

MARKETING

ISSUE #441 JULY 2025

WEEKENDER™

**AFTER HE SPEAKS,
OVER 140 CAMPAIGN
PRESENTATIONS
WILL STEAL
THE SHOW.**

D. SRIRAM

CO-FOUNDER & MANAGING PARTNER

SEARCHLIGHT MANAGEMENT CONSULTING



EDITOR'S STORY

29

04



YEARS ON

What sets The APPIES apart from other events?



Cannes by Foot, by Boat, and by the Glass

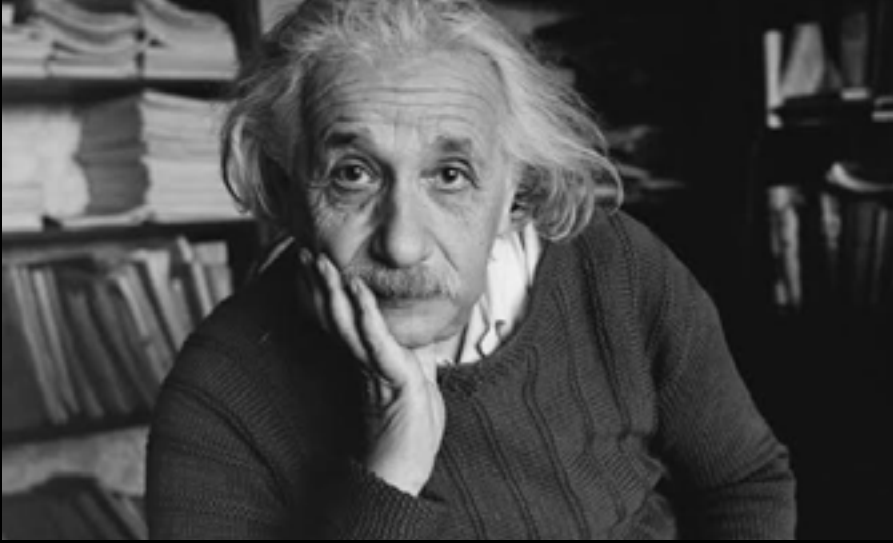
COVER STORY

05



From Shanghai to KL, D. Sriram shares his wisdom with Malaysia's marketing industry

What Say



“Education is what remains after you’ve forgotten everything from school.”

Albert Einstein



“There is a crack in everything, that’s how the light gets in.”

Leonard Cohen - songwriter, singer, poet, and novelist.



“Strategy is simply resource allocation. When you strip away all the noise, that’s what it comes down to.”

Jack Welch (Former GE CEO)



One Malaysian company dinner handed out awards to staff who sleep most on the job, and take the most medical leave (MCs). The winner of the Most MC Award was on medical leave the whole year in 2024.



YEARS ON

PROFESSOR HARMANDAR SINGH
PRESIDENT - APPIES MALAYSIA

The annual festival showcasing the best ideas in marketing across Malaysia is back with its 10th edition. Held over two days, on 9 & 10 July, 2025 at Sheraton PJ for judging and presentations. What sets The APPIES apart from other events is that each featured campaign is presented Live by the brand marketers and campaign creators themselves before a panel of distinguished judges and an industry audience. Campaigns are presented in a strict format: 4 minutes creative reel summary, followed by 5 minutes oral presentation highlighting significant aspects of the campaign. Then, the presenters fields questions from the judges within a 5 minutes time frame. All creative, media, digital and marketing organisations come together for this amazing show that has grown in stature and influence over the years. While the magic happens on the stage, what happens on the floor is the best part. Delegates get to listen and learn like never before. It is like being a “client” for 143 new biz presentations, from brands across the spectrum. But you don’t judge, that is left to the CMOs seated in front. So delegates get the best all worlds: the sharing, the learnings and the chance to hear how marketers think and evaluate.

I'M APPIE TO BOOK MY SEAT NOW!



COVER STORY

From Shanghai to KL, D. Sriram shares his wisdom with Malaysia's marketing industry.

Sriram has seen it all. He's worked in agencies, with media specialists, helped drive startups, earned a pilot's licence and speaks fluent Mandarin. His career highlights include being CEO of Aegis Media China, AsiaPac CEO of Starcom Mediavest Group, CEO of Group IMD China, COO of Vpon Inc Taiwan, MD and Chairman of Ebiquity Shanghai and more...



COVER STORY

... In the corporate world, “failure” might mean missing a target or losing a client. There’s structure...

How did you learn to speak Mandarin so well?

Honestly, immersion was the only way. I was living in Hong Kong at the time, travelling frequently to mainland China, but I was still speaking English or Cantonese most of the time. When I eventually moved to Shanghai, I was finally in an environment where I had to use Mandarin every day. That made all the difference.

But I also pushed myself. I once signed up for six weeks of intensive Mandarin—four hours a day, five days a week. At the end of that, I took on a training gig for a local Chinese agency. All the materials and delivery were in Mandarin. That kind of pressure forces you to think in the language.

