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## Advertising from the perspective of festivals: the present and future of commercial communication in the categories of awards (2013-2014)

**Abstract**

Since the very beginning of research on the structure of the advertising system, advertising awards and acknowledgements have been referred to as one of its essential elements. In the specialised sector, a particular interest in advertising festivals has been acknowledged which tends to mirror the continuous evolution of the commercial communication system. With a clear interaction, festivals are forums in which professionals find suitable inspiration which has an impact on what is suggested by each festival each year for future ones. Hence, they become benchmarks for the present and future. Specifically, in order to show the latter aspect, this paper focuses on the organization of festivals and shows the major present and future advertising trends. In advertising, five major macro trends are addressed (Digitisation, New Alternatives, Innovation, Integration and Results) and following the results of our research, they are all covered in the festival awards. Specifically, according to the way the categories of advertising awards are presented, we have concluded that the digitisation of communications has come to an end; the "new ways" of communication in advertising are very present in all contests as the result of the current marketing communication campaigns in which new ways of communication are gradually gaining a more relevant role; innovation is essentially an advertising value; the context of integrated marketing communications is inherent to current advertising; and the effectiveness and results in festivals are significant.

**Keywords**

Commercial communication system, advertising structure, advertising awards, advertising trends

**1. Introduction**

The concepts of structure and system have traditionally been used for the study of the general process of advertising and its elements (Victoria, 2005: 28-29). According to this tradition, the structure refers

to how the elements are placed, their order and hierarchy, both in a natural organism and in a logical organisation. In this regard Castellblanque (2001: 27-28) stated that it is the term which best sums up the scientific attitude toward advertising, since it gathers absoluteness, self-transformation and self-regulation, i.e. the subordination of all the elements to the whole and its self-sufficiency through laws and internal rules.

Over the years, the term *system* has really become crucial because it has emphasised the life developed by the parts and how each element affects the unity of the body. Thus, both functions (professional profiles) and processes become relevant. According to Von Bertalanffy, to reach this goal, the aspect of this purpose which gives balance to some identifiable elements, related and linked to each other, is needed so that any change or modification of one element leads to a change in the result of the general structure (Gavel, 1994: 63).

Consequently, the best image of the system concept is the living human body, which is complex to understand and manage, because everything is influenced by everything else and it is a greater reality than the sum of the elements. In the field of sociology, Luhmann (2012) defined the system as the structural organization of society, formalised and technically configured, consisting of subsystems, such as politics, economics or culture.

In this macro context, the advertising system, festivals and contests acknowledging commercial communication often have a twofold justification: their role in the structure of the advertising system and their elasticity in showing the developments in the sector. Theoretically, festivals are events which have found their role and justification in the structure of the advertising system. Professionally, they have gained renown for having a specific tendency to develop and evolve in line with advertising and marketing. We explicitly found the reason why festivals currently exist in advertising and marketing manuals (Arens, 2004; Fill, Hughes, & De Francesco, 2012; Sasser, 2014). From the classical theoretical point of view, if we apply the concept of system to the general structure of advertising (Pérez-Ruiz, 1996), we will have an approach whereby the structure becomes a "living body", i.e. we will consider parties as existing separately but having a permanent relationship with each other. Hence, the fact that one of these parts exists or not is to be considered in the whole of the component elements. This is the literal application (Bertalanffy, 1989) of biology, philosophy and the General Systems Theory to an increasingly important sector of today's society. In the case of advertising, we must not forget that it is one of the most open and changing structures in our dynamic global Information and Communication Society (Gallissot, 1994).

What Perez Ruiz defined as "Central Structure of Advertising" (Pérez-Ruiz, 1996) and Castellblanque called "Nuclear Structure" (Castellblanque, 2001), consists, in Castellblanque's words, of advertisers, advertising agencies, media, consumers and the combination of research and universities. Among the "first elements" which shape the "professional structure" there are festivals and events, well-acknowledged in this field.

Nevertheless, according to the authors, this must be seen as part of an imposed or self-imposed "superstructure" in which it is likely to find rules, laws, and governing and self-governing bodies regulating the advertising activity. This self-imposed superstructure usually finds justification in core company's benefit from the structure of the advertising system, i.e. the advertising agency, which has an essential role in mediating. Benefits are both internal and external. In the first case, the awards specifically strengthen the links between the best employees and agencies (Helgesen, 1994). In the second, for agencies there is no better way for being promoted than differentiating themselves from their competitors, attracting new clients (Schweitzer & Hester, 1992; Waller & Polonsky, 1995; Tippins & Kunkel, 2006; Kübler, 2012) and having an impact on advisers (Wentz, 1992).

After having studied the key elements of the structure of the advertising system, it was necessary to study "festivals" themselves. There is much existing research on advertisers,

agencies, media, consumers, laws, self-regulation and the rest of the infrastructure and superstructure.

