

# Ad Stars 2021 winners revealed

Ad Stars revealed the 2021 winners from the online awards ceremony which took place on 27 August. There were 619 winners overall, chosen from 1,726 finalists and 54 countries.



Ali Rez, regional executive creative director at Impact BBDO MENAP, was an executive judge at the Ad Stars 2021 Awards. He said, “Ad Stars is always a wonderful show to view work from a large number of cultures, and is always an incredible learning experience. This year was no different: the jury was absolutely amazed by the variety of thinking.”

## Grand Prix winners

A total of eight Grand Prix trophies were awarded to six creative companies:

- Saatchi & Saatchi Australia: ‘Donation Dollar’ for Royal Australian Mint (Brand Experience & Activation Grand Prix, Design Grand Prix and Direct Grand Prix),
- Dentsu Inc. Japan: ‘The Toxic Dictionary’ for Nikkei Inc. (Print Grand Prix),
- Happiness Saigon, Vietnam: ‘Lays Crispy Subtitles’ for Le Thi Yen (Radio & Audio Grand Prix),
- VMLY&R Singapore: ‘Pride Pass’ for Manpower Group Workforce Solutions (Public Service Advertising Grand Prix),
- Cheil Hong Kong: ‘The Cost of Bullying’ for Samsung (Public Service Advertising Grand Prix),
- TBWA Hakuhodo Japan: ‘The First Take’ for The First Take (Video Stars Grand Prix).

## Film and Video Stars

There were seven Gold trophies awarded in Film:

- Wunderman Thompson Thailand: ‘This creative is thanking a client for cancelling its work in the pandemic’ for TCP Group,
- Taproot Dentsu India: ‘Pooja Didi’ for Facebook,
- Pol Oslo, Norway: ‘Don’t hate. Imitate – The Super Bowl Clapback’ for Audi Norway,
- Ogilvy Group Thailand: ‘Library’ for Monde Nissin Co. Ltd.,
- Amber Communication Shanghai, China: ‘Safely feel the real world’ for Durex,

- Dentsu Mcgarrybowen, Taiwan: 'In Love We Trust' for Sinyi Realty,
- BBH Singapore: 'It's in Our Spirit' for The Absolut Company.

"A personal favourite of mine is Pooja Didi by Taproot Dentsu India. Within a minute, I was fully invested in the story, and I didn't want it to end. I actually teared up a little. Great direction. Great storytelling. Films like this aren't always destined for big awards, they're almost too quiet and genuine for that. But I'm very glad we could give this one a Gold," explains John Mescall, global executive creative director at McCann Worldgroup, who led these categories.

In the Video Stars category, the Grand Prix was awarded to TBWA Hakuhodo for 'The First Take' for The First Take.

"The First Take was designed to create an entirely new way for artists to record and share their music. It wasn't just a one-off piece: it was designed to scale and did just that. It was beautifully executed and supremely fit for purpose. In short, an ambitious idea executed flawlessly, that sets a very high bar for video content. I think for a few years, whenever I'm interrogating a branded content piece, I'll be using The First Take as a benchmark. Wonderful, wonderful work," said Mescall.

There were three Gold winners in **Video Stars**:

- Gigil, Philippines; 'Netflix 'Cupids' for Netflix,
- Ogilvy Group Thailand; 'Library' for Monde Nissin Co., Ltd.,
- Wunderman Thompson Thailand; 'This creative is thanking a client for cancelling its work in the pandemic' for TCP Group.

## Design and Print

In Design, the Grand Prix was awarded to Saatchi & Saatchi Australia for 'Donation Dollar' for Royal Australian Mint.

The judges awarded two Gold trophies in Design:

- AKQA Japan; 'Create with Air Max' for Nike,
- Hakuhodo Indonesia; 'Sake Sushi House' for Sushi Sei.

In Print, the Grand Prix was awarded to Dentsu Inc.'s 'The Toxic Dictionary' for Nikkei Inc. The jury also awarded one Gold trophy to Havas Middle East for 'LEGO News Rebuilt' for LEGO Saudi Stores.

