

## **How to Enter the CASSIES** **April 2016**

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**

Your first step is to register the case(s) to give you a start point. 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).

At this stage you are only concerned with the Case Summary Form which you access by clicking on the Register Now button. Complete the online form which includes 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 "Start Here" button and complete the form that loads. Remember, 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, click on "Print/View Case" to review. Entries are not official submitted until payment is complete. Entries are not complete until you've confirmed entry details and uploaded Case Creatives.

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 "In Progress".
- 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](mailto: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.

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 two years and three years 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**

In this section you are defining the scope and scale of the advertising upon which your case is based. The key is to ensure logic and accuracy in inputting.

#### **Length of Business Results Period**

- Select from the drop-down menu the length of time covered by your Business Results Period. The choices being:
  - 0-12 months
  - 1-2 Years
  - 2-3 Years
  - 3+ Years

#### **Business Results Period – BRP – in consecutive months**

- Example entry: “January 2015 – December 2015”
  - The Business Results Period has to be consecutive months. Do not cherry-pick the best months and leave out the weaker ones.
  - 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. The BRP should end at a sensible time, the end of a calendar or fiscal year or the latest month’s data prior to the entry date. If your end-date looks unusual, judges will wonder if you are trying to include (or exclude) an abnormal effect. But if you believe an unusual end date is justified, make sure to give an explanation.

### **Start of Advertising/Communication Effort**

- Example entry: “January 2015”
  - 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 2014 – December 2014”
  - The Base Period establishes what was happening before you launched your campaign. It will often be the preceding 12 months, but not necessarily. Base Periods must be representative of normal activity i.e. do not select one that is artificially short or weak. Also, for seasonal brands, the most usual base period would be the equivalent year–ago period, to eliminate the effect of seasonality.

### **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. The choices are:
  - \$0-\$50,000
  - \$50,000 - \$100,000
  - \$100,000 - \$200,000
  - \$200,000 - \$500,000
  - \$500,000 - \$1 million
  - \$1 million - \$2 million
  - \$2 million - \$3 million
  - \$3 million - \$4 million
  - \$4 million - \$ 5 million
  - Over \$5 million
  - Confidential
- It should be noted that selecting "Confidential" significantly weakens your case as the judges may well be unable to assess if the returns generated were worthwhile. 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 words or less, set the scene for the judges as to what you believe to be the strongest and most unique elements of the case you will be presenting. What makes this case particularly noteworthy?

## **Section II — The Client’s Business Issues/Opportunities**

In this section you are orientating the judges as to the situation that led to the development of the work, and the objectives that were set. A good rule of thumb is to ensure that, in this section, all the information and commentary pre-dates the commencement of the advertising.

### **a) Describe the Client’s business, competition and relevant history**

- Describe as concisely possible the client’s business, the brand(s), the competitive context and any significant past trends. Give the judges a feel for the market dynamics and the client’s place within it. Be careful with insider language and acronyms. Judges will not necessarily be familiar with your brand or market.

### **b) Describe the Client’s Business Issues/Opportunities to be addressed by the Campaign**

- Set up the situation that existed before you decided what to do. You should be highlighting WHAT exactly was the problem or opportunity, but without going into detail as to why it exists. Discuss product performance, sales, share, profit, spending, share of voice, pricing, awareness, brand image, social trends etc. as appropriate, only including information that directly influenced the need for advertising. Be concise and keep it at a strategic level – imagine you are summarising the issue for the client CEO.

### **c) Resulting Business Objectives**

- These will usually be expressed in hard numbers such as sales and market share (or the equivalent for non-business categories). Many cases are too vague in this section, much to their detriment. When expressing numbers, make sure that you define your units, the sources and the period in question that the campaign will be measured against e.g. a 12% increase in dollar net sales (internal company sales reports) for calendar 2015.
- Make sure to provide context for the scale and degree of difficulty of the objectives, historically and/or competitively.
- Some cases, through necessity, will also include "softer" objectives, for example related to brand equity or engagement. Note, however, that judges are always looking for evidence of a bottom line effect. Number of Facebook "Likes" is not an award-winning objective.

- If you need to reference data sources, use the Footnote function in the template.

### **Section III — Your Strategic Thinking**

In this section you are showcasing the quality and incisiveness of your thinking. All the information in this section must pre-date the development of the creative.

#### **a) What new Learnings/Insights did you uncover?**

- Judges will be looking for a series of coherent facts gleaned that led directly to a detailed understanding of the business problem/opportunity – answering WHY the problem/opportunity identified in the previous section has arisen and WHERE the solution may lie. Describe what steps you took to uncover information.

#### **b) How did your Communication Strategy evolve?**

- The Communication Strategy should flow directly and obviously from the Objectives and the Learnings/Insights, showing how the Learnings/Insights informed the creative and media targeting decisions that went into the creative briefing.