In our case, studies on the internal structure of the awards are remarkably limited. This structure inevitably defines them in their role of interaction with the rest of the advertising system. Despite the absence of research focusing specifically on this point, we have often considered the use of festivals and their events as categories for research on case studies (Correa, Rodríguez, & Ayhan, 2012; Sáez & Cubells, 2013; Malefyt, 2013) and on the exploration of the creativity awarded at festivals (Pérez-Ruiz, 2008; Kübler, 2012; Kilgour, Sasser, & Koslow, 2013; Runge, Botzenhardt, & Ferdinand, 2013).

Consequently, the main object of study of our paper was the organisation of the festivals and their role as an active mirror of the advertising activity. As acknowledged by experts in this field, our initial hypothesis was that there is special elasticity in the "awards" element, due to their specific interaction with the structure of the advertising system. Awards are forums in which professionals find suitable inspiration which has an impact on what is suggested by each festival each year and in view of future ones. Hence, they are as benchmarks for the present and future and should specifically take into account what have been defined as the five major macro trends: Digitisation, New Alternatives, Innovation, Integration and Results (Thorson & Moore, 2013; Powell et al., 2013; Flemming & Christensen, 2013; Moriaty et al., 2015). These five trends exist today in the field of commercial communication and mirror the current structure of the advertising system.

From the late 90s, digitisation has been considered as one of the megatrends in advertising. More than simply a trend, digitisation is currently considered as the context in which all other trends occur and which enhances globalisation while being driven by it (Scolari, 2009).

The advertising industry is currently in full development due to digitisation. This is causing changes in the production and distribution processes of advertising, as well as in all media consumption habits. The speed of these changes is increasing and the advertising industry will gradually introduce them in its structure. (Müller, Alt & Michelis, 2011; Takemura, 2012; De Mooij, 2013; Scott, 2013).

With regard to New Communication Alternatives, they appeared during the "advertising crisis" in the 90s. New forms of commercial communication were needed in all the structures of the advertising system and in response to the problems of audience and media segmentation as well as of plausibility and credibility.

An organisation's communication strategies need to be adapted to the new media and the communications context. The advertising industry is adjusting with the purpose of responding to organisations and agencies which are searching for alternative formats and communicating tools to those which had traditionally been used. (Castell, 1983; Rust & Oliver, 1998; Lucas & Dorrian, 2006; Sheehan, 2013; Shimp & Andrews, 2013; Costa-Sánchez, 2014).

With regard to Innovation, one of the main resources in the field of creativity in advertising has always been content, media and format innovation. When the message or the medium used refers to innovation, the impact and even sales are guaranteed (Acs & Audretsch, 1987; Turow, 2012).

The advertising industry is in full adaptation and in this innovation process is a key element for progress. The importance of mass media buying is losing prominence in this sector and we need to innovate in the use of media. New possibilities also appear in the relation of brands with consumers and the advertising system actors are exploring new fields.

Innovation has always been a key trend in the advertising system. However, it is now even more significant as the advertising industry needs to find new ways of relating to

consumers. In fact, agencies and advertisers who take risks with innovation are gaining a leadership position.

Similarly, we have taken into account the general trend towards integration as one of the basic factors of effectiveness. When combined, media create special synergies and enhance internal integration. The importance of coordinating the different promotional tools with the aim of maximizing the marketing communication effects promotes the emergence of the idea of integration. In this context, the theory of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) was developed in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) concept was created at Northwestern University, in response to a need for advertising communication. It is true that in the professional field of advertising, the idea of integration has been developed for the last decade. However, it is hardly applied in professional practice due to the departmental structure of advertising agencies.

Nowadays this megatrend is a reality which makes marketing communications plans in a coherent and synergic way, effectively manages all promotional activities and considers all media to send brand messages (Porcu, 2012; Shimp & Andrews, 2013; O'guinn, Allen, Semenik, & Scheinbaum, 2014, Costa-Sánchez, 2014).

The latest trend related to effectiveness and represented in the field by ROI (Return on Investment) is particularly claimed in the current structure of the advertising system. Today, measuring efficiency is a reality shared by advertisers and agencies. Currently any investment in advertising or marketing communications needs ROI. This is a trend which is imposing a major challenge for the advertising industry. Furthermore, the introduction of digital tools to the brand communication strategies is an opportunity to progress in this field. In this context, the effectiveness of creativity is measured and measurement almost stops being exclusive to media.

It should now be examined in the professional practice as it is in the most economic area of marketing. Some authors, such as Athey (2011), Taylor (2012) and Porcu (2012) among others, have already dealt with this subject.

## **2. Hypothesis**

With the main trends currently seen in the advertising system established and a bibliographic review of important sources, five blocks are identified which allow us to structure the central hypothesis of our research.

H1: Advertising Festivals are a good reflection of the main trends of the marketing communications sector.

H1.A: New Alternatives in marketing communication have an important presence among the categories which are present at advertising festivals.

One of the issues of greatest interest to the participants involved in the Advertising System is the great diversity of options which exist for transmitting and shaping commercial messages. This category of New Alternatives encompasses strategic marketing communication actions and approaches which brands are starting to use repetitively and which are starting to be identifiable. Increasingly large budgets are invested in this field, and their representation at festivals may be an indicator.

