How to Enter the CASSIES

To enter the CASSIES, you are required to submit a rigorous written case study with supporting advertising materials. In addition you may also submit a video summary of the case, no more than TWO MINUTES in length.

Step 1: Registering Online

Each entry is made up of three elements:

- Case Summary Form (admin details of the case, not a summary of the case itself),
- Case Template (in which you enter the content of your business case),
- Entry Release Form (signed by your client giving permission for the case to be entered).

Click on the Register Now button and complete the Case Summary Form, including your contact information and a password of your choice. The Account Info page is the first page that loads when you register or login to the site. It allows you to review all your activity, see your current entry fees, edit your registration details, and manage case details.

Once logged in, click the "Add New Case" button and complete the form that loads. You can save your entry as work in progress at any time, and you can add as many case entries as required. When each entry is complete, submit it by clicking "Submit". Entries cannot be submitted until you have uploaded your Case Creative and confirmed your entry details.

Features to take note of:

- You can save an incomplete entry at any time and return to complete it later.
- You may delete an In Progress entry at any time.
- You can view the details of a submitted entry or In Progress entry by selecting it from your personal list on your account info page.
- Once submitted, an entry cannot be deleted.
- Your entries fees will be automatically calculated.
- Entry fees must be paid online and are not refundable under any circumstances.
- Entry Release Form(s) signed by the client(s) must be submitted online.

If you have any questions please contact Customer Support at support@cassies.ca.

Step 2: Selecting the Entry Category(ies)

There is no limit to the number of categories you may enter each case into. See the PDF download “CASSIES Categories” for detailed descriptions of the categories to help you select the categories relevant to your case. Select your categories by checking the boxes alongside the ones you wish to enter.

For multiple category entries, you MUST SUBMIT ONLY ONE VERSION OF THE CASE. Different versions of the same case – one for each category entry – are not permitted. (In the Case Overview, you can explain WHY the case should win in the various categories entered.)

Any case may enter any category, apart from the Sustained Success and Long Term Success categories, which can only be entered by cases which have at least 24-months and 36-months continuous Business Results Periods respectively.

If you are entering a case which has previously won a CASSIES award, please see CASSIES Rules of Entry PDF download for entry restrictions.

Step 3: Entering the Case

Section I — Case Parameters

Business Results Period – BRP – in consecutive months

- Example entry: “January 2016 – December 2016”
    - The Business Results Period has to be consecutive months.
    - Start the BRP as close as possible to the start of Advertising/Communication effort. If your advertising starts mid-month, choose either that month, or the next one, as the first month in the BRP.

Start of Advertising/Communication Effort

- Example entry: “January 2016”
    - The advertising/communication effort does not have to run in every month of the BRP as the BRP should include all the months after the end of the communication that show positive business results.

Base Period as a benchmark

- Example entry: “January 2015 – December 2015”
    - The Base Period establishes what was happening before you launched your campaign. It will often be the preceding 12 months, but not necessarily. For Seasonal category entries, the most usual base period would be the equivalent year–ago period.

Geographic Area Covered

- Example entry: “Canada (excluding Quebec)”
    - State where your effort ran

Budget for this Effort

- Select the Advertising/Communication Budget, including Production, from the drop–down menu. For cases longer than a year, state the average annual budget.

- N.B. Selecting "Confidential" significantly weakens your case - make every effort to get client agreement to openness in this section.

Case Overview – Why should this case win in the category(ies) you have entered?

- In 200-400 words, set the scene for the judges as to what you believe to be the strongest and most award-worthy elements of the case you will be presenting. Give a compelling reason **why each of the categories you are entering** should be awarded.

Section II — The Client’s Business Issues/Opportunities

Describe the Client’s business, competition and relevant history

- Describe as concisely as possible the client’s business, the brand(s), the competitive context and any significant past trends. Do not use insider language or acronyms.

Describe the Client’s Business Issues/Opportunities to be addressed by the Campaign

- Describe WHAT exactly was the business problem or opportunity, but without going into detail as to why it existed. Be concise and keep it at a strategic level – imagine you are summarising the issue for the client CEO.

Resulting Business Objectives

- SMART Business Objectives
    - Specific – Increase what by how much.
    - Measurable – State how they will be measured.
    - Ambitious – Highlight the scale of the task.
    - Relevant – Business results, not advertising results.
    - Timeframe – When will success be measured.

- Reference data sources where possible - use the Footnote function in the template.

Section III — Your Strategic Thinking

What new Learnings/Insights did you uncover?

- What facts did you uncover? Describe what steps you took to discover information.
- What is your insight?
- Why is this relevant to the challenge?

What was your Big Idea?

- In 50 words or less, describe your Big Idea in the form you would have initially revealed it to the client.

How did your Communication Strategy evolve?

- Show how the Learnings/Insights informed the creative briefing.

How did you anticipate the Communication would achieve the Business Objectives?

- Describe a logical chain of cause and effect starting with who you were targeting, and what impressions/beliefs/attitudes you were seeking to change/instill, and how that would impact their subsequent behaviour as it related back to the client's Business Objectives.

