



# GRAND PRIX INSIGHTS

Rozhovory o strategii  
nejúspěšnějších  
kampaní z Cannes  
Lions International  
Festival of Creativity





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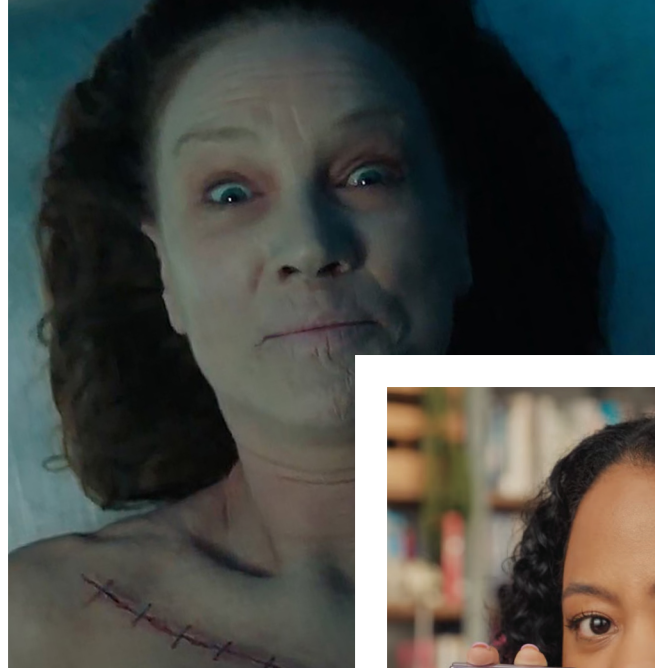
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# The Last Performance /

How an insurer confronted the subject of death by partnering with one of New Zealand's most popular TV shows

**T**he Last Performance campaign for New Zealand insurer Partners Life challenged category norms by using characters that had been killed off in the TV show, *The Brokenwood Mysteries*, to convince people to take out life insurance.

The ads aired at the end of each episode, before the credits rolled, and featured that episode's murder victim coming back to life on the table of the morgue to reflect on their demise and share their regrets at not getting life insurance. The campaign ran over a six-week period from 7 August 2022 to 11 September 2022, but was also included in the on-demand versions of the episodes.

The campaign was created by Special, New Zealand. According to the agency, Partners Life's website saw a 135% increase in traffic over the campaign period and the campaign generated a 75% increase in direct leads to its financial advisors and a 26% increase in brand awareness.

To find out more about the ads, the challenges the brand faced trying to partner with a TV show, and hitting the right tone when talking about death, Contagious spoke with Special New Zealand's executive creative director, Lisa Fedyszyn, and Rory



Gallery, chief strategy officer, and on the brand side, Kris Ballantyne, chief customer officer at Partners Life.

## Give us an overview of the brand and how it has evolved over the past couple of years.

**Kris Ballantyne:** Partners Life is 12 years old so we're a relatively new life and health insurance company. Most insurance companies are over 100 years old and new entrants don't come around very often. For the first eight or nine years of the company's

existence, there was no publicly positioned brand or above-the-line communications. Our first effort into the above-the-line space was back in 2018 with a campaign called Afterlife. It was quite successful and won a few awards, and it also got us a lot of complaints. From there, we figured out our creative territory, as this sort of sardonic, cheeky, dark-humour tone was quite drastically different to most competitors in the market, and so we've kind of grown from there. We've refreshed the actual brand that sits around our communications campaigns

to better reflect our values and look a lot fresher and more exciting for the team to work with. We've continued to push the boundaries in the creative space and now, not only is it about building liquidity, but also how do we activate that conversion funnel to try and address the elephant in the room, which is that New Zealand is one of the least insured nations in the world. We want to try and do that through ways that banks or your traditional 150-year-old insurance companies aren't doing.



## Who is the brand's target audience?

**Ballantyne:** We believe the message is relevant to all New Zealanders, as on average, less than one in two of them are going to have no form of insurance. In terms of the actual demographics, we want to go for a very broad reach. We've gotten better at finding the methods, channels and timings that hit those people who are at the consideration step in the conversion funnel. That's led to a significant increase in people who are activated by seeing our communication campaigns for the first time in category and coming directly to us to find out more. I wouldn't say it was because we did a poor job and have improved. It's just we've been able to have the luxury of now considering more actionable campaigns rather than at that awareness level.

## What are people's attitudes towards life insurance in New Zealand?

**Ballantyne:** There is an OECD insurance penetration statistic that's published annually, and it tracks the OECD countries for the percentage of people who have adequate insurance. In the most recent statistic, the Republic of Ireland sits at 91% while New Zealand is down at 47%. We're now the fourth worst on the OECD list. One reason for that is because the financial literacy and education around finances is very poor. We haven't had long-term institutionalised, financial products built into our day-to-day lives like Australia, which has superannuation mandatory [a system for employees to make regular payments from their income to invest in a pension] and ties insurance in with

superannuation. So, the first time most New Zealanders engage with any sort of financial instrument is when they finish university or they're starting to work and someone else tells them, 'Hey, you should probably talk to your bank about your interest rate.'

The problem for us in life and health insurance is that it's a retrospect product. This is seen not just in New Zealand but a lot of countries with certain cultures that skew towards the concept of death as being considered taboo. It's not unique to our culture, but for example, New Zealand has a large Māori and Pasifika population for whom there is a strong cultural drive of not wanting to tempt fate by thinking about death or getting sick. In New Zealand, we have this 'she'll be right' attitude, but the problem with that is that people don't take things seriously until it's too late.

## What challenges does the brand face right now?

**Ballantyne:** New Zealand has some unique challenges to insurance that drive competitive behaviours. For example, the distribution channel is intermediated as there are financial advisers who sell the product. But the challenge that all our category is facing is the challenge for insurance in New Zealand. It's why in our own messaging we're hitting the core note of building financial literacy and telling people that they need to consider our product because it is important, and it can happen to you. Then, in our secondary or tertiary messaging, we try to show how we're going to try and help you get to a point where you might be able to understand the financial impact of that and be ready to have those conversations.

**'The problem for us in life and health insurance is that it's a retrospect product. This is seen not just in New Zealand but a lot of countries that skew towards the concept of death as being considered taboo.'**

Kris Ballantyne, Partners Life





# HEALTH & WELLNESS GRAND PRIX

## Did you receive a brief for this campaign?

**Rory Gallery:** There have been some campaigns prior to this, and they all sat underneath the Get Life Right brand platform. The brief was continuing that brand platform and to continue to focus on using hindsight as the creative vehicle to express why you should get insurance. For this campaign, we received a task to look at how we could get more New Zealanders interested in life insurance and the key goal of that was to help drive brand awareness and brand consideration for Partners Life.

## What was the initial response to the brief?

**Lisa Fedyszyn:** It was *The Last Performance* because it was so clear to us that a dead person should be the spokesperson for life insurance. They really are the perfect people to talk about hindsight, and we actually couldn't believe it hadn't been done before. The answer had been under everyone's noses all along: to use people in TV shows to advertise life insurance.

## Why did *The Brokenwood Mysteries* seem like the right fit?

**Fedyszyn:** It's New Zealand's most popular murder mystery series, so in terms of reach

that was super helpful. There's six episodes so that meant six deaths and six perfect candidates to show why you should have life insurance through their hindsight. Also, tone was really important as the show is a dark New Zealand comedy, which aligned to the Partners Life tone of voice.

## How did you convince the show to partner with you on this initiative?

**Fedyszyn:** Partnering with a TV series wasn't easy. From a TV development point of view, advertising is kind of seen as a necessary evil that breaks up your content while paying the bills. So, in their defence,

if you're a showrunner and you heard that an ad agency wanted to talk to you about a life insurance company infiltrating your storyline and using your characters, you probably would run a mile. The show was initially not interested but as we would when presenting to a client, we created a pitch document for the production company, which described all the benefits of the partnership. It included things like the brand's ability to create additional talkability around the show.

Importantly, we demonstrated that we were respectfully writing to the tone of voice of the characters and the show. As our relationship developed, they recognised that, and the trust really grew. By understanding what was in it for them, we created breakthrough work that helped the brand weave its way into the most unlikely of places of primetime television.

## How does the tone of the campaign differ from standard insurance advertising?

**Fedyszyn:** What makes Partners Life different compared to other competitors is that it embraces death, and we keep building on this. In our previous campaigns, like *Unhappily Ever After*, we addressed death through fictional characters such as Humpty Dumpty. Partners Life also really leans into the New Zealand tone of voice. In all campaigns, we use a cheeky, Kiwi sense of humour to bring levity to the topic but also to really stand out as a New Zealand insurer. We also use media in ways that are most impactful to our audience. For *Unhappily Ever After*, it was targeted to new parents, using stories that were just for them, and the commercial ran at 8pm, after they would put their kids to bed.



**Gallery:** Most insurance companies try to engage with people by interrupting whatever it is they're watching and asking them to think about their own death happening. For example, I could be watching sports and be interrupted with an ad about life insurance, which isn't when I would ordinarily be thinking about that sort of thing. On the contrary, although they say that New Zealanders don't want to engage in death, if you look at the top 10 trending shows on Netflix in New Zealand right now, most of them are about death or a murder mystery. I think one of the clever elements about this idea is that it engaged people with the subject of death when they were already thinking about it. This strategy is quite different to how most of the category, as they tend to avoid tackling a taboo subject like death.