Later, when I helped implement a cloud-based ad

delivery system across China, I was on the road explaining the tech to regional TV stations—in Mandarin. That stretched my vocabulary into industry-specific territory.

I should say, I know non-Chinese friends whose Mandarin is far better than mine. One even reads ancient Chinese literature in traditional script. It just proves that language is about time, intention, and being surrounded by it.

You’ve straddled both corporate and startup life. Where did failure teach you more?

Startups. Without question. In the corporate world, “failure” might mean missing a target or losing a client. There’s structure. You can course correct. But in a startup, failure is existential. If you can’t get your first user or prove your value proposition, the whole model falls apart.

I remember my first startup. We struggled to get traction. No one was using the product the way we imagined. That was a different kind of failure—more personal, more painful. But it forced me into analytical mode: what were we missing? Why

COVER STORY

... Real creativity is building something the world hasn't seen. It's inventing Airbnb. It's writing The Handmaid's Tale. It's a street performer making strangers laugh in real time...

didn't it click? Even today, over 15 years later, I still unpack lessons from that experience.

By contrast, when your first real customer starts using your product as intended—that's validation. It's a feeling no KPI or bonus can match. Once you've built something from scratch and watched it work, it changes your relationship with traditional corporate work forever.

In the age of AI and data, does creativity still matter?

Of course. But we in advertising have misunderstood what creativity truly is.

We've hijacked the term and confined it to ads, headlines, and award entries. Real creativity is building something the world hasn't seen. It's inventing Airbnb. It's writing The Handmaid's Tale.

It's a street performer making strangers laugh in real time.

Once in a while, advertising does deliver something truly creative—an idea that shifts perception and drives real brand impact. But most of what we label "creative" is made to impress peers, not consumers.

Now, enter AI. Today, brands don't run one grand campaign. They fight thousands of small battles: on TikTok, in eCommerce banners, in chatbot replies. AI will excel in these micro-moments, adapting content in real time. But AI can't invent the platform. It can't pull the emotional insight from thin air.

True creatives will always matter—they shape the narrative, the platform, the tone. The hacks who just recycle tropes for awards? They'll be the first to go.

You've worked across so many cultures. What's the most underrated business virtue globally?

Assuming goodwill. Every culture has its quirks. Something that feels abrupt in one place is normal in another. When you assume people mean well, you engage more openly, and things usually go better.

COVER STORY

... Alibaba and Tencent aren't ad platforms. They're ecosystems. They don't rely on ads for revenue. Ads drive traffic to their real business—commerce, content, services. That shifts everything about how marketing works here...

Also: humour. I once pitched to a Chinese client who had four phones and wouldn't stop answering them during our meeting. I stepped out, called one of his numbers from the hallway, and asked if he'd prefer I do the pitch over the phone. He burst out laughing, apologised, switched off all his phones and gave me his full attention. We ended up doing business together.

Another tip: language. I speak Mandarin, but I always learned a few key phrases in whatever language was relevant to the meeting. That tiny gesture lowers walls. People do business with people they feel at ease with.

Trust, technology or timing—what determines whether a bold idea survives in Asia?

Timing. Every time.

Ride-hailing wasn't new when Uber came along. The tech was there. Others had tried. But it only worked when the market was ready. Same with eCommerce, livestreaming, even QR payments. Tech and trust matter, yes, but timing is the master key.

What's the biggest illusion marketers have about China?

That China is just a localised version of global platforms. The logic goes: Google = Baidu, Facebook = WeChat, Amazon = Alibaba.

Completely wrong.

Alibaba and Tencent aren't ad platforms. They're ecosystems. They don't rely on ads for revenue. Ads drive traffic to their real business—commerce, content, services. That shifts everything about how marketing works here.

Chinese consumers are also different. They're highly functional. Brand loyalty is thinner. If another product is better or cheaper, they switch without sentiment.

COVER STORY

Even platforms differ. TikTok and Douyin are technically siblings, but Douyin is built for commerce in ways TikTok isn't. Trying to map the Chinese digital landscape 1:1 with the West is lazy and dangerous. You need a whole new lens.

If you were a 28-year-old marketer in 2025, what industry truth would you challenge?

Today, many CMOs are expected to be experts in performance media, dashboards, SEO, SEM—but that's not the whole job. We've reduced marketing to the fourth P: Promotion.

Real marketing should define what business we're in. If taxi companies had strategic marketers, they'd have invented Uber. If hotel chains had real marketing minds, they'd have launched Airbnb. But they didn't—because marketing was trapped in “How do we sell what we have?” instead of “What unmet need should we solve?”

If I were 28, I'd ask: Are we just buying clicks? Or are we building companies?

BOX: Don't miss Sriram at the opening of the APPIES Marketing Festival on July 9 with his topic:

... Real marketing should define what business we're in. If taxi companies had strategic marketers, they'd have invented Uber. If hotel chains had real marketing minds, they'd have launched Airbnb...

