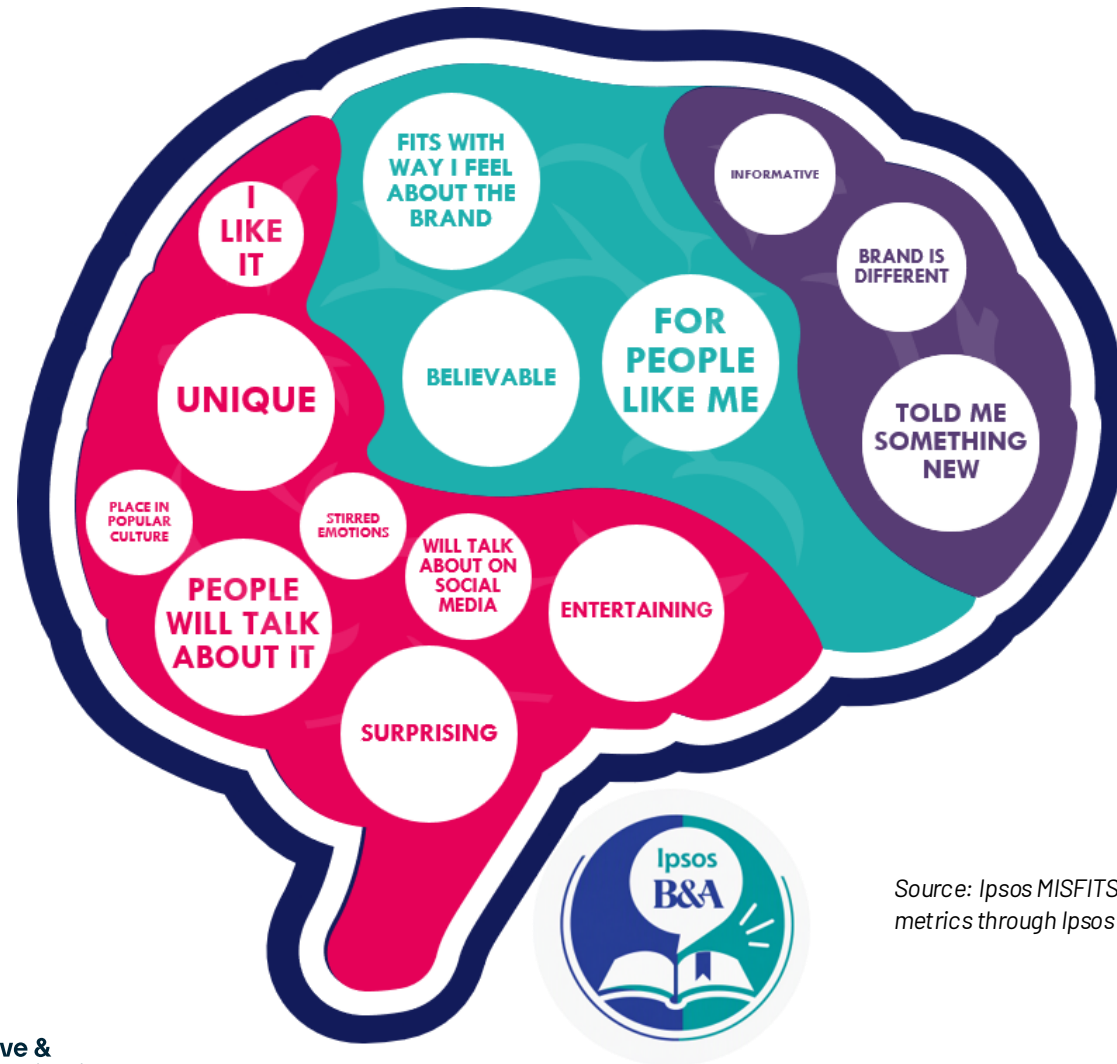
More Stock Market Performance**



*(IPA Binet & Field). ** (Cannes Creativity Festival & Yahoo)

Creative effectiveness is driven by a MISFITS mindset approach to creativity, empathy and information value.

These three areas drive brand attention, short term choice and long-term brand equity.