## Tell us about the media plan in place – how did you ensure this would create noise?

**Gallery:** We launched this as a complete surprise during the first episode, as a 'what the hell just happened' moment. Then, in every episode, when a character died, they would reappear at the end of each episode before the credits to talk about the importance of life insurance. The campaign appeared in the show throughout the entire season including when the show was played on-demand. There was also a 30-second film, which worked in isolation, and we amplified the campaign through some social digital assets. Each week, after the episode was aired, we highlighted each character's message to New Zealanders on socials, using the character's face to prompt our audience to find out more about life insurance. We

also had a quiz on the Partners Life website, which helped people figure out what sort of protection they might need.

## Tell us about the early results – how has the campaign been received?

**Gallery:** Awareness increased by six points and brand consideration increased by about 25%. We measured a statement that said, 'it's important for me to have life insurance' and that increased by 12 percentage points. We also got a very positive TV review, which complimented how clever the campaign was.

## How does this campaign benefit the brand's long-term brand strategy?

**Ballantyne:** We're already seeing some results in terms of improvements in the conversion funnel. We went from zero organic contacts from potential customers to several hundreds. Everything we've seen so far has been positive that this will be a large part of how we can touch that huge population of uninsured or underinsured New Zealanders that have never engaged with any of the traditional methods that our industry has tried over a huge number of years.

## What has been your single greatest learning from this campaign.

**Fedyszyn:** The power of collaboration, because this is an idea that died and came back to life several times, and it took over two years to make. But the Last Performance kept being resuscitated because it had a passionate collaborative team around it to keep it alive. And I think



most importantly, we had an innovative client that believed in it and kept backing the idea. The entire agency, from account strategy, production and creative, all understood the power of this idea.

**Ballantyne:** We loved the creative territory when it first got pitched to us, but we also thought it may be impractical to execute. It was one of those things that sounded great on paper, but we weren't sure how we could land this right. For us, it was not giving up on a territory that we liked the idea of. You must stick with it and be brave. As the client, you need to remember that if you settle for mediocrity, you're never going to get the potential results that you could with that one

brilliant campaign. Let's not be too quick to shelve ideas completely because you never know when we might have that right opportunity to strike.

**Gallery:** Don't just find the uncomfortable truth, confront it. One of the things that's happened across my career is that we spend a lot of time in strategy, finding what the problem is in a category, but we completely ignore it when it comes to communications. Address that problem. Here, we confronted the uncomfortable truth, which was tackling the subject of death, and wrapping that discomfort in entertainment ensured that people were more willing to think about life insurance. 🌸



# A British Original

How an airline created 500 unique ads to remind customers of the magic of flying post-pandemic and emphasise its British heritage



On 25 October 2022, London agency Uncommon Creative Studio launched its debut work for British Airways (BA). The campaign plays on the common question travellers are asked on forms or at borders when they land in a new destination: ‘What is the purpose of your visit?’

In 500 unique print, digital and outdoor executions and more than 32 different short films, British Airways highlights reasons other than ‘Business’ or ‘Leisure’ why people fly.

Some statements are humorous (‘Stag do. Pray for me.’) while others are more moving (‘I still love her.’) and serious (‘Breakthrough treatment.’).

The creative is pared-back – in each media format, the copy takes centre stage. The videos are free of narration, and the out-of-home and print executions feature simple checkboxes and the BA logo.

Uncommon worked with media agency Manning Gottlieb OMD, London, to place certain executions in contextual locations. One outdoor execution in a London Underground station, for instance, reads: ‘Warm gusts of wind that don’t come from tube trains.’

According to Uncommon, brand consideration increased by 8% compared to pre-campaign measures. In late December and throughout January, the brand’s site traffic and revenues increased by over 50% compared to 2019 benchmarks.

To find out more about the making of the campaign and how it offers a modern but faithful take on the brand’s 102-year history and flag-carrier status, we spoke to Uncommon co-founder Lucy Jameson.

**This is Uncommon’s debut work for BA – can you give us a bit of background? What’s the brand’s biggest challenge? How has that changed over the past few years?**

Obviously we went back to the old work when we were pitching, and we saw all of that Made in Britain stuff that ran around the centenary. British Airways is the national flag carrier, so in many ways it is always going to channel what Britishness is, as a global airline. So we wanted to maintain that Britishness in the brand. But we felt it was really important to define what strand of Britishness it should stand for, rather than just saying ‘Made in Britain’. Because I think there’s been a default of harking back to all the very traditional elements of Britishness – and we felt it was important that British Airways stood for a modern version of Britishness.

One of the things we were struck by when we were coming up with ‘British Original’ was that Britain’s always been known for its originality, its inventiveness, its creativity. And we felt that was really appropriate for British Airways, too. Obviously it was the pioneering airline, but also, it’s got lots of really lovely original touches in the customer experience. We did quite a bit of research when we were pitching for the brand, and people always say that the people that British Airways hires set it apart. Whether you’re speaking to British people who are flying BA, or Americans, or anyone – they always [refer to] that British charm and wit and humour, [BA] treats you more like a human. We got people to do various exercises, talking about what a BA air hostess or host was like, versus other airlines, and that definitely came through.

# OUTDOOR GRAND PRIX

We really loved that and thought British originality was such a powerful place to play because it speaks to modern Britain, it speaks to British Airways people, and of course, it speaks to all the customers. One of the things that sets a more premium airline apart from the low-cost carriers – they actually treat everyone who goes on the plane like an original. They recognise you as an original, they don't treat you like cattle. We thought that was powerful. And then, of course, time it with the fact that we've just come out of a pandemic, where we've all been sitting in our rooms for the last two and a half years – people have never been so much in need of that spark of originality.

And that's what travel can do, it just gets you to see things from a different perspective and make new connections. So that was really important as well. We pitched a year and a bit ago, so the work has obviously morphed and changed as we've emerged from the pandemic more and more, but that core thought of British Originality, of 'It's all about the people, not the planes', about the BA staff being originals and every customer being an original – that hasn't changed at all. It just feels like a sharper articulation of what 'Made in Britain' was.

## How much was the post pandemic recovery a factor in this new direction for the brand?

Obviously, every airline had an absolute nightmare from a financial point of view – businesses were effectively shut down in the UK. So all of them had a significant challenge coming back out, encouraging people to think about flying again, but still recognising the massive challenge of getting themselves

operationally back to full strength. That's been such a difficult balance to get right.

There are no particular claims that any airline in the world could make about the operational side of it because it has been really tough. So we knew that it was going to end up being more about the reasons to travel rather than hard product facts, and we wanted to encourage people and remind them of why flying is incredible. We'd all sort of forgotten that, what it was like to go

abroad and feel something different.

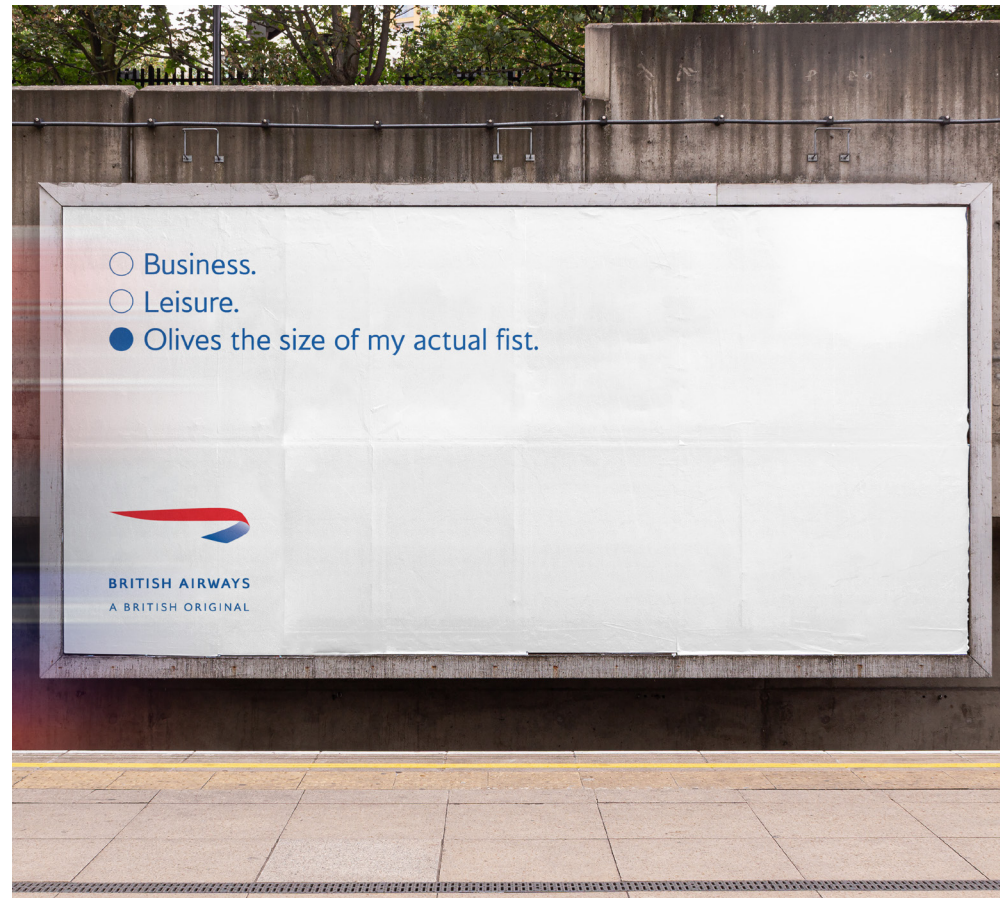
It encompasses quite a lot. BA is a more premium airline than the low-cost carriers, but there's the functional stuff of, 'Does it have the right network, the right frequency and the right price?' That's the sort of stuff that, of course, we have to cover within the mix of the work we do. So there's a lot of destination-type work. But then it is about reminding people of why it's worth paying for. There is lots of great stuff in the product, whether it is

free hand baggage, the food and drink, the fact it's central airports like Heathrow, rather than somewhere in the middle of nowhere.

