

Global Advertising Creative Trends: An Analysis of the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix Winners ทิศทางของความคิดสร้างสรรค์ในงานโฆษณาในระดับนานาชาติ: การวิเคราะห์ผู้ชนะรางวัลกรุงปารีสคานส์โลออนส์ประจำปี 2567

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Abstract:

Background and Objectives: For decades, the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity has served as a global benchmark for advertising excellence and creative prestige. Yet, recent Grand Prix-winning campaigns have lacked systematic analysis. This study fills that gap by examining all 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners across 32 categories through qualitative content analysis. Campaigns were coded for creative trends, strategy, execution, and messaging based on an analytical framework combining prior research and current industry insights.

Methods: This research employed a qualitative content analysis approach, analyzing the 34 Grand Prix winning campaigns across all 32 categories of the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. Data was collected from Cannes Lion's official source and reports from industry media. Then, the collected data were analyzed to identify the emerging advertising creativity trends, recurrent patterns and innovative elements that characterize the current global advertising landscape.

Results: Findings reveal that human-centered storytelling is the most prominent trend, with campaigns leveraging authentic narratives focused on actual people and lived experiences. Social responsibility and brand activism also featured strongly, as brands address issues such as inclusion, sustainability, and empowerment through advocacy and community engagement. Technological innovation is deeply integrated, with campaigns utilizing AI, data-driven personalization, and immersive digital tools to enhance storytelling and participation. Other substantial trends include immersive brand experiences, cross-channel integration, sustainability, humor and pop culture, creative commerce, and artistic craftsmanship. Standout campaigns such as Vaseline's "Transition Body Lotion," KPN's "A Piece of Me," and Orange's "WoMen's Football" demonstrate the intersection of purpose-driven storytelling, technological innovation, and multi-platform strategy. These findings have significant implications for both industry and academia. For practitioners, the study highlights the significance of implanting social purpose and authentic storytelling within creative strategies, while leveraging emerging technologies for deeper engagement. For academics, this research provides a current framework for analyzing global advertising trends and supports future investigation into the interplay between creativity, technology, and social impact.

Conclusions: The 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners reflect a multidimensional evolution in advertising creativity, where human-centered storytelling, social responsibility, and technological innovation are central to industry excellence. These trends depict a transformation toward campaigns that capture attention, drive societal change, and deliver business outcomes. The findings underscore the essential role of ingraining social purpose and genuine storytelling at the heart of creative strategies. Agencies and brands should invest in deep consumer insight and community collaboration to create campaigns that reverberate on a human level and drive meaningful change.

Keywords: Advertising; Award Winners; Creativity; Cannes Lions; Creative Industries

บทคัดย่อ:

ที่มาและวัตถุประสงค์: เทศกาล Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity ในฐานะมาตรฐานสูงสุดของความเป็นเลิศด้านโฆษณาในระดับโลก เป็นแหล่งข้อมูลสำคัญในการศึกษาทิศทางของความคิดสร้างสรรค์ร่วมสมัย แม้ว่าจะมีงานวิจัยก่อนหน้านี้ที่ศึกษาผู้ชนะ Cannes Lions ในอดีต แต่ยังขาดการวิเคราะห์อย่างเป็นระบบที่ทันสมัยเกี่ยวกับแคมเปญที่ได้รับรางวัล Grand Prix ในปีล่าสุด โดยงานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์แนวโน้มความคิดสร้างสรรค์ที่ปรากฏในแคมเปญผู้ชนะ Grand Prix ประจำปี 2024 ของ Cannes Lions เพื่อระบุรูปแบบสำคัญด้านกลยุทธ์ วิธีดำเนินงาน และสารที่สะท้อนความเป็นเลิศของโฆษณาในยุคปัจจุบัน

ระเบียบวิธีการศึกษา: การวิจัยนี้ใช้วิธีวิเคราะห์เนื้อหาเชิงคุณภาพ โดยวิเคราะห์แคมเปญผู้ชนะรางวัล Grand Prix Cannes Lions 2024 ครบทั้ง 32 หมวดหมู่ จำนวนทั้งหมด 34 แคมเปญ โดยรวบรวมข้อมูลจากแหล่งข้อมูลทางการและสื่ออุตสาหกรรมที่น่าเชื่อถือ จากนั้นถอดรหัสแนวโน้มความคิดสร้างสรรค์ รูปแบบเนื้อหา และนวัตกรรมที่เกิดขึ้น ซึ่งวิเคราะห์โดยอิงกรอบแนวคิดจากวรรณกรรมเดิมและพัฒนาการล่าสุดในอุตสาหกรรม

