

Three does All It Takes for the Irish Rugby Team



Boys and Girls & MediaVest

AGENCIES



CLIENT



AWARD

LEISURE, MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT
Sponsored by

SILVER



COMPANY PROFILE

Boys and Girls

Boys and Girls is a creative agency founded on the principle of “Daring Simplicity”. We believe that the simpler an idea, the more it resonates and the more it inspires action.

Over the last six years we have grown rapidly, and now produce award-winning campaigns for a range of clients from indigenous brands to large international companies as far afield as the Caribbean, the USA and Europe.

We work above the line, below the line, through the line, in areas where there is no line, in both analog and digital. Wherever we work, we believe that ‘Great work, works’.

MediaVest

Established in 2000, MediaVest is a data-led media communications agency with one ambition, to unite insight gained from data, technology and creativity. Personalisation, mobility, responsiveness and connectivity are now the bedrock of everything we do. Central to all of this is the talent, curiosity and imagination of our people.

We are part of Core Media, Ireland’s largest media group, with over 230 people working across technology, data, innovation, creative, social and media planning and buying. With combined group billings of €195m, we have a 25% share of the market, giving us the scale to deliver the best trading terms available in Ireland.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

"I truly believe that if you've got The Try, anything is possible. All it takes, is all you've got."

The Try – The secret to success in life and career

James P Owen

On the 3rd of March 2015, the final stage of Three's merger with O2 would be complete and the O2 brand would cease to exist in the Irish marketplace. Aside from the launch of the iPhone in 2008, this would be one of the biggest events in the telecoms market since Three launched in 2005.

A lot would happen in the preceding months. In fact, every single customer of both brands would be informed of the event and every step and precaution would be taken to ensure that this transition was a smooth one. It would need to appear like business as usual for all concerned, especially for the larger O2 base, who, without making any active choice, would wake up one day and see the number 3 in the top corner of their phone where O2 once resided.

While this entry isn't about that event specifically (another ADFX entry will demonstrate the success of that campaign), it does play an important role in it overall. You see, by the time the merger was completed, the sponsorship of the Irish Rugby Team had already changed hands. Along with the 3Arena, formerly The O2, the rugby sponsorship moved to Three in 2014. That meant that the Six Nations Championship in 2015 would be one of the earliest manifestations of how Three would 'take care' of the things that O2 customers had become accustomed to.

Rugby was important to O2 customers, with 48%¹ of them having a desire for Three to continue with the sponsorship. Our successful stewardship of this asset would be an early indication of 'life with Three', hence becoming a reassuring sign of things to come for both existing Three customers and those who would soon be joining from O2 on the 3rd of the 3rd, 2015.

¹ Source: Red C O2 Merger Customer Research 2013

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

All activity undertaken by Three during this time period had one key objective to deliver on - maintain the size of the combined O2 and Three base. A significant amount of money had been invested in the merger and its success was dependent on retaining the customer base through its completion.

The role of communications for the Six Nations campaign specifically would be to reassure the O2 customers joining the Three network that it was 'business as usual', while also exciting Three customers with the introduction of the brand to one of the hottest properties in town.

In order to achieve this, we set ourselves an aggressive goal:

To create a Six Nations campaign for Three that could reach the same level of sponsorship effect in one year that O2 had achieved in the previous 8 years.

By doing this, we would be 'maintaining' the effect of the sponsorship and transferring its equity smoothly from one brand to the other. We believed that this could only be done by delivering one of the most creative campaigns that Three had ever produced.

Our specific measures to determine this success would be as follows:

1. Red C Red Alert 1 Sponsorship Score of between 60 – 63 (O2 score stood at 63 in Feb 2014 after 8 years of sponsorship)
2. Red C Red Star² score of 60 or better for TV (Telecom norm is 54)
3. Red C Red Star score of 50 or better for Print/Outdoor (Telecom norm is 36)
4. CTR for digital of over 0.6% (Average for Three is between 0.15 and 0.6%)
5. Creative awards at a recognised event – ICAD/Sharks

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MARKETING OBJECTIVES

As part of our objectives, we also looked at any demographic that was seen to be most 'at risk' during the period before the completion of the merger. Specific research conducted by Red C on the impact of the merger on O2 customers revealed that the most dissatisfied demographics with the news that O2 was merging with Three were Males (48%) and Leinster (61%). So we set ourselves the task of getting this campaign to target these demographics specifically and reassure them that the move to Three would be a positive one.