Gabriela Scardaccione, global creative director at Mother, London, led these categories as an executive judge. She said, "The Toxic Dictionary is a piece of craft. The colours, typeface and overall presentation are immaculate. Everyone on the jury loved this and with an almost 100% majority, it took the biggest award. If anyone has a copy they can send me, I would look forward to holding one in my hands."

## **Pivot, Public Service Advertising, Diverse Insights, Outdoor, Place Brand, Radio and Audio**

Last year, Ad Stars introduced the 'Pivot' category to celebrate campaigns that have amplified and repositioned brands in response to a crisis like Covid-19. There are three Gold Pivot winners:

- Saatchi & Saatchi Australia; 'Donation Dollar' for Royal Australia Mint,
- Wunderman Thompson Thailand; 'Destination Menu' for THAI Airways,
- Dentsu Inc. Japan; 'Tuna Scope 2020' for Kura Sushi Inc.

Rez led these categories as Executive Judge. He said, "The travel industry got impacted more than almost any other during this pandemic. To pivot amidst such crisis the way Thai Airways did is the stuff of great learning. They understood their customer well and took pride in what differentiates them: the wonderful food they serve on board. A worthy winner in this category."

In **Public Service Advertising (PSA)**, there were two Grand Prix winners:

- VMLY&R Singapore's 'Pride Pass' for Manpower Group Workforce Solutions,
- Cheil Hong Kong's 'The Cost of Bullying' for Samsung.

Rez said, "The strongest thing about both these campaigns is that they go beyond just awareness and talk – they provide

real solutions that address the problem and go a long way in helping overcome it.”

There were also five Gold PSA trophies awarded:

- Havas Worldwide Portugal; ‘The Day-After-Women’s-Day Newspapers’ for Raparigas da Bola,
- Thinkerbell Australia; ‘The Purple Hive Project’ for Bega Foods,
- Havas Costa Rica; ‘The Check Ball’ for BlueCross BlueShield,
- Saatchi & Saatchi Australia; ‘Donation Dollar’ for Royal Australian Mint,
- Special Group New Zealand; ‘Meddle in the New Zealand Election’ for Every Kiwi Vote Counts.

There were no Grand Prix or Gold awards in the Diverse Insights category.

In **Outdoor**, the jury awarded four Golds:

- Saatchi & Saatchi Australia; ‘Donation Dollar’ for Royal Australian Mint,
- MullenLowe MENA FZLLC; ‘Double Moon’ for UAE Government Media Office,
- BBH Singapore; ‘Running Stories’ for BBH,
- The Nine, China; ‘Guess Which Book Is It’ for Yan Ji You Bookstore.

There was one Gold winner in the **Place Brand** category this year: MullenLowe MENA FZLLC’s ‘Double Moon’ for UAE Government Media Office.

In **Radio and Audio**, Happiness Saigon in Vietnam won Grand Prix for ‘Lays Crispy Subtitles’ for Le Thi Yen; while AKQA Brazil won Gold for ‘Beck’s Frequency’ for Beck’s.

“Lay’s Crispy Subtitles is an ingenious case of not only utilizing the audio medium very creatively but doing so with the product differentiator at the very heart of the idea. It’s all done in a very tongue-in-cheek, whimsical manner which is absolutely perfect for the category while doing a fantastic job of selling the appetizing crunch of the product. Winner all round,” said Rez.

## **Innovation, Integrated, Interactive, Mobile, Data Insights, Social and Influencer**

There were no Grand Prix or Gold winners in the Innovation and Integrated categories this year, and no Grand Prix winner in Interactive. The three Gold winners in the Interactive category are:

- AKQA Brazil; ‘Beck’s Frequency’ for Beck’s,

- Dentsu Craft Tokyo; 'Yakushima Treasure – Another Live from Yakushima' for Yakushima Treasure,
- Zulu Alpha Kilo, Canada; 'World's Oldest Esports Team' for HomeEquity Bank.

"Overall, Interactive winners should make the audience want to interact with the idea. 'Beck's Frequency' belongs to the "seriously?" category. I'm curious to try it out myself. With 'Yakushima Treasure', I actually played with the experience after seeing the case video. I really loved the 'World's Oldest Esports Team' idea as so many gamers play war games and revel in aimless killing without understanding the chilling truth of wars," explains Natalie Lam, chief creative officer, Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa at Publicis Groupe, who led these categories as executive judge.