All of those things add up, plus the experience and the way you're treated, they all wrap together. And there's also that level of emotion. We could see it when we did research, people say [BA] feels like a bit of comfort, a bit of home – when you've had a really miserable business trip, and you get back on a BA plane, and it feels like, 'Oh, thank God for that.' That emotional connection and that sense that if something goes wrong, [you] won't get stranded.

## Tell us about the brief.

The original brief was, as the market opened back up from the pandemic, 'Get a disproportionate share of that market'. It was as simple as that. And I think that is very much still the brief, it's always to get a disproportionate share of [the market] for British Airways. As with any premium brand, you're justifying that price premium, making sure that people understand why that is worth paying for. And a lot of that, as I say, is emotional, not rational – that feeling of 'I just want to fly with them, I think they recognise me, and what I'm like'. But there's work underneath it that speaks to the network and price, and all of that type of stuff. It's a really emotional job to get people to love BA, and that's always a hard job. But that sense of 'they recognise me, they know who I am' was what we wanted to capture by having 500-plus executions, covering all those different reasons you might fly. In that mix, somebody is going to go, 'They've nailed it, they absolutely get me.'





## ‘People have never been so much in need of that spark of originality

Lucy Jameson, Uncommon



### As the national carrier, does BA benefit by simply getting more people to fly in general post-pandemic?

This is a brand campaign. It's the first bit of work under A British Original, but there will be different iterations of that as times and tasks change. This was definitely understanding the moment we're in right now, so it does speak to that.

### Did you go into this looking for an emotional hook?

Absolutely. You're never going to win on rationality. We all know that. There are a million behavioural science pieces behind that. Emotional campaigns work much harder, fame-driving campaigns work much harder. People make decisions on emotion and that's the bit that we can shift. I can't change how much [BA is] going to charge or whether they've got a flight at the right

time or not, but I can make you feel like, 'I'm gonna go and look at BA first'. So that was our job, cementing that emotional connection people have with the national flag carrier.

### Less is more with this creative – did the client have any reservations about swapping long, emotion-driven TV ads for succinct, copy-driven creative?

It didn't entirely start out this way. But certainly, when we did some research along the way, and the posters that had some of that wit and charm, people just loved them. So it made sense to take that right the way through and land that across everything. I think it feels quite modern and right for the time, especially having come out of two years of crisis. Everybody knows airlines had a really tough time. This feels like a good way of having all that warmth and

connection, but recognising you don't have to do a bombastic [campaign] with a giant track and all the rest of it. In lots of ways, I think [the campaign] stands out more because of that.

### Are the 500 different executions inspired by real customer insights?

Once we had the thought of the different reasons why we travel, we opened it up to the entire agency, and we had a Google doc of all the reasons people fly. And of course, BA have big segmentations around why people fly and which audiences fly for what kind of trips – visiting friends and family, business trips, weekends away or two weeks' fly-and-flop with the kids. I think we know what those types of trips are. It was just then making them feel really personal and funny and warm, which is down to copywriters, much more than anything else.

### Where does A British Original go in the long term?

We love the fact that we can do more and more contextual work [which] feels very right for the brand. Inevitably there's more stuff we want to do. I love the idea of [A British Original] starting to make its way into the whole customer experience, whether it's a British Original breakfast, or British Originals on the entertainment system. There's a brilliant opportunity to do more there, because it has got so many touch points. As those things take longer to do, we'll see more and more of that kind of stuff coming through.

We're just going through what comes next after things like the January sales. Inevitably times and the context will change – next year, we're going into a cost of living crisis, so how does that change things? How do we make sure that [the brand] is famous for some of the brilliant things [it offers], like if you go on a short-haul flight, BA gives you free cabin

## 'It's one of those dream briefs where you get to slightly update a British icon'

Lucy Jameson, Uncommon

baggage? What does A British Original do with all of that free cabin baggage?

How much original stuff can they pack into a cabin bag? There are lots of different ways we can play with it. You'll definitely see the contextual nature of it carrying through, you'll definitely see that personalisation coming through more and more – BA being able to recognise each and every person as an individual. That's absolutely something we want to see more of, and those original touches through the whole customer journey.

### Tell us about the media plan – how and where did you launch this? Why was outdoor the best channel?

That is all down to our partners in crime, MG OMD. Lots of people criticise media agencies for just cranking out a wheel and coming up with an identikit media plan. But they always, right from the beginning, saw A British Original as a brilliant opportunity to create an original media plan – so all due credit to the team at MG OMD.

They saw the opportunity to do something different and less traditional. The campaign did not start out in this shape at all, so they've been really reactive as well. We all talk about having better data-enabled campaigns but actually, having something that's as simple as this allows you to make the most of that.

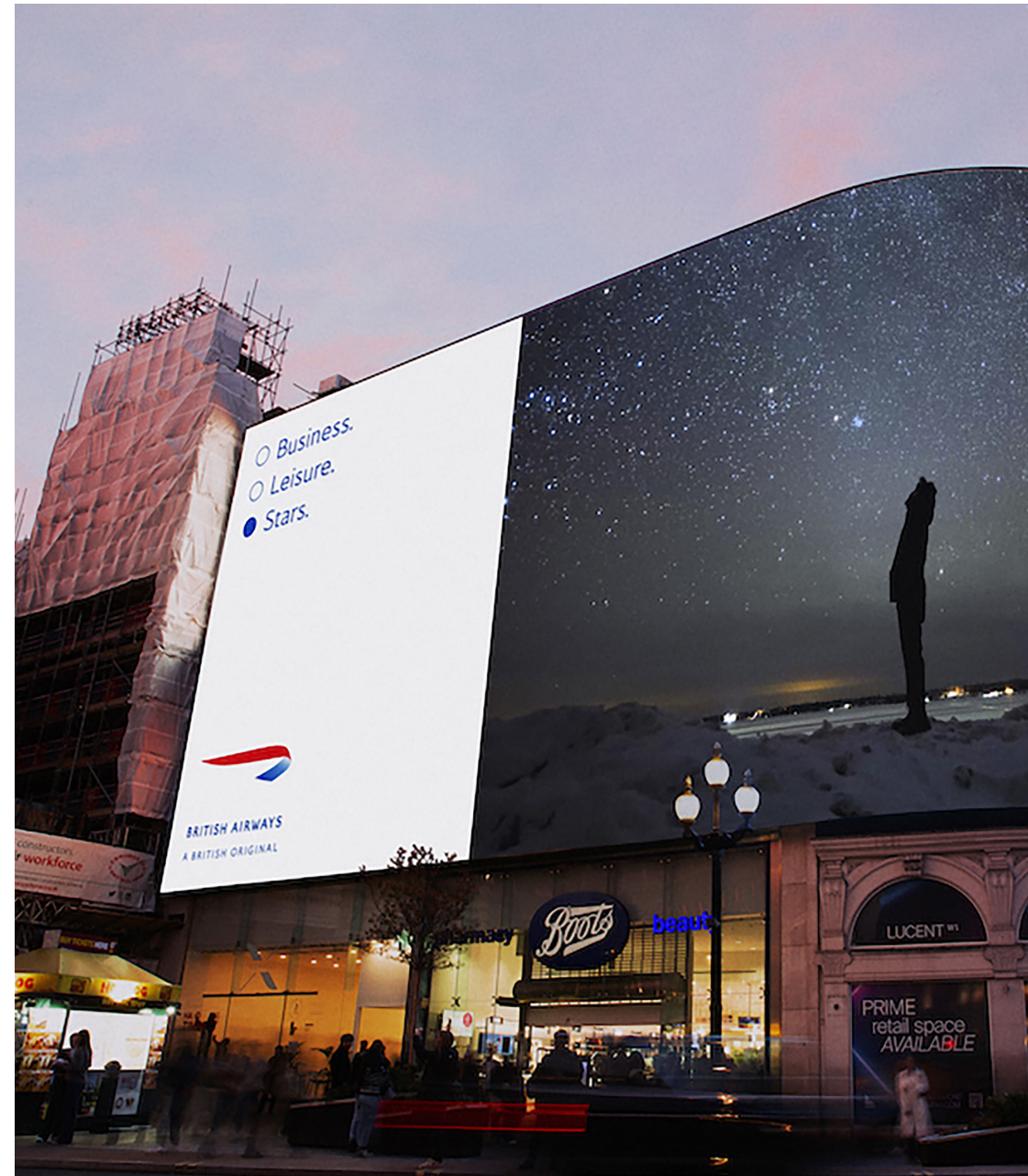
### It's delightfully low-tech. How did you arrive at the number 500?