1 Red Alert from Red C Research evaluates sponsorship across five key building blocks – Awareness, Linkage, Equity Effect, Response and Target Access – to provide robust and insightful feedback and direction for a brands sponsorship strategy.

2 Red Star from Red C Research is an advertising evaluation model that tracks performance against Affection, Brand Impact and Connection. It facilitates comparability and target setting with industry and market benchmarking ultimately producing a one number outcome for every execution, providing a snapshot of advertising effectiveness.

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THE TASK

Our task represented a significant challenge on a number of fronts:

1. The sponsorship was 'inherited' through the O2 merger and therefore it didn't naturally align with Three's strategic objectives for sponsorship. We would have to shape our communications to create this alignment.
2. Three was already the title sponsor of the Irish Football Team and we would have to ensure that our work was sympathetic to the differences between the two properties.
3. Because of the merger, we had access to insights and learnings from O2, but 8 years of work covered a lot of ground, so we were under pressure to uncover a fresh insight O2 hadn't unearthed yet.
4. We had multiple audiences to appeal to:
 - a. The IRFU.
 - b. The team management, and ultimately Joe Schmidt, who signed off on any creative approach.
 - c. O2 customers who had strong affinity to the brand as a result of this sponsorship.
 - d. Rugby fans who would 'see through' any misplaced insight about a sport they were passionate about.
5. Standout in a very cluttered market. The Six Nations tournament has a title sponsor in RBS Ulster Bank, our home stadium is sponsored by Aviva, Guinness has built its own association with rugby through the Autumn International series, and every other unofficial sponsor brand who wants to 'get in on the act' during the tournament.

Aside from these challenges, we also needed to tackle the more obvious task of taking one of the most successful sports sponsorships in the country and doing it justice. The Irish Rugby Team were the current Six Nations Champions. The squad was in great shape and our work needed to galvanise support for the team in their efforts at a successful title defence. With all these challenges ahead of us, we all clearly understood that we couldn't afford to 'drop the ball' on this campaign.

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THE STRATEGY

Like any great gameplan, our strategy was simple:

Inspire the nation's support for the team by showing them what it takes to be a Six Nations Champion.

Our initial strategic thinking was guided by a global trend in sport sponsorship communications. More and more brands were looking 'beyond' success and achievement and instead focusing on what it takes to become successful in the first place. Brands like Nike and Beats with their campaigns for LeBron James (Re-established 2014 for Beats and Training Day for Nike) and Neymar (The game before the game) turned the focus off their star status and their success at game-time and onto what it takes behind the scenes to become a winner. The physical demands, the effort and the mental fortitude required to make it to the top.

This inspired us to take a similar approach to the Irish Rugby Team. We would use all our activity, not to celebrate the success of the team, but to highlight to fans what exactly is required to make it to International Test level in the first place. Very few people ever make it this far, so we believed that very few people really knew what it took. We knew that if they could see it and understand it, they would then be inspired to support the team more than ever before.

It was this strategic thinking that would unlock a fresh insight and a fresh perspective for our campaign. We would then take this and deliver it through a fully integrated marketing plan in the following ways:

- ▶ ATL would be used to dramatise the idea and create awareness.
- ▶ Social and PR would be used to add depth to the campaign by creating bespoke content using brand ambassadors and engage with sports media throughout the tournament.

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THE STRATEGY

- ▶ Digital would add a high level of engagement to the campaign by using time-sensitive message delivery of the creative content to give the campaign a 'real time' insight into the lives of our brand ambassadors throughout the tournament.
- ▶ Finally, we would use activation at the matches to create content for social as well as getting rugby fans involved in games that highlighted the incredible skill and agility required to be a top rugby player.