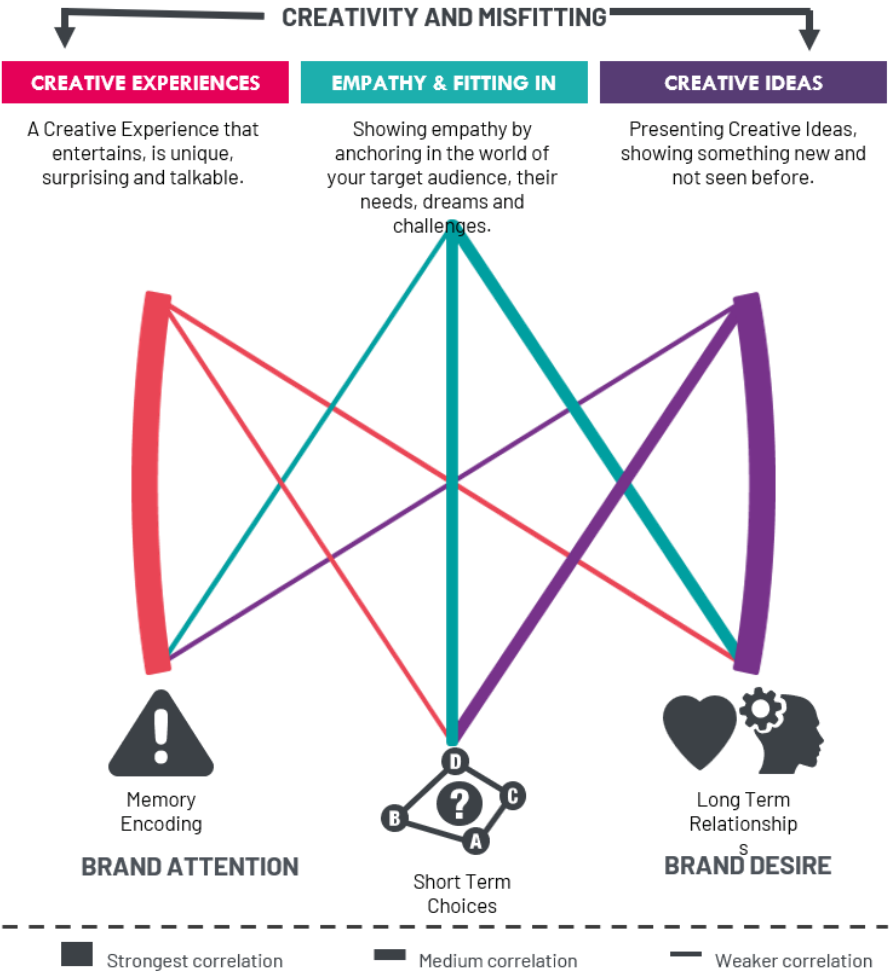
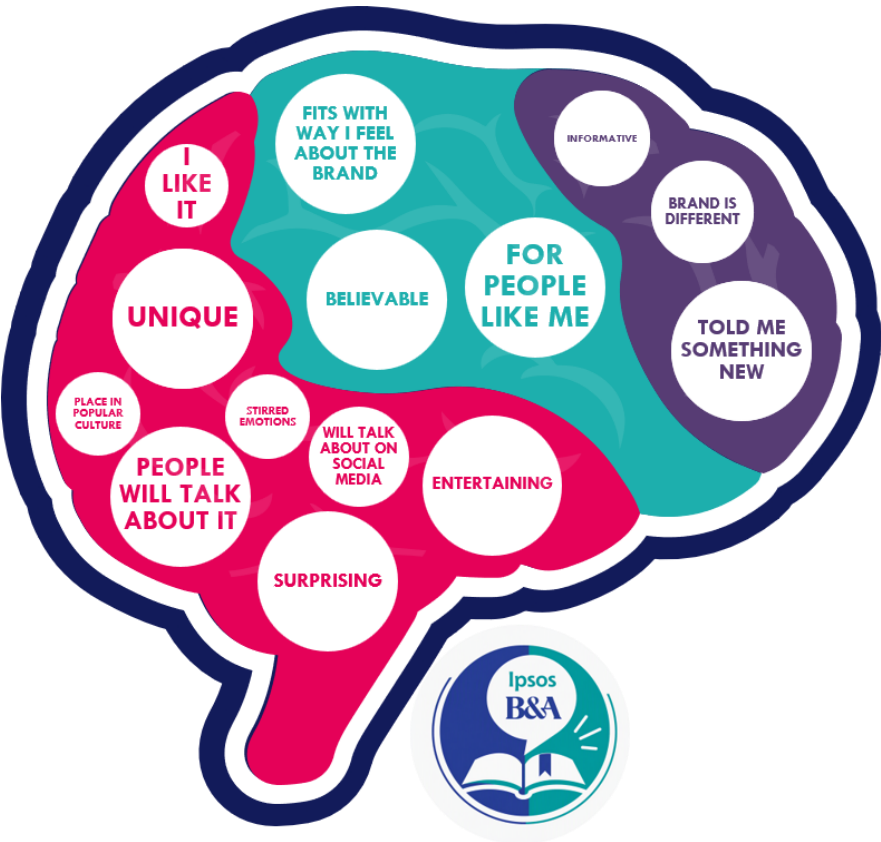
Source: Ipsos MISFITS framework - validated against real world sales metrics through Ipsos Global Ad Testing Meta-Analysis (n=1,734 cases)