ผลการศึกษา: ผลการวิจัยพบว่า “การเล่าเรื่องที่เน้นมนุษย์เป็นศูนย์กลาง” เป็นแนวโน้มหลักที่โดดเด่นที่สุด โดยแต่ละแคมเปญเน้นการเล่าเรื่องที่จริงใจและสะท้อนประสบการณ์ชีวิตจริงของผู้คน นอกจากนี้ “ความรับผิดชอบต่อสังคมและการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคมของแบรนด์” ก็ปรากฏอย่างชัดเจน โดยแบรนด์ต่างๆ มุ่งเน้นประเด็นความหลากหลาย ความยั่งยืน และการเสริมสร้างพลังอำนาจผ่านการรณรงค์และมีส่วนร่วมกับชุมชน “นวัตกรรมทางเทคโนโลยี” ก็เป็นอีกองค์ประกอบสำคัญ ทั้งในแง่การใช้ AI การปรับแต่งเนื้อหาตามข้อมูล และการสร้างประสบการณ์ดิจิทัลที่มีส่วนร่วม นอกจากนี้ ยังพบแนวโน้มการสร้างประสบการณ์แบรนด์ที่สมจริง การสื่อสารแบบบูรณาการข้ามช่องทาง ความยั่งยืน อารมณ์ขัน วัฒนธรรมสมัยนิยม และความประณีตทางศิลปะ ข้อค้นพบนี้มีความสำคัญทั้งในเชิงวิชาการและปฏิบัติ สำหรับภาคอุตสาหกรรม งานวิจัยนี้ชี้ให้เห็นถึงความสำคัญของการผสานจุดยืนทางสังคมและการเล่าเรื่องที่จริงใจเข้ากับกลยุทธ์สร้างสรรค์ พร้อมทั้งใช้เทคโนโลยีใหม่เพื่อเสริมสร้างการมีส่วนร่วมอย่างลึกซึ้ง สำหรับภาควิชาการ งานวิจัยนี้เสนอกรอบการวิเคราะห์แนวโน้มโฆษณาในระดับโลกที่ทันสมัย และสนับสนุนการศึกษาวิจัยต่อยอดเกี่ยวกับความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความคิดสร้างสรรค์ เทคโนโลยี และผลกระทบทางสังคม

บทสรุป: สรุปได้ว่า แคมเปญผู้ชนะ Grand Prix Cannes Lions 2024 สะท้อนวิวัฒนาการของความคิดสร้างสรรค์ในโฆษณายุคใหม่ ที่เน้นการเล่าเรื่องโดยมนุษย์เป็นศูนย์กลาง ความรับผิดชอบต่อสังคม และการนำนวัตกรรมเทคโนโลยีมาใช้เป็นหัวใจสำคัญของความเป็นเลิศในอุตสาหกรรม

คำสำคัญ: การโฆษณา ผู้ชนะรางวัล ความคิดสร้างสรรค์ คานส์ไลออนส์ อุตสาหกรรมสร้างสรรค์

Introduction

In recent years, the advertising industry has experienced profound transformations, driven by technological innovations, shifting consumer behaviors, and evolving societal values [1]. Advertising creativity is widely acknowledged as a pivotal determinant of success in contemporary marketing, influencing consumer responses and ultimately driving brand performance [2-3]. As brands navigate an increasingly complex media landscape, understanding global creative trends becomes crucial for developing effective communication strategies that resonate across diverse markets and cultural contexts [4]. The strategic differentiation of products and the competitive positioning of advertising agencies are fundamentally reliant on creative distinction [5]. The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, established in 1954, has emerged as the premier global benchmark for advertising excellence, with its Grand Prix awards representing the pinnacle of innovation effectiveness and creative achievement in the advertising industry [6].

Cannes Lions winners provide a unique lens through which to examine contemporary advertising creativity and its reflection of broader societal shifts. These awarded campaigns not only demonstrate exceptional creative execution but also serve as indicators of emerging trends that influence global advertising practices [7]. A comprehensive analysis of the Cannes Lions festival's evolution from a modest film advertising event in 1954 to a multifaceted global festival encompassing diverse creative disciplines, highlighting the festival's dual role as a celebration of creativity and a commercial marketplace. A scholar emphasizes that Cannes Lions continues to shape industry standards and creative practices, but its future relevance depends on balancing tradition with innovation [8]. As the advertising landscape becomes increasingly fragmented across digital platforms and traditional media, analyzing award-winning creative work offers valuable insights into the strategies and approaches that capture both industry recognition and consumer attention [9].

