

Award Winning, It's All About the Story

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On Thursday 23rd of January, I was very kindly invited to attend the Marketing Society Star Award Event. This event was a showcase of previous gold winning work from the Star Awards. I was asked to give some specifics on our Gold Financial Services Award winning International Money Transfer campaign for Tesco Bank and highlight our approach to successfully preparing and writing the paper.

The key take out won't come as a surprise – it's all about the story. You can do all the preparation, ensure naïve readers check it over, have the evidence to back things up but unless you are able to write a compelling story that stands out to the raft of entries that the

judges will be reviewing your probably not going to be winning much in the future.

Back to the session, chairing was Petra Cameron from Royal Bank of Scotland and as usual, did a great job of keeping everything on track.

The first presentation was from the Scottish Government's Kim Wallace. As new sponsor of the Champions of Diversity and Equality Award for 2020, Kim gave a fascinating presentation around the importance of diversity in marketing and how we can and should get involved.

This was then followed by Lee Beattie Co-Founder and Director at WIRE, who were the 2019 Star Agency of the Year. Lee's presentation was insightful from a creative / PR agency perspective. In my opinion it was interesting that both Lee and I were asked to discuss any hints and tips for the submissions and as much as each of our presentations were based upon our opinions and aspects that we've learned from doing this previously, it was great to see that we really didn't differ too much from what each other was saying and the process is so similar. It won't come as a surprise the story and the creativity of the submission are the most important parts.

From my perspective, it was an absolute delight to be invited to take part in this session, with my peers. We were so pleased when we picked up the award and it was great to revisit it and try and help others with their award entries.

Key points I took away were: –

- Preparation always helps, be that fulling understanding the criteria, what is the word count, how you submit it.
- Timing surprisingly one of the biggest factors, in so many ways, you always underestimate the length of time it takes to write and really craft the paper but also just in the practical levels, naïve readers, approval process etc.
- The story, remember the judges will be reading a lot of papers so you

need to make sure you stand out, make straight forward read a lot. You need to be able to evidence the impact that the campaign had.

- Also, we firmly believe in teamwork, lean on people who may be better placed than yourself in areas, e.g. I'm not the best at long-form writing but others in the team are. From our perspective, we deliver a campaign together so we should all engage in getting the paper together and then obviously celebrating the win together.

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