The times they are a-changin' - what does that mean for marketers? *Tariffs on, tariffs off. AI taking over everywhere including marketing. Changing geopolitical climate. Changing consumer habits with every generation... how does all this change and uncertainty affect brands and marketers? How should marketers everywhere and particularly in Malaysia deal with this to successfully build brands and businesses?*

Call Ruby for seats - 0377262588



THE
APPIES
2025

MALAYSIA
MARKETING CAMPAIGNS AWARDS



OVER

1440

PRESENTATIONS
25 MARKETING
LEADERS JUDGING
OVER TWO DAYS.

HRDC CLAIMABLE

Imagine if you had the chance to listen and learn from some of the best marketing minds and campaigns in the country. Listen, learn and ask questions about the strategies, the thinking, the opportunities, the challenges, and most importantly, discover what the campaign results were. So you know about the TED Talks, ya? You log in to get inspired about life and the things you love most. Have you heard a TED Talk about Malaysian marketing successes? Have you seen a TED talk that lets you ask questions? After the talk? Some people say The APPIES is like the TED of Marketing. Because at The APPIES you get inspired and learn almost the same way. But there's more... you get up close with the presenters, you can ask questions and what they are saying is relevant to what your job is all about, great advice you can take home immediately... YES, instant ROI! People on the planet also say The APPIES is like a 2-Day MBA in Marketing. YES... MBA. Because you get to enrich your brain power with over 140 marketing presentation across 21 categories. Now imagine all this happening on July 9 & 10 in Petaling Jaya.

www.appies.com.my

2025 PROGRAMME

DAY ONE

(9 JULY 2025)

REGISTRATIONS		8:00 AM	Registrations & Morning Coffee/Tea						
WELCOME SPEECH		9:00 AM	Welcome by Appies Malaysia President, PROF. HARMANDAR SINGH						
KEYNOTE PRESENTATION		9:10 AM - 10:00 AM	D.SRIRAM, Co-Founder & Managing Partner, Searchlight Management Consulting						
REFRESHMENTS & NETWORKING		10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Registrations & Morning Coffee/Tea						
MAIN CATEGORY	CATEGORY	TIME	HALL	CAMPAIGN	BRAND	ADVERTISER	AGENCY	TYPE	PRESENTERS
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social	10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	HALL A	The Ekspres Campaign	KLIA Ekspres	Express Rail Link Sdn Bhd	BLWN	Advertising Agency	Michelle Tan Monica Shenton
Platforms & Purpose	Best in AI		HALL B	Which Speedster Are You?	CelcomDigi	CelcomDigi	Kingdom Digital	Advertising Agency	Harris Daniel bin Noor Azahar Elizabeth Cheng En-Li
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL C	Aiken Double the Brightness for a Brighter Year	Aiken	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	MBCS	Advertising Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Festive	10:45 AM - 11:00 AM	HALL A	CULTIVATING DREAMS TOGETHER	CGC	CREDIT GUARANTEE CORPORATION MALAYSIA BERHAD	CD Advertising	Advertising Agency	Jusrurcarnaen Azer Pamela Kong
Brands & Business	Best in Financial Services		HALL B	Allianz Travel Tales	Allianz Malaysia	Allianz Malaysia Berhad	MediaCliQ	Advertising Agency	Reyna Gopal
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL C	ReToss Tradition A New Take on Yee Sang	MCM 美中美	Kum Thim Food Industries Sdn Bhd	ABR Group	Advertising Agency	Kwok Su Lin Chan Wei Tuck
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing	11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	HALL A	Aiken Double the Brightness for a Brighter Year	Aiken	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	MBCS	Advertising Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Customer Experience		HALL B	Fila Pickle Wickle - Game. Set. Experience	Fila	Fila	FWO Consultancy Sdn Bhd	Media Agency	Keith Loo Calvin Shiaw
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation		HALL C	Which Speedster Are You?	CelcomDigi	CelcomDigi	Kingdom Digital	Advertising Agency	Harris Daniel bin Noor Azahar Elizabeth Cheng En-Li
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing	11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	HALL A	#HealingDiLangkawi	LANGKAWI 99 MAGICAL ISLANDS	LANGKAWI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	CD Advertising	Advertising Agency	Sue Mansor Arael Ismail
Platforms & Purpose	Best in AI		HALL B	CelcomDigi Enterprise: Winning Malay SMEs Through the Power of AI Pantun	CelcomDigi Enterprise	CelcomDigi	OMD Malaysia	Media Agency	Timothy Sio Daryl Ng
Brands & Business	Best in Automotive & Transport		HALL C	A Quest for More	Shell	Shell Malaysia	GrowthOps Asia	Advertiser	Belinda Hon Aimad Zakaria
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital	11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	HALL A	Unifi Device Fiesta	Unifi	Telekom Malaysia	GrowthOps Asia	Advertiser	Nuraini Alyaa Binti Ramlan Lim Jack Kin
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL B	Excited Raya	MYDIN	Mydin Mohamed Holdings Berhad	Mydin Mohamed Holdings Berhad	Other - Retail	Gurubaran A/L Ballalie
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL C	Aiken Double the Brightness for a Brighter Year	Aiken	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	MBCS	Advertising Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing	11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	HALL A	Pasti Stedi Livestream with 100PLUS	100PLUS	F&N Malaysia	Gushcloud Malaysia	Other - Talent Agency	Wan Hou Yin Vivian Sue
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social		HALL B	#HealingDiLangkawi	LANGKAWI 99 MAGICAL ISLANDS	LANGKAWI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	CD Advertising	Advertising Agency	Sue Mansor Arael Ismail
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation		HALL C	CelcomDigi Enterprise: Winning Malay SMEs Through the Power of AI Pantun	CelcomDigi Enterprise	CelcomDigi	OMD Malaysia	Media Agency	Timothy Sio Daryl Ng
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing	12:00 PM - 12:15 PM	HALL A	Safi Hijabista Deodorant Ketibas, Ketibus, Ketitam	Safi Hijabista Bodycare	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	MBCS	Advertiser	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Customer Experience		HALL B	Making Journeys Better - The Orange Hot Relaunch of Journify Holidays	Journify Holidays	Loyalty & Travel Services, Malaysia Aviation Group	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Shu Jie Chua Azree Wahab
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Customer Experience		HALL C	There's No Stopping the Game: Netflix's Squid Game Returns to Malaysia for Season 2	Netflix	Netflix pte ltd	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Aaron Levi Elliot Joseph
Brands & Business	Best in B2B	12:15 PM - 12:30 PM	HALL A	Alliance BizSmart Challenge: Elevator pitch drives 9% sales growth	Alliance Bank		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL B	Pre Loved with Besties Vol 2 x Seasons	Seasons	F&N Malaysia	Gushcloud Malaysia	Other - Talent Agency	Wan Hou Yin Vivian Sue
Brands & Business	Best in Travel & Hospitality		HALL C	#HealingDiLangkawi	LANGKAWI 99 MAGICAL ISLANDS	LANGKAWI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	CD Advertising	Advertising Agency	Sue Mansor Arael Ismail
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Customer Experience	12:30 PM - 12:45 PM	HALL A	FOMO & Fizz create Malaysia's #1 TV show in just 3 weeks, driving record sales	Calpis Soda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cindy Khoo Amelia / Celine
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital		HALL B						
Platforms & Purpose	Best in AI		HALL C	Safi Serlah Seri Diri	Safi	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	MBCS	Advertising Agency	