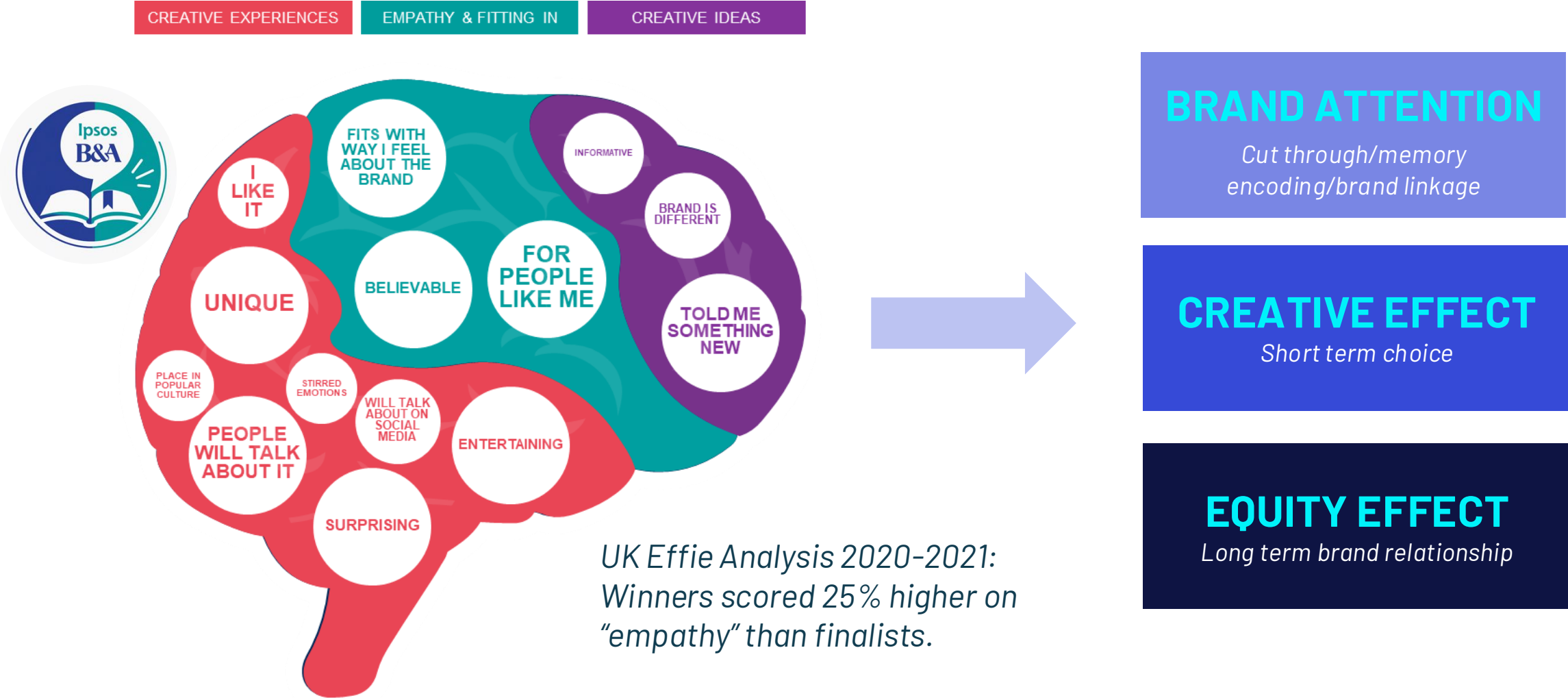
Source: Ipsos Global Ad Testing Meta-Analysis (n=1,734 cases)

Drivers of creative effectiveness

Creative effectiveness is driven by a MISFITS mindset approach to creativity, empathy and information value



What defines an effective creative?



