



Ad Breakout Age Brands

**Awards Entry kit
2025**

In 2023, Ad Age published the first class of Breakout Brand Leaders, a group of 25 individuals behind the marketing success of emerging brands. Last year, we expanded the program to include work—campaigns, collaborations and branding efforts that have driven outsized success for new and challenger brands. View the 2024 winners here.

The following information is required for judges to determine the award winners. Each piece of information requested is important; a complete application will improve your chances of winning.

All information included in entries for the Breakout Brands is limited to any achievements that occurred or work that debuted between Jan. 1, 2024 and April 7, 2025.

All details in the entry forms should be publishable by the time the awards break in September 2025. Any information noted as “not for public” or “off the record” will not factor into the juries’ evaluation. In the rare case, judges may opt to move an exceptional entry into what they deem to be the appropriate category if they feel it was entered into the wrong category.

Breakout Brand Leaders

Breakout Brand Leaders honors individuals who are driving the marketing success of up-and-coming brands today. From people leading challenger brands that successfully take on giants in well-established categories to those who have turned around older companies now experiencing a surge in sales and popularity, the honors will identify executives who are propelling growth using marketing and advertising.

Breakout Brand Work

Breakout Brand Work honors campaigns and marketing efforts driving the success of up-and-coming brands. Categories include:

- **B2B Campaign of the Year NEW**
- **Best Design/Branding of the Year**
- **Best Partnership/Collaboration of the Year**
- **Best ROI: Work that Works NEW**
- **Best Use of Social Media NEW**
- **Experiential Campaign of the Year**
- **Print/Out-of-Home Work of the Year**
- **Purpose-Led Campaign of the Year**
- **Video of the Year**

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Breakout Brand Work Categories

Entries are limited to campaigns and marketing efforts made for breakout brands. This includes challenger brands that successfully take on giants in well-established categories to older companies now experiencing a surge in sales and popularity.

All work must have debuted and run between Jan. 1, 2024 and April 7, 2025.

B2B Campaign of the Year *NEW*

In this category, we shine a light on the most innovative and creative advertising and marketing ideas tailored to speaking to other businesses, whether it be in concept, craft, strategy or ideally, all of the above. The work honored here should be on par with the best consumer-facing pushes.

Best Design/Branding of the Year

This category will award brands that crafted unique branding, from product packaging to website pages to new brand systems. Projects can include newly launched brands or products as well as rebrands. Entries should show how the design or branding idea came to be and why the new branding is considered out of the box/creative/industry disruptive in its category.

Best Partnership/Collaboration of the Year

This category recognizes standout projects developed by two or more brands or organizations working together. Partnerships with creators and influencers are also eligible. Projects can include co-branded products, marketing campaigns and other collaborative efforts. Entries should show innovative and creative thinking that elevate both collaborators. All partners must have been active participants in the project's creation.

Experiential Campaign of the Year

From holiday markets and pop-up stores to direct mail ideas and limited-edition products, experiential campaigns can provide a unique way for marketers to interact with consumers in the real world. This category will celebrate how an idea allowed customers to "live" the brand, not just read about it or see it.

Best ROI: Work that Works *NEW*

This category honors innovative creative work or campaigns that demonstrated remarkable business results. Entries should include the work itself as well as background information and publishable metrics detailing how the campaign's innovative work and approach propelled sales or other significant business success.

Best Use of Social Media *NEW*

This category celebrates the innovative use of social media and honors brands that navigate this finicky space with authenticity, creativity and strategic thinking. Successful entries will showcase how brands effectively engage their communities, build new audiences and drive business results through strategic thinking, thoughtful content, consistent messaging and strong brand voice.

Print/Out-of-Home Work of the Year

This category celebrates impactful and effective print or out-of-home work, where the placement is as important and creative as the message. Entries can include billboards, direct mail pieces, branded magazines and other printed or outdoor advertising.

Purpose-Led Campaign of the Year

This category will award campaigns and initiatives that have a positive impact on society, including addressing a particular industry's shortcomings or systemic inequities, or advocating for change at a local or national level. Winning entries will demonstrate how to combine strategy with creativity to produce effective ideas that move communities to action and shine a light on a path forward for other organizations.