If you're going to talk about recognising everyone as an original, you can't just run five ads. It demands a lot. One of the joys is it's simple and cheap from a production point of view, so that did mean we could run more. I think 500 was just a number that felt big enough and significant.

And then it was thinking about the balance of the crew in there as originals, different kinds of trips, different executions which are going to be relevant to our different audiences, different tones of voice from the genuinely really serious reasons people fly to the more flippant stuff. Once you've created a matrix like that, it's like 3D chess. You do need quite a lot of executions. But it's also important to get people thinking about why they fly, particularly, now that we know people have got out of the habit of flying, they're worried about money or sustainability.

### Was sustainability a consideration in this brief?

We thought long and hard about that, and people are still going to want to fly and there are still huge benefits of flying, whether that is seeing your family, or face-to-face meetings, experiencing different cultures. There are still very good reasons for flying which I do not think are going to go away.





But of course, we've got to balance that with doing things more sustainably. What I found powerful when we first met [BA] – and I did quite a lot of research into it – is they were the first airline group to commit to net zero by 2050. They were the first European airlines to make significant commitments to sustainable aviation fuel.

They'd invested very early in hydrogen, and they have a [traveltech] incubator, which works with small companies to help in this space. I felt like it was much more important that they were probably the leading European airline at those kinds of things. Rather than just deciding to offset everything, actually [they're going] to go after what the fundamental issues are, and start investing in solving those things. Right from the beginning of our pitch, we [knew] those were stories that need to be told, because we will need every ounce of British originality, if we're going to fix those things. So we wanted a platform that would ultimately allow British Airways to be able to speak to some of that, because it's really, really powerful.

## So it was a conscious decision to keep that separate from this work?

I think you will see work over the next year that absolutely does speak to [sustainability] because it's really important. But you don't necessarily want to do it in the same way as stimulating demand – you want to be able to tell that story properly in its own way. They've also done things like reducing the weight in planes so they don't need as much fuel, by switching things over to digital, or making



sure [to avoid] single-use plastics as much as possible. There are streams of work going on on all of that stuff, but it feels like it needs its own time in the sun.

## It's early days, but do you have a sense of the campaign's success so far?

Not yet – [we're tracking] all the usual measures, and we'll see whether consideration and brand love and 'worth paying for' et cetera, are going up. We've had an extremely positive reaction out in the wild,

but we haven't got anything that we could point to at this point, it's too early to be able to see and lots of it is still running. Airlines are such a complicated business because you can't compare back to last year or the year before, because obviously we were in the middle of a pandemic.

## Is the intention to expand this to other territories?

This is a UK campaign at the moment but yes, it will be going live in India and in the US and key markets like that. Those screenshots

that go round on social or in the press, that's very much what we intended. We wanted these to work a bit like memes in that they would spread in their own way.

## What did you take away from this experience?

It's one of those dream briefs where you get to slightly update a British icon. And the clients are fab and so was the media agency. It's not been plain sailing, because it didn't start out looking like this, but I feel like it actually ended up better as a result. 🌈

# The First Digital Nation

A small Pacific nation announced that it was uploading its history and culture to the metaverse to draw attention to the threat of climate change

**A**t the COP 27 summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November, Simon Kofe, minister for justice, communication and foreign affairs for the small Pacific island nation of Tuvalu, addressed world leaders in a three-and-a-half minute video. Standing at a podium on a beach in his home country, Kofe explained that some of the islands that constitute Tuvalu were at risk of being swallowed by rising sea levels caused by climate change.

In the face of a lack of action to combat climate change, Kofe said Tuvalu would take steps to preserve its culture, heritage and status by becoming The First Digital Nation, uploading its stories, ancestral records, flora, fauna, administration and government services to the metaverse to be preserved forever. As Kofe's speech continued and the camera zoomed out, the land behind him began to glitch, giving the impression that Kofe was standing in a virtual representation of the island. To find out more about the campaign from The Government of Tuvalu and agency The Monkeys, Sydney (A part of the agency network Accenture Song), Contagious spoke with the agency's chief creative officer, Tara Ford, ECD Barbara Humphries and chief strategy officer Hugh Munro.



## Tell us about Tuvalu as a country.

**Barbara Humphries:** Tuvalu is one of the smallest countries in the world, made up of nine islands in the Pacific Ocean, about halfway between Australia and Hawaii. The average height of the islands is just two metres above sea level, making them extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. They are the smallest of the UN's [United Nations'] 193 member states, with the lowest GDP, and are classified as 'highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks.' Despite their position, they are leading the world in many ways in climate advocacy and innovative solutions. Current predictions are that Tuvalu can expect to be unlivable by 2050, which would make them the first country to be lost to climate change. If this happens, it will create a diaspora of 12,000 displaced citizens with no physical territory to call home.

## What are the greatest challenges facing Tuvalu as a nation and how did they influence this campaign?

**Humphries:** Tuvalu's challenges are interconnected – rising sea levels are an environmental concern which poses an absolute existential threat to Tuvalu as a nation – in the physical, cultural, economic,





and geopolitical sense.

Rising temperatures and sea level encroach on the land mass, with increasing salinity destroying vegetation and crops. Even in the short term, natural disasters can be catastrophic for towns and infrastructure. But it's not just the land itself that is at stake. By the current definition of International Law, a nation needs a permanent physical border to exist. Without [that], Tuvalu faces losing its future as a functioning state. Tuvalu's maritime borders, voting rights and voice on the world stage would all be lost. Tuvalu needs a way to survive and function as a permanent nation, even if its people are forced to relocate. While we all hope the world will act on climate change in time to avoid a worst-case scenario, hope is not a viable strategy for Tuvalu. This project is a direct result of attempting to bring the dual aims of mitigation and adaptation together.

## Did you approach the Government of Tuvalu offering to help or did they come to you?

**Tara Ford:** The government of Tuvalu came to us through mutual partners whom we worked with on other sustainability-related projects. Prior to this, Accenture had already worked with several Pacific islands, the Australian Institute of Marine Science, and Amazon Web Services (AWS) on a recent conservation and climate change project.

## How did you come up with the idea for The First Digital Nation?

**Ford:** The concept of The First Digital Nation came about as a way to safeguard a culture, while giving the government both a framework and central entity from which they can continue to communicate and serve their people – even if they are displaced. The project is a co-creation with the Tuvaluan government, and we wanted to make sure this concept

could serve their dual aims: digital transformation, as well as giving a crucial wake-up call to the world while there is still time to act. In that way, it's a bold provocation. Just the other day, Minister Kofe framed their perspective on the Digital Nation to us as akin to a terminal cancer diagnosis, in that having limited time 'forces you to think about what's important.' It's incredibly sad, but that's very much the position they are in. Making the most of the time they have left to make the onset of loss as manageable as possible.

## Did you conduct any research to help inform the direction of the campaign? If so, what were the key insights?

**Humphries:** We researched Tuvalu's situation, but the most beneficial thing was our conversations with Minister Simon Kofe and his team about what was happening in Tuvalu. It was invaluable to learn first-hand what was most important to communicate and preserve from their perspective, as a progressive and proactive island nation with

a strong and spiritual attachment to their home. Minister Kofe and his team were very collaborative and generous with their time, without which we would not have learnt that Te Afualiku islet is a place people often boat to for picnics, and that it is already showing signs of vegetation loss. They shared that the islet's name of 'Te Afualiku' is also significant, adapted from wording to mean 'sweat of the chief' and is symbolic of the resilience of the people of Tuvalu – which was part of why it was their choice to focus on this part of Tuvalu to digitise first.

No Tuvaluan person wants to leave their home. This is not an easy or convenient substitute for the real home, and that in itself should serve as a warning to the world.

## Tell us more about the speech delivered by Simon Kofe. What were the most important points to help the message to land?

**Ford:** There were many, particularly regarding climate change mitigation, given that was the focus of COP. But a key takeout lies in this

**'If we expect Tuvalu to solve the climate crisis while it's on its knees, we have a serious problem with our thinking. The climate crisis is the responsibility of every nation'**

Tara Ford, The Monkeys

wording, 'We have no choice but to become the world's first Digital Nation.' While many entities have made moves to the metaverse and are building a presence there, for Tuvalu, their motivations are starkly different: Digitising and relocating a country to the cloud is a last resort to survive as a nation. No Tuvaluan person wants to leave their home. This is not an easy or convenient substitute for the real home, and that in itself should serve as a warning to the world. As Minister Kofe said, 'Without a global conscience and a global commitment to our shared wellbeing, we may soon find the rest of the world joining us online as their lands disappear.'

