Cannes Adds a New Lion for Creative Business Transformation

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The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity is recognizing the growing power of consultancies in the ad industry with a new Lion that will consider products and services, customer experiences, and operational shifts that have driven transformative change to a brand’s core business.

The new category, the Creative Business Transformation Lion, is the most significant of a wave of tweaks to the show’s awards roster announced today. The updates also included broadening the scope of the influencer marketing and corporate social responsibility sections of the PR Lions.

The new Lion comes as consultancies like Deloitte and Accenture are increasingly snapping up agencies and ad tech firms in a bid to weave advertising offerings with other tech and services offered to clients. Just two months before this year’s Cannes Lions, for example, Accenture Interactive acquired independent creative powerhouse Droga5.

“The Creative Business Transformation Lions recognize a new breed of work that we’re seeing more and more of,” said Susie Walker, head of awards for Cannes Lions. “There hasn’t been a place for this kind of work to be honored at Cannes Lions until now, and it’s coming from consultancies and people working in areas like experience design, creative innovation and technology, and digital transformation.”

Organizers said the new Lion was added to acknowledge the changing roles of agencies and other brand partners as well as the internal overhauls brands are undertaking to keep pace with new technology.

“This new Lion recognizes that brands are asking more of their creative and change partners to help them respond to ongoing digital disruption and are investing in new ways of working in order to future-proof their businesses,” Walker said. “It celebrates creative work that enables a brand or business to create efficiency, grow productivity, deepen loyalty and connect with consumers in new ways that can demonstrate a tangible business result.”

The Creative Business Transformation Lions will encompass four entry categories: customer experience, business design and operations, product and service, and venture creation and design. Cannes representatives said the award will be open to any team or organization that delivers this type of change on behalf of a brand, whether the work was performed by agencies, consultancies or in-house divisions.

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