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Quotes from squad interviews

'You can taste blood at the back of your mouth'

'Your legs feel like they will burst'

'What you eat, your workouts, your stats - everything is monitored, there's nowhere to hide!'

'It's like a really bad pain, like white. Blinding with pain - but then you're back into it.'

'You can be physically talented, gifted even, but if you're mentally weak it won't work.'

'Your body is your business - the industry is so ruthless, you have to look after your business. It's constantly in the back of your head.'

'You do get butterflies, a nervous anxiety. Your heart kind of flutters a little. You know that its game day, it feels like it the second you open your eyes and wake up. You go to bed thinking about it, and you end up dreaming about it.'

BOYS
AND
GIRLS



THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

To develop the idea, we combined our strategic approach with research we conducted with Irish Rugby squad players. This took the form of a series of short interviews and it immediately crystallised our thinking into an insight that we knew would unlock our creative idea.

Campaign Insight

You have to give 100% to play rugby for Ireland

100%. That's the amount of effort and commitment it takes to play rugby at international level. Nothing less will do. In rugby there is nowhere to hide. Not with a 16st back sprinting at you with only one thought in his mind: impact. There's no place for the half-hearted. To get to this level of intensity and commitment requires a spectacular level of dedication. It takes all you've got both physically and mentally. You must devote your whole life to it. Every waking minute of every day.

Creative Idea

ALL IT TAKES IS EVERYTHING.

Representing your country is every player's dream. Many have the talent. Many have the physicality. Many have the mental strength. Few have it all. This idea, the first for Three's sponsorship of the Irish Rugby Team, explores all it takes to play for Ireland, delving into the physical and psychological obstacles the players must overcome to be the best.

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THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

Communication Strategy

ATL

The ATL campaign uses a mix of TV, print and outdoor. It features Ireland captain Paul O'Connell 'destroying his opponent', out-half Johnny Sexton 'conquering his nerves' and Robbie Henshaw 'feeling the burn'. Ireland head coach Joe Schmidt narrates the TV commercial, which helps to ground the work and lend real credibility to what we show as being 'all it takes' to play for Ireland.

Digital

CKSK's digital strategy focused on engagement through content and information delivery. It gave us the opportunity to bring fans closer to how the players train and prepare - allowing them to explore 'all it takes' through real-time insight. We used time-sensitive display advertising that contained content and information specific to a player's schedule at that precise time of day. This content would refresh and change depending on when it was viewed. Click throughs from the display ads landed on a dedicated microsite. This was a responsive page where you could explore how players trained and prepared for a match by time of day, giving viewers an in-depth understanding of what it takes to play for Ireland, morning, noon and night.

PR

The PR Strategy was a three pillar approach.

- ▶ Use traditional PR to push out three pieces of film content (All It Takes videos series) and the 60" TVC.
- ▶ Leverage Brand Ambassadors via traditional PR.
- ▶ Leverage assets to secure free media space – tickets and signed jerseys competitions.

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THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

Social

We used our social channels to look deeper into the lives of our three brand ambassadors and explore how the 'All It Takes' mentality is fostered throughout the life of a player - not just in the build-up of a match. We did this through the All It Takes video series featuring Paul O'Connell, Robbie Henshaw and Johnny Sexton.

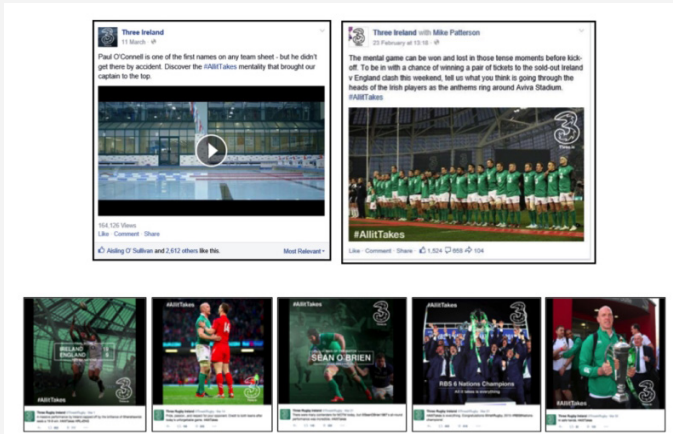
We also used INPHO to capture live match-day shots, providing social media with real-time imagery from the game to give status updates and scores. This brought those that were 'viewing' the game through social a closer connection to the action.