H1.B: Digitisation has a main and paradigmatic role in the awards of advertising contests.

In the advertising sector, digital reality is not especially meaningful, as it has caused a change on all levels. It has not only transformed the use that advertisers make of the media,

but has also changed formats and content, influencing the Advertising System itself. Advertising contests must reflect this reality.

H1.C: Integration of marketing communications is evaluated as an approach which deserves to be awarded in advertising contests.

Digital and integrated are very closely related trends. However, integration does not always refer to the digital (nor does digital always incorporate it). In our research, Integration has been considered from a broader perspective which considers the integration of all marketing communication tools in a single strategy.

H1.D: Innovation is considered a value which is particularly represented in the categories of advertising festivals.

The concept of Innovation has been considered in its broadest sense of application in the field of advertising. From this perspective, Innovation intends to identify new ideas which may arise through different applications in advertising: formats, tools, forms and content of messages, and even through new integration approaches or new advertising languages. We could say that the awards related with this variable intend to identify the trends through which they advance in the advertising system. We understand that Innovation awards identify guidelines which have not yet been seen, and which could be a future reality; while New Alternatives are already a reality which are being established. In the advertising sector, innovation is considered as a value in itself and the advertising sector works to recognise the participants who bring this value to the System.

H1.E: Effectiveness is a determining factor in the categories which are currently awarded in advertising festivals.

It can be stated that the search for Effectiveness is one of the greatest ambitions of the current Advertising System. The heads of brand communication must increasingly work with information (databases) to demonstrate the effectiveness of their campaigns. This determines, for the justification of the results, a notable development towards quantitative over qualitative, as it is necessary to determine the ROI (*return on investment*) based on the objective indicators which allow the result of a communication action to be evaluated.

### **3. Material and methods**

#### **3.1. Preliminary considerations**

The study presented below began with the following research question: how are competitions awarding advertising in Latin America in 2014 presented?

For this, an Analysis of Content has been carried out, being a research tool which allows the analysis of the awarded categories which serve to “identify trends” and “provide an objective, systematic and quantitative method” (Yale & Gilly, 1988 in Roca & Mensa, 2009)

#### **3.2. Aims of the research**

The purpose of this article is to recognise the categories which are awarded at advertising festivals and show their use to study the key trends of the advertising system. The general intention of the research intends to encompass ten objectives.

First: To discover how awards for one or another campaign are presented.

Second: To discover the frequency of festivals in which New communication alternatives are very relevant, with respect to those in which it has a medium relevance, and compared with festivals in which it has a low relevance.

Third: To determine the frequency of festivals in which there is a special digital category, in relation to those which include digital categories in other sections and those which in addition to having a digital section also include digital categories in other sections.

Fourth: To establish the frequencies and percentages of the festivals in which Integration is present as a category in relation to the contests which do not include it.

Fifth: To discover the frequency of contests in which Innovation is awarded compared to those which do not award it.

Sixth: To determine the frequencies of festivals which include categories related to Effectiveness compared with those which do not.

Seventh: To identify the existing correlations between described megatrends:

- To determine whether the festivals in which Digitisation is present tend to have Integration included as an awarded category.
- To determine whether the festivals in which there is a high or medium relevance of New communication alternatives tend to include an Innovation category.

Eighth: To determine whether festivals created after 2006 tend to represent the five megatrends among their categories to a greater extent than contests created prior to 2006.

Ninth: To determine whether local festivals have a lesser tendency to include the megatrends among their categories than regional festivals.

Tenth: To determine which are the most represented megatrends in the advertising festivals of Latin America, and if for the festivals considered as “main” festivals the presence of one of them is greater than in all contests.

### **3.3. Sample**

Through the analysis of content, the main advertising festivals in which Latin American advertising is present are analysed. The sample is based on the UNIR Ibero-American Advertising Ranking, and includes all festivals of Latin America and the main international contests in which there is representation from Latin American advertising.

The Ibero-American UNIR Advertising ranking is a meta-product which assessed the quality of advertisements and agencies in Ibero-America through the awards advertisements received at national and international advertising festivals. It is an ideal product for academic research on advertising in Ibero-America and for university teaching (Repiso & Berlanga, 2015; Repiso, Llorente, & García, 2013).

In the sample composition we took into account festivals and went through them in order to establish a ranking, which included the main contests rewarded by Ibero-American advertising. The study sample was composed of sixty-one advertising festivals: forty were national (in Ibero-American countries) and twenty were international but Ibero-American advertising is represented. A subgroup was also examined including the most significant festivals (those which had been weighted in the UNIR Ranking with a score of 2 and 2.5).

### **3.4. Encoding**

The Analysis of Content units were the website sections of the contests in which all categories awarded in the contest appeared numbered. A specific code was created to analyse each one of the analysis content units. The encoding was carried out with the help of the SPSS statistics programme and with the collaboration of a statistics expert. In total, seven nominal variables were presented, grouped into two sections.