In Mobile, Deloitte Australia won Gold for 'Carbon Thumbprint' for Belong. "'Carbon Thumbprint' is an alarming use of data: concrete evidence of our impact on the environment. We all know we should limit social media and mobile usage for our mental health, and now there's another good/important reason to do so. Let's hope this concept takes on a much bigger impact," says Lam.

In the Data Insights category, there are two Gold winners:

- Dentsu Craft Tokyo; 'Yakushima Treasure – Another Live from Yakushima' for Yakushima Treasure,
- Deloitte Australia; 'Carbon Thumbprint' for Belong.

"Yakushima Treasure is a clever but beautiful use of data. It's just so weird and wonderful, it showed the tenacious dedication to craft during such a tough time," says Lam. In Social and Influencer, the jury awarded three Golds:

- POL Oslo, Norway; 'Don't hate. Imitate - The Super Bowl Clapback' for Audi Norway (two Golds),
- Rothco, part of Accenture Interactive, Ireland; 'Sleeping Flags' for One.

## **Brand Experience and Activation, Creative E-commerce, Direct, Media, PR**

In Brand Experience & Activation, Saatchi & Saatchi Australia won Grand Prix for 'Donation Dollar' for Royal Australian Mint. "With this idea, people will look at money differently. This coin represents generosity. This coin reminds us that there are less fortunate people out there who need our assistance. This coin is not only the actual help but a call to action for everyone to help," says Merlee Jayme, chief creative officer, Asia Pacific at Dentsu International, who led these categories as executive judge.

There are also three Gold winners:

- BBH Singapore; 'Running Stories' for BBH,
- Clemenger BBDO Wellington, New Zealand; 'Voice of Racism' for New Zealand Human Rights Commission,
- Grey; 'Contract Translator' for Reclame Aqui.

"'Voice of Racism' is a simple way to make people who think they're anti-racism think again. Imagine listening to these real hurtful words hurled at people every day? Understanding that they may even be unconsciously contributing to this is a powerful realisation. It's good that this is being used as a learning tool in New Zealand today. Definitely something the world should learn from," says Jayme.

Creative E-commerce celebrates ideas that optimise the customer journey through creative solutions. Wunderman Thompson, United Arab Emirates, won Gold for 'Pay Cut Whopper' for Burger King.

In Direct, Saatchi & Saatchi Australia won Grand Prix for 'Donation Dollar' for Royal Australia Mint. There were also two Gold winners in Direct:

- Impact BBDO, United Arab Emirates; 'The Wider Web' for Etisalat,
- MullenLowe, USA; 'Shamecards' for Change the Ref.

In Media, there is one Gold winner: Saatchi & Saatchi Australia's 'Donation Dollar' for Royal Australian Mint. In PR, the jury awarded three Golds:

- MullenLowe MENA FZLLC; 'Double Moon' for UAE Government Media Office,
- Rothco, part of Accenture Interactive, Ireland; 'Sleeping Flags' for One,
- Saatchi & Saatchi Ukraine; 'Motherland Pride' for KyivPride.

Hwan-Jin Choi, Chairperson of the Ad Stars executive committee, said, "Our panel of judges told us that they were amazed by the ideas they saw that are helping brands to rise, restart the economy or create meaningful ways to assist consumers. They give us optimism for the future – all winners should be very proud."

## Special Awards

This year's Special Award winners are:

- Network of the Year: dentsu
- Agency of the Year: Dentsu Inc.
- Advertiser of the Year: WWF
- Production Company of the Year: Good Oil

Ricardo Adolfo, executive creative director at TBWA\Media Arts Lab in Japan, was a final judge at Ad Stars 2021. He said, "This year's Ad Stars showed that the industry has been busier than ever and always swift on adjusting to unforeseeable challenges. A considerable amount of the great work awarded was born out of new problems and fuelled by the latest tech. It was great to see that Ad Stars continues to grow with the best work not only from the region but also from all over the world."

The Ad Stars 2021 Awards Ceremony was held online on 27 August. To see the full list of winners, go [here](#).