Activation

To demonstrate the skills required to be an Irish Rugby player, we hosted the 3Tryout at all home internationals. Fans were given the opportunity to test their reflexes and reaction times and compare them to the scores of Irish Rugby internationals Robbie Henshaw, Gordon D'Arcy and Connor Murray.

Media Strategy

The media strategy in every channel aimed to create awareness of Three's sponsorship of the Irish rugby team, while exciting and entertaining rugby fans. We would do this by being the closest brand to rugby and sport content during the RBS 6 Nations Championship. This would demonstrate Three's passion for rugby and willingness to bring the fans exactly what they wanted.



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THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

TV

We bought into the RTÉ 2015 RBS 6 Nations Championship package.

Centre-Breaks – based on week 1 x 20sec and weeks 2-5 60sec – would air in each of the 5 Irish games. The 6 Nations Tournament was watched by 2,951,000 people.

This impactful piece of creative needed a heavy launch, which we did in January. We planned 100% of our ratings against the 60sec to launch the new commercial, we then moved to an 80% split for the 20sec, as we had two versions to communicate and 20% of our 60sec commercial ran in conjunction with these. Front-weighting campaigns maximises awareness early, and starts building frequency sooner.

Outdoor

There was only one size that was going to showcase this gripping artwork and that was large format. Our efforts were focused around the time of the tournament. We ran a national campaign on 48 sheets, Adshel, Golden Squares, 96 sheets and Adshel formats.

Print

Environment was key when it came to the planning of the print activity. We needed to target avid rugby supporters, and for this reason, all of our activity was placed in the sports sections of every title we ran. We were active in The Irish Times, The Irish Independent, Irish Examiner, Irish Daily Star, Irish Daily Mirror, Sunday Times, Sunday Independent and Evening Herald.

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THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

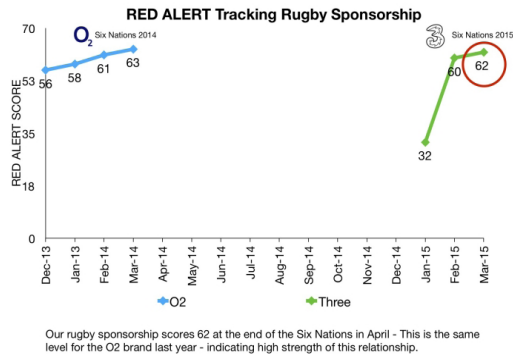
Digital

We decided to be the brand that brought the tournament content to fans. For that reason, we partnered with YouTube and had a RBS 6 Nations channel Takeover; this was supported by further activity targeting all sports content on the network.

We ran HPTOs on key sports and rugby sections of the main news websites such as RTÉ and Independent.ie. We sponsored the rugby section of Joe.ie and targeted a specific rugby audience on Facebook.

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Our rugby sponsorship scores 62 at the end of the Six Nations in April - This is the same level for the O2 brand last year - indicating high strength of this relationship.



Figure 13

Rugby Sponsorship Performance Over Time (RED ALERT)

	O ₂ Dec'13	O ₂ Apr'14	Three Feb'15	Three Mar'15
Awareness	40	50	32	35
Linkage	38	37	40	37
Equity Effect	16	16	29	19
Response	13	13	13	14
Target Access	37	38	41	41
RED ALERT SCORE	56	63	60	62

After the Six Nations we see a further increase in sponsorship awareness and also equity effect, i.e. feeling closer to Three, Three having advantages over other networks. While we are lower than O2 on awareness, we score higher on equity effect, e.g. the sponsorship has a more positive effect on the Three brand than it had on the O2 brand.