#### **c) 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.

#### **d) How did you anticipate the Communication would achieve the Business Objectives?**

- Here you should 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. For example, "The communication was to target Millennials in their leisure hours in order for them to see Brand X as part of their nights out with friends. By adding Brand X to their purchase repertoire we would see an increase in brand penetration".

### **Section IV — The Work**

In this section you are describing and showing a representative view of the work that ran so that the judges have a clear idea of the campaign. While it is important to be comprehensive and detailed in this section, beware of death by banner ad. The judges need to see and comprehend the rationale behind all the campaign elements, but they do not need to see every single execution of every medium.

### **a) How, where and when did you execute it?**

- Here you are describing in detail the media used and the creative executions.
  - You can communicate the creative by a combination of still images in the commentary and file attachments.
  - You do not need to include every single execution, but you need to give the judges a representative view of the breadth of the campaign.
  - It hurts your case if judges get confused about what ran when and where – make this clear in preparing creative to upload by using clear file names, with dates. For example: "HandyAndy TV, Flight 2, Sept – Nov 2015".

### **b) Media Plan Summary**

- This is a simple flow chart media plan to orient the judges, showing what ran when and where. Make sure that the timeline matches the Business Results Period given earlier.

## **Section V — The Results**

In this section you need to show the results generated by the advertising, explicitly tying them into the objectives defined in Section II.c), as well as key intermediate measures showing linkage between advertising and results along with the Return on Investment.

### **a) How Did the Work Impact Attitudes and Behaviour?**

- This section is for externally sourced, consumer data where tracking studies are available, showing changes to, for example, 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.) The aim is to show changes in intermediate measures to help prove linkage between advertising and the desired end behaviour (sales, donations etc.).

### **b) What Business Results did the work achieve for the client?**

- This section should concentrate on the client's internal hard numbers of sales, shipments, share, or the equivalent for non-business cases (e.g. donations). If necessary, you can use indices to mask absolute results, giving judges a sense of scale, e.g. "Shipments for the BRP indexed at 111 versus year ago, which was the highest 12-month shipment total in the brand's history".

### **c) Other Pertinent Results**

- Most CASSIES cases show business growth. However, there are other ways to show business success:
  - Helping a stable brand increase its profitability.
  - Helping a brand repel a significant competitive threat.

- Helping a brand/company improve its stock price.

**d) What was the campaign's Return on Investment?**

- To the degree that confidentiality permits you should do your best to monetize your results, for example by discussing incremental revenue in comparison to investment along with a dollar return in profit for every dollar invested.

**Section VI — Proof of Campaign Effectiveness**

In this section you must use evidence and argument, not opinion, to convince sceptical (but fair) judges that the advertising and the results are inextricably linked. As well as presenting evidence proving the link, you must also present evidence, where possible, proving other factors did not contribute to the results.

**a) Illustrate the direct cause and effect between the campaign and the results:**

- In this section you should consider including:
  - The timing of advertising effort compared to the sales results and versus previous years.
  - 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.
  - Comparisons between consumers who were and were not exposed to the advertising.
  - ACNielsen "non-promoted" sales data.
  - Market models and econometric techniques.
  - Softer data such as qualitative research, public reaction, press reports and the like.

**b) Prove the results were not driven by other factors:**

- **Campaign spend vs history and competition:** Show that 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 trends that existed prior to the commencement of the advertising, making sure to also account for seasonality factors.
- **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:** This needs care. A brand can grow by increasing distribution or geographic coverage – and advertising can play a role in making this possible. Indeed, it can be a specific objective of the advertising. However, it's also possible to add business simply by getting new distribution, or by opening new stores, or by pushing into other provinces. To the degree that questions like this might occur to the judges, make sure that you deal with them.