UK Effie Analysis 2020-2021:
Winners scored 25% higher on
“empathy” than finalists.

Source: Ipsos MISFITS framework - validated against real world sales metrics through Ipsos Global Ad Testing Meta-Analysis (n=1,734 cases)

The winning campaigns create lasting memory structures that strengthen the brand over time



And drive more than immediate response. Ads with strong **brand attention** have the potential to win viewers attention and encode memories associated with the brand.

Strong effective creative builds mental availability by making the brand easier to recognise, recall and choose in future.

78%

of winners met or exceeded norms
for BRAND ATTENTION

89%

of winners met or exceeded norms
for predicted LONG TERM EQUITY
EFFECT

Winning work creates an emotional response

Winning creative creates a reason to feel and drives a stronger emotional connection to the brand



The strongest work appears to prioritise emotional impact over emotional positivity.

Winning campaigns frequently fall outside Creative Spark AI's positive sentiment norms, suggesting effectiveness can be driven by tension, empathy, concern, surprise or challenge as much as by positive emotion.



An Post was exceptionally effective at creating a stronger emotional connection to the brand with an uplift in the brand's ability to meet their needs or expectations.

Emotion works hardest when the brand owns it

Emotion creates connection and distinctive assets ensure that connection contributes to the brand.



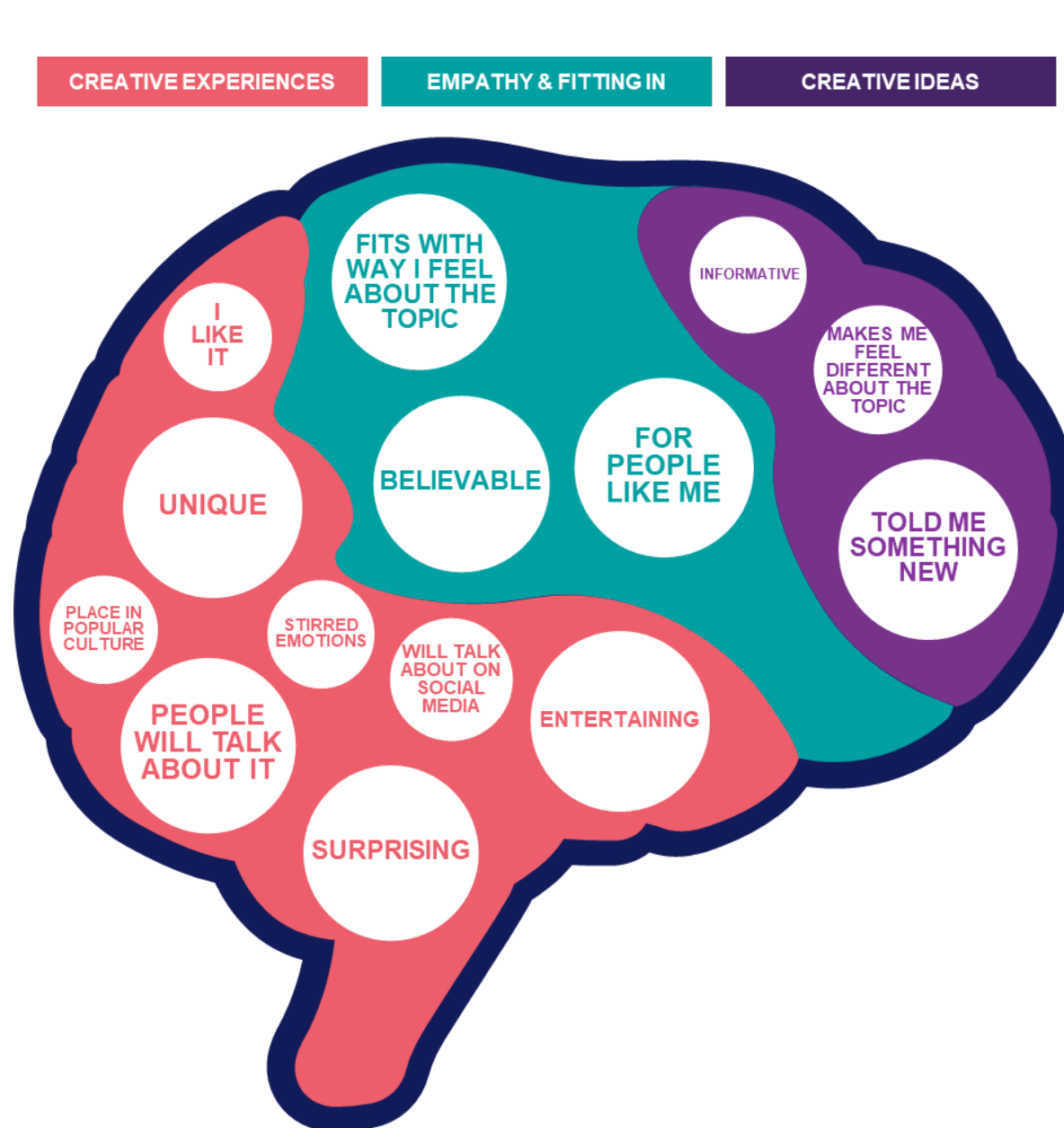
The most effective campaigns may challenge creative norms, but they rarely lose sight of the brand. Distinctive ideas appear to work hardest when audiences can clearly connect the creative asset back to the advertiser. Think distinctive brand assets.