Understanding advertising trends is essential because the communications industry is vibrant and inventive, constantly creating new forms of communication that cause societal turbulence and ethical conflicts, making it crucial for academics and marketing managers to understand these changes to forecast future developments, determine which innovations will lead to new industries versus fads, and address the ethical dilemmas and disruptions, such as job obsolescence, created by the rapid pace of change, ultimately enabling industry professionals to prosper within this climate of creative destruction [10]. Recent scholar has emphasized the importance of understanding how global advertising campaigns balance universal appeal with local cultural sensitivities [11]. The concept of "Glocalization" in advertising has gained prominence as brands seek to create campaigns that maintain consistent brand messaging while adapting to regional preferences and cultural nuances [12]. This tension between global standardization and local adaptation is particularly evident in award-winning campaigns that must demonstrate both creative innovation and market effectiveness across diverse geographic regions. Focusing specifically on creative trends, a previous study [13] analyzes the 2019 Cannes Lions winners to identify key shifts in global advertising creativity. The study finds that campaigns increasingly emphasize multi-sensory experiences, the integration of data and creativity, authentic humanism, brand activism, and inclusivity for marginalized groups. These trends reflect broader shifts in consumer expectations and the growing importance of social responsibility and technological innovation in advertising.

Furthermore, the rise of digital technologies and social media platforms has fundamentally altered the creative landscape, enabling new forms of storytelling and audience engagement [14]. Contemporary advertising campaigns increasingly leverage interactive technologies, user-generated content, and multi-platform narratives to create immersive brand experiences [15]. The 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners reflect these technological shifts, showcasing how creative professionals are adapting traditional advertising principles to new media environments and consumer expectations.

However, A longstanding debate in the advertising literature concerns whether award-winning creativity necessarily translates into market effectiveness [16-17]. While industry competitions like the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity highlight creative excellence [18], some reports indicate a growing skepticism among marketers regarding advertising creativity's direct value and a corresponding decrease in investment [19-21]. Studies have suggested that award-winning advertisements are not always effective in driving sales, citing examples such as Nissan's "Mr. K"

campaign, which garnered creative accolades but failed to boost sales [17]. This perspective often highlights that the primary audience for creative awards is frequently other advertising professionals, leading to creative award shows being held in higher esteem by creatives than by researchers focused on demonstrable effectiveness [17]. Advertising managers, from this viewpoint, sometimes contend that award-winning creative advertising may have little correlation with actual sales or brand outcomes [17]. Yet, Cannes Lions winners, especially Grand Prix winners, still represent the pinnacle of advertising creativity, setting creative trends for future directions in advertising creativity [21].

The literature gap is that most prior studies focus on earlier years (e.g., 2019 or before) or provide broad overviews of Cannes Lions' historical evolution, lacking up-to-date analysis of the most recent Grand Prix winners in all categories. There is a gap in examining how the latest campaigns (2024) reflect new creative directions, especially in the wake of rapid technological and societal changes.

The significance of studying Cannes Lions award winners extends beyond mere creative appreciation. These campaigns often serve as trend-setters that influence industry practices and inspire creative professionals worldwide [22]. By analyzing the thematic patterns, creative approaches, and strategic frameworks employed in Grand Prix-winning campaigns, researchers and practitioners can identify emerging trends that may shape future advertising strategies [23]. Overall, the 2024 winners reflect a multidimensional shift toward campaigns that engage audiences, create societal value, and achieve business goals. Moreover, understanding these trends provides valuable insights into how societal values, technological capabilities, and consumer preferences converge to influence creative expression in advertising on a global scale, offering important lessons that Thailand can apply to advance its own advertising industry and creative economy. This paper aims to analyze the 2024 Grand Prix winners to identify winning creative trends shaping the industry with the following objectives.

Literature Review

Advertising industry is known for its creativity and innovation [10]. Creativity in advertising is portrayed as a balance between two opposing elements: surprise (novelty, originality, divergence from the norm) and regularity (familiarity, appropriateness, and usefulness). Effective creative ads are not just novel but also relevant and valuable to consumers. The creative process is a mix of bursts of insight and methodical problem-solving, requiring both intuitive and analytical thinking. While some creativity theories emphasize sudden inspiration or randomness, others highlight the importance of bounded, patterned thinking and the use of proven creativity templates or structures to produce effective ads [17].

The evolution of creativity-enhancement methods in advertising, distinguishing between randomness-based brainstorming approaches and more structured, regular methods that use cognitive frameworks and creativity templates [17]. Although randomness and free ideation have been widely used, evidence suggests they may not always be the most effective approach because they can reduce idea usefulness and effectiveness. Structured creativity methods seek to balance originality with practical relevance, yielding ads that stand out yet remain coherent and communicatively effective [17].

In advertising industry, creativity matters greatly because creative advertisements influence consumer attitudes, drive sales, and play a significant role in shaping brand identity and cultural norms. Creativity remains at the core of advertising's ability to connect, persuade, and succeed in competitive markets, evolving from more romantic, intuitive notions to more scientific, systematic understandings and applications [17].

Advertising creativity works most effectively when it combines both originality and appropriateness, positively influencing consumer responses such as attitudes toward the ad and brand, especially in high-involvement product contexts and for unfamiliar brands. It operates through three complementary mechanisms 1) affect transfer, where positive emotions elicited by creative ads spill over to brand attitudes, 2) enhanced processing, which increases consumer engagement and interest in the ad, and 3) signaling, creativity signals brand effort and quality, thereby directly influencing brand perceptions [21].

