

Ali Rez on how to win a Loeries Grand Prix

By  Danette Breitenbach

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Winning a Loeries Grand Prix requires several factors to line up to create a perfect storm. Someone who makes it look easy is Ali Rez, CCO of Impact BBDO in Dubai, and the most awarded creative in the Loeries region.



Source: Campaign Brief Asia [Campaign Brief Asia](#) Ali Rez, CCO of Impact BBDO in Dubai

At the 2022 Loeries Awards, the agency won three out of the eight Grand Prix awarded, and was named Agency of the Year Award and Regional Agency Group of the Year.

But while it might look effortless, Rez says a campaign worthy of a Grand Prix is a result of many years of work.

“It starts with good leadership and a great team that is consistent and supportive.

“Then it’s about experience. Not only for the campaign but also in the packaging of the actual case study. Years of experience of doing case studies help you to know when to pivot and change, and you can only learn these along the way. Ultimately it takes time.”

He adds, “The above are in vain if you don’t have brand partners that share the same values as the agency.”

But when all these factors come together, you get the perfect storm. “This is when you can tell by the scale of something how successful it can be,” he says.



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Ideas cost nothing

While many believe that agencies in Dubai are successful because they receive massive budgets, the opposite is in fact true.

“Budget can only help you so much, but when you don’t have budget, ironically, that’s when you can be inspired to do something big that everyone talks about. This is what our experience has been,” says Rez.

It is important to create strong ideas he adds. “A high-budget film can win big, but ideas don’t have to be expensive; just powerful and something different that people are attracted to.”

Of course, it is about the quality of the work. “And this is embedded into everything we do and every brief we look at,” he says.

It not only runs through all the work but through every person at the agency. "And that makes it a place that builds success for everyone. The leadership contributes to this."

He adds that if you are working in an agency where leadership does not have your growth in mind, then leave.

"Growth is shared success and involves everyone. It also creates a lovely energy and leads to people giving more because they are valued."



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Awards: A measure of business success

Rez does not view awards as a big pat on the back. "In the past awards were just that, a pat on the back. But today it is part of measuring the effectiveness of campaigns and is a measure of business success.

"In a space where you are judged by your peers, you can say you are the best agency, but if a group of industry experts are looking at the work and saying that your agency is the best then it has a direct impact on the agency. As communication experts we work to make brands successful but if we are not successful at making ourselves successful then what? It is a differentiator."

Awards, he adds, also allow you to learn from other agencies and brands. "It points us to where we are headed. The winning work set the standard, and guides and directs the industry."

But he says pick wisely. "There are many awards out there, and we only pick the best, for example, the Loeries is important to us."



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Print: An important medium

No stranger to the Loeries, Rez is part of its ecosystem as a member of the Loeries committee. This year he is also co-jury president for the Loeries Print jury.

He says he is looking forward to this year's Loeries. "Last year the energy was fantastic. It was inspiring being at Loeries and seeing the work but also talking to people about the work."

As co-jury president for print, he says print is such an important medium. "It has been called the perfect medium. What makes it challenging is explaining something in just print with no other mediums to help. Plus, in print, it has all been done before.

"The journey of the construction of print, the story you are telling and how it connects with other platforms is what makes this category is so innovative, with work that is pushing it forward."

Born in Pakistan, he grew up in China and the US, spending most of his life in San Francisco where he attended college. He has visited 139 countries. Rez moved to Dubai just when the country was starting its upward trajectory.



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- Ranked Top 10 creative leaders globally - World Creative Rankings 2023, 2022.
- Most awarded creative leader in the Middle East with 900+ awards: Cannes Grand Prix, D&AD Yellow, Clio Grand, Effie Grand, One Show Best, Andy Best, Spikes Grand, CA Grand, LIA Grand, Dubai Lynx Grand, Adfest Grand, Adstars Grand.
- Ranked No.1 CCO in MENA and Asia - World Creative Rankings 2023, 2022.
- First Jury President from MENA at Cannes Lions.
- Top 10 Creative Leaders in Asia - Campaign Brief Asia.
- South Asia Creative Person of the Year 2020, 2018 - Campaign Magazine.
- 20+ years creative leadership experience in the USA, MENAP and APAC.
- Jury President at Cannes, LIA, Spikes Asia, Cresta, MadStars and AdFest.
- Jury at D&AD, One Show, Clios, Effies.
- Speaker at Oxford University, St.Martin's College and TedX.
- Ranked No.1 CCO in MENA 2022, No.1 ECD in 2020 - Loeries Rankings
- BBDO Worldwide Creative Council member.
- &AD Impact Council member.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from VMts.

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