The first section, Section A, is made up of two variables: the creation of the festival (before 2006 and after 2006) and the scope of the festival (local and regional).

The second section, Section B, groups five variables: digitisation (special digital category, digitisation in other categories, special digital section + digitisation in other categories), new communication alternatives (low relevance, medium relevance, high relevance or new alternatives), integration (if there is an integration category and there is no category related to integration), innovation (if there are categories referring to innovation and if there are not innovation awards) and effectiveness (if there are awards related to effectiveness and if there are not categories which award effectiveness).

### 3.5. Statistical study

#### 3.5.1. Frequency study

We carried out a descriptive statistical study of frequencies to analyse how the different variables develop in the total sample and the segmented sample (main festivals). Likewise, it has also been made a statistical study of frequencies to check the relationships between some variables. For the development of this analysis the SPSS program was used.

#### 3.5.2. Statistical testing of dependency

To identify dependency relationships between qualitative variables, contingency tables were created and subsequently used for contrast based on the statistical  $\chi^2$  (Chi-square).

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(o_i - e_i)^2}{e_i}$$

This test has allowed us to assert a statistical confidence level of 95% if the levels of a qualitative variable influencing the levels of the other nominal variable analysed. For the development of this analysis the SPSS program was used.

### 3.6. Reliability of the encoding of results

The encoding of the sixty-one website sections of the awards was carried out by a single assessor. After encoding, following the procedure proposed by Dupagne, Potter and Cooper (1993), in order to estimate the reliability of the study, the help of another encoder was used (an advertising degree student). This process was used to guarantee the reliability of the encoding, above all when evaluating the New Communication Alternatives. The reliability factor between encoders (intercoder reliability) was 97%.

**Table 1.** Major Festivals Analysis of Content

FESTIVAL NAME	CREATION DATE	RELEVANCE	DIGITISATION		CATEGORIES INCLUDED		
			SPECIAL SECTION	OTHER CATEGORIES	INTEGRATION	INNOVATION	EFFECTIVENESS
WAVE FESTIVAL	2007	HIGH	NO	YES	"Blue-Wave"	NO	NO
ADCE AWARDS	1990	HIGH	INTERACTIVE SPECIAL SECTION	YES	"Integration & Innovation"	"Integration & Innovation"	NO
GOLDEN DRUM	1997	LOW	DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS INCLUDING MOBILE CAMPAIGNS	YES	"Integrated communication campaigns"	"Innovative campaigns"	Best use of integrated media

EUROBEST	1984	MEDIUM	INTERACTIVE SPECIAL SECTION	YES	"Integration"	"Innovation"	NO
EUROPEAN EXCELLENCE AWARDS	2007	MEDIUM	NO	YES	NO	"Change communicatio"	"Evaluation"
É.P.I.C.A. – Europe's Premier Creative Awards	1987	HIGH	DIGITAL SPECIAL SECTION	YES	"Integrated campaigns"	"Media innovation"	NO
FIP – FESTIVAL IBEROAMERICANO DE PROMOCIONES & EVENTOS	1998	MEDIUM	2 SPECIAL SECTIONS: "Interactive digital marketing" and "Online supports"	NO	NO	"Innovation"	NO
CARACOL DE PLATA	1999	LOW	SPECIAL SECTION: "Digital media"	NO	NO	NO	NO
Festival de Antigua de la Publicidad	2004	HIGH	"CYBER" SPECIAL SECTION	YES	NO	NO	NO
FEPI Festival de la Publicidad Independiente	2007	LOW	SPECIAL SECTION: "Digital and interactive"	NO	"Mixed campaigns" // "Combination of media"	"Digital innovation" "Media innovation"	NO
EL OJO DE IBEROAMERICANA	1997	LOW	SPECIAL SECTION: "Interactive, Mobile and Media"	NO	"Integrated campaigns"	"Innovation"	NO
EL SOL	1986	MEDIUM	SPECIAL SECTION: "Digital and mobile"	NO	"Integrated campaigns"	"Innovation"	NO
JOHN CAPLES INTERNATIONAL AWARDS	1978	HIGH	SPECIAL SECTION: "Digital"	YES	"Integrated campaigns"	NO	NO
CRESTA AWARDS	1993	LOW	NO	YES	"Integrated campaign competition"	NO	NO
ANDY AWARDS	1964	MEDIUM	NO	YES	"Integrated media"	"Agency innovation" // "Innovation"	NO
D&AD	1962	HIGH	"DIGITAL DESIGN" // "DIGITAL MARKETING"// "MOBILE MARKETING"	YES	"Integrated"	"New blood"	NO
LIA AWARDS	1986	HIGH	"DIGITAL"	YES	"Integration"	"The new"	NO