To be competitive in the advertising industry, advertising agencies need to differentiate themselves from each other and to do so, advertising award ceremonies allow for the evaluation and classification of each agency's work in a comparative way [5].

The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity was established in 1953 and is held annually in Cannes, France, a city famous for its film festival. Cannes Lions is one of the world's top three advertising festivals alongside the Clio Awards and the New York Festivals, having firmly established itself as the most prestigious international advertising festival. Initially focused on cinema advertising, it evolved along with the development of television media into a global festival representing TV advertising alongside the Clio Awards [13].

Over the years, new categories were introduced: print in 1992, cyber in 1998, and media in 1999. The contest now covers all advertising and communication production, with multiple subcategories under film, newspaper/magazine, posters, and more. Major awards include Grand Prix, Gold, Silver, and Bronze Lions, with shortlist recognitions for outstanding works. Since 2002, a Direct category was also introduced. The event is hosted by the Screen Advertising World Association and includes film shows, international competitions, and seminars [13].

In 2019, the festival featured 9 tracks and 27 categories with about 31,000 entries from 89 countries competing fiercely. There were 27 Grand Prix winners. Nike's "Dream Crazy" campaign won 2 Grand Prix and added another with "Air Max Graffiti Stores," totaling 3 Grand Prix awards. Burger King's "Whopper Detour" won 3 Grand Prix, and The New York Times' "The Truth is Worth" won 2 Grand Prix. These three brands alone won 8 out of 27 Grand Prix, dominating the awards [13]. A previous study identified common creative trends and explores what these trends imply for the Korean advertising industry and found 5 major emerged trends in 2019 Cannes Lions winners which differs from previous years. These trends include multidimensional sensory engagement, merging data insights with creativity, genuine human-centered messaging, active social responsibility brands, and inclusiveness for marginalized groups [13].

Despite growing interest in advertising creativity, a significant gap remains in the literature regarding trends from 2019 to the present. To date, no comprehensive studies have systematically analyzed this recent period, leaving an absence of documented evidence on the evolution of creativity in advertising. Furthermore, there is limited understanding of how contemporary technological advancements have been integrated into advertising campaigns during this time.

Objective

This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the creative trends embodied in the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners, examining what are the trends emerged in 2024 winning campaigns through systematic analysis of award-winning work across various categories, this research seeks to identify patterns in creative strategy, execution, and messaging that characterize contemporary advertising excellence.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative content analysis method to examine the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix-winning campaigns. Data were collected from official Cannes Lions sources and industry reports listing the Grand Prix winners across 32 categories [24-26]. The analysis focused on identifying the emerging advertising creative trends, recurrent patterns and innovative elements that characterize the current global advertising landscape. To ensure reliability, a communication scholar acted as a second coder for the analysis and were responsible for analyzing 40% of the sample campaigns.

Table 1. Cannes Lions 2024 Grand Prix Winners

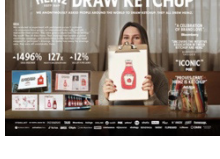
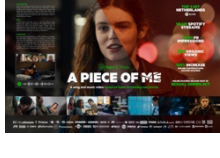
Award Category	Entry	Case Study
Audio & Radio Lions	Specsavers "The Misheard Version"	
Branded Experience & Activation Lions	Pop-Tarts "The First Edible Mascot"	
Creative B2B Lions	JCDecaux "Meet Marina Prieto"	
Creative Business Transformation Lions	Philips "Refurb"	
Creative Commerce Lions	Renault "Cars to Work"	
Creative Data Lions	Mastercard "Room for Everyone"	
Creative Effectiveness Lions	Heinz "Draw Ketchup"	
Creative Strategy Lions	KPN "A Piece of Me"	
Design Lions	Sol Cement "Sightwalks"	
Digital Craft Lions	Spotify "Spreadbeats"	

Table 1. Cannes Lions 2024 Grand Prix Winners (continue)

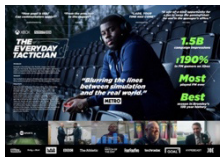
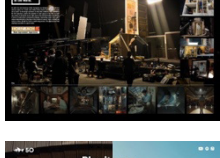
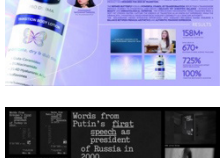
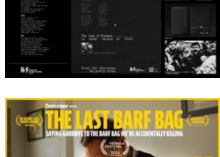
Award Category	Entry	Case Study
Direct Lions	Xbox "The Everyday Tactician"	
Entertainment Lions	WhatsApp "We Are Ayenda"	
Entertainment Lions for Gaming	Xbox "The Everyday Tactician"	
Entertainment Lions for Music	Johnie Walker "Errita at 88"	
Entertainment Lions for Sport	Orange "WoMen's Football"	
Film Craft Lions	Hornbach "The Square Meter"	
Film Lions	Sydney Opera House "Play It Safe"	
Glass: The Lion for Change	Vaseline "Transition Body Lotion"	
Grand Prix for Good	Reporters Without Borders "The First Speech"	
Health & Wellness Lions	Dramamine "The Last Barf Bag"	