**The visuals of this address were also quite striking. Why did you show the island glitching against a black backdrop?**

**Humphries:** The concept of an islet floating in the metaverse was chilling to think of, and that hollowness and sense of loss were what we wanted to communicate. We knew we could never accurately show the islet's natural beauty in a digital void, and we wanted the viewer to feel that immediately. The unfinished building and the glitches are all designed to show the nation as work in progress, and the imperfect nature of this as a substitute. The slow pan-out created the sense of a beautiful nation slipping away.

**Why did you decide to use the metaverse and blockchain technology to preserve Tuvalu in The First Digital Nation?**

**Ford:** The promise the metaverse offers is a degree of security and permanence in the way we used to ascribe those values to



physical land, which is tragic in and of itself. And yes, when we talk about the metaverse as an alternative to a physical home, it's shocking for anyone to contemplate. Despite the excitement surrounding the metaverse in recent years, Tuvalu recognises that the realisation of a fully interconnected metaverse will require significant progress in hardware, software, and networking infrastructure. Out of necessity, both are being developed in tandem. Embarking on The Digital Nation is something Tuvalu must start as they have exhausted other alternatives. It's a pragmatic

step to help Tuvalu argue for sovereignty and nationhood and its permanence as a nation.

**To what extent was this aspect of the campaign a way to earn more PR and to what extent did it provide value for Tuvalu?**

**Ford:** Any PR or debate that comes of that, shocking or otherwise, helps Tuvalu with the dual concerns of adaptation measures and support, and advocating for urgent global action on climate change. And that's a good thing.

**Anybody hearing about this project should absolutely question whether a digital replica of their home is an acceptable alternative. I think we'd all agree that it is in no way preferable to being able to save the real thing**

Barbara Humphries, *The Monkeys*



## ‘The climate crisis is on our doorstep’

Tara Ford, The Monkeys

for a very real worst-case scenario, while communicating urgency to other nations.

### Why did you decide to target the United Nations at COP 27?

**Ford:** COP is the only opportunity for the year that nations like Tuvalu can address world leaders, delegates, and global media in one hit. While Minister Kofe could not attend the event in person, making the most of that window was key. Climate change and emissions targets were on the agenda that year. As the first potential country to be lost as a result of these things, Tuvalu’s

voice had to be heard to force new commitments and action.

**Humphries:** The impact was driven solely by the moment at COP and the speech being shared by the public and news media in the subsequent days. We had zero media budget, so we could not rely on the support of any other elements or a media plan to amplify our messages. The film and website were the only assets, but working with our PR partners, we formed a strategy for making the most of the coverage around COP that would allow for further interviews with Minister Kofe.

### Why was there no media budget?

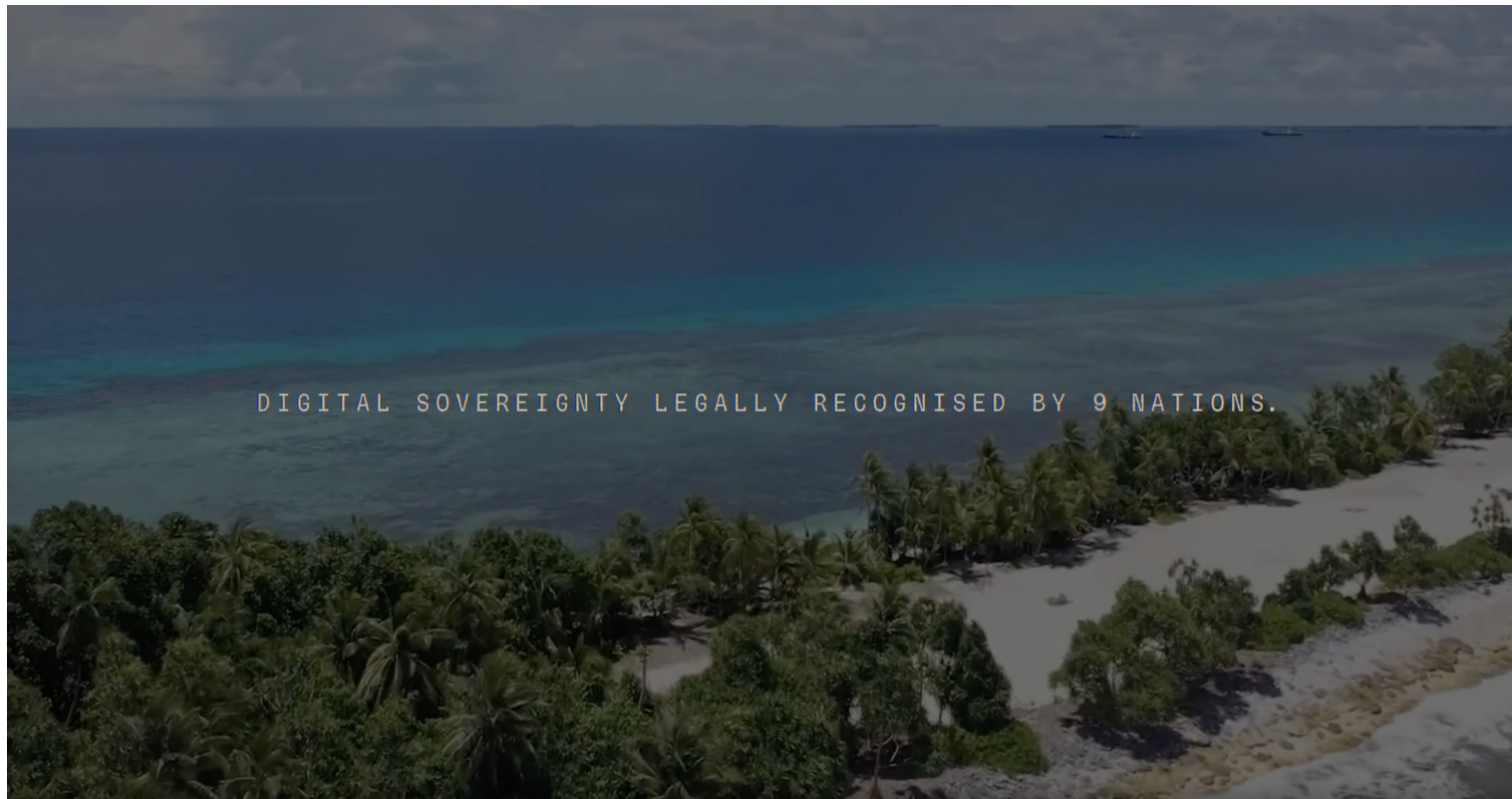
**Hugh Munro:** As a nation with a population of just 12,000 and the smallest GDP in the UN, Tuvalu can’t afford lavish media budgets. Especially on a global scale. Every dollar needs to go towards mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change. With a modest production budget and significant in-kind contributions from companies involved in the making of the project, this goes to show that money is no match for passion, effort, and a powerful creative idea.

### What happened after the speech? How did the world react to The First Digital Nation idea?

**Humphries:** There was an immediate and visceral reaction in the press and from the public. [It was] described as ‘heartbreaking,’ ‘devastating’ and ‘chilling’. In the first 48 hours, the website had visitors from 118 countries, which grew to over 160 in the following weeks (over 80% of the world’s countries). There were many questions about what it means and how it would work. Things like, ‘Is the metaverse a viable home for a country?’ All important questions to ask. The reaction and interest gave Tuvalu further opportunities and a larger platform to talk about what is happening in their country. It has snowballed into more media interviews and speaking opportunities.

### Can you tell us about the results?

**Ford:** Just a few weeks ago, Kosovo became the 10th nation to recognise the permanence of Tuvalu’s nationhood, irrespective of what happens to their physical land. Taiwan has agreed to donate US\$1.5m in funding for 4G internet, to help



# THE DAN WIEDEN TITANIUM LIONS GRAND PRIX

facilitate access and support for the Digital Nation. A lot of this can be attributed to the spread of the project, reaching a mind-blowing 2.1 billion people. Minister Kofe has talked repeatedly about the need to reach citizens of the world, forcing them to think, what if this were happening to my country? It is often the citizens putting pressure on their own governments that forces the most action. To have the work reach such a broad audience was key to amplifying Tuvalu's voice and centering Pacific perspectives in global climate conversations.

## Were you worried that The First Digital Nation could have an adverse effect by encouraging people to think that uploading a country's cultural records online was an acceptable solution to the threat of land destruction caused by climate change?