MOBIUS AWARDS	1971	MEDIUM	"DIGITAL MOBILE" // "DIGITAL ONLINE"	YES	"Integrated campaigns"	NO	NO
CANNES LIONS	1954	MEDIUM	"CYBER" // "MOBILE"	NO	"Titanium" // "Integration"	Innovation	Creative effectiveness
CLIO AWARDS	1959	HIGH	"DIGITAL" // "DIGITAL TECHNIQUES" // "SOCIAL MEDIA"	YES	"Integrated campaign"	"Innovative"	"Engagement-experiential"*
ECHO AWARDS	2006	HIGH	"ECHO™ DIGITAL AWARD"	NO	NO	"A. Eicoff broadcast innovation award" // "Echo award for strategic innovation"	NO
NEW YORK FESTIVAL	1957	HIGH	"DIGITAL"	YES	"Integrated"	"Avant garde"	"Effective marketing creativity"
CUP AWARDS	2007	LOW	NO	YES	NO	"Best of media innovation" // "Most insightful idea"	NO
AME- Advertising & Marketing Effectiveness Awards-	1994	HIGH	NO	YES	"Integrated (mixed media)"	NO	The festival itself
ONE SHOW	1998	LOW	SPECIAL SECTION: INTERACTIVE	NO	NO	NO	NO
AMAUTA	1999	MEDIUM	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE PUBLICIDAD CARIBE	1992	HIGH	"INTERACTIVE" // "ONLINE"	NO	"Integrated campaigns"	NO	NO
EFFIE AWARDS GLOBAL	1968	LOW	NO	NO	NO	NO	The festival itself

## 4. Results

The main results of the study were classified into two groups: Representativeness of the categories and Relations between variables:

### 4.1. Representativeness of the categories

From the data obtained from the Content Analysis of the categories of the festivals, a statistical study was carried out on frequency variables of Section A. This has allowed the observation of the representativeness of each of the megatrends in advertising contest which are described below in the following frequency tables.

#### 4.1.1. Digitisation

Digitisation refers to the role played by the "digital" field in the awards. The aim was firstly to identify to what extent digital communication was attributed such a relevance to have a special section in a festival. Secondly, the purpose was to review other digital categories which had also appeared in other sections, combining them with the categories from off-line advertising.

Sixty five percent (65.5%) of the festivals examined devoted a special section to digital advertising. Concerning digital categories, just over fifty-one percent (50.8%) of festivals introduced digital categories in sections, which were not specifically digital. Thirty-one percent (31%) of festivals hosted special section and digital categories in other sections. In the case of major festivals, the percentage of festivals that devoted a special section to digital advertising was seventy-five percent (75%), and thirty-nine percent (39%) had two: a special section and digital categories.

**Table 2.** Frequency table "Digitisation in Advertising Festivals" (SPSS results)

DIGITISATION (Full sample)				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
0 Nothing	9	14.8	14.8	14.8
1 Digital categories	12	19.7	19.7	34.4
2 Digital section	21	34.4	34.4	68.9
3 Digital section + categories	19	31.1	31.1	100.0
Total	61	100.0	100.0	

  

DIGITISATION (Major Contests)				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
0 Nothing	1	3.6	3.6	3.6
1 Digital categories	6	21.4	21.4	25.0
2 Digital section	10	35.7	35.7	60.7
3 Digital section + categories	11	39.3	39.3	100.0
Total	28	100.0	100.0	

#### 4.1.2. New communication alternatives

The "new communication alternatives" variable refers to all techniques and formats currently used in marketing communications to transfer and shape messages, which are not sufficiently developed to allow standardisation and rating, as occurs in conventional advertising.

"Among these unconventional techniques, many have arisen which are either dramatically new, or which are a significant development of others which already exist, to the point of being perceived as different. The majority of these techniques are interconnected and even overlap one another, so that in many cases there are different terms for different techniques, or that they are even known by different names depending on the country in which they are applied" (Pintado & Sánchez, 2013).

From this perspective, for this research, new categories related with the following concepts have been included: guerrilla marketing, street marketing, ambient marketing,

experiential marketing, brand experience, branded content, storytelling, branded-entertainment, advergaming, game-based messaging, mobile applications, social media marketing, viral marketing, buzz marketing, virtual reality, digital signage, outdoor digital signage and co-creation.

This involved examining to what extent awards related to new communication alternatives were awarded in each festival. The ratio between the number of awarded categories and the number of categories related to the “new communication alternatives” was calculated: high relevance = from 1 to 0.66; medium relevance = from 0.66 to 0.33; low relevance= from 0.33 to 0.

The study results shows that "new communication alternatives" had a medium or high relevance in most contests (59%). When the major contests were taken into account, "new communication alternatives" had a high or medium relevance in seventy-one percent (71.5%) of festivals.