Creative freedom, not brand absence. The strongest campaigns are pushing conventions around sentiment, pacing and framing, but maintain clear brand linkage throughout the execution.



Guinness is a winner that exceeded the norms for brand linkage with emotional impact resonating with branding visuals.

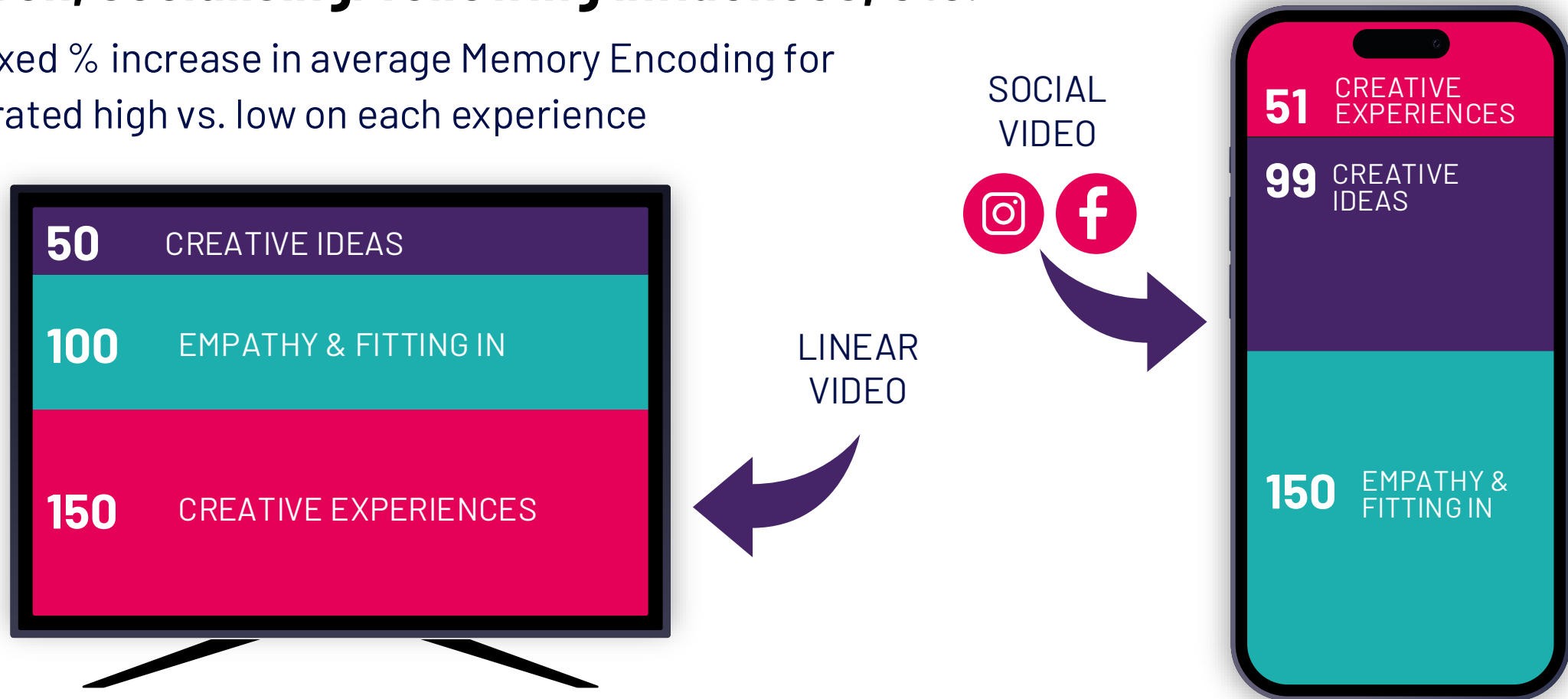
The interaction between creative and channel matters...



