

How to win a Cannes Lion: Using social analytics to create award-winning campaigns

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Date : December 27, 2015



What does it take to win a prestigious **marketing** award like a Cannes Lion? The simple answer is, of course, creativity, but any **marketing** department or agency worth its salt will have creativity in spades, so what separates the winners from the rest of us?

If we look at some of the winning campaigns from 2015 – such as **Oreo**, [Eclipse](#); **Under Armour**, [I will what I want](#); **Always**, [#likeagirl](#); **ALS Society**, [The Ice Bucket Challenge](#); and **KLM**, [Happy to Help](#) – there are some common themes. All of these campaigns enjoyed great virality. Another common factor is that they all demonstrate a deep understanding of the wants and needs of the target audience, the content isn't overtly pushing **brand** messages, but instead inspires and entertains.

There's obviously a lot of luck involved in achieving viral success, but you can tip the scales in your favour by getting under the skin of your target audience and really understanding what gets them excited and what kind of content they are likely to share.

This is where **social** media analytics can help by identifying groups that gravitate around particular topics. For any given topic or **brand**, there will usually be more than one community associated with it, and each of these groups will have their own attitudes and interests.

By using text-analysis to understand the key themes in online discussions, you will be able to spot what kind of topics are likely to resonate with these separate communities.

Content discovery tools can also help you identify the kind of things that get shared a lot within specific communities or around a particular topic.

With a clear picture of who your target audiences are, the communities they are a part of, and what themes or topics they are most engaged by, you should have the ammunition to craft a creative idea that will capture people's imagination.

The next step is to ensure that your content stands the best possible chance of going viral. **Social** analytics tools will be able to tell you who the most influential people are within target communities.

Data and analytics are no substitute for raw creativity, but they can provide you with the insight you need to channel creativity in a more productive direction, as well as helping you to execute the campaign successfully. All of this can tip the odds in your favour when the judging panel sits down to make its decision.

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