**Table 3.** Frequency table “New Communication Alternatives in Advertising Festivals” (SPSS results)

<b>NEW COMMUNICATION ALTERNATIVES (Full sample)</b>				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
<b>1 Low relevance</b>	25	41.0	41.0	41.0
<b>2 Medium relevance</b>	17	27.9	27.9	68.9
<b>3 High relevance</b>	19	31.1	31.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	61	100.0	100.0	

  

<b>NEW COMMUNICATION ALTERNATIVES (Major Contests)</b>				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
1 Low relevance	8	28.6	28.6	28.6
2 Medium relevance	8	28.6	28.6	57.1
3 High relevance	12	42.9	42.9	100.0
Total	28	100.0	100.0	

#### 4.1.3. *Integration, innovation and effectiveness*

In our paper, we have analysed to what extent Integration, Innovation and Effectiveness trends were reflected in the categories of advertising festivals:

*Integration:* Almost half of the festivals (49%) had one or several categories which referred to media integration from an integrated strategy. In most cases the term used was "integrated" and rarely "integral". When analysing the main contests, we realised that 64% of them rewarded integration.

**Table 4.** Frequency table "Integration in Advertising Festivals" (SPSS results)

<b>INTEGRATION</b>				
<b>(Full sample)</b>				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
1 No integration categories	31	50.8	50.8	50.8
2 Integration categories	30	49.2	49.2	100.0
Total	61	100.0	100.0	

  

<b>INTEGRATION</b>				
<b>(Major Contests)</b>				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
1 No integration categories	10	35.7	35.7	35.7
2 Integration categories	18	64.3	64.3	100.0
Total	28	100.0	100.0	

*Innovation:* almost half (47%) of festivals awarded innovation in some way. In the case of major contests, this reached sixty-eight percent (68%). In most of them the term "innovation" was used, but in some others, inspiration was referred to with concepts such as "alarm", "inspiring idea" or "change in communication".

**Table 5.** Frequency table "Innovation in Advertising Festivals" (SPSS results)

<b>INNOVATION</b>				
<b>(Full sample)</b>				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
1 No innovation categories	29	47.5	47.5	47.5
2 Innovation categories	32	52.5	52.5	100.0
Total	61	100.0	100.0	

  

<b>INNOVATION</b>				
<b>(Mejor Contests)</b>				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
1 No innovation categories	9	32.1	32.1	32.1
2 Innovation categories	19	67.9	67.9	100.0
Total	28	100.0	100.0	

*Effectiveness:* Thirty-six percent (36%) of the festivals had a category linked to effectiveness. By analysing the most important festivals, it was discovered that this dimension reduces its presence to twenty-five percent (25%) of contests including a category related to effectiveness. In these cases, if a campaign opted for this award, it will be necessary to provide evaluation data or effectiveness measurement. In one third of contests there were categories or sections related to this concept, and in some of them the whole festival was effectiveness, as EFIE Awards. Terms such as "efficient communication", "best practices" and even "evaluation" were used.

**Table 6.** Frequency table "Effectiveness in Advertising Festivals" (SPSS results)

<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>				
<b>(Full sample)</b>				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
1 No effectiveness categories	39	63.9	63.9	63.9
2 Effectiveness categories	22	36.1	36.1	100.0
Total	61	100.0	100.0	

  

<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>				
<b>(Mejor Contests)</b>				
	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
1 No effectiveness categories	21	75.0	75.0	75.0
2 Effectiveness categories	7	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	28	100.0	100.0	

#### 4.2. Relations between variables

##### 4.2.1. Relationships between variables in Section A and Section B

To set all possible relationships of each of the two variables in Section A (scope of the festival and creation of the festival) with each of the five variables in Section B (digitisation, new communication alternatives, integration, innovation and effectiveness), we have made contingency tables and a contrast between variables based on statistical  $\chi^2$  (Chi-square).

The study has shown that the relationship is significant in the variable "scope" with "digitisation", with "integration" and with "innovation". For all other variables in section B there is no significant relationship. This shows a trend in the categories of regional festivals: digitisation, integration and innovation are present more strongly than in local competitions in which there is a tendency not to include them. Regarding the variable "creation of the award" we have observed that there is no significant relationship. This shows that there is not a trend in most modern festivals: macro trends are not more present. In the following section it shows contingency tables and Chich-quarter tests, only in the cases where there is signification.

**Table 7.** Contingency table "Digitisation-Scope of the festival" (SPSS results)

<b>DIGITISATION-SCOPE OF THE FESTIVAL</b>					
<b>(Full sample)</b>					
			Scope		Total
			1 local	2 Regional	
Digitisation	0 nothing	count	9	0	9
		% of scope	26.5%	0.0%	14.8%
	1 Categories only	count	6	6	12
		% of scope	17.6%	22.2%	19.7%
	2 Special section	count	11	10	21
		% of scope	32.4%	37.0%	34.4%
	3 Special section + categories	count	8	11	19
		% of scope	23.5%	40.7%	31.1%
Total		count	34	27	61
		% of scope	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Table 8.** Chic Quarter Test “Digitisation-Scope of the festival” (SPSS results)