Table 1. Cannes Lions 2024 Grand Prix Winners (continue)

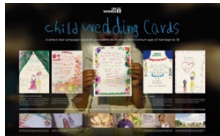
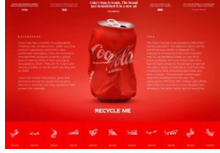
Award Category	Entry	Case Study
Health Grand Prix for Good	UN Women “Child Wedding Cards”	
Industry Craft Lions	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung “Zukunft Gestalten”	
Innovation Lions	KVI Brave Fund Inc “Voice 2 Diabetes”	
Luxury & Lifestyle Lions	Loewe “Loewe x Suna Fujita”	
Media Lions	Mercado Libre “Handshake Hunt”	
Outdoor Lions	Pedigree “Adoptable”	
Pharma Lions	Siemens Healthineers “Magnetic Stories”	
PR Lions	Specsavers “The Misheard Version”	
Print & Publishing Lions	Coca-Cola “Recycle Me”	
Social & Influencer Lions	CeraVe “Michael Cerave”	

Table 1. Cannes Lions 2024 Grand Prix Winners (continue)

Award Category	Entry	Case Study
Sustainable Development Lions	Renault "Cars to Work"	
The Dan Wieden Titanium Lions	Doordash "Doordash-All-The-Ads"	

Remark: [24] *The Cannes Lions Grand Prix Winners – 2024*, Ads of the World. (2024, June).

[25] *All the Grand Prix-winning campaigns from Cannes Lions 2024*. Contagious. (2024, June).

[26] *Cannes Lions 2024: watch every Grand Prix-winning ad*. The Drum. (2024, June).

Research Results

34 Grand Prix winners across 32 categories of Cannes Lions 2024 were analyzed. Some of the campaigns have won more than 1 Grand Prix award in different categories. The content analysis of the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners reveals a multifaceted landscape of global advertising creativity characterized by several dominant trends.

The analysis discovered 13 emerging advertising creative trends occurred in all 34 Grand Prix winners of Cannes Lions 2024 as shown in Table 2. The top five trends are

1) Human-Centered Storytelling, emerged 17 times in "The First Edible Mascot", "Refurb", "A Piece of Me", "WoMen's Football", "Play It Safe", "Sightwalks", "The Square Meter", "Transition Body Lotion", "Meet Mariana Prieto", "We Are Ayenda", "Errata at 88", "Magnetic Stories", "The Everyday Tactician", "The Last Barf Bag", "Handshake Hunt", "The Misheard Version", and "Loewe x Suna Fujita"

2) Social Responsibility & Brand Activism, emerged 13 times in "A Piece of Me", "WoMen's Football", "The First Speech", "Child Wedding Cards", "Adoptable", "Cars to Work", "Recycle Me", "Michael Cerave", "We Are Ayenda", "Find Your Summer", "The Last Barf Bag", "Zukunft Gestalten", and "Handshake Hunt".

3) Immersive Brand Experience, emerged 7 times in "The First Edible Mascot", "Refurb", "Sightwalks", "Handshake Hunt", "Loewe x Suna Fujita", "Find Your Summer", and "Zukunft Gestalten".

4) Technological Innovation, emerged 7 times in "Voice 2 Diabetes", "Spreadbeats", "WoMen's Football", "Room For Everyone", "Magnetic Stories", "Handshake Hunt", and "The Misheard Version".

5) Cross-Channel & Integrated Campaign, emerged 7 times in "Adoptable", "Meet Marina Prieto", "Doordash-All-The-Ads", "Handshake Hunt", "Find Your Summer", "The Misheard Version", and "Zukunft Gestalten".

The rest of the advertising creative trends discovered in Cannes Lions 2024 Grand Prix winners are as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Emerged Advertising Creative Trends of Cannes Lions 2024 Grand Prix Winners

Number	Creative Trend	Description	Frequency
1	Human-Centered Storytelling	Authentic, emotional narratives focusing on real people, lived experiences, and cultural identity.	17
2	Social Responsibility & Brand Activism	Campaigns addressing societal issues, promoting inclusivity, or driving positive social change.	13
3	Immersive Brand Experience	Interactive, sensory-rich, or experiential campaigns engaging audiences beyond traditional media.	7

Table 2. Emerged Advertising Creative Trends of Cannes Lions 2024 Grand Prix Winners (continue)