TV is mainly used for entertainment while social media is used for many reasons: entertainment (short & long), inspiration, information search, socialising/following influences, etc.



Indexed % increase in average Memory Encoding for ads rated high vs. low on each experience

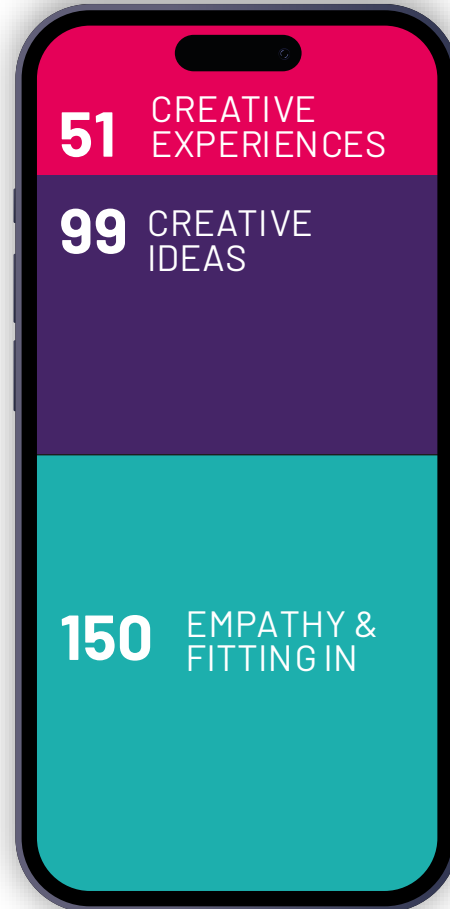
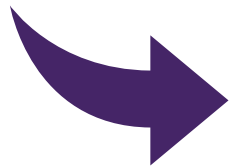


Source: Social MISFITS (n=191 Instagram and facebook cases), Ipsos Global Ad Testing Meta-Analysis (n=1,734 Linear Video cases)

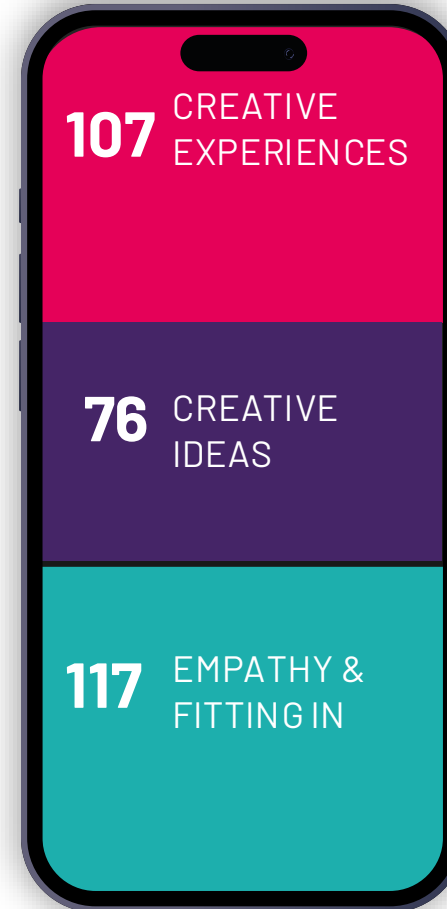
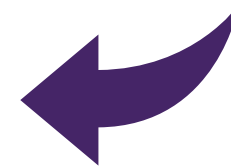
Short Form Video effects are more balanced between Creative Experiences and Empathy



SOCIAL
VIDEO IN-FEED

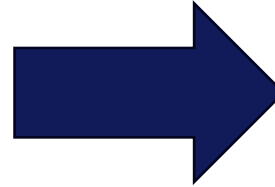


SHORT FORM
VIDEO



Indexed % increase in average Memory Encoding
for ads rated high vs. low on each experience