<b>DIGITISATION-SCOPE OF THE FESTIVAL</b> <b>(Full sample)</b>			
	Value	gl	Asymptotic signification (bilateral)
Pearson's chi-squared	8,834 <sup>a</sup>	3	0.032
Continuity correction	12,195	3	0.007
Likelihood ratio	5,972	1	0.015
Fisher exact test	61		
Linear by linear association	8,834 <sup>a</sup>	3	0.032
N valid cases	12,195	3	0.007

**Table 9.** Contingency table “Integration-Scope of the festival” (SPSS results)

<b>INTEGRATION-SCOPE OF THE FESTIVAL</b> <b>(Full sample)</b>					
			Scope		Total
			1 local	2 Regional	
Integration	1 Categories only	count	21	10	31
		% of scope	61.8%	37.0%	50.8%
	2 Special section	count	13	17	30
		% of scope	38.2%	63.0%	49.2%
Total	count	34	34	27	
	% of scope	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Table 10.** Chic Quarter Test “Integration-Scope of the festival” (SPSS results)

<b>INTEGRATION-SCOPE OF THE FESTIVAL</b> <b>(Full sample)</b>					
	Value	gl	Asymptotic signification (bilateral)	Exact signification (bilateral)	Exact signification (unilateral)
Pearson's chi-squared	3,682 <sup>a</sup>	1	0.055		
Continuity correction	2,759	1	0.097		
Likelihood ratio	3,719	1	0.054		
Fisher exact test				0.073	0.048
Linear by linear association	3,621	1	0.057		
N valid cases	61				

**Table 11.** Contingency table "Innovation-Scope of the festival" (SPSS results)

<b>INNOVATION-SCOPE OF THE FESTIVAL</b>					
<b>(Full sample)</b>					
			Scope		Total
			1 local	2 Regional	
Integration	1 Categories only	count	20	9	29
		% of scope	58.8%	33.3%	47.5%
	2 Special section	count	14	18	32
		% of scope	41.2%	66.7%	52.5%
Total	count		34	34	27
	% of scope		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Table 12.** Chic Quarter Test "Innovation-Scope of the festival" (SPSS results)

<b>INNOVATION-SCOPE OF THE FESTIVAL</b>					
<b>(Full sample)</b>					
	Value	gl	Asymptotic signification (bilateral)	Exact signification (bilateral)	Exact signification (unilateral)
Pearson's chi-squared	3,921 <sup>a</sup>	1	0.048		
Continuity correction	2,965	1	0.085		
Likelihood ratio	3,975	1	0.046		
Fisher exact test				0.071	0.042
Linear by linear association	3,856	1	0.050		
N valid cases	61				

#### 4.2.2. Associations between Group A variables

To respond to paragraph seven of aims of the research and "to identify the existing correlations between described megatrends", some contingency tables and a contrast between variables have been made based on statistical  $\chi^2$  (Chi-square) between Integration-Digitisation and New communication alternatives-Innovation.

The result has been significant for the relationship between the variables digitisation and integration in both the full sample and the sample section "main festivals". However, the association is not significant between the variables "new communication alternatives" and "innovation", or the complete sample, or section of the sample of main festivals. Therefore there is a trend at festivals where Digitization has some prominence: Integration is also present in his category. However in contests where Innovation is rewarded there is no significant tendency to include New alternatives of communication among their winning categories.

In the following section contingency tables and Chic-quarter tests are shown, only for the cases where there is significance.

**Table 13.** Contingency table "Integration-Digitation" (SPSS results)

<b>INTEGRATION-DIGIISATION</b>					
<b>(Full sample)</b>					
			Scope		Total
			1 local	2 Regional	
Integration	1 Categories only	count	13	4	17
		% of scope	61.9%	21.1%	42.5%
	2 Special section	count	8	15	23
		% of scope	38.1%	78.9%	57.5%
Total	count		34	21	19
	% of scope		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Table 14.** Chic Quarter Test "Integration-Digitation" (SPSS results)

<b>INTEGRATION-DIGITISATION</b>					
<b>(Full sample)</b>					
	Value	gl	Asymptotic signification (bilateral)	Exact signification (bilateral)	Exact signification (unilateral)
Pearson's chi-squared	6,812 <sup>a</sup>	1	0.009		
Continuity correction	5,243	1	0.022		
Likelihood ratio	7,081	1	0.008		
Fisher exact test				0.012	0.010
Linear by linear association	6,642	1	0.010		
N valid cases	40				

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

Our research provides conclusive results. The general hypothesis is confirmed almost literally: the "awards" are benchmarks for the present and future since they specifically take into account the so-called five major macro trends: Digitisation, New alternatives, Innovation, Integration and Results. This may be nuanced by the fact that the corporate interests of the sector, particularly those represented by agencies and media planning and buying companies, could reduce this elasticity. The financing of agencies and parent agencies is, for example, more advantageous and clear in a conventional way and this may imply a limit in the choice of innovation. However, in general, the advertising awards and their categories have a privileged role in mirroring the changes produced in the advertising system; it is a system which works with one of the most vivid postmodern society structures.