Figure 14

RESULTS

This campaign swept the boards. All our goals were either met or exceeded, and in some cases, records were smashed. Here are the highlights:

1. Red Alert Sponsorship Score of between 60-63 (see figures 13 and 14)

The campaign reached a Red Alert score of 60 within the first four weeks, rising to an incredible score of 62 by the end of March. It is an outstanding achievement that in just one campaign, Three had achieved an almost identical score to O2 after 8 years.

2. Red C Red Star score for TV of 60 or better

The TV execution delivered a Red Star score of 62. This was the highest score achieved for a Three TV ad in 2 years, and the second highest ever recorded for Three by Red C. It smashed the telecom norm score of 55 and the Red Star norm of 56.

Breaking down that score, the TVC was particularly strong on Affection (Emotional Valence 87), above norms on Connection (Future Desire 78) and Brand Impact (Rational 60 and Emotional 59). According to Red C, it was an "Exceptional performance compared to spend due to high emotional connection to the audience."

3. Red C Red Star score of 50 or better for Print/Outdoor

The outdoor was a man of the match in terms of results. We achieved a Red Star score of 55, the highest ever score for Three and almost 20 points ahead of the telecoms norm for outdoor/print of 36.

RESULTS

4. CTR for digital of over 0.6% (The industry average is between 0.15% and 0.25% for rich media)

We achieved the highest ever click through rate for a Three campaign of 1.21%, which is almost 5 times the industry average rate of click through.

The levels of engagement on the microsite were just as impressive, with an average time of 3 mins interaction per unique visitor.

5. Creative awards at a recognised event – Kinsale/ICAD

The campaign was entered in the Kinsale Shark Awards in 2015.

The entry date for ICAD was before the campaign had finished, so it will be entered in 2016. However, we have high expectations for ICAD given how well the campaign performed at Kinsale, winning 5 creative awards:

- ▶ 1 Gold for TV
- ▶ 2 Silver for print and outdoor
- ▶ 2 Bronze for print and outdoor

Beyond these specific campaign targets, we have isolated the following Brand scores from the Quarterly Brand and Ad Tracking for Q1 2015 conducted by Red C:

Communications reach:

- ▶ Communications reach overall 65% (up from 56% in Feb)

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RESULTS

- ▶ Reach among males 75%
- ▶ Reach in Dublin 69%

This was encouraging, given our desire to reassure this particular segment in the period approaching the completion of the merger.

TV Recall

- ▶ TV recall for Three in Feb '15 was up from 65% in Feb to 73% in March, and only the Rugby TVC was on air for Three at that time.

Social Media

- ▶ 2.7 million combined views of all three videos.
- ▶ 32,566 likes/favourites.
- ▶ 1,390 comments/replies.
- ▶ 12,615 shares/retweets.

Match-day

- ▶ Total reach over the tournament of 9.4 million accounts.
- ▶ Average 306,163 impressions and 18,865 engagements per match.

These results represented the highest ever views of any brand or social content from Three.

From a media standpoint, the campaign delivered strong awareness results. Overall, over 16 million+ impressions and 1.1 million+ engagements were generated for the campaign, 320% more than planned.

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Brand and Ad Tracking March Monthly Report 2015

	Recall Rugby Ad	Do Not Recall Rugby Ad	Difference	Change from Feb to March
Communication Reach	70%	59%	11%	+9
Brand Consideration	59%	50%	9%	+5
Brand Loyalty	24%	19%	5%	+8
IMAGE				
Has good customer service	23%	16%	7%	+3
Its coverage is as good as other networks	37%	31%	6%	+4
Is a brand I can trust	32%	27%	5%	+7
Is first with new ideas	30%	24%	6%	+9
Sets the standards for mobile networks	31%	27%	4%	+6
Interested in you	22%	17%	5%	+0
Carling	19%	11%	8%	+3
Makes great handsets accessible	27%	21%	6%	+1
Rewards customers for their loyalty	19%	14%	5%	+7



Figure 15

RESULTS

- ▶ The 6 Sheet recall was 55% versus an average of 35% ¹
- ▶ The 48 Sheet recall was 55% versus an average of 37% ²

The RTÉ 6 Nations packages delivered high results with 80% of all Men ABC1 tuning into the tournament at some stage.