Number	Creative Trend	Description	Frequency
4	Technological Innovation	Use of emerging technologies, data, or digital platforms to enhance storytelling or engagement.	7
5	Cross-Channel & Integrated Campaign	Multi-platform storytelling ensuring cohesive brand messaging across channels.	7
6	Sustainability & Environmental Focus	Campaigns promoting eco-friendly behaviors, sustainability, or upcycling.	6
7	Humor & Pop Culture	Use of humor, celebrity, or pop culture references to engage and entertain audiences.	6
8	Creative Commerce & Business Transformation	Reinventing business or commerce models through creative strategies.	4
9	Data-Driven Personalization	Using data insights to tailor messages or experiences to individuals or communities.	3
10	Craft & Artistic Excellence	Exceptional use of design, production, or artistic craftsmanship to elevate creative impact.	3
11	Brand Experience & Activation	Creating meaningful brand experiences that connect emotionally with audiences.	2
12	Cultural Storytelling & Tribute	Campaigns that celebrate cultural heritage, history, or social narratives.	2
13	Experience & Pop-Up Marketing	Physical activations or pop-up events to engage audiences tangibly.	1

Remark: Collected and analyzed by Salas Supalakwatchana & Xin Fan, 2025

First, Human-Centered Storytelling continues to be a core strategy, with narratives that emphasize authentic, emotional connections. This trend emerged as the most prevalent creative trend among the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners. This approach places real people, emotions, and lived experiences at the heart of campaigns, forging deep emotional connections between brands and audiences. Campaigns such as KPN's "A Piece of Me" and Orange's "WoMen's Football" powerfully illustrated the impact of digital shaming and gender bias, respectively, by telling authentic, relatable stories. WhatsApp's "We Are Ayenda" documented the harrowing yet hopeful escape of the Afghan Girls National Football Team. At the same time, Siemens Healthineers' "Magnetic Stories" used children's audiobooks to ease the anxiety of MRI scans. Other winners, including Pop-Tarts' "The First Edible Mascot" Johnnie Walker's "Errata at 88," and Hornbach's "The Square Meter," each found unique ways to center their narratives on personal journeys, cultural identity, or everyday human creativity. This trend was further reflected in campaigns like "Meet Marina Prieto" for JCDecaux, "Find Your Summer" for Magnum, and "The Last Barf Bag" for Dramamine, all of which used storytelling to foster empathy, nostalgia, or joy. Campaign like the Sydney Opera House's "Play It Safe" highlight the power of storytelling to celebrate cultural identity and foster inclusivity.

Second, Social Responsibility & Brand Activism continue to gain momentum, reflecting the growing expectation for brands to address societal challenges authentically. This trend is the second most dominant with brands taking clear stances on pressing societal issues and driving real-world change. Vaseline's "Transition Body Lotion" addressed the unmet needs of transgender women through co-created product innovation, while UN Women's "Child Wedding Cards" used wedding invitations designed by child brides to advocate against child marriage and influence legislation. KPN's "A Piece of Me" not only raised awareness about online shaming but also contributed to legal reform and educational

curriculum changes. Orange's "WoMen's Football" and WhatsApp's "We Are Ayenda" both challenged social norms and advocated for gender equality and empowerment. Other campaigns, such as "Adoptable. By Pedigree," "Cars to Work" by Renault, and Coca-Cola's "Recycle Me," demonstrated how brands can integrate social good, be it through pet adoption, sustainable mobility, or environmental responsibility into their core messaging. Dramamine's "The Last Barf Bag" and Mercado Libre's "Handshake Hunt" also contributed to this trend by promoting health, upcycling, and digital inclusion.

Third, Immersive Brand Experiences emerged as a third prominent trend, with campaigns using multisensory engagement, interactivity, and creative environments to draw audiences into the brand's world. Pop-Tarts' "The First Edible Mascot" allowed fans to interact with and even eat the brand's mascot, blurring the line between product and experience. Philips' "Refurb" and Sol Cement's "Sightwalks" transformed everyday objects and urban spaces into platforms for creative engagement and community benefit. Mercado Libre's "Handshake Hunt" gamified the shopping experience, merging digital and physical participation, while Loewe's "Loewe x Suna Fujita" and Magnum's "Find Your Summer" created immersive artistic and seasonal activations. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung's "Zukunft Gestalten" campaign further exemplified this trend by creating thought leadership events and spaces for public interaction, making the brand a facilitator of meaningful experiences. This trend underscores a shift toward experiential marketing that transcends traditional media boundaries.

Fourth, Technological Innovation played a crucial role in shaping the creative landscape of 2024, with several campaigns leveraging new platforms, data, and digital tools to deliver unique brand interactions. Klick Health's "Voice 2 Diabetes" empowered patients with voice-activated tools for diabetes management, while Spotify's "Spreadbeats" pushed the boundaries of digital craft by creating a music video coded within an Excel spreadsheet. Orange's "WoMen's Football" used advanced VFX and deepfake technology to challenge perceptions of gender in sports, and Mastercard's "Room For Everyone" visualized inclusive commerce through data-driven storytelling. Siemens Healthineers' "Magnetic Stories" integrated MRI sounds into audiobooks, and Mercado Libre's "Handshake Hunt" used digital gamification to engage users. Specsavers' "The Misheard Version" showcased the creative use of audio technology and humor, demonstrating how technological innovation can enhance both storytelling and engagement.