Video of the Year

From TV ads to TikTok, videos can be a powerful marketing tool. Brands can submit any video content produced within the eligible period, whether a long-form piece of branded entertainment or short-form work, but the entry must focus on a singular piece of content. Entries will be judged on creativity, craft, impact and results.

Entry Requirements

Breakout Brand Leaders

Ad Age Breakout Brand Leaders identifies individuals who are influential in driving up-and-coming brands to sales and market-share success. This includes people leading challenger brands, those creating innovative brands in new categories and folks who have turned around older companies currently experiencing a burst of growth and popularity.

Although we are interested in identifying people in roles related to marketing, we will also consider people in other positions, including founders or those related to strategy or innovation that significantly contribute to go-to-market strategies.

You will be asked to submit a compelling 350-word summary in English addressing why you or your nominee deserves our Breakout Brand Leaders honor. Please also submit a headshot.

Entrants will also be asked to demonstrate the recent success of their brand with metrics including sales figures, market-share gains, growth in investment, or similar data. This is key in helping judges determine the health and momentum of the company as well as the impact of current marketing and media strategies.

Note: This is not a lifetime achievement award nor is it an award for the brand/company itself; specifically, we look for meaningful or measurable accomplishments made by an individual between Jan. 1, 2024 and April 7, 2025.

Nominees can reside and work anywhere in the world, but entries must be made in English.

Breakout Brand Work

All information included in entries for the Breakout Brand Work awards is limited to work that debuted between Jan. 1, 2024 and April 7, 2025.

For Best Design/Branding of the Year and Best Use of Social Media:

- Your name and contact information
- Name of the brand and the year it was founded

Background and strategy (350 words)

In 350 words or less, describe the history of the brand's social media presence or design/branding and the strategy behind recent efforts. Entrants may provide a summary of go-to-market plans, descriptions of the creative executions and any associated marketing efforts.

Business results (350 words)

Provide any results demonstrating success; metrics can include sales increases, market-share gains, growth in investment or similar data. Where possible, specify how the work shaped or drove this success.

Work samples

Please include up to four (4) assets that show and explain the work in detail and also clearly illustrate its impact. You are free to also include video testimonials that can speak to the effectiveness of the campaign.

For Best Partnership/Collaboration of the Year:

- Partner 1 Partner 2
- Additional partners

Background and strategy (350 words)

In 350 words or less, describe the history of the partnership/collaboration, the strategy behind it and the impact it had on both businesses. Entrants may provide a summary of go-to-market plans, descriptions of the creative executions and any associated marketing efforts.

Business results (350 words)

Provide any results demonstrating success; metrics can include sales increases,

market-share gains, growth in investment or similar data. Where possible, specify how the work shaped or drove this success.

Work samples

Please include up to four (4) assets that show the collaborative campaign, product or initiative and how it was marketed to its target audience. Please also include any metrics or data to illustrate the partnership's impact and effectiveness.

For B2B Campaign of the Year, Best ROI: Work that Works, Experiential Campaign of the Year, Print/Out-of-Home Work of the Year, Purpose-Led Campaign of the Year and Video of the Year:

- Your name and contact information
- Name of the brand and the year it was founded

Background and strategy (350 words)

In 350 words or less, describe the business challenge or problem addressed by the campaign/work, the summary of media/communications plan, the description of the creative executions and any associated marketing efforts.

Business results (350 words)

Provide any results demonstrating success; metrics can include sales increases, market-share gains, growth in investment or similar data. Where possible, specify how the work shaped or drove this success.

Purpose motivation (for Purpose-Led Campaign category only): Explain why this cause is important to the business and/or its leadership.

Work samples

Please include up to four (4) assets that show and explain the work in detail and also clearly illustrate its impact. You are free to also include video testimonials that can speak to the effectiveness of the campaign.

Case study video upload (optional)

You may submit a case study video if the campaign requires some explanation.

What is Ad Age's Breakout Brands program?

The program honors individuals and work propelling growth for up-and-coming brands. This includes people and marketing efforts driving business success for challenger brands successfully taking on giants in well-established categories, innovative brands in new categories and older brands seeing new momentum and growth.

What's new this year?