2025 PROGRAMME

DAY ONE

(9 JULY 2025)

Platforms & Purpose	Best in E-Commerce	12:45 PM - 01:00 PM	HALL A	Aiken Brightening illuminate CNY's eCommerce sales	Aiken	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	PHD Media	Media Agency	Janice Yee Puteri Nadhira Omar
Brands & Business	Best in Healthcare		HALL B	Heritage in Motion: Alliance Bank's Purpose-Driven Run for Culture, Community & Sustainability	Alliance Bank		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in OOH/DOOH		HALL C	Making Journeys Better - The Orange Hot Relaunch of Journify Holidays	Journify Holidays	Loyalty & Travel Services, Malaysia Aviation Group	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Shu Jie Chua Azree Wahab
BREAK		01:00 PM - 02:00 PM	LUNCH						
Brands & Business	Best in Festive	02:00 PM - 02:15 PM	HALL A						
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital		HALL B	FOMO & Fizz create Malaysia's #1 TV show in just 3 weeks, driving record sales	Calpis Soda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cindy Khoo Amelia / Celine
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL C	Seasons Ramadan Bersama Imran Bard	Seasons	F&N Malaysia	Gushcloud Malaysia	Other - Talent Agency	Wan Hou Yin Vivian Sue
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital	02:15 PM - 02:30 PM	HALL A	An Ele-vated Shower Experience: Turning Bath Time into a Digital Playground of Fun	Carrie Junior	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	PHD Media	Media Agency	Jeff Tan Amanda Yong
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Customer Experience		HALL B	One Tap at a Time: Breaking Period Stigma with RM2.1M in PR and 99% Student Support	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Van Ampersand
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL C	Tackling "Sun-Screenxiety" with Aiken Ceramide Sunscreen	Aiken	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	PHD Media	Media Agency	Janice Yee Puteri Nadhira Omar
Platforms & Purpose	Best in E-Commerce	02:30 PM - 02:45 PM	HALL A	FOMO & Fizz create Malaysia's #1 TV show in just 3 weeks, driving record sales	Calpis Soda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cindy Khoo Amelia / Celine
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Tech		HALL B	CelcomDigi Fibre: Building a Fibre Funnel That Works Smarter	CelcomDigi Fibre	CelcomDigi	OMD Malaysia	Media Agency	Edina Lim Loo Sze Jack
Brands & Business	Best in Financial Services		HALL C	The Ultimate Elevator Pitch gets 3.4 Million Views and helps grow Digital Loan Disbursements by 20%	Alliance Bank		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Festive	02:45 PM - 03:00 PM	HALL A	Safi Serlah Seri Diri	Safi	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	MBCS	Advertising Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL B	6 Cancer Survivors turn Influencers to drive sales+ 11,000 screenings	HOMESoy		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL C	The "Ele-vating" Shower Experience that Transforms Bath Time into Fun time	Carrie Junior	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	PHD Media	Media Agency	Jeff Tan Amanda Yong
Brands & Business	Best in Education & Training	03:00 PM - 03:15 PM	HALL A	The Ultimate Elevator Pitch: 60 Seconds to Greatness: Redefining the SME Pitch	Alliance Bank		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Customer Experience		HALL B	Legitimizing Esports, driving sales with Malaysia's first ever ESports Month	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital		HALL C	CelcomDigi Fibre: Right Time, Right User, Real Results	CelcomDigi Fibre	CelcomDigi	OMD Malaysia	Media Agency	Edina Lim Loo Sze Jack
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Govt/ NGO	03:15 PM - 03:30 PM	HALL A	DASHING – A Force for Good	Dashing	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Mutiara Harisson (part of McCann Worldgroup)	Advertising Agency	Devarshi Dalmia Benjamin Cheong
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL B	One Culture. One Campaign. Millions Reached in East Malaysia	Pepsi		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Sustainability		HALL C	Safi Serlah Seri Diri	Safi	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	MBCS	Advertising Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital	03:30 PM - 03:45 PM	HALL A	Legitimizing Esports, driving sales with Malaysia's first ever ESports Month	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Customer Experience		HALL B	The Ultimate Elevator Pitch: B2B SME competition gets 3.4 Million Views and helps grow Digital Loan Disbursements by 20%	Alliance Bank		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital		HALL C	Beyond Impressions: 6 Survivor stories drive record sales & 11000 screenings	HOMESoy		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG	03:45 PM - 04:00 PM	HALL A	Safi Shayla Hair Mist Sembur, Play, Slay	SAFI Shayla	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	MBCS	Advertising Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL B	Keluang Man Movie: Local superhero drives local coffee flavour growth	Wonda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Alia / Cherry
Platforms & Purpose	Best in AI		HALL C	Dashing Bad Boyz Deodorant Spray — Powered by AI. Shared by AI.	Dashing	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Mutiara Harisson (part of McCann Worldgroup)	Advertising Agency	Devarshi Dalmia Benjamin Cheong