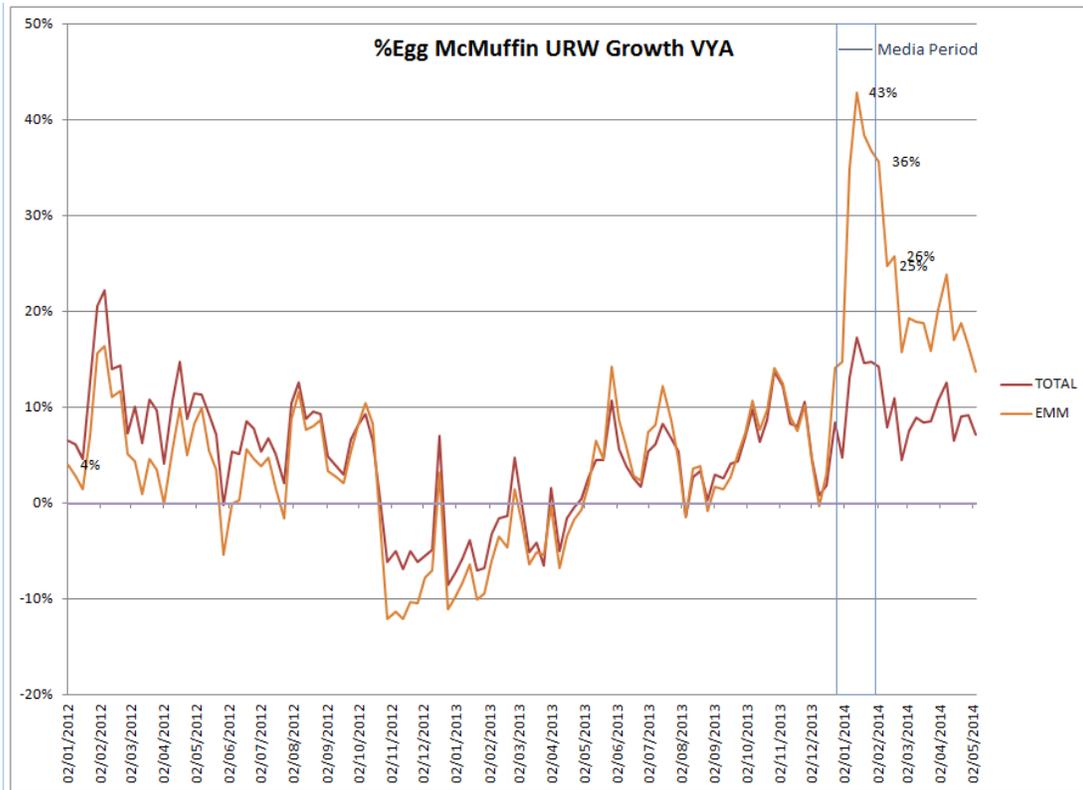
- **Unusual Promotional Activity:** Judges may wonder if growth has come from increases in the level of promotional activity.
- **Any Other Factors:** This is a catch-all for factors that may apply to your case. In tourism it might be the exchange rate. In finance, it might be a massive move in the stock markets. In automotive, it might be the turmoil caused by major product recalls, and so on. A number of CASSIES winners have involved product or service improvements. In such a case, a judge could wonder if the improvement alone (without advertising support) might have been enough to bring success, and if that question seems likely you should deal with it – usually by showing that unsupported improvements in your market have not worked.

#### **Step 4: Getting Buy-In & Approval**

A key tenet of the CASSIES is that winning cases are published, currently in summary form in strategy magazine and on the Brunico website, and in full form on the CASSIES and WARC websites. Winning case studies are also made available to higher education establishments. In signing the Release Form, clients are giving formal approval to the case, and permission to publish if it wins.

Clients have been known to refuse to sign the release form, sometimes after a lot of work has been done. The following may be useful in getting client approval.

1. Identify the person with the power to approve, and approach him or her early on. This is often someone very senior, in which case a top agency person should make the contact—and should maintain contact through the process.
2. Assure the client that they will have full veto over any sensitive content before entry, and that you will submit the case in time for them to review it, and make changes. Make sure you know the client's availability as the deadline approaches.
3. Establish beforehand what the client's sensitivities are, and propose ground rules for excluding or disguising sensitive data. Many winning cases, such as for McDonald's Egg Muffin (example below), index sales growth versus year ago to mask actual hard sales numbers:



4. Cases give away little or nothing that competitors do not already know and much of the information is already in the past – CASSIES’ case entries can have run the advertising up to two years prior to the entry date and winning cases do not get published for a further six months after.
5. There are over 400 cases on the CASSIES website. Many are from highly competitive blue-chip companies. There is no evidence of any competitive disadvantage from publication.
6. On the positive side, a CASSIES win can be valuable ammunition in the client's organization, helping sell skeptical colleagues in other departments on the value of advertising.
7. Most clients are looking for ways to attract talent. A CASSIES win can help sell the company to potential new hires, and on university campuses.
8. A winning case will improve the client's profile in the agency.
9. Writing a CASSIES case is an excellent learning tool – preparing a case always turns up "Lessons Learned" that would otherwise have been overlooked.

As an extra measure, the ICA, A2C and AAPQ will gladly add their voices to your argument.

## **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, 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
- 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](mailto:support@cassies.ca)

## **Step 6: Submission Checklist**

1. You have activated the "View/Print Case" button in the Case Template.
2. The case is clear, complete, and convincing.
3. The Business Results Period, Start of Advertising, and Base Period are filled out.
4. The Charts, Tables and Exhibits are in the proper place in the Case Template. All creative that is embedded must ALSO be uploaded separately.
5. Electronic versions of Case Creative are ready to send.
6. The Entry Release Form has been signed by Agency and Client Management.
7. A digital copy of the signed Entry Release Form must be uploaded as part of the online entry (the release form can be printed from an in-progress entry. This must be signed, scanned and uploaded to the entry.
8. Your entry fee has been paid online.

Once the Case Summary Form and Case Template for a case have been completed you submit the case as follows:

1. Select the specific case on your account info page
2. Review the information
3. 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.