**Humphries:** That was not a concern because the idea had to serve two dual aims of climate mitigation and adaptation. Both must be pursued simultaneously because Tuvalu doesn't have the time to wait and see if the world will act before pursuing alternate measures. As the Minister said in the address, 'Because the world has not acted, we have had to act.' Tuvalu is very clear about this as a last resort. The digital nation, the backing up and recording, the updating and curation of a culture and history online is a massive and ongoing undertaking – not to mention the integration of government and administrative functions – so they

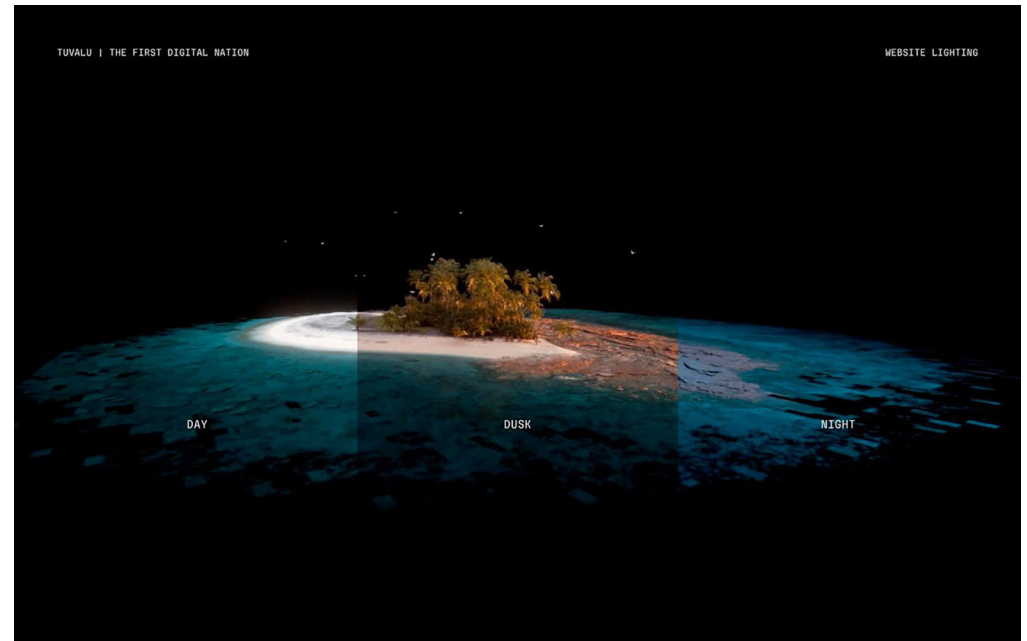
must begin now. Anybody hearing about this project should absolutely question whether a digital replica of their home is an acceptable alternative. I think we'd all agree that it is in no way preferable to being able to save the real thing. But this is something they've said they'd be 'foolish' not to do.

## What can brands, agencies and people do to help Tuvalu and with the ongoing issues of climate change?


**Ford:** We can all help centre Pacific voices in climate change conversations. Pacific people have been managing their land and oceans sustainably for thousands of years. Tuvalu contributes less than 0.01% of total global emissions and yet is one of the first to feel the brunt of the rest of the world's inaction. We are all connected, and understanding our own connection to the bigger problem is fundamental to any meaningful progress.

## What has been your single greatest learning from this campaign?

**Ford:** The biggest learning is how close this crisis is, and how real. We all felt that when we were briefed on the situation. Land affected by sea level rises is unlivable well before it's underwater. The problems Tuvalu is facing, like diminished crops and reliance on expensive food imports, are happening right now. If we can leave you with the words of Minister Simon Kofe, 'We're living with the effects of climate change. We have a responsibility to forewarn the world as to what is coming ahead.' The climate crisis is on our doorstep. ❧





A man in a blue cap and apron is working at a fish counter, wearing gloves and handling fish. A polar bear is standing next to him, holding a shopping basket. The background shows a grocery store aisle.

# WORK SMART, NOT HARD WITH CONTAGIOUS IQ

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# Phone It In

How a telco convinced New Zealanders to record long copy OOH ads that became radio commercials, promoting its low-cost credentials and increasing sign-ups by 34%

Low-cost telco brand Skinny's mischievous OOH campaign encouraged New Zealanders to call an 0800 number and read aloud advertising copy to potentially become the voice of one of the brand's radio ads.

The Phone It In ads, created by Colenso BBDO, Auckland, and media agency PHD, Auckland, were placed in an array of unusual touchpoints, including bar coasters, takeaway coffee cups, barber mirrors and even pork pie packaging. The copy was written to reflect its location, adding to the humour and reinforcing how the campaign was cost-effective and that the savings would be passed on to consumers.

According to the agency, 2,650 ads were recorded, equating to 22 hours of radio content. The campaign generated a 34% increase in sign-ups, with 65% of calls made by Skinny's competitors' customers.

To find out more about the campaign, Contagious spoke with Skinny strategic lead Ally Young and Colenso BBDO chief creative officer Simon Vicars.

## Contagious last spoke to Skinny back in 2020 for your Friend-vertising campaign, how has the brand evolved since then?

**Ally Young:** Skinny has been going from strength to strength. We've got the highest brand metrics, growth and base numbers that we've ever had. Basically all the hard work that we've been doing since we met with Colenso way back in 2018 has just driven further and further growth for us. Since Friend-vertising, we've really honed in on what it means to be a credible telco – which for us is all about keeping prices low and customers happy, but doing it in an inexpensive quality way. Honestly, telcos are boring. They just sell texts, minutes and data – so we've got to bring a little bit of fun, energy and joy to that market, which I think Skinny does and people recognise us for it.

## Last time we spoke you mentioned that Skinny has a history of being associated with teenagers. Is that still the case?

**Young:** The gap has closed quite



considerably, but Skinny is still known as a brand for the youth. That's still my biggest bugbear – trying to make sure that we appeal for the masses, rather than just being a youth-centric brand. However, what we've seen over time is that the people that were with us from the beginning, they've gotten older, so we are actually growing into different age groups because we're taking our customers with us. We've found that once we've acquired a customer and they stay with us for over a year, we've got them for a good long time.

## What is Skinny's brand positioning in the New Zealand market?

**Young:** Since our entry into the market over 10 years ago now, the brand was born out of offering low prices, but it wasn't enough to just be known for being low cost. There are 15 telcos in New Zealand, so it's a very competitive environment especially when we've only got 5 million people in the country – so anyone could beat us on price if they really wanted to. That's why Skinny needed to make sure that we had something else that we could own and no one else could steal from us – which is low prices and happy customers. So, everything we do in our marketing is about just making sure that we keep reiterating our brand proposition, which is: 'We'll do anything to keep prices low and customers happy.'



## What are Skinny's biggest challenges as a brand and in the telecommunications category?

**Young:** Our number-one KPI and objective is increasing consideration. The telecommunications category is such a competitive environment in New Zealand. In order for us to really make money in this market, you've got to be within the top three. Skinny is constantly sitting at number four, and there's quite a big jump between four and three, but we are slowly closing that. But in any press releases or within the general media, Skinny is not considered as one of the top telcos. Which is actually quite annoying because we use the exact same network as Spark, which is the mothership. But we can't say that we're a part of Spark because everyone will just think that we're a cheap version of Spark, and then we will get fired because we wouldn't make any money. So, it's very important that there's a differentiation between the two brands and it's one of our biggest challenges in trying to show people that we are credible and that we have a great network.

## Did Colenso receive a brief for this campaign?

**Simon Vicars:** Skinny has a standing evergreen brief at Colenso that sits on the wall, which is 'How do you keep prices low and customers happy?' The offices of Colenso BBDO in Auckland actually used to be an old bacon factory, so we run a thing every month called The Bacon Factory that acts as our proactive thinking labs where anyone from the agency can come together during a two-hour session to talk about ideas. A lot of the time the ideas are around Spark and Skinny, and the idea for Phone It In came out of that.



## I gravitate towards smart ideas that can then be deployed in a mischievous way.

Simon Vicars, Colenso BBDO

## What was the creative idea that sparked the Phone It In campaign?

**Vicars:** The initial idea was really kind of effortless and clear – to create user-generated radio ads by getting people to call an 0800 number – which was something we all collectively grabbed onto. From there, I asked the creatives to help me understand what a script might look like and that's

when the idea went into a new place. I could see the potential of compromising people's integrity to sell Skinny by writing a script that basically just talked about how brilliant this telco was in their own words, but it's actually our words – which I could see as being really entertaining.

## In the previous interview you talk about not crossing the line or behaving in a juvenile way. How did you stick to that for this campaign?

**Vicars:** I really gravitate towards smart ideas that can then be deployed in a mischievous way. If you start in a silly place, the idea probably doesn't have the permission to push itself as far as it could go. But when you start in a very smart place like 'a low cost telco has created a free phone number for you to record radio ads', that's so smart that you can then be silly without it being silly. I'm always a bit wary of ideas that try to be funny before they're smart. I think they have to be smart, and then they can be made even funnier.

## It's smart to get people to use their phones to participate in a telco campaign, was this included in the brief?

**Vicars:** It was a real conscious decision for Skinny's next campaign to have the phone, wifi or service at the heart of the idea so that the campaign could be effortlessly ours. Also, the way that most people experienced the campaign was likely on a device that could be on our network – so people were just a little bit closer to the experience of what it's like when you join Skinny.



## How did Skinny react to the proposed idea of the Phone It In Campaign?

**Young:** The whole production of Phone It In from start to finish was turned around in just four weeks. What was quite interesting about this campaign is that we were defying all marketing guidelines, and effectiveness rules went out of the window. You don't normally put 50 words on a billboard, and it wasn't creatively beautiful or anything

like that.

**Vicars:** The choice of the art direction was actually very deliberate as it was then very easy to put it into different shapes and make work quickly.

**Young:** We believed that this was the best way to execute on the idea, but selling that execution into the rest of the business and saying, 'Hold tight, this is the right thing to do', was quite interesting.

**Vicars:** It really was gut-instinct stuff,

just believing in human nature, of tapping into this idea of the desire for fame, would be enough and not putting too much of a carrot on the end of the stick.