2025 PROGRAMME

DAY ONE

(9 JULY 2025)

BREAK		04:00 PM - 04:30 PM	COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING						
Brands & Business	Best in Healthcare	04:30 PM - 04:45 PM	HALL A	Stop That Dot: 6 Survivor Stories Empower Women to Fight Breast Cancer	HOMESoy		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL B	Peugeot Weekender Experience	Peugeot	Stellantis Malaysia	Gushcloud Malaysia	Other - Talent Agency	Wan Hou Yin Vivian Sue
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Govt/ NGO		HALL C	Atlas Ecopod: World's Slimmest Reverse Vending Machine with Compaction System	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Isaac Ampersand
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Govt/ NGO	04:45 PM - 05:00 PM	HALL A	One Culture. One Campaign. Millions Reached in East Malaysia	Pepsi		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL B	IGNITING NATIONAL PRIDE IN THE LOUDEST, PROUDEST AND MOST LOCAL WAY: BERSAMA SATU SUARA	MR.DIY	MR.DIY	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Marion St. Joan Galid Elaine Ho Yee Ling
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL C	IG Made me buy it	Safi	Wipro Unza (M) Sdn Bhd	PHD Media	Media Agency	Andrea Choong Kallee Ong
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing	05:00 PM - 05:15 PM	HALL A	Dashing x Tottenham Hotspur — From London with Locker Room Cred	Dashing	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd	PHD Media	Media Agency	Devarshi Dalmia Liau Yein Hao
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B		HALL B	Stop That Dot: HOMESoy 3.0 Empowers Women to Fight Breast Cancer	HOMESoy		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Education & Training		HALL C	One Tap at a Time: Breaking Period Stigma with RM2.1M in PR and 99% Student Support	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Van Ampersand
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B	05:15 PM - 05:30 PM	HALL A	Keluang Man Movie: Local superhero drives local coffee flavour growth	Wonda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Alia / Cherry
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL B	Skuad 5G	CelcomDigi	CelcomDigi	PersonEdge Sdn Bhd	Other - Social Media Agency	Chin Wei Yi Chia Win Son
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL C	IGNITING NATIONAL PRIDE IN THE LOUDEST, PROUDEST AND MOST LOCAL WAY: BERSAMA SATU SUARA	MR.DIY	MR.DIY	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Marion St. Joan Galid Elaine Ho Yee Ling
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation	05:30 PM - 05:45 PM	HALL A	Atlas Ecopod: World's Slimmest Reverse Vending Machine with Compaction System	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Isaac Ampersand
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital		HALL B	Malaysia's first ever Senior Esports Team	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL C	Belonging: Turning old clothes into new hope	RHB Bank	RHB Banking Group	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Timothy Teh Wang Ie Tjer
Platforms & Purpose	Best in E-Commerce	05:45 PM - 06:00 PM	HALL A	Chic Takes Over TikTok: Turning Visibility into Conversions	Enchanteur	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd	PHD Media	Media Agency	Siti Nurzulaika Binti Shamsol Anuar Fatimah Zaharah Binti Zainal
Platforms & Purpose	Best in OOH/ DOOH		HALL B	The Real M Nasir	Wonda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cindy Khoo Etika
Platforms & Purpose	Best in OOH/ DOOH		HALL C	CelcomDigi Dreams to the Heart of Sabahans, The Dreamer	CelcomDigi	CelcomDigi	Posterscope Malaysia	Media Agency	Cheng Yee Yin Eeling Hooi

