

Dan Wieden to receive Lion of St. Mark

CANNES, FRANCE: The organisers of the 59th Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity have announced that the 2012 recipient of the Lion of St. Mark will be Dan Wieden, co-founder and global executive creative director of Wieden+Kennedy.



The accolade is presented in celebration and honour of his long and outstanding contribution to creativity in communications.

Dan Wieden grew up in Portland, USA, graduated from the University of Oregon and worked briefly in public relations before applying his writing talents to the advertising business. Initially he wrote trade magazine copy for a timber company.

In 1982 Wieden, together with his creative partner David Kennedy, founded Wieden+Kennedy. Their first client was the upstart company Nike. After being told by Phil Knight, founder of Nike, that 'He didn't believe in advertising', Wieden and Kennedy set about making some of the greatest advertising ever made - for a company that doesn't believe in advertising. Wieden famously coined the Nike tagline 'Just Do It'.

He just did it

Almost three decades later, the agency that started with five employees now has offices in Portland, New York, London, Amsterdam, Delhi, Shanghai, Tokyo and São Paulo with nearly 1200 employees around the world. Notwithstanding the incredible growth of Wieden+Kennedy, Wieden's motivation and goal was to start a different type of advertising agency. An agency where people could perform at their best without structures and bureaucracies and where creativity would not be lost as the agency grew.

In its 30th year under Wieden's leadership, Wieden+Kennedy has grown to be a global brand in its own right. W+K operates 24 hours a day, in dozens of languages, on projects as varied as branding international companies, operating an experimental advertising school and producing sports documentaries and TV series while releasing some of Japan's best music through W+K Tokyo Lab. All the while, every office has at least one pro bono client and has followed Wieden's example and played an active role in supporting the arts and culture of the host city.

Honours galore

In 2010, Wieden+Kennedy was chosen Agency of the Year by *Adweek*, *Ad Age*, *Campaign*, *Creativity* and *SHOOT*. It was the first time in history one agency has swept the honour, and further proof that Wieden's vision of an independent, creatively led agency can make meaningful, progressive and challenging work for its diverse client base. This includes some of the world's most recognisable brands such as Coca-Cola, Chrysler, Delta Airlines, ESPN, Heineken, Honda, Kraft, Levi's, Nike, Old Spice and Procter & Gamble.

It is thanks to Wieden that Titanium Lions launched in 2003 to honour ground-breaking ideas that are provocative and point to a new direction; work that, according to Wieden, "causes the industry to stop in its tracks and reconsider the way forward".

"Dan's integrity and brilliance have inspired a generation and gained worldwide respect. While his work is much admired, his vision has reverberated across the industry, changing the course of brand marketing and redefining the structure of the business," says Terry Savage, Chairman of Cannes Lions. "We are extremely proud and honoured to present Dan, one of the nicest people in the industry, with the Lion of St. Mark for his outstanding contribution to creativity in communications."

Commenting on the award, Wieden says, "This is a pretty big honour. To be honest, I've always identified with that renowned military leader, of whom it was said, his men would follow him anywhere. Mainly, out of curiosity."

Wieden will be presented with the Lion of St. Mark in Cannes during the Film, Film Craft, Titanium, Integrated and Branded Content & Entertainment awards ceremony.

The Lion of St. Mark trophy is based upon the original Lions awarded at the Festival which were modelled on the lion statue in St. Mark's Square in Venice, location of the first Festival in 1954 and alternating host city with Cannes before Cannes became the Festival's permanent home in 1984.

The Lion of St. Mark accolade was presented for the first time in 2011 to Sir John Hegarty.

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