

The young rock the Riviera as Cannes creative festival enters into a new age

Cannes Lions Diary

Dave Byrne

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Vogue magazine boss Anna Wintour takes to the stage at Cannes Festival of Creativity

Marketing buzzwords, so-called exceptional campaign results and big celebrity names can make a youth campaign feel successful and best in class.

Working in the youth space for the last 10 years has taught me one thing: young people don't care about the social media reach, the PR hits or the online sentiment, they care about how something makes them feel.

Under three headings, interruption, influencer and innovation, my mission for my first time at Cannes Lions was to find out, could the thinking presented truly spark a feeling with young people?

INTERRUPTION

Pete Mountstevens and James Herring of London agency Taylor Herring hit the nail on the head with their insight of, 'Stop interrupting and start entertaining' at their Saturday talk. 'Interrupting' is a term long associated with a youth audience. Yes, brands can interrupt across every moment of a young person's life, but when does interrupting become entertaining and not simply annoying?

It was interesting to see the top 5 brands listed by the duo as taking this mantra to heart. Uber, Airbnb, Ikea and Red Bull held the first 4 spaces of the top 5 but it was the number 1 spot, Porn Hub, that delivered the most cut-through.



Anna Wintour, Dave Byrne and Logan Paul at Cannes Lions

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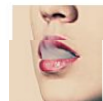


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It's safe to say Cannes Lion is not an event that would have a huge young audience in attendance; in fact, I would struggle to find many people under the age of 20 that have even heard of it.

This year, however, social media megastar Logan Paul is going to change that. Close to 20 million of Logan's die-hard followers will get to enjoy his antics. Logan is one of the biggest social media stars in the world. The 21-year-old Ohio native has amassed a whopping 4 billion views on Vine alone and is arguably more recognisable than any traditional celebrity.

Advocacy and peer promotion is something that has hugely dictated what I do on a daily basis - coming up with ideas that are worth talking about, worth sharing and worth being part of.

From The Thinkhouse Youth Culture Report, we know that 73pc of 18 to 35-year-olds state that friends and peers influence their brand choices, so it is encouraging to see this area of marketing get such a huge focus at this year's festival.

INNOVATION

When it comes to youth marketing, unsurprisingly most of the innovation comes from young people themselves. As the Creative Director of a youth marketing agency, Young Cannes Lions is what I look forward to the most. It is here we get to see young creatives (under 30) from around the world share their work with the industry and, more often than not, it is some of the most innovative thinking.

The Irish entry in the Cyber category targeted LinkedIn users with fake profiles connecting with influential people on the platform to drive talkability and traffic to a charity website.

A festival I had once assumed was a flurry of Rosé and needless networking for an industry where young people came second, actually delivers some world class thinking, to not only entertain and connect with a youth audience, but, most importantly, make them feel.

Dave Byrne is creative director (UK and Ireland) at Thinkhouse, The Youth Marketing Agency

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