2025 PROGRAMME

DAY TWO (10 JULY 2025)

WELCOME TO DAY 2		8.00am	Registrations & Morning Coffee/Tea						
MAIN CATEGORY	CATEGORY	TIME	HALL	CAMPAIGN	BRAND	ADVERTISER	AGENCY	TYPE	PRESENTERS
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B	09:00 AM - 09:15 AM	HALL A	Malaysia's first ever Senior Esports Team	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL B	Atlas Ecopod: World's Slimmest Reverse Vending Machine with Compaction System	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Isaac Ampersand
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL C	SDP: Elmina City - Where Wellness Lives, and Content Leads the Way	Sime Darby Property	Sime Darby Property	WPP Media	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social	09:15 AM - 09:30 AM	HALL A	The Real M Nasir	Wonda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cindy Khoo Etika
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL B	SDP: Elmina City - Where Wellness Lives, and Content Leads the Way	Sime Darby Property	Sime Darby Property	WPP Media	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Automotive & Transport		HALL C	Toyota Gazoo Racing Season 7: Malaysia's First All-Digital Motorsports Spectacle	Toyota	UMW Toyota Motor	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Mahira Dahlan Shuba Ramakrishnan
Brands & Business	Best in Festive	09:30 AM - 09:45 AM	HALL A	#EratkanIkatan — A Raya Campaign That Rebuilt Bonds With Youth	CelcomDigi Berhad	CelcomDigi Berhad	ONE Team (M&C Saatchi + Naga DDB Tribal)	Advertising Agency	Inda Nur Atika Binti Sadi Ani Juliana Ibrahim
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL B	Bawa Balik Yang 'Itu'	Farm Fresh	Farm Fresh	Edelman	Other - Marketing Communications	Mundzir Latif Shazwan Zulkkifli
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL C	A DIY CNY	MR.DIY	MR.DIY	MR.DIY	Advertiser	Wong Ying Si Celine Khow Cer Hui
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B	09:45 AM - 10:00 AM	HALL A	FOMO & Fizz create Malaysia's #1 TV show in just 3 weeks, driving record sales	Calpis Soda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cindy Khoo Amelia / Celine
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation		HALL B	Bekpes Hot Tawan Puncak Kinabalu	Hot FM	Hot FM	Media Prima Audio	Other - Radio Broadcasting	Shah Hayatudin Aaron Pinto
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation		HALL C	Ultimate Elevator Pitch: 60 Seconds that reinvent the category!	Alliance Bank		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B	10:00 AM - 10:15 AM	HALL A	Bawa Balik Yang 'Itu'	Farm Fresh	Farm Fresh	Edelman	Other - Marketing Communications	Mundzir Latif Shazwan Zulkkifli
Brands & Business	Best in B2B		HALL B	CelcomDigi AiX – Innovation that Converts	CelcomDigi Berhad	CelcomDigi Berhad	ONE Team (M&C Saatchi + Naga DDB Tribal)	Advertising Agency	Tengku Aishah Munirah Nurul Nadhirah Binti Mohd Najib
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Govt/ NGO		HALL C	Jangan Scam Hatiku	Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM)	Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM)	M+C Saatchi	Advertising Agency	Jenatun Zulkkifli Nadjimi Nidza
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B	10:15 AM - 10:30 AM	HALL A						
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation		HALL B	FOMO & Fizz create Malaysia's #1 TV show in just 3 weeks, driving record sales	Calpis Soda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cindy Khoo Amelia / Celine
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Govt/ NGO		HALL C	Dreaming Big, Drawing Bigger: How Toyota's Art Contest Became a National Movement	Toyota	UMW Toyota Motor	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Mahira Dahlan Shuba Ramakrishnan
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B	10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	HALL A	Legitimizing Esports, driving sales with Malaysia's first ever ESports Month	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in OOH/ DOOH		HALL B	Atlas Ecopod: World's Slimmest Reverse Vending Machine with Compaction System	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Isaac Ampersand
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL C	CelcomDigi One Plan	CelcomDigi	CelcomDigi Berhad	ONE Team (M&C Saatchi + Naga DDB Tribal)	Advertising Agency	Choong Siew Cheng Ani Juliana Ibrahim
BREAK		10:45 AM - 11:15 AM	COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING						
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing	11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	HALL A	CelcomDigi x SRG – Turning Disruption into Influence	CelcomDigi Berhad	CelcomDigi Berhad	ONE Team (M&C Saatchi + Naga DDB Tribal)	Advertising Agency	Melvyn Lim Dinesh Sanjay Manickavasagam
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation		HALL B	Legitimizing Esports, driving sales with Malaysia's first ever ESports Month	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL C	There's No Stopping the Game: Netflix's Squid Game Returns to Malaysia for Season 2	Netflix	Netflix pte ltd	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Aaron Levi Elliot Joseph
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Tech	11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	HALL A	Dashing Bad Boyz Deodorant Spray — The Deo of the Future	Dashing	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Mutiara Harisson (part of McCann Worldgroup)	Advertising Agency	Devarshi Dalmia Benjamin Cheong
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B		HALL B	Pepsi Harvest: A Cultural Celebration Across Every Touchpoint	Pepsi		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL C	PANDAi Jaga Anda	MR.DIY	MR.DIY	M+C Saatchi	Advertising Agency	Ryan Alexander Blaydes Muhammad Fawzi Bin Jamil