Fifth, Cross-Channel Integrated Campaigns were a defining feature of many Grand Prix winners, ensuring cohesive storytelling and maximizing reach across multiple platforms. Pedigree's "Adoptable" By Pedigree unified messaging across outdoor, media, and PR to drive pet adoption, while JCDecaux's "Meet Marina Prieto" used outdoor, digital, and social media to share an inspiring personal story. Doordash's "All-The-Ads" campaign orchestrated TV, digital, and out-of-home media for seamless brand presence, and Mercado Libre's "Handshake Hunt" connected digital and real-world experiences for a gamified treasure hunt. Magnum's "Find Your Summer," Specsavers' "The Misheard Version," and Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung's "Zukunft Gestalten" all exemplified the power of multi-platform storytelling, leveraging the strengths of each channel to create a unified and impactful brand narrative.

Sixth, Sustainability & Environmental Focus were prominent in campaigns that addressed eco-friendly behaviors, upcycling, and resource-conscious innovation. Philips' "Refurb" and Renault's "Cars to Work" both promoted circular economy principles and sustainable mobility. Coca-Cola's "Recycle Me" encouraged recycling through creative packaging, while Dramamine's "The Last Barf Bag" upcycled obsolete barf bags into new products, blending environmental action with nostalgia. Magnum's "Find Your Summer" and other campaigns also incorporated messages of environmental stewardship, reflecting a broader industry commitment to sustainability.

Seventh, Humor & Pop Culture references were used strategically to engage audiences and make brands more relatable. Specsavers' "The Misheard Version" played on everyday misunderstandings in a witty audio campaign, while Cerave's "Michael Cerave" used influencer humor and internet culture for viral impact. Doordash's "All-The-Ads" and Johnnie Walker's "Errata at 88" also tapped into pop culture, leveraging celebrity and playful storytelling to boost memorability and shareability.

Eighth, Creative Commerce & Business Transformation. Several campaigns reimaged business models and commerce experiences through creativity. Heinz's "It Has To Be Heinz" and Renault's "Cars to Work" demonstrated

innovative approaches to product positioning and access. Philips' "Refurb" highlighted the potential of refurbished goods, while Mercado Libre's "Handshake Hunt" gamified e-commerce, showing how creativity can drive both business results and customer engagement.

Ninth, Data-Driven Personalization. Personalization powered by data was a key trend in campaigns that tailored experiences to individual needs and contexts. Mastercard's "Room For Everyone" visualized inclusive commerce through data insights, while Spotify's "Spreadbeats" used user data to create a unique, interactive musical experience. Mercado Libre's "Handshake Hunt" also leveraged data to enhance the gamified shopping journey, demonstrating the value of personalization in modern marketing.

Tenth, Craft & Artistic Excellence remain fundamental. Exceptional design, production, and artistic collaboration were celebrated in campaigns that elevated the craft of advertising. Hornbach's "The Square Meter" and Loewe's "Loewe x Suna Fujita" showcased meticulous attention to visual and experiential detail, while Johnnie Walker's "Errata at 88" honored musical artistry. These campaigns demonstrated that high production values and artistic integrity can set brands apart in a crowded media landscape.

Eleventh, Brand Experience & Activation. Brand experience and activation campaigns created meaningful, memorable interactions between brands and audiences. Pop-Tarts' "The First Edible Mascot" and Siemens' "Magnetic Stories" both offered unique, hands-on experiences, whether eating a mascot or listening to comforting audiobooks during medical procedures. These activations went beyond traditional advertising, making the brand a tangible part of consumers' lives.

Twelfth, Cultural Storytelling & Tribute. Cultural storytelling and tribute campaigns celebrated heritage, history, and social narratives. Johnnie Walker's "Errata at 88" and Loewe's "Loewe x Suna Fujita" paid homage to overlooked or underappreciated artists, while Dramamine's "The Last Barf Bag" explored the cultural significance of an everyday object. These campaigns connected with audiences by honoring collective memory and shared cultural touchstones.

Thirteenth, Experience & Pop-up Marketing brought brands to life through physical events and activations. Dramamine's "The Last Barf Bag" featured a pop-up exhibition in New York, allowing visitors to interact with upcycled barf bags and learn about their history. Magnum's "Find Your Summer" and other campaigns also used pop-up experiences to create buzz and foster direct engagement, demonstrating the enduring power of real-world brand encounters.

Collectively, these findings illustrate that the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners embody a holistic approach to creativity, one that balances technological advancement, social relevance, emotional resonance, and experiential innovation. This reflects an advertising industry that is increasingly adapting to evolving consumer values and the complex demands of a globalized marketplace.

