

M&C Saatchi Abel shines at Apex Awards 2017

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Nando's and Heineken's Strongbow win key creative effectiveness awards for the first time...

M&C Saatchi Abel landed Apex awards on both its entries for Nando's and Heineken's Strongbow Cider at the annual gala event held last week. The agency's South Africa launch of Strongbow was the most successful launch globally for the Heineken Company, earning a silver Apex, while the bold work for Nando's on two promotional campaigns ('Back to Work' for the period of January to March 2016 and 'Easter' March to May 2016) scooped a bronze Apex. The Apex Awards measure both strategic and creative effectiveness – and entries must demonstrate how creative campaigns translate into tangible commercial/business results for clients.

"Both brands operate in highly contested categories with competitors that far outspend them, and the Apex recognition of the work we did together with our Clients demonstrates the impact great creative ideas can have," says Robert Grace, founding partner and head of strategy at M&C Saatchi Abel. "At a time when marketing and advertising budgets are under pressure the tendency is to shy away from big ideas. We believe the exact opposite to be the opportunity. It takes strong Client partnerships, robust thinking and ultimately beautifully simple solutions – what we call Brutal Simplicity of Thought - to create this kind of impact across a brand and its business."

Heineken's Strongbow faced the formidable task of reviving a brand that was almost non-existent in local consumers' minds and a cider category long dominated by two competitor brands. The challenge was to take the global brand platform and launch it in a highly impactful, relevant and distinct way. Key to the success, was focusing outside of traditional paid channels and engaging the brand's heartland consumers through memorable activations. Over the five month launch period, the brand firmly established itself in the category, gaining unprecedented market share.

View the Strongbow video here:

<http://www.mcsaatchiabel.co.za/work/NatureremixRefreshesJohannesburg>

Nando's has a long history of delivering stand-out creative work. The brief from the client was to translate this equity into strong retail campaigns - without losing sight of the brand's revered tone of voice. M&C Saatchi Abel responded to this by developing a creative platform for all branded retail campaigns that centres around the flavour and the fire of Nando's food and its well established brand personality. Both campaigns not only delivered and exceeded their target they also improved and strengthened an already impressive set of brand health metrics.

"We are immensely proud of the creative work and results achieved with both Strongbow and Nando's and the Apex Awards certainly reaffirms that powerful ideas put that much desired distance between brands and their competitors," concludes Mike Abel, founding partner and chief executive at M&C Saatchi Abel.

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