2025 PROGRAMME

DAY TWO

(10 JULY 2025)

Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social	11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	HALL A	FOMO & Fizz create Malaysia's #1 TV show in just 3 weeks, driving record sales	Calpis Soda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cindy Khoo Amelia / Celine
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL B	CelcomDigi Skuad 5G	CelcomDigi Network	CelcomDigi Berhad	ONE Team (Naga DDB Tribal + M&C Saatchi)	Advertising Agency	Nikki Oon Tyler Chin
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Sustainability		HALL C	Atlas Ecopod: World's Slimmest Reverse Vending Machine with Compaction System	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Isaac Ampersand
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation	12:00 PM - 12:15 PM	HALL A	Malaysia's first ever Senior Esports Team	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL B	Bawa Balik Yang 'Itu'	Farm Fresh	Farm Fresh	Edelman	Other - Marketing Communications	Mundzir Latif Shazwan Zulkifli
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social		HALL C	Dashing Bump-It! Together As One	Dashing	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Mutiara Harisson (part of McCann Worldgroup)	Advertising Agency	Devarshi Dalmia Benjamin Cheong
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Tech	12:15 PM - 12:30 PM	HALL A	Atlas Ecopod: World's Slimmest Reverse Vending Machine with Compaction System	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Isaac Ampersand
Platforms & Purpose	Best in OOH/DOOH		HALL B	PANDAI Jaga Anda	MR.DIY	MR.DIY	M+C Saatchi	Advertising Agency	Ryan Alexander Blaydes Muhammad Fawzi Bin Jamil
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Sustainability		HALL C	Belonging: Turning old clothes into new hope	RHB Bank	RHB Banking Group	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Timothy Teh Wang le Tjer
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Digital	12:30 PM - 12:45 PM	HALL A	Dashing x Tottenham Hotspur — From London with Locker Room Cred	Dashing	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Mutiara Harisson (part of McCann Worldgroup)	Advertising Agency	Devarshi Dalmia Jenny Ching Yen Jee
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Customer Experience		HALL B	Record Breaking Sales Growth as Goodday KidSTART participation grows by 1200%	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Healthcare		HALL C	One Tap at a Time: Breaking Period Stigma with RM2.1M in PR and 99% Student Support	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Van Ampersand
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B	12:45 PM - 01:00 PM	HALL A	Record Breaking Sales Growth as Goodday KidSTART participation grows by 1200%	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Travel & Hospitality		HALL B	Making Journeys Better - The Orange Hot Relaunch of Journify Holidays	Journify Holidays	Loyalty & Travel Services, Malaysia Aviation Group	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Shu Jie Chua Azree Wahab
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL C	Dashing x Tottenham Hotspur — From London with Locker Room Cred	Dashing	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Mutiara Harisson (part of McCann Worldgroup)	Advertising Agency	Devarshi Dalmia Jenny Ching Yen Jee
BREAK		01:00 PM - 02:30 PM	LUNCH						
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation	02:30 PM - 02:45 PM	HALL A	Keluang Man Movie: Local superhero drives local coffee flavour growth	Wonda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Alia / Cherry
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL B	One Tap at a Time: Breaking Period Stigma with RM2.1M in PR and 99% Student Support	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Van Ampersand
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B		HALL C	Spritzer SILIQA™ - Experience Nature's Oldest Skincare Secret	SPRITZER	SPRITZER	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Wong Ching Sin Kong Pooi Ling
Brands & Business	Best in Festive	02:45 PM - 03:00 PM	HALL A	Romano X Dashing X Enchanteur - Surprise Your Love, Scentfully	Romano, Dashing, Enchanteur	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Mutiara Harisson (part of McCann Worldgroup)	Advertising Agency	Eve Goh Su Hoon Jenny Ching Yen Jee
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Sustainability		HALL B	Record Breaking Sales Growth as Goodday KidSTART participation grows by 1200%	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Brands & Business	Best in Fast Dining		HALL C	KFC Raya Meowriah: Making Raya Purr-fectly Inclusive	KFC Malaysia	QSR Stores Sdn Bhd	Naga DDB Tribal	Advertising Agency	Allen Looi Aireen Nasya
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Gov/ NGO	03:00 PM - 03:15 PM	HALL A	Stop That Dot: HOMESoy 3.0 Empowers Women to Fight Breast Cancer	HOMESoy		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social		HALL B	Keluang Man Movie: Local superhero drives local coffee flavour growth	Wonda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Alia / Cherry
Brands & Business	Best in Festive		HALL C	Multiply the Goodness with Tropicana Twister	Tropicana Twister	PepsiCo Malaysia	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Timothy Teh Wong Ching Sin
Platforms & Purpose	Best in OOH/DOOH	03:15 PM - 03:30 PM	HALL A	One Tap at a Time: Breaking Period Stigma with RM2.1M in PR and 99% Student Support	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Van Ampersand
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social		HALL B	KFC Raya Meowriah: Making Raya Purr-fectly Inclusive	KFC Malaysia	QSR Stores Sdn Bhd	Naga DDB Tribal	Advertising Agency	Allen Looi Aireen Nasya
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL C	Enchanteur Luxe: The Scent of Music & Modern Expression	Enchanteur	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Mutiara Harisson (part of McCann Worldgroup)	Advertising Agency	Sean Chuah Siti Nurzulaika Binti Shamsol Anuar