Conclusion and Discussion

The analysis of the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners displays a dynamic and evolving advertising landscape where human-centered storytelling and social responsibility dominate the creative agenda. Brands increasingly prioritize authentic narratives that resonate emotionally while addressing pressing societal issues such as inclusion, sustainability, and empowerment. Technological innovation, immersive experiences, and integrated multi-channel campaigns further enhance engagement, demonstrating that creativity today is multidimensional-blending purpose, innovation, and experiential depth. This holistic approach reflects a broader industry shift toward meaningful, culturally relevant, and technologically intelligent advertising that not only grabs attention but also drives social impact and business outcomes.

The analysis of the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners reveals a creative landscape that both confirms and extends the trends identified in earlier works [8,13]. Consistent with previous findings [13], the importance of human-centered storytelling and brand purpose remains a defining characteristic of award-winning advertising. Campaigns such as Vaseline's "Transition Body Lotion" and KPN's "A Piece of Me" exemplify the continued emphasis on authentic narratives that engage with social issues, reinforcing the concept that purposeful creativity is not only ethically crucial but also commercially effective. This alignment emphasizes the sustained significance of storytelling that resonates emotionally and culturally, a trend that has solidified since the late 2010s.

Nonetheless, the current study also identifies a marked evolution in the integration of technological innovation within creative executions. While a previous study [13] recognized the emerging role of technologies such as AI, AR, and VR, the 2024 winners demonstrated a more mature and pervasive application of these tools. Campaigns like Orange's "WoMen's Football," utilizing deepfake technology, and Siemens Healthineers' "Magnetic Stories," which incorporates MRI sounds into audiobooks, illustrate how technology now serves as a fundamental enabler of immersive, personalized, and socially impactful storytelling. This progression reflects the advertising industry's rapid adaptation to advances in digital technologies and data analytics, which have become paramount to crafting nuanced consumer experiences and driving engagement.

Likewise, the findings resonate with prior observations [8] concerning the shift toward socially conscious advertising and experiential media. The importance of immersive brand experiences and cross-channel integrated campaigns in the 2024 winners aligns with characterization of brands as cultural storytellers and facilitators of meaningful engagement [8]. However, the current analysis extends this perspective by underscoring how brand activism has deepened from awareness-raising to effecting tangible societal change, including legislative impact, as seen in UN Women's "Child Wedding Cards" and KPN's campaign against online shaming. This evolution signifies that brands are increasingly expected to act as agents of social transformation, leveraging creativity not only to reflect culture but to actively shape it.

In totality, the creative trends observed in the 2024 Cannes Lions Grand Prix winners both reaffirm the foundational insights of previous studies [8,13] and display the dynamic advancement of advertising creativity. The fusion of purpose-driven storytelling with advanced technological innovation and integrated media strategies marks a new stage in the industry's evolution. This highlights the essential for a continuous scholarly investigation into how emerging technologies and shifting cultural expectations will continue to redefine creativity, effectiveness, and social responsibility in advertising.

For industry practitioners, these findings emphasize the necessity of embedding social purpose and authentic storytelling at the soul of creative strategies. Agencies and brands should invest in deep consumer insight and community collaboration to create campaigns that resonate on a human level and drive meaningful change. Leveraging emerging technologies such as AR, AI, and data analytics can strengthen these narratives, but must be employed thoughtfully to enhance, not replace, emotional connection. Besides, adopting integrated, cross-channel approaches ensures consistent and broad-reaching impact. Sustainability should be considered not as a niche add-on but as a fundamental creative pillar. Brands that successfully integrate these elements are more likely to build trust, loyalty, and long-term relevance in an increasingly values-driven marketplace.

Academically, this study contributes to the understanding of contemporary advertising creativity by mapping dominant trends in award-winning work, thereby offering a framework for analyzing the interplay between storytelling, technology, and social purpose. It provides empirical evidence supporting theories of brand activism and consumer-brand relationship building through authentic narratives. The findings encourage further exploration of how technological innovation intersects with human-centered communication and ethical branding. Moreover, it invites scholars to investigate the impact of integrated campaigns on consumer engagement and brand equity. This research can inform curriculum in marketing, advertising, communication, and media studies, equipping students with insights into the evolving demands and strategies of modern advertising.

Future research could extend this analysis longitudinally to track how these creative trends evolve over time and across different cultural contexts. Comparative studies between regions, creative award organizations, or industries could reveal unique adaptations or emerging priorities. Additionally, qualitative research focusing on consumer reception and the emotional impact of socially responsible and technologically innovative campaigns would deepen understanding of effectiveness. Investigating the internal processes within agencies and brands such as collaboration, ethical decision-making, and technology adoption could provide valuable insights into how these award-winning campaigns are conceived and executed. Finally, exploring the long-term business and societal outcomes of brand activism campaigns

would help quantify their true impact beyond immediate creative glory.

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