Specifically, according to the way the categories of advertising awards are presented, we concluded that the digitisation of communications has come to an end. The vast majority of contests have a specific digital section, but the most significant aspect has to do with the fact that half of them include digital categories in the rest of the most relevant sections. Digitisation is already transverse and the media and digital formats are incorporated in all



areas of marketing communication in companies. Ultimately, when a category does not expressly provide the digital dimension, the festival will take into account that at the origin of the strategy the online dimension is already foreseen.

New communication alternatives are very present in all contests. In today's advertising, the term "new alternatives" is particularly relevant. Hence, there are a growing number of categories referring to marketing communication. The categories of conventional advertising in traditional media are losing ground – but not as much as they would if we consider the nuances of the hypothesis we had mentioned in the first conclusion – and there are many festivals in which new communication alternatives have high or medium relevance. This is the result of current marketing communication campaigns, in which new ways of communication are gradually gaining a more relevant role.

The context of integrated marketing communications is inherent to current advertising. Integration is a reality in the sector. Half of the contests have a category related to integration (there is only one award linked to this point). As we explained in the second conclusion, campaigns which take advantage of the synergies of online and offline media and which incorporate all new alternatives are gaining stronger relevance. The field has accepted the research according to which among the different media synergies there is no other which is as efficient as the one which advertises by transferring the digital world to the offline world and vice versa (Lindstrom, 2005).

It is shown that innovation is essentially an advertising value. More than half of the contests reward innovation. Innovation is an advertising value, which, by definition, will have increasing importance in the field of advertising. We must surprise customers and new alternatives are certainly a great opportunity to do so.

Effectiveness and results in festivals were significant. However, the reduced presence of this dimension, in relation to the high presence in the specialised media, would lead to a relativisation of this trend or having it reflected in the awards. The growing role of ROI (return on investment) in the specialised field is only present in twenty percent (20%) of the contests. Although some of them expressly state in their advertisements that what is rewarded is ROI, we cannot find that in this case it is a transverse trend present in the rest of festivals.

One of the main conclusions drawn from combining the categories of Digitisation and Integration is that the former is directly related (in terms of cause and effect) with the second. The digitisation concept, that is a reality present at the contests, is evolving in the advertisement structure, getting closer to the Integration approach. We consider that it could be possible that in the next few years the Digitisation idea could lose relevance, because it is an established reality in the system. Consequently, the Integration concept should gain relevance in the contests as the response to the sector reality from the perspective of the online & offline fusion environments.

The "creation of the festival" being a variable that has proved to have a very low impact on the categories awarded gives a certain nuance to our hypothesis. The more recent "elasticity" is shown by awards, but the structure of the awards created in the last ten years is not significantly different from those that had appeared previously. In any case, the awards sample is too small to obtain any relevant information. Furthermore, the creation date of the award is not a relevant fact since most festivals include new categories each year and eliminate others. These festivals are characterised by the "elasticity" mentioned in the hypothesis and this means that old contests may also mirror the current structure of the advertising system, just like others which are newer. It would be interesting to conduct further research on this subject and analyse how festivals, over time, have been modifying what they reward in response to the changes in the advertising reality of each period.

By contrast, the introduction of the "Scope of the Award" variable shows interesting results that confirm our hypothesis, yet with a certain nuance. Regional and international

contests in their award-winning categories represent the current advertising trends towards Digitisation, New Alternatives, Integration, Innovation and Efficiency, which is not very evident in the national festivals. Explicitly, the more geographical scope an award has, the more it mirrors the structure of the advertising system. This finding may indicate that the advertising of each country has certain characteristics that are reflected in the structure of their advertising festivals. To further explore this important fact, it would be interesting to carry out a comparative analysis of advertising festivals in each country and see to what extent they mirror their advertising structures.

The name used in the award categories provides ideas about the currently accepted jargon within the structures of the advertising system. We can state that the words "Digital" and "Interactive" have been established, and have replaced the word "Cyber" which seems to have disappeared in the field of advertising. "Integrated" is the term used for other words or concepts, as it is the one which best represents the idea of communication strategies integrating all available resources to achieve a better segmented target. Regarding the dimension of innovation, the term currently employed in half of the contests is "Innovation" as it is a globally established concept in many areas strictly beyond advertising or marketing. However, due to their nature-creative names are also used to refer to the categories. Regarding effectiveness, the most commonly used term is "effectiveness" but being a dimension not yet present in contests, it is not strongly represented. However, the fact that several advertising festivals are exclusively devoted to effectiveness and use this language to give titles to their own contest, such as "Efie Awards" or "AME (Advertising and Marketing Effectiveness Awards)", suggests that it is the term currently employed in the structures of the advertising system.

These conclusions are enlightening and provide relevant information, though it would be highly desirable to develop and complement some of these aspects and to have a second phase of research which would study the campaigns awarded in each category. Given that our sample has been small, in most categories and crosses, to draw any statistically significant conclusions, consideration -in the next article- of awards "granted in fact" could indeed provide the necessary quantitative basis to resolve this shortcoming.

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