The France v Ireland and England v Ireland matches appear in the top 10 TV programmes of 2015.

Video was a key performer for the campaign, accounting for over 90% of the engagements for this campaign. Facebook proved to be a strong performer – based on video views, cost per view, clicks and click through rates (for a fraction of the cost).

RTÉ Sport was the best performer under sponsorships/ HPTO engaging over 12,000+ users.

Finally, but very importantly, we have looked at the Brand Health scores for Three in March 2015. Although Three was in market with other campaigns for Merger Preparation, Three Business and Always-on digital display, we can isolate improvements in brand scores by looking at the difference in those scores for people who recall the Rugby Advertising versus those who did not recall it. By doing this, we can say that the improvements seen in these areas were contributed to significantly by the Rugby campaign.

These improvements included the following uplifts from February to March:

- ▶ Communication reach +9%
- ▶ Brand Consideration +5%
- ▶ Brand Loyalty +8%
- ▶ Is a Brand I can trust +7%

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2016

RESULTS

- ▶ Is first with new ideas +9%
- ▶ Sets the standard for mobile networks +6%
- ▶ Rewards customers for their loyalty +7%

These scores all build towards trust and consideration for the Three brand, and are rooted in the reassurance that this campaign was designed to create at the outset.

Oh, and the team won its second consecutive 6 Nations Championship. Which is nice.

1 and 2 PML Poster Impact Report

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IMPACT ON BEHAVIOURAL ACTIVITY AND PAYBACK

This campaign was just one link in a chain of activity from Three, spread over six months in the build up to the merger of the Three and O2 brands in March 2015. Three individual case entries into this year's awards will demonstrate how separate campaigns built towards a single objective of maintaining the total customer base of the 'new Three' business in the run up to the merger.

It's hard to single out the specific contribution that this Rugby campaign delivered within this overall objective; however, our results clearly demonstrate an amazing achievement;

Three achieved the same level of sponsorship performance in just one rugby campaign that O2 had achieved after eight years of work.

This leads us to contend that our work gave current O2 customers the reassurance that, with Three, it would be 'business as usual' and that Three could take care of the things that mattered to them. This kind of trust and reassurance for O2 customers especially was critical in the uncertain time period before they would become Three customers. We would suggest that this emotive reassurance was just as important in O2 customers decision to 'stay' with Three post merger as the more functional reassurance delivered through the other campaigns. Their behaviour would suggest that Three's continued support of the Irish Rugby Team and the manner in which it was communicated resonated with them and convinced them that Three was a brand for them – a hypothesis that is supported in the retention of the customer base as well as the brand and advertising tracking.

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NEW LEARNINGS

As the US Coast Guards say, 'Semper Paratus'. Always ready. With increasing demand for content during live sports coverage through mobile, we realised the critical importance of an 'Always Ready' strategy. Some brands talk about 'always on' when it comes to content, however the truth is that brands need to be always ready to react when it comes to sport. Our live content capture at matches provided unique content with real time engagement, giving us an edge in a cluttered environment. It's a learning we took into 2016 and into our strategy for the Republic of Ireland Football Team sponsorship.

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SUMMARY

Just as the team delivered for Ireland, Three's sponsorship of Irish Rugby delivered huge brand success. Our tactic of raising the bar creatively to deliver results proved sound. Our insight and execution throughout every touchpoint engaged the nation, helping Three score a stronger relationship with existing customers as well as reassuring those joining from O2.

Inspired by Joe Schmidt, we had clarity over our goals from the outset and a strategy to achieve them. Every component worked together cohesively. Nothing was left behind. This campaign gave everything it had to succeed. Because, to win an ADFX, all it takes is everything.

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MEDIA GALLERY

OUTDOOR



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MEDIA GALLERY

TV



60 second TV



20 second TV (Robbie Henshaw)



20 second TV (Johnny Sexton)



20 second TV (Paul O'Connell)

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ADF
AWARDS
2016

MEDIA GALLERY

DIGITAL

