

Advertising the best of health

Floral inspired shirts and Buddy Holly specs didn't ensure a win at the recent IPA Awards, but as PharmaTimes found out, there were still plenty of 'apples' to go around



Best of Health



Trying to use the chopsticks at the dinner reception was probably on a par with judging the 340 pieces of work submitted in the IPA Best of Health Awards 2009 – it was all about having a firm grasp of the subject, technical dexterity, and outstanding delivery.

From smelly Stilton cheese to regurgitated dead rats and Pablo the Drug Mule Dog, the IPA awards brought out the advertising fraternity's finest. It would have been a tough call for anyone to judge, but the awards were dominated by Langland, which took home 29 awards, including best of show healthcare professional. Mother Advertising was crowned best of show consumer. Other top winners included DLKW (seven awards), Woolley Pau (five awards), Ogilvy Healthworld (four awards), and McCann (four awards). In total, this year's competition saw two golds, eight silvers and 67 bronze awards.

So what was the standard of entry this year? "The outstanding work was

easy to spot," reveals judge Patrick Norrie of Grey Healthcare. "There were several quality pieces that deserved recognition for going the extra mile... for unearthing that breakthrough insight... for sparking that little moment of wonder during the creative process. There's no point awarding work simply for being a job-reasonably-well-done-albeit-in-challenging-times." Indeed, this point is made strongly by IPA healthcare consultant Tracey Brader: "It is tempting when organising awards to offer as many as possible to raise the profile of the event and its entrants. That has never been the Best of Health way, so winning gold is a phenomenal achievement – and agencies should be proud of receiving even a bronze given the high standards."

Certainly, judge Andrew Nicolson, Magnetic London, was "very impressed" by some of the work produced for local authorities, particularly the BAD Health campaign. "These pieces showed they really understood the local population and the specific health issues they faced. These were addressed cleverly

with a charm and flair that made them accessible, while avoiding the worthy preachy approach of some health campaigns." Adds Langland's Creative Director Andrew Spurgeon: "Personally, I look for work that contains a clear idea, that challenges me and forces a degree of re-evaluation."

However, judge Alex Frech, of Black and Ginger, felt "innovation was limited" this year. "Good ideas always evoke an emotional response and in healthcare this couldn't be more relevant. Nice executions go so far, but this won't sell the service or product." He says in some cases this year the creative and narrative was lost through production and this dilution could possibly be something that comes from the client and the growing demands of procurement.

But Spurgeon stresses: "Creativity provides difference and 'stand out'. Without it, clients run the risk of having their advertising messages ignored and their budgets wasted. Procurement professionals drive value and the good ones understand that invisible work is



'By its very nature The Best of Health awards focus primarily on advertising that promotes brands and products that help improve people's lives. It's always nice to tell your mum that you're helping to save the world. Our clients who we worked so closely with, and who without their lobbying of ministers these

campaigns would never have happened, deserve to be rewarded too. To be able to repay their trust not only in the amazing way the campaigns were embraced by the public, but also in recognition by one of the industry's most respected bodies, is wonderful' Creative team, Mother Advertising, winner of Best of Show Consumer



'It's not easy to win an IPA Award because the standard required is high. So to win 29 this year – more than one third of the total number of awards presented – is extraordinary. Of course we are thrilled with all of the awards won, but the awards for Best of Show and Best Use of Photography were particularly satisfying. We view our achievement as setting the standard for the industry. It's also our personal best, so it's a result we are already working on to improve' Philip Chin, Chief Executive, Langland, winner of Best of Show Healthcare Professional





Special Prizes

Best of Show Consumer
 'Pablo campaign', Frank (COI),
 by Mother Advertising

Best of Show Healthcare Professional
 'Smell the Stilton', Nexavar (Bayer Schering),
 by Langland

Best use of Art Direction
 'Pablo campaign', Frank (COI),
 by Mother Advertising

Best use of Copywriting
 'Lose weight feel great campaign', Ashton,
 Leigh and Wigan Primary Care Trust, by
 McCann Erickson Communications House