## Why did you opt to not include a promotional offer or call-to-action as part of the radio ads to encourage listeners to switch providers?

**Vicars:** If we're throwing in 20% discounts,

it feels to consumers that there's headroom in Skinny's pricing structure. Other brands throw in free Spotify subscriptions or whatever, but with Skinny what you get is an incredible network and it's really important that people really believe that our product is as good as it gets.

## This isn't the first time Skinny has used crowdsourcing in a campaign, why does the brand like to use regular people in its ads?

**Vicars:** Before Friend-vertising, the brand had a problem in terms of its great value insinuating a poorer experience. To overcome those perceptions we used our customers as advocates for Skinny – that's why we did it again for Phone It In.

## Were you worried that people wouldn't engage with the campaign?

**Vicars:** We were terrified that no one was going to call the number and that no one would engage with the idea. Sure, we talked about whether we needed to incentivise people to call with free five gigabytes of data or something, but ultimately we wanted to keep this as simple as possible, and we took a punt on the draw of possibly being on the radio was enough of an incentive. Then of course we started to get calls coming in and it was a big relief. What really helped was when the radio ads started going out, and in a way those helped explain the mechanic of the campaign – which definitely helped build momentum. When we reached 700, I thought, 'Phew, if that's all we get, that's great,' but then they just kept coming.





## What did the media plan and launch time frame look like for the campaign?

**Young:** One quite interesting and non-traditional part of this campaign is that it wasn't on digital. The only digital imprint we had was on our website where people could read our terms and conditions. The media agency were having a lot of fun and we just kept adding to all the different media channels. Some of the media owners had never sold those spaces before, like hairdressers where we asked to use a portion of their mirror for an ad. The campaign ran for six weeks and the success of it actually made us extend our radio buy for another two weeks.

## Which touchpoints turned out to be the most successful in terms of call-ins and in terms of PR value?

**Vicars:** A dairy in New Zealand is like a corner shop or small convenience store, so we rebranded dairies all around the country. Maybe it was a footfall thing or the universality of the script, but the dairy poster definitely got a lot of call-ins. We also did a full-page newspaper ad that really distilled the cleverness of the idea – as it's a newspaper ad, that doubles as a radio ad, that then triples as a way to tell the whole country about Skinny. But the script and ad that probably created the most mischief was our red-light district poster that was placed near a strip bar. The copy of 'I'm in a questionable part of town making pretty questionable decisions. But there's no questioning Skinny's great prices,' became quite an earworm and bounced around

a lot of earned media outlets.

**Young:** The red light district ad probably wouldn't have gone live but I just didn't tell our corporate comms team about that one. Because Skinny is a small telco within a big telco, we sort of do things and then ask for permission later – we're encouraged and empowered to do that within the team. As long as I can defend whatever happens in court, I'm fine with that.

## Skinny has a history of creating fully integrated campaigns with weird and wonderfully creative touchpoints. Why opt for such an extensive media strategy over defaulting to the more reliable options?

**Young:** Our budgets compared to the big top three telcos are very, very small. We literally can't compete when it comes to TV and we therefore have to be super effective with where we show our brand and every brief has a section where we ask for out-of-the-box executions. Our media agency PHD are amazing and really understand that we can't compete in big media channels, so they're always thinking of quirky little places that Skinny could show up.

**Vicars:** Sometimes when you see an integrated campaign, it feels like the idea has been stretched like a piece of dough, breaking a bit as it reaches the corners. I don't think we're ever trying to create an integrated campaign, I think it's more that this is what helps us drive fame. That's exactly what our media plan and strategy is, to create talkability.







## Are you happy that the core claim of the campaign that 'Skinny is keeping costs low by saving on recording costs' really bears out in reality?

**Vicars:** What you've identified is something that we considered really early on in terms of, 'Are we contradicting ourselves by creating this campaign to keep prices low?' We thought really hard about that and there were two things that really helped us in that moment. The first was that while we might be buying a whole bunch of OOH, it's doing the job of a traditional OOH campaign and doing the double job of creating a radio campaign for nothing – that was the moment that put our mind at ease that it wasn't a contradiction. Then the other part is

that brands do spend millions of dollars on a celebrity to hop into a recording booth and read 60 words – there was a real celebration that we hadn't done that kind of indulgent expense. We felt pretty comfortable that people would spot that and celebrate Skinny for it.

## Skinny likes to break the fourth wall of advertising and be overtly obvious that it is marketing to consumers in its communications. Why this tactic?

**Young:** Skinny in its marketing is quite a rational brand. We say 'mobile' or 'broadband' or something like that in every single communication that goes out. So, we're very obvious and we make it really

clear that we're trying to sell you a telco. **Vicars:** I'm a huge fan of the American style of advertising that's not embarrassed about having a commercial agenda. The reason why advertising exists in the first place is the deployment of creativity for commercial betterment, so the holy grail of marketing is when you can make people love you for selling them something – that's the ultimate challenge.

## What has been your single greatest learning from this campaign?

**Vicars:** I'm really interested in work that proves a point of view, as opposed to talking about a point of view. If Skinny's point of view

is: 'We'll do anything to keep prices low, and customers happy' – don't just tell that to me, prove that to me. Brands spend a lot of time trying to understand who they are, but I think Phone It In is proof that it's more important to understand who you're for – which Skinny understands really well. We're for people who get a lot of satisfaction out of hacking the system, and when you understand the kind of mindset you are hoping people will subscribe to, you start making work for people instead of for yourself and hoping people will be interested in you. That's a key learning for me and I'm really excited to take that into a bunch of new ideas for Skinny because we've tapped into something that a whole bunch of people were excited to get involved with. 🌈



# Flipvertising

How a tech brand flipped targeted advertising on its head with a pre-roll ad competition and dialled up sales by 34%

To promote its Galaxy Z Flip 4 smartphone, Samsung launched an online competition asking participants to mess with their Google Search algorithm in order to win one of the new phones.

The Flipvertising campaign, developed by agency CHEP Network, Sydney, was an online scavenger hunt. The goal was to be served a YouTube pre-roll ad with a winning

code, but the only way to see it was for players to train their algorithm by Googling the right keywords. That meant participants had to intensely search for details about the Galaxy Z Flip 4, essentially asking Samsung ads to target them.

Clues and encouragement cropped up on social media, in YouTube videos and through Google text ads, and influencers were paid to kick the campaign off, but scavengers were mostly engaging with

unpaid, unbranded content about the Galaxy Z Flip 4 through their searches.

According to the agency, the Flipvertising campaign achieved a 34% increase in sales and 600% higher engagement than the industry standard. It also saw the highest search volume of any previous Samsung Z Flip launch – 133% higher than the next best launch.

We caught up with Joanna Baxter, head of Galaxy marketing communications, Samsung Australia, Joe Ranallo, senior copywriter at CHEP Network, and Hansen Ding, CHEP's lead media director, to find out more about how this campaign was created.

## How does this campaign fit into the overall Samsung strategy over the past few years?

**Joanna Baxter:** The heritage of the Samsung brand has always been really grounded in innovation. But for us, it's not just innovation in the sense of tech, it's also an ethos around pushing forward with grit and determination. Over the decades, this has moved us from small product innovations to folding glass in phones, which is pretty cool, and Flipvertising was about hyping up that device. From a brand perspective, our platform of 'openness' was introduced in recent years, and I think that has evolved that sense of grit and determination to include openness; if we're curious and we're playful, we will innovate. And that connects back to how we approached Flipvertising.

## What are the main challenges Samsung is facing in the Australian market?

**Baxter:** It's ensuring that we're remaining relevant to our target audience. We need to connect with them, so we're taking that step further of inviting them to connect with us. In this particular campaign, the purpose of it was to connect with our audience with playfulness, and that sense of innovation we have as a brand, but making it really relevant to those audiences.

## What was the brief?

**Joe Ranallo:** There is a level of consistency in how we operate with these big phone launches. We expect to see a spike in interest when the phone is announced, but then we always look to see how we can amplify that locally during the pre-order phase; how do we keep that level of interest up until the phone actually becomes available for people to buy? That was really the job of this campaign.

The specifics of this brief, because it was for the Flip, was we were trying to target a slightly younger audience, Gen Z, slightly skewed female. We needed to find a way to get them interested, not just passively watching, but actively engaging in the brand in a way that channelled Samsung's positioning.

## What were the key goals of the campaign? Did you have any specific business objectives?

**Baxter:** Overall, we really wanted to achieve that broad mass awareness of the Z Series. But we were also looking at more specific objectives around how we hype the device; drive that intrigue around the device; and connect with the audience. So measuring things like website sessions, increasing brand relevance, and then also purchase intent of the device.



## The premise of the campaign was that Gen Z don't like targeted ads. Did you do any research into that? Do you think it has any implications for the future of advertising?

**Ranallo:** In general, when it comes to tech and data, the younger audience are just more clued in on how all of it works than any other audience has been before. And I think a big part of this idea was just being really, really transparent about the whole thing. This was very obviously an advertising campaign, right down to the name of it, Flipvertising, which was consumer-facing. We weren't hiding away from the fact that we wanted you to hunt down our ads. And I think there's a level of respect that comes with that, because our audience immediately knows they're not treating me like an idiot: they're not trying to sneak something into my feed and pretend it's not an ad.