We have expanded the Breakout Brand Work awards for 2025 by adding three new categories.

The new categories are:

- **B2B Campaign of the Year**
- **Best ROI: Work that Works**
- **Best Use of Social Media**

When will Ad Age publish the winners?

All honorees and winning work will be profiled in an Ad Age special report to be released September 2025.

When do nominations begin?

The nominations open April 7, 2025 and close May 28, 2025. The link to enter can be found at AdAge.com/events and on the AdAge.com/BreakoutBrands award site.

Who is eligible for Breakout Brand Leaders?

We are looking for leaders at brands, companies or startups that have experienced business success in the past 16 months in marketing and media strategies have played a significant role. Individuals can reside and work anywhere in the world, but must work in-house at the brand/company.

Executives who are propelling growth at up-and-coming brands using marketing and advertising can have a marketing/media title, but it's not mandatory. Breakout Brand Leaders can include founders or those in other positions that significantly contribute to go-to-market strategies. There are no firm requirements on the age of the brand; we will consider people leading newer brands as well as those who have turned around older companies that have experienced recent growth and popularity. Entrants should demonstrate how their brand is successful by citing metrics, which could include market share gains, sales gains, growth in investment or other similar data. They should also cite examples of marketing or new innovation that has helped propel the brand and describe the candidate's role in shaping this.

What is eligible for Breakout Brand Work?

Entries are limited to campaigns and marketing efforts made for breakout brands. This includes challenger brands that successfully take on giants in well-established categories to older companies now experiencing a surge in sales and popularity. All work must have debuted and run between Jan. 1, 2024 and April 7, 2025. If you are submitting work that is an update or continuation of a previous campaign, please note that only the work that debuted during the aforementioned time period will be judged, not the campaign as a whole.

Are the Breakout Brands awards for U.S.-only companies/individuals?

The Breakout Brands are open to anyone anywhere in the world.

How can I nominate someone for Breakout Brand Leaders?

Nominations must be submitted online at AdAge.com/BreakoutBrands. There is a fee to enter.

How can I enter work into Breakout Brands Work?

Entries must be submitted online at AdAge.com/BreakoutBrands. There is a fee to enter.

Can I just call you or send you an email with the name of the person I'd like to nominate?

No. We need to have the online entry form filled out at AdAge.com/BreakoutBrands.

Can I self-nominate for Breakout Brand Leaders?

Absolutely! Judges look at those who self-nominate in exactly the same way as someone who was nominated.

I want to nominate my boss for Breakout Brand Leaders, but would it be better if someone higher up nominated them?

Can I nominate a family member?

You can nominate anyone you feel deserves the Breakout Brand Leaders honor. The nominator doesn't weigh into the judging process; we use the nominator information to help gather info should your nominee be chosen.

How does the judging process work?

Breakout Brand Leaders and Breakout Brands Work are judged by the editors and reporters of Ad Age.

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What is required of those who are selected?

Candidates who are selected must make themselves available for an interview with a reporter if applicable. The editorial and awards teams will reach out to honorees via the contact information supplied in the entry form. We will also host the Ad Age Business of Brands event in September 2025 and you will be invited to attend the event.

Will I be informed if my nominee was not selected?

If it's in early August and you have not heard from us, please contact our awards team at awards@adage.com to check if notifications have been made. Unfortunately, it may not be possible for us to contact every entrant that is not selected.

If I have not heard from Ad Age by August, does that mean my nominee was not selected?

That would be a fair assumption, but there may be delays in notifications. For questions please reach out to awards@adage.com.

Can I contact you to see how my entry is doing in the judging process?

No. We don't give status reports. If we need any further information, we will contact you. Please be patient.

Where can I purchase Ad Age issues, badges, additional awards and marketing items should I win?

For all marketing collateral, along with special orders for copies of print issues, please contact Laura Picariello at lpicariello@crain.com.

If you have a question not answered here, please contact our awards team at awards@adage.com.

Terms & Conditions

The Breakout Brands program (the Program) is sponsored by Ad Age (the Sponsor), a business unit of Crain Communications Inc., 685 Third Ave., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10017 (Ad Age).

