GROUP DESCRIPTIONS/EVALUATION GUIDANCE:

Events and Experiences: *Any type of event that supports the entrant's business goals, and can include internal and/or external audiences.*
Categories:
- Webinar/Webcast
- Event Attendee Materials *agendas, invitations, etc.*
- In-Person Exhibit Booth/Display *can be booth/display as well as attendee experience at booth/display*
- Virtual Educational Event *summits, seminars, workshops, etc.*
- Virtual Engagement/Brand Experience Event *trade shows, live product launches, awards ceremonies, employee engagement events, etc.*
- In-Person Educational Conference/Seminar *single- or multi-day; primary objective is knowledge transfer and thought leadership*
- In-Person Relationship Building Event *non-sales-focused gatherings to build brand loyalty and community, partner networking, hospitality, etc.*
- In-Person Sales Incentive/Recognition Event *trips, galas, awards for top performers*
- Other Event/Experience (In-Person or Virtual) *for events that don't fit neatly into the other categories but demonstrate exceptional strategic and creative execution*
  - Small/medium companies-total company employee size <1000
  - Large companies-total company employee size 1000+

Strategy:
- Are the goals clearly stated in the objective?
- How well does the event align with broader marketing or business objectives?
- Is it clear who the audience is?
- Are there mechanisms to track metrics?

Execution:
- How well was the event planned, coordinated and executed?
- Were logistics, timing and production quality handled effectively?
- How original or innovative was the event concept or theme?
- How well was the brand integrated into the design and atmosphere?
- Did the experience encourage meaningful participation or interaction?

Results:
- Did the event achieve its intended objectives or impact?
- What measurable outcomes were demonstrated?
- What feedback was received from attendees or stakeholders?
- Did the event deliver continued engagement beyond the experience?

Brochures: *Content intended for either internal or external audiences.*

Categories:
- Brochure Campaign/Series *three or more brochures*
- Promotional Brochure: Company or Capabilities Overview
- Promotional Brochure: Product or Service

Strategy:
- Is the purpose clearly defined?
- Is it clear who the audience is?
- Does the piece effectively address the needs and motivations of its target audience?
- Are there mechanisms to track metrics?

Execution:
- Is the messaging original and visually engaging?
- Is the headline compelling?
- Is the messaging clear for the intended audience?
- Is there a clear and relevant call to action or next step for the reader?
- How well does the piece align with broader brand or campaign objectives?
- Is the piece well-produced, timely, and professionally delivered?
- How original or distinctive is the creative approach?
- Is the brand clearly identified?

Results:
- Did the piece achieve its stated goals and contribute measurable results?
- How was success evaluated (e.g., distribution reach, engagement, leads, feedback)?
- What impact did the piece have on audience perception or behavior?
- Does the submission demonstrate continuous improvement or insight gained from performance?

Social Media: *Any social platform, with published content in any format.*

Categories:
- Social Media Campaign *series of posts for a single objective*
- Social Media: Single Post/Piece of Content
- Overall Social Channel Presence (Single Channel)

Strategy:
- Were the submission's goals clearly defined and measurable (e.g., awareness, engagement, conversion)?
- How well did the social strategy align with broader marketing or business objectives?
- Was the target audience clearly understood and effectively reached?
- Did the platform choices and posting strategy support the campaign's purpose?

Execution:
- How original or innovative was the concept, theme or execution?
- Did the content stand out?
- Is the messaging clear for the intended audience?
- Is the brand clearly identified?
- Were community management and audience interactions handled effectively?
- Did posting encourage authentic engagement, sharing or participation?
- Were formats used strategically (e.g., video, carousel, stories, etc.)?

Results:
- Did submission meet or exceed its stated KPIs or objectives?
- What measurable results (engagement rate, reach, conversions, follower growth, etc.) were achieved?
- What qualitative outcomes (brand sentiment, audience feedback, storytelling impact) were demonstrated?
- Did the submission provide evidence of learning, optimization or long-term brand value?

Websites, Portal, Apps

Categories:
- Customer or Agent Portal
- External Website
- Internal Website *Intranet*

Strategy:
- Are the goals of the website, portal, or app clearly defined and measurable?
- How well does the strategy align with overall marketing or business objectives?
- Is the target audience clearly identified, and are their needs reflected in the approach?
- How effectively does the experience support the brand's positioning and purpose?

Execution:
- Is the design visually engaging, accessible and consistent with brand standards?
- How intuitive and user-friendly is the navigation and overall experience?
- Does the site, portal or app demonstrate innovation or creativity in solving user challenges?
- Is the content organized logically and presented in an engaging, responsive format?

