

(Re-)introducing Entertainment

 By Leigh Andrews

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Key to roaring with pride at this year's new Lions Entertainment stream will be the creation of content that integrates seamlessly into consumers' lives instead of interrupting them, and resets the discussion instead of being skipped over or fast-forwarded.

“We won a Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity Branded Content & Entertainment Lion!” Say it with me – it gives you a rush, and not just for the associated glory of the win – mainly for the fact that it’s quite a mouthful. Luckily the team behind the Cannes Lion Festival of Creativity heeded this and have since rebranded [‘Branded Content & Entertainment’ to just ‘Lions Entertainment’](#) .

In addition to being easier to say, the two-day Lions Entertainment programme is seen as a specialist event that’ll better bring together the platforms that are reinventing content consumption as we know it. This makes it the ideal place to celebrate both the labels and studios adapting to channel disruption as well as the brands that have created that authentic, compelling, disruptive content. It’ll explore the opportunities and challenges for the industry that come with a shift from branded content into something more like “branded culture”, giving brands the inspiration to produce those true ‘water cooler moments’.



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As that’s still a pretty broad description and the category has grown exponentially since launching four years ago, there are also now two associated Lions that identify and celebrate this work: the **Entertainment Lions**, which is the true evolution of ‘Branded Content and Entertainment Lions’ as you know it, re-examining what it takes to make content that cuts through, turns the customers into fans and ascends to the cultural mainstream by covering all forms of audio-visual entertainment, live experiences, gaming, sport and more; and the **Entertainment Lions for Music**, the first specialist discipline to spin out of Entertainment and have its own award as the long-established creative use and distribution of music has been campaigned for and designed by the music and creative industries. The dedicated Music Lion obviously also comes with its own [specialist jury](#).

Fittingly, the Lions Entertainment programme will also include talks from industry leaders ranging from DJs, rappers and actors to creatives, musicians and even wrestlers, as entertainment is a huge part of the industry and has tentacles across all aspects of creativity.

Storytelling: The heart of creating ‘water cooler’ content

More than that, it celebrated how content is incorporated into mainstream culture through effective storytelling and compelling content. Jae Goodman, CCO and co-head of CAA Marketing is jury president for the inaugural Lions Entertainment. Winner of the 2012 Branded Content & Entertainment Grand Prix, he feels the Entertainment Lion is crucial as it reflects the necessity for marketers to shift away merely creating content that interrupts the entertainment and towards creating that entertainment itself that keeps us clicking and chatting with envy around the office water cooler, wishing we’d had a hand in bringing that content to life.

It’s that [storytelling](#) aspect that makes Cannes Lions stand out – if you get the storytelling right, you’re nearly there in elevating that content into the cultural mainstream through innovative communication channels.

“Talented entertainers who have the power to connect directly with consumers are seizing the opportunity by presenting themselves as musicians, actors, sportspeople, fashion designers, chefs, vloggers, entrepreneurs and artists. What is very exciting is that agencies, brands and media owners are seeking to work with them like never before,” explains Tshireletso Yvonne Diogo, GM of promotions and trade marketing at Ster-Kinekor Theatres, with high expectations for local creative work to make its mark in this realm.

Set to be a game changer for years to come, Lions Entertainment takes place during Cannes Lions on 23 and 24 June 2016 in the Palais des Festivals, with the Lions Entertainment Awards ceremony taking place on 24 June. [Headline sponsor Citi](#) will host both the breakfast networking to kick-start the day for Lions Entertainment delegates as well as the Lions Entertainment After Party following the awards ceremony.

With Cannes Lions’ Branded Content & Entertainment having gone two years now without a Grand Prix, perhaps the rebrand is just the change needed to spark truly excellent ‘storytelling’ entries. Only time will tell...

[Click here](#) to view the Cannes Lions Entertainment Music programme, [here to view](#) the Cannes Lions 'Brands Go Pop' whitepaper on the music revolution in branded communications and [here for a reminder](#) of last year’s Branded Content & Entertainment winners.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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