Eligibility

The Program is open to anyone in the industry who meets the General Requirements posted for the Breakout Brand Leaders program. Employees of the Sponsor, their affiliates and members of their immediate families are not eligible. Eligibility is subject to change each year.

How to enter

Instructions on how to enter are posted on [AdAge.com/BreakoutBrands](https://www.adage.com/breakoutbrands). Entries must comply with the instructions for the applicable Program. Entries into the competition are subject to a tiered pricing system, with standard fees for regular deadline entries and additional fees for final deadline entries. Fees are non-refundable once entries are submitted. You can submit as many entries as you would like. All entries must be received through our awards website. As a reminder, anything in an entry will be considered potentially public information. There's no space for explicitly confidential information, and we ask entrants to anticipate that anything in their entry could become public—mostly because we don't want to wind up trying to honor a winner without being able to tell anyone why we want to honor them. Entries will not be acknowledged or returned. Entries will be accepted until May 28, 2025 at 5 p.m. ET.

Certification/Acknowledgment/Consent

EACH ENTRANT CERTIFIES THAT THE MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PROGRAM (INCLUDING ARTWORK, IMAGERY AND IDEAS) ARE THE ORIGINAL WORKS OF THE ENTRANT. ENTRANTS RETAIN THE COPYRIGHT AND OTHER INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY INTERESTS IN THEIR MATERIALS. HOWEVER, EACH ENTRANT ACKNOWLEDGES AND IRREVOCABLY CONSENTS THAT ANY AND ALL MATERIALS SUCH ENTRANT SUBMITS FOR THIS PROGRAM MAY BE REPRODUCED, DISPLAYED, PUBLISHED (INCLUDING IN PRINT AND DIGITAL FORMATS), ARCHIVED (IN PRINT AND DIGITAL DATABASES) AND OTHERWISE FREELY USED WITHOUT LIMITATION OR RESTRICTION BY AD AGE, CRAIN COMMUNICATIONS INC, AND ITS PARTNERS AND AFFILIATES IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROGRAM. EACH ENTRANT ACKNOWLEDGES AND IRREVOCABLY CONSENTS TO THE USE OF ENTRY INFORMATION IN PUBLICATIONS, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL WEBSITES, ADVERTISING AND IN MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE PROGRAM, UNLESS PROHIBITED BY LAW.

Winning

All category wins are at the discretion of our judges. Judges have the right to not select a winner if they feel materials submitted did not meet the standards, creativity or other qualities they are looking for in entries. The decisions of Ad Age and the judges are final and binding in all matters relating to this Program, including interpretation and application of the rules. This Program is based on the quality and other factors determined by the judges of the materials submitted and winning depends on the views of the judges. Winning is not based on the number of eligible responses received and Ad Age cannot predict the number of entrants who will participate in the Program.

General conditions

All entrants agree to release Ad Age, sponsors and its partners and affiliates from any and all claims and liability with respect to and in any way arising from participating in the Program, accepting of any award, prize(s), or technical, hardware, software or other failures of any kind, cost or unavailable network connections, incomplete, garbled or delayed transmissions, injury or damage to an entrant's or third person's computer, whether caused by Ad Age, sponsors, entrants, users or by any of the equipment or programming associated with or by any technical or human error which may occur in the processing of submissions which may damage an entrant's system or limit an entrant's ability to participate in the Program. Ad Age reserves the right to modify or cancel all or any part of the Program for any reason at its sole discretion with a refund of the applicable entry fee paid as the sole remedy for any entrant.

Subject to applicable laws, entrants irrevocably grant to Ad Age, Program sponsors and their successors, assigns and sub-licensees the right and permission to use their name, voice, likeness and/or biographical material for advertising, promotional and/or publicity purposes in connection with the Program, in all forms of media and by any and all means and media (now and hereafter known), and on and in connection with related products, services, advertising and promotional materials (now known or hereafter developed), worldwide, in perpetuity, without any obligation, notice or consideration except for the awarding of the prize(s) to the Grand Prize Winner. All entrants agree to comply fully with each provision in the Program rules. Any person attempting to defraud or in any way tamper with the Program and any person who does not comply with the Program rules, will be ineligible for any award or prize. Program void where prohibited or restricted by law.