People respect transparency, so I don't think you always need to come in with a super subtle approach. I think doing that is one of the main reasons why people got so engaged, because there was that level of transparency.

## There were a lot of elements to this campaign, how long did it take to get from pitching the idea to Flipvertising being launched?

**Baxter:** I think it took about 12 weeks to get to the launch, but even after that you have to stay close to it, keeping that constant review and refinement, so that you know you're nailing that customer experience.

**Ranallo:** I would pretty confidently say that without our internal media people, this would have been next to impossible, because from the moment that we had it down on a piece

of paper, before we wanted to show it to the Samsung team, we needed to do a sense check that this was possible. It was really a huge collaboration, constantly talking every single day. We've got these assets, how do we need to deploy them? When can they go live? Are people seeing them? There was a constant flow of conversation, and I think it was only possible because we were all under one roof.

## Twelve weeks feels quick. Were there any sticking points where you thought you weren't going to be able to make it work?

**Ranallo:** We were trying to do something that was virtually the opposite of what Google's ad targeting platform had been designed over many, many years to do, so yes. If you're buying ads based on Google, you're asking to get as many people as possible within our target audience to see this ad. Believe it or not, they don't have guidelines on how to set up an ad that almost nobody on earth is going to see. So there were a lot of phone calls to Google.

**Hansen Ding:** There were two parts that, going in, were completely hypothetical. First, are we going to be able to create a huge enough search interest on specific keywords to have it register? If tens of thousands of people were all searching different keywords, they're not actually going to coalesce on the correct one and allow us to serve those text ads that drive them through the journey. So it was interesting to learn, even as someone who's been doing this as long as I have, how that would work, and how long it would take to happen – which turned out to be a couple of days.

Then the second point is how can we

make an ad that's really difficult to see. But the key thing is that, no matter how tricky and technical this all was, for the customer it would either work or it wouldn't. We were just trying to build a seamless user experience.

**Ranallo:** Another huge question mark was around how do we stop the first person who wins just sharing the link with 10 of their friends. Our internal tech team came up with a way of programming a link that would only work if you clicked on that link from the YouTube pre-roll – if you clicked on it from a message, it just simply wouldn't serve you. That was a pretty big eureka moment.

## You highlighted three specific phone features throughout the campaign, why did you pick those three in particular?

**Ranallo:** We wanted to tell the product story, with features we knew this audience would like, but in a way that we knew would connect with them. That somewhat absurdist humour was important. We owe a lot to Max Barden, the young Australian director from The Sweetshop who worked on it with us, who understands that audience really, really

well, and took those scripts to a place that we knew would connect with Gen Z.

## The campaign also featured Google text messages of inspiration, were those always part of the plan or did you think people might need a bit of encouragement?

**Ranallo:** They were live at the beginning of the campaign, but definitely weren't always part of the plan from day one. As we were progressing through it, we realised we're asking people to Google like crazy in the hopes of finding these videos, but how do they even know if they're remotely on the right track or not? So we wanted to have these signposts so people knew they were in the right area.

And it worked that way because we saw on our social channels, people commenting 'I don't know if I'm on the right path'. And then other people replying showing screenshots of the Google text. Then the Samsung team jumped in to help. It felt like the whole community was working together to find these videos, so that ended up being a pretty crucial part of the campaign.

# Our research strategy guys found an insight into how Gen Z connect with a brand in terms of branded content versus unbranded content – unbranded content is more likely to drive consideration and ultimately sell

Joe Ranallo, CHEP Network



## Jo, what was your reaction to the pitch when they first came to you?

**Baxter:** Straightaway I was like: I love this idea, this is awesome. How on earth are we going to make this work? The CHEP team did an incredible job to make sure they did their due diligence around iterating on the idea before presenting it to us to check if it was possible. There was a bit of bravery from everyone involved, but again it comes back to that mindset of innovation. You've got to try these new things to iterate, learn and then evolve and move forward.

## Why did you choose to use influencers, and why did you pick the ones you did?

**Ranallo:** Samsung has a really strong influencer strategy as a brand across the board, so it's something that we look to leverage whenever it makes sense. Here, we were trying to create a game that was hidden from the algorithm, so it felt really natural to have the message come from people that weren't us.

In terms of audience segments, these are people that we've worked with historically, we knew their audience base and we knew they were going to connect

with a few different sub-cultures of Gen Z. One of them, Dylan Page, is known for making 'this feels illegal to know' style content, which felt right for this. We had gamers because there was a gamification element to the campaign. Another one, Queenie Tan, who gives financial advice, felt natural, too, because, ultimately, this could get you a free phone, so for someone who's trying to save money it also makes sense. We picked people who felt right for both the audience and the idea narrative.

## When you launched the campaign, what was the plan to ensure that people noticed this scavenger hunt was underway?

**Ranallo:** We had the launch film, which went out across all of our channels. We've got a pretty engaged social audience, so that was massively helpful. There was also some paid media pushing that out. Then, on top of that, we had some simple social videos that we had already produced up our sleeve to maintain interest in the campaign throughout. So basically, if we saw interest or search start to dip off, we'd drop one of these videos that would give people a clue as to the kind of thing that they should be searching to try and get targeted by the video. And those clues just became more and more obvious as we got towards the end of the campaign period to try and engage people who had either given up because they found it too hard or couldn't be bothered in the first place.

## How did you ensure the process was clear from the get go?

**Ranallo:** When we started talking to the

influencers about it, we realised maybe it's easier to understand than we thought. We would just jump on the phone and explain the idea to them, then they would send us a video two days later explaining it somehow better than we were explaining it. I also explained the idea to my mum and she understood, which is a pretty good sign because I'm still going to her house to help her turn on her TV.

## Contagious' recent Radar report found that 73.7% of C-Suite marketers said that 'Data is not being used to its full potential' – can you tell us more about the importance of data in advertising and how you utilised data creatively for Flipvertising?

**Ranallo:** Interesting stat. We used data when we were building the concept. Our research strategy guys found an insight into how Gen Z connect with a brand in terms of branded content versus unbranded content – unbranded content is more likely to drive consideration and ultimately sell. That was a good insight that got us to the idea of creating an experience that floats unpaid, unbranded reviews from a completely unbiased source in front of this audience.

Another huge element is that nowadays people understand data, and there's a lot of nervousness around that, but I think we shouldn't shy away from it. Consumers know about data, they know about targeting, but I think we can leverage the fact that people understand how targeted data works. That's what we were doing here.



**One of the results of the campaign was that sales increased by 34%. How do you know that that was specifically due to the Flipvertising campaign itself, rather than other promotional material that was going out at the time?**

**Baxter:** Flipvertising was a part of our overall campaign launch at the time and I think it's really the sum of all those different building blocks. But when you look at the timing of when the Flipvertising campaign occurred, that's why you see that spike in sales, search, and sessions.

**On the Samsung side, how did you kind of map out success? Are there any other results you can share?**

**Baxter:** What we were really happy with is that the overall awareness of the Galaxy Z Flip 4 increased; that was a really positive sign for us. We were also looking at those other elements: increased sessions on the site, increased brand preference, driving overall hype of the product, and purchase intent. And we were really happy with those results.

**You've already won two Grands Prix at Spikes, do you have any advice to people looking to do the same?**

**Ranallo:** I wouldn't say I feel like an expert in winning Grands Prix, but in terms of the Direct category, I think there is a lot of cool stuff you can do by taking existing pieces of technology that aren't new, that aren't the metaverse, and use it in a different way. Another Direct winner at Spikes was Knock Knock [from the Korean

National Police Agency and Cheil Worldwide, Seoul], where they created a 911 helpline that was accessible by pressing a specific combination of numbers on a keyboard, specifically to help domestic violence victims call for help. That did the same thing.

**What was your single greatest learning during this campaign?**

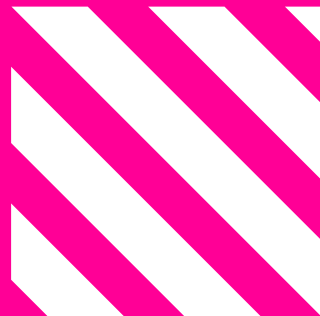
**Ranallo:** Creatively, for me, it's don't shy away from what would usually be considered a high barrier to entry. It's a term that gets thrown around a lot, especially when it comes to giveaways or brand experiences. We don't want to ask too much from consumers, but I've done a lot of competitions that were a lot easier than this and we had no one entering, so I think there's something to be said for going the complete opposite way.

**Ding:** My greatest learning is the importance of human experience. It's easy to always look for the most elegant, automated tech solutions, but there were several key stages in the execution of this campaign where we just needed to get the most experienced people possible to work everything out. We had a team of three people each day who were allowed to know the winning code, to embed it in the winning ad, and that was a lot safer than using a series of overlapping tech solutions.

**Baxter:** From a Samsung side, I think firstly, it's remembering that with great risk there can be great reward, but it's about stretching those ideas to kind of look at all the ins and outs. Then, most importantly, it's really important to keep the customer at the very heart of everything that you do because then you'll ensure you're delivering on that great customer experience. ❄️







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