Results:
- Did the submission achieve its stated objectives or KPIs?
- What measurable outcomes or analytics demonstrate effectiveness?

- How did the submission contribute to business growth, efficiency, or brand reputation?
- Has the platform delivered lasting value or informed future marketing strategies?

Advertisements and marketing promotions: *Marketing communications focused on sales or marketing/promoting products and services to target audiences.*
Categories:

- Advertising/Promotional Campaign *three or more advertisements*
- Magazine or Newspaper Advertisement
- Promotional Email Campaign
- Promotional Email - Single Piece
- Direct Mail Advertisement
- Other Digital/Multimedia Advertisement *TV, Radio, Podcast*
- Other Print Advertisement
- Advertising created in-house (small/medium companies-total employee size <1000)

Advertising created in-house (large companies-total employee size 1000+)
Strategy:
- Are the goals clearly stated in the objective?
- Are there key take-aways?
- Is it clear who the audience is?
- What is expected of the audience?
- Are there mechanisms to track metrics?

Execution:
- Is the messaging original and visually engaging?
- Is the headline compelling?
- How well does the visual and the headline work together?
- Is the messaging clear for the intended audience?
- Is the brand clearly identified?
- Is there a clear and motivating CTA?

Results:
- Does it achieve its intended objectives or impact?
- How compelling is the presented data?

Video: *Content intended for internal or external audiences; no limit to video length.*
Categories:
- Video Campaign *three or more videos*
- Community Relations/ Philanthropic Video
- Promotional Video
- Brand Positioning Video

- Instructional/Training Video
- Other Video *internal & external*
- Video on a Shoestring
  - Small/medium companies-total company employee size <1000
  - Large companies-total company employee size 1000+

Strategy:
- Are the goals clearly stated in the objective?
- Are there key take-aways?
- Is it clear who the audience is?
- Are there mechanisms to track metrics?

Execution:
- Is the narrative clear, engaging, and well-paced?
- Does the video use original concepts, compelling visuals, and creative editing?
- Does it capture attention, evoke emotion, or prompt action from the intended audience?
- Is the brand clearly identified?
- Is there a clear and motivating CTA?

Results:
- Does it achieve its intended goals or impact?
- How compelling is the presented data?

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging (DEIB) Communications: *Supports the organization's goals, initiatives, or special events related to DEIB in any medium/format.*
Categories:
- External Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging (DEIB) Marketing or Communications *single piece or campaign*
- Internal Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging (DEIB) Marketing or Communications *single piece or campaign*

Strategy:
- Are the goals clearly stated in the objective?
- Are there key take-aways?
- Is it clear who the audience is?
- Are there mechanisms to track metrics?

Execution:
- Does the content reflect diverse identities, perspectives, and experiences?
- Is the communication inclusive in format, language, and design for all audiences?
- Is the messaging respectful and free from stereotypes or bias?
- Does it genuinely promote equity and belonging, and inspire meaningful engagement or change?

- Is the brand clearly identified?

Results:
- Does it achieve its intended goals or impact?
- How compelling is the presented data?

Miscellaneous Tactics: *Any medium/format.*

Categories:
- Best Redesign/Refresh-Single Item
- Best Redesign/Refresh Campaign
- Contest/Gamification
- Promotional Item/Branded Merchandise
- Most Out-of-the-Box Idea
- Sales Generating Campaign of the Year
- My project doesn't fit under any of these categories

Strategy:
- Are the goals clearly stated in the objective?
- Are there key take-aways?
- Is it clear who the audience is?
- Are there mechanisms to track metrics?

Execution:
- Does the tactic align with overall brand goals and campaign strategy?
- Is the approach fresh, unexpected, or creatively executed?
- Is the tactic well-produced, timely, and professionally delivered?
- Does it generate engagement, buzz, or measurable results?
- Is the brand clearly identified?

Results:
- Does it achieve its intended objectives or impact?
- How compelling is the presented data?

Internal Employee Communications: *Not directly sales-oriented; targeted at employees supporting the organization's goals, initiatives, or special events in any medium/format.*

Categories:
- Employee Communications Campaign (Three or more components)
- Employee Communications (Single Piece)

Strategy:
- Is the purpose of the communication clearly defined and aligned to organisational goals?
- Were objectives specific (e.g., engagement, behaviour change, awareness)?

- Was the approach based on insight or feedback from staff?
- Is there evidence of strategic alignment with wider internal or cultural initiatives?

Execution:
- Is the tone authentic, motivating, and consistent with company values?
- Were internal channels used effectively and creatively (e.g., email, video, town halls, intranet)?
- Is the creative or format engaging and accessible?
- Was the delivery well-planned and professional?