Section IV — The Work

How, where and when did you execute it?

- Highlight the original aspects of the work – showcase the creativity.
- Attach no more than six pieces of creative that are reflective of the breadth of the campaign.
- Include visuals of creative within the narrative.

Media Plan Summary

- Include a simple flow chart media plan to orient the judges, showing what ran when and where.

Section V — The Results

How Did the Work Impact Attitudes and Behaviour?

- Include, where possible, externally sourced measures such as brand affinity, purchase consideration etc. It is also for internally sourced measures that illustrate changes to the drivers of business results (e.g. website visits, call centre volume etc.)

What Business Results did the work achieve for the client?

- Concentrate on the client's internal hard numbers of sales, shipments, share, or the equivalent for non–business cases (e.g. donations). If necessary, use indices to mask absolute results, giving judges a sense of scale of achievement.
- Ensure results cover the whole Business Results Period.
- Include information to put the results in context of category and competition trends.
- Use charts, tables, graphs – show trends before, during and after the campaign.

Other Pertinent Results

- Social media results.
- Other measures relevant to the Objectives.

What was the campaign's Return on Investment?

- Monetize your results, for example: a dollar return in profit for every dollar invested.

Section VI — Proof of Campaign Effectiveness

Illustrate the direct cause and effect between the campaign and the results:

- Include data/information which ties the campaign to the Business Results:
    - The timing of advertising effort compared to the Business Results and compared to previous campaigns.
    - Information from creative testing and tracking studies.
    - Comparison to areas that did not get the effort, e.g. elsewhere in Canada and/or the US.
    - Softer data such as qualitative research, public reaction, press reports and the like.

Prove the results were not driven by other factors:

- Provide SOLID, FACTUAL evidence that the following did not drive the Business Results:

- **Campaign spend vs history and competition:** Show that increased spending levels were not buying the business or moving sales between time periods.
- **Pre-existing Brand momentum:** Show that the sales results were not a continuation of prior trends.
- **Pricing:** Show that you did not have unusual price discounting or that your relative price versus competitors did not significantly improve.
- **Changes in Distribution/Availability:** Highlight any changes in the availability/accessibility of the product/service.
- **Unusual Promotional Activity:** Show that growth has not come from increases in the level of promotional activity.
- **Any Other Factors:** A catch–all for factors that may apply to your case. In tourism it might be the exchange rate. In finance, it might be a massive move in the stock markets. In automotive, it might be the turmoil caused by major product recalls, and so on.

- Failure to talk about factors that are easily discoverable (Judges know how to Google) and could reasonably be assumed might have impacted the Business Results will be detrimental to your case. The onus is on you to prove that they didn’t drive the results.

Step 4: Getting Buy-In & Approval

In signing the Release Form, clients are giving formal approval to the case, and permission to publish it IN FULL and AS SUBMITTED if it wins.

Step 5: Getting Materials Ready for Submission

Cases must be submitted electronically. Please follow instructions carefully.

The Case Document

1. Create the final case narrative, filling in the appropriate sections of the Case Template.
2. Upload Embedded Images of case creative, charts, tables, or exhibits. Images can be uploaded by clicking on the "Insert/edit image" icon found in the toolbar above sections of the Case Template.
3. Upload Attached Files of audio, video, interactive SWF files, PDF files, WORD files and the release form. Files can be uploaded by clicking on the "Upload Files" button found in the right hand column of the Case Summary page.

Case Creative

File specifications for upload:

- Print: .jpg

- Outdoor: .jpg
- Radio: .mp3 files (128 kb/s, 44.100 kHz, stereo)
- Scripts of selected radio commercials: PDF files, WORD files
- Examples of packaging: .jpg .gif, .png
- Interactive: .swf (flash sites/web banners), Website URLs (Note: these can be from active sites or for sites that are no longer live by the time judging takes place).
- Video Files
    - Accepted format: MP4/H.264 AAC
    - Resolution up to 720p HD (minimum 640x480)
    - Aspect Ratio: Native aspect ratio without letterboxing (examples: 4:3, 16:9)
    - Frames per second: up to 30, preferred: 29.97
    - Minimum resolution 640x480
    - Maximum file size per video: 700 MB
- Audio Files
    - Accepted format: MP3
    - 128 kb/s, 44.100 kHz, stereo

Please ensure that any video files uploaded are of the best possible quality, should you win an award these files will be used at the event to showcase your work on a giant screen.

If you have a question regarding the formatting requirements for online files, please contact support@cassies.ca

Step 6: Submission Checklist

1. You have activated the "View/Print Case" button in the Case Template.
2. The Entry Release Form has been signed by Agency and Client Management and a digital copy of the signed Entry Release Form has been uploaded.
3. Your entry fee has been paid online.
4. Click the "Submit" button at the bottom right of the form
    - After clicking "Submit Case", a confirmation page will be displayed with all the relevant Case Summary information for the submitting agency, the client, and the case. If all the information is correct click "Confirm Entry". Your dashboard page will be updated to reflect the submitted entry.