Best use of Illustration
 'CYP Engagement campaign', Barking and
 Dagenham NHS, by Raw Design Studio

Best use of Photography
 'Risks forewarned', Idis, by Langland

Gold awards

**Consumers/Patients, TV/Video or
 Promotional Film**
 'Pablo campaign', Frank (COI), by Mother
 Advertising

Healthcare Professional, Direct Mail
 'Smell the Stilton', Nexavar (Bayer Schering),
 by Langland

Silver awards

**Consumers/Patients,
 Mixed Media Campaign**
 'Confronting death phase 2', Marie Curie,
 by DLKW

**Consumers/Patients,
 Mixed Media Campaign**
 'Lose weight feel great campaign', Ashton,
 Leigh and Wigan Primary Care Trust, by
 McCann Erickson Communications House

**Consumers/Patients,
 Mixed Media Campaign**
 'CYP Engagement campaign', Barking and
 Dagenham NHS, by Raw Design Studio

Consumers/Patients, New Media
 'Real danger', Pfizer, by Langland

**Consumers/Patients, TV/Video or
 Promotional Film**
 'Rat', Get Real (Pfizer), by Langland

**Consumers/Patients, TV/Video or
 Promotional Film**
 'Brainerashers', Frank (COI),
 by Mother Advertising

**Healthcare Professional,
 International Campaign**
 'Gorilla - UK/Spanish/Danish', EpiPen
 (ALE Abello), by Langland

**Healthcare Professionals,
 Press Campaign**
 'Targets', Crestor (AstraZeneca) by Langland

not a good return on investment."

The creative team at Mother Advertising agrees. "Creativity shouldn't change with the economic climate of the day. People love to be engaged and entertained. It's times like these that people look to be inspired. There may not be as much money around, but you don't need money to have a great idea. Executing it - well you just have to be creative there, too."

For Philip Chin, Chief Executive at Langland, the current economic climate means creative work must perform harder than ever to help clients gain competitive advantage. "It's simply not enough for advertising to generate awareness," he adds. "Our work is specifically designed to provoke changes in behaviour and we achieve this by rooting our ideas in insight. That way, our advertising messages have a far greater opportunity to

create an impression that will linger in the customer's mind long after the communication has been delivered."

It isn't that procurement is having a detrimental effect on creative standards, notes Richard Rayment, Creative Director of GSW Junction 11, more the fact that an increasing proportion of campaigns are global. "It's harder - but still possible - to conceive highly original, highly creative ideas that work across different markets and cultures. Furthermore, if you are charged with implementing a global campaign locally, creatively speaking, the brand book tends to be a straitjacket."

Indeed, the global aspect does put pressure on the agency and the advertisement. Says Brader: "It is no longer enough for an agency to be strong domestically - work generated for ethical pharma brands especially has to be able to hold its own around the world."

Another pressure is the burgeoning public health issues facing society, Brader adds, and campaigns aimed at patient engagement were a particular growth area in the awards this year. "Time was when only major public health issues were communicated to lay audiences. It seems now we have, albeit slowly, realised how crucial the 'end user' is in ensuring uptake of healthcare and medication. Getting your communication through this morass, often a message centering on an issue that the audience would rather not think about, is perhaps one of the biggest challenges agencies face."

Of course, using the right form of communication to get the message across is essential and Spurgeon notes this year's entries were a reflection of the "dark ages" the healthcare sector is in when it comes to digital. There is a hope next year's awards will try to show an improvement in this area.

"I'd like to think that agencies and their clients will continue to push things," adds Norrie. "After all, it's very difficult to negotiate your way through a recession with strategies based on fear, retrenchment and the pursuit of safety. There is no option but to innovate." **PT**

The IPA Best of Health Awards 2009 was held at the start of July at Gilgamesh Studios in Camden. For more information go to: www.bestofhealthawards.ipa.co.uk



Enjoying the vodka fountain