Creative Spark AI



Looking at the TV/VOD ads within the winning campaigns to understand how well winners demonstrated results for:

- 8 key creative elements – that have a proven correlation with advertising effectiveness
- Performance of element within the MISFIT model with a focus on *brand linkage (attention)*, *short-term choice* and *long-term brand equity effect*

Creative Spark AI – Creative Elements



Brand Consistency



Category Uniqueness



Average Face Time



Positive Sentiment



Text & Audio Congruency



Brand % of Time on Screen



Tight Framing



Pacing

The more principles that are met by the ad, the higher the chances are of having a stronger effective ad.

Note: A creative is unlikely to achieve all 8, 4 would be considered good.

Irish winners deliver on branding and pacing

And met at least half of creative measures: not all measures need to be met for every ad and sometimes breaking the rules gives brands an advantage.



MET AT LEAST 4 elements

82%
of winners

At least 2 in 3 winners met norms for:

Pacing creating ads that are better to follow and deliver impact



Brand % on screen driving good brand linkage to impact memory



Brand consistency tapping into continuity & distinctive assets to encode brand to memory



The three main elements that winners met built a foundation where other elements layer up to increase effectiveness.

Conclusion: The Effectiveness system in action

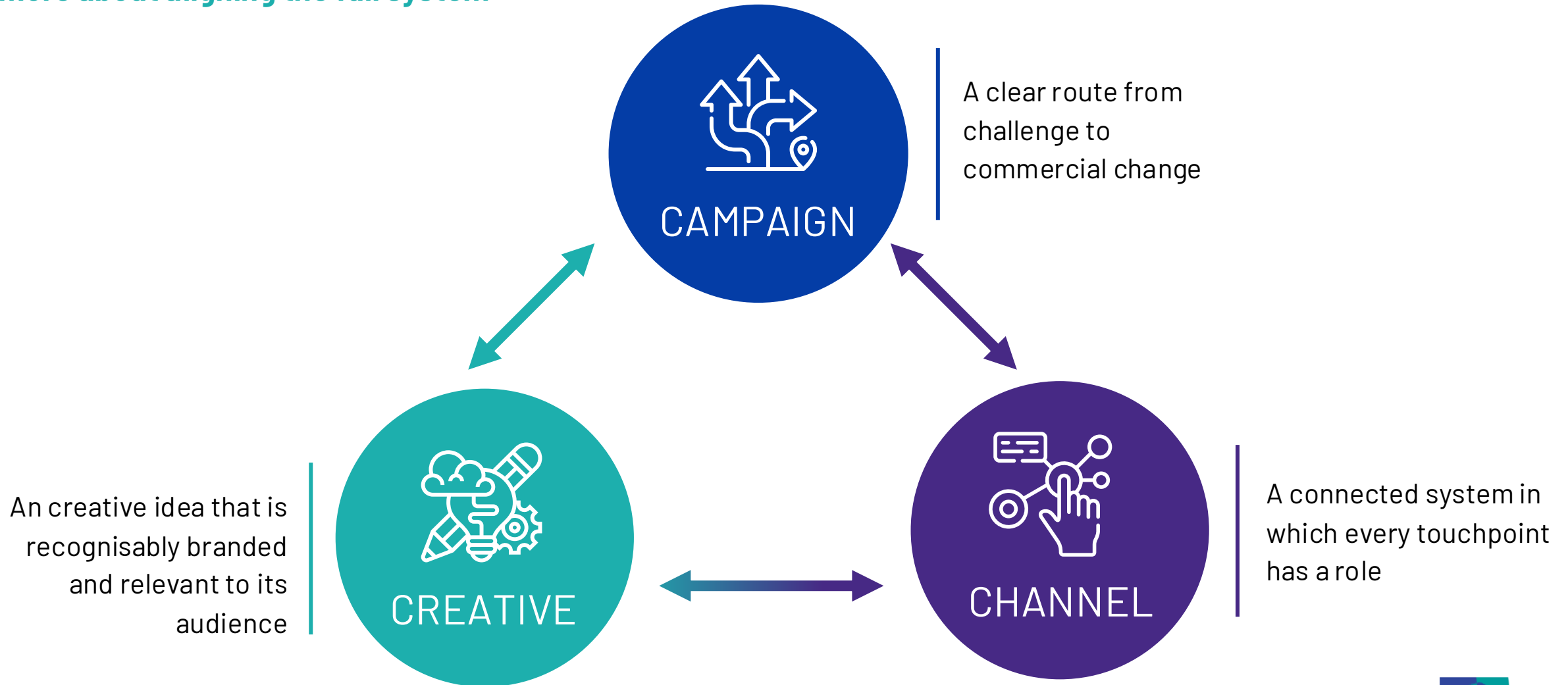
*“The greater the obstacle,
the more the glory in overcoming it!”*