Results:
- Is there clear evidence of engagement or behaviour change among employees?
- Did the activity meet or exceed its stated objectives?
- Are metrics, results or qualitative feedback provided?
- What measurable business or cultural outcomes resulted?
- Has learning been captured or improvements made for future initiatives?

Corporate communications / Public relations: *Not directly sales-oriented; targeted at analysts, shareholders, or the public, in any medium/format unless specified.*
Categories:
- Corporate Communications/Public Relations Campaign (three or more components)
- Corporate Communications/Public Relations-Single Piece *news release, editorial/article*
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Campaign (three or more components)
- Employee Recruiting Campaign
- Annual Report
- Corporate Communications Created In-House
  - Small/medium companies-total company employee size <1000
  - Large companies-total company employee size 1000+

Strategy:
- Are the goals clear and connected to business or reputational priorities?
- Does the entry show understanding of key stakeholders or external audiences?
- Is the narrative grounded in strategic insight or issue analysis?
- How well is it aligned to the broader brand or corporate positioning?

Execution:
- Are the key messages clear and credible?
- Was there integration across owned and earned channels?
- How well was the media strategy or stakeholder engagement handled?
- Was the communication responsive to events or feedback during rollout?

Results
- How was success tracked or evaluated?
- What evidence is provided of measurable outcomes

- Were objectives achieved within time and resource constraints?
- Did the campaign contribute to brand value?

Long-form written publications: *Content intended for internal or external audiences.*
Categories:
- Blog/Article Campaign – Series or Collection
- Blog/Article – Single Piece
- Magazines *printed or digital*
- Long-Form Instructional Guide
- Newsletter *print & digital*
- Other Long-Form Written Publication *eBook, research report, white paper*

Strategy:
- Is the purpose of the publication clear and audience well-defined?
- Does it demonstrate understanding of reader interests or industry issues?
- How well does it align with organisational thought leadership or brand goals?
- Was there a content strategy or editorial plan underpinning it?
- Are success measures or distribution goals identified?

Execution:
- Is the content high-quality, well-structured, and insightful?
- Does the writing show clarity, originality, and authority?
- How effective are design and layout in supporting readability?
- Are visuals, infographics, or data displays used effectively?

Results:
- Is there evidence of reach, readership, or engagement?
- Did it strengthen reputation or generate leads, enquiries, or citations?
- Was there measurable influence (e.g., media pick-up, industry recognition)?
- Did the piece have lasting value or impact beyond launch?

Podcasts: *Content intended for internal or external audiences; no length limit.*
Categories:
- Podcast Campaign (three or more podcast episodes)
- Podcast – Single Episode

Strategy:
- Is the show's purpose and audience clearly defined?
- Is it positioned distinctively within its niche or category?
- Does it serve a clear business, brand, or community goal?
- Was there a content or guest strategy designed around audience needs?
- Were success measures or engagement goals established upfront?

Execution:
- How engaging and relevant is the content and discussion?
- Are the episodes well-structured, paced, and hosted?
- Is the production quality (sound, editing, consistency) professional?

- Does it reflect the brand's tone and personality effectively?

Results:
- Are listener metrics (downloads, retention, reviews) provided?
- Has the podcast grown its audience or community over time?
- Did it generate engagement, PR coverage, or follow-on opportunities?
- Is there evidence of influence or thought-leadership impact?
- How well did results meet the stated objectives?

Campaigns per amount spent: *The campaign must include three or more components. Consider all costs, external and internal, including print and media buy. Must include the cost breakdown in the entry.*

Categories:
- Total Campaign less than $5K*
- Total Campaign between $6K and $15K*
- Total Campaign between $16K and $30K*
- Total Campaign between $31K and $50K*
- Total Campaign between $51K and $100K*
- Total Campaign more than $100K*

Strategy:
- Are the campaign objectives and target audience clearly defined?
- Is there a rationale for the budget level and media choices?
- Does it address a specific market opportunity or challenge?
- Was success defined in meaningful, measurable terms?

Execution:
- How strong and distinctive is the creative concept?
- Was the idea executed effectively across chosen channels?
- Is the campaign well-crafted and consistent with brand identity?
- Were resources used efficiently and creatively to maximize impact?
- Was the delivery professional and coherent across touchpoints?

Results:
- How effectively did the campaign achieve its goals relative to spend?
- Is there evidence of strong ROI or value created from limited resources?
- Are metrics (awareness, engagement, conversions, etc.) clearly presented?
- Did it deliver disproportionate impact or creativity for its scale?
- What insights or learnings were gained for future campaigns?