Molière



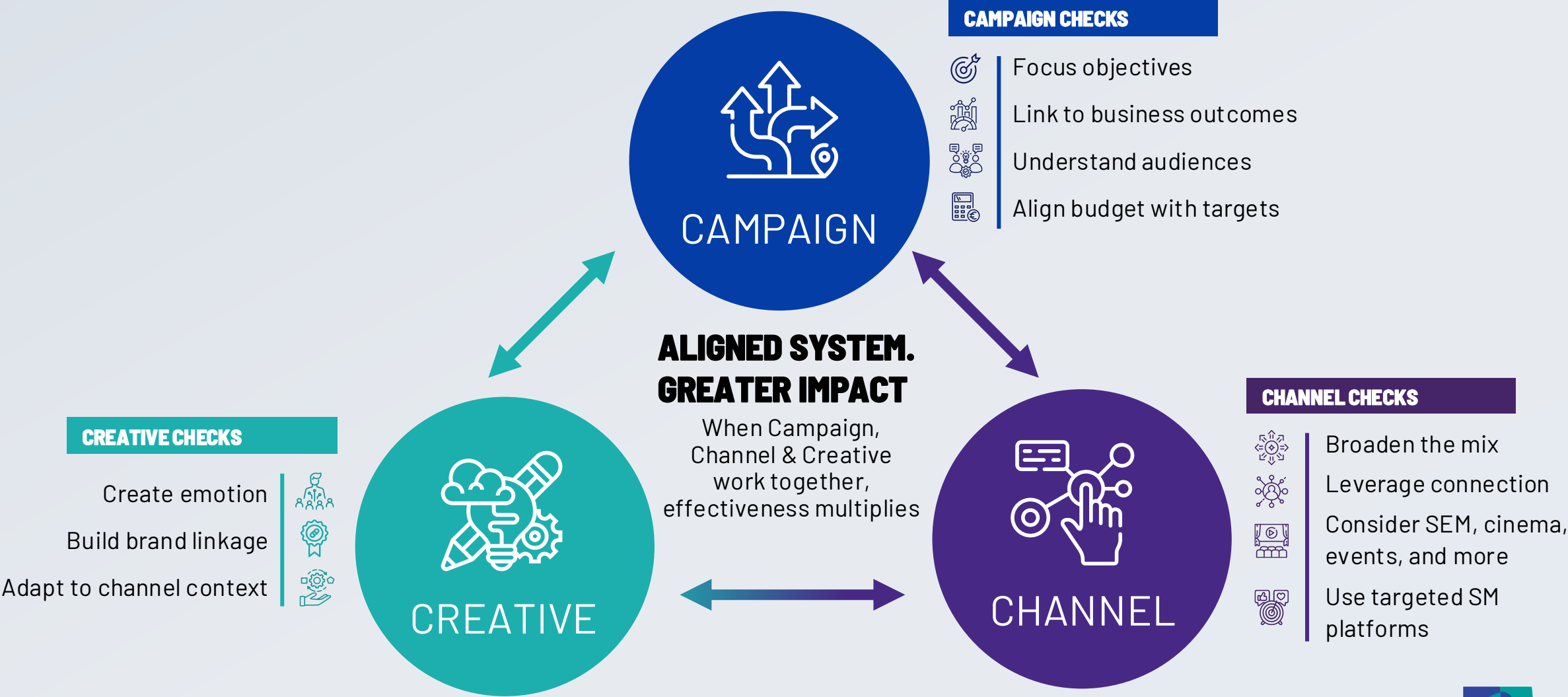
Campaign × Channel × Creative = Effectiveness

The findings suggest that effectiveness is less about finding one winning ingredient and more about aligning the full system



The Effectiveness Playbook

The findings suggest that effectiveness is less about finding one winning ingredient and more about aligning the full system



THANK YOU