Brands & Business	Best in Festive	03:30 PM - 03:45 PM	HALL A	Where Drama Meets Dinner: Dapur Goodday Ramadan	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing		HALL B	Spritzer SILIQA™ - Experience Nature's Oldest Skincare Secret	SPRITZER	SPRITZER	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Wong Ching Sin Kong Pooi Ling
Platforms & Purpose	Best in OOH/DOOH		HALL C	That Dot is everywhere: Breast Cancer Survivors campaign takes over outdoor	HOMESoy		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
BREAK		03:45 PM - 04:15 PM	COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING						
Brands & Business	Best in Festive	04:15 PM - 04:30 PM	HALL A	Scentify & Enchanteur: The Purrfect Scent? Just Ask the Cat.	Scentify & Enchanteur	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Ogilvy Malaysia	Advertising Agency	Ma'wa Rahidin Aditi Hariharan
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B		HALL B	Where Drama Meets Dinner: Dapur Goodday Ramadan	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Sustainability		HALL C	One Tap at a Time: Breaking Period Stigma with RM2.1M in PR and 99% Student Support	Atlas Vending		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Van Ampersand
Brands & Business	Best in B2B	04:30 PM - 04:45 PM	HALL A	Wonda scores a winning goal with FAM and Harimau Malaysia	Wonda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cherry
Brands & Business	Best in FMCG - F&B		HALL B	Multiply the Goodness with Tropicana Twister	Tropicana Twister	PepsiCo Malaysia	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Timothy Teh Wong Ching Sin
Brands & Business	Best in Travel & Hospitality		HALL C	RWG CEO 2.0: Eva's Back, And She Means Business	Resorts World Genting	Resorts World Genting	Naga DDB Tribal	Advertising Agency	Allen Looi June Mah
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Influencer & Creator Marketing	04:45 PM - 05:00 PM	HALL A	Where Drama Meets Dinner: Dapur Goodday Ramadan	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	
Platforms & Purpose	Best in OOH/DOOH		HALL B	There's No Stopping the Game: Netflix's Squid Game Returns to Malaysia for Season 2	Netflix	Netflix pte ltd	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Aaron Levi Elliot Joseph
Brands & Business	Best in Non-Food FMCG		HALL C	Scentify & Enchanteur: The Purrfect Scent? Just Ask the Cat.	Scentify & Enchanteur	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Ogilvy Malaysia	Advertising Agency	Ma'wa Rahidin Aditi Hariharan
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Sustainability	05:00 PM - 05:15 PM	HALL A	Multiply the Goodness with Tropicana Twister	Tropicana Twister	PepsiCo Malaysia	THE SHOUT GROUP/FCB SHOUT	Advertising Agency	Timothy Teh Wong Ching Sin
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social		HALL B	Wonda scores a winning goal with FAM and Harimau Malaysia	Wonda		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	Cherry
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation		HALL C	Toyota Gazoo Racing Season 7: Malaysia's First All-Digital Motorsports Spectacle	Toyota	UMW Toyota Motor	Trapper Media Services	Media Agency	Mahira Dahlan Shuba Ramakrishnan
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Social	05:15 PM - 05:30 PM	HALL A	Scentify & Enchanteur: The Purrfect Scent? Just Ask the Cat.	Scentify & Enchanteur	Wipro Unza (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.	Ogilvy Malaysia	Advertising Agency	Ma'wa Rahidin Aditi Hariharan
Platforms & Purpose	Best in Innovation		HALL B	Where Drama Meets Dinner: Dapur Goodday Ramadan	Goodday		Ampersand Advisory	Media Agency	

**TO MARK OUR 10th YEAR,
WE WILL ALSO BE HONOURING APPIES WINNERS OF
THE DECADE ON AUGUST 8.**



*All Programme details are correct at the time of publication,
and may change as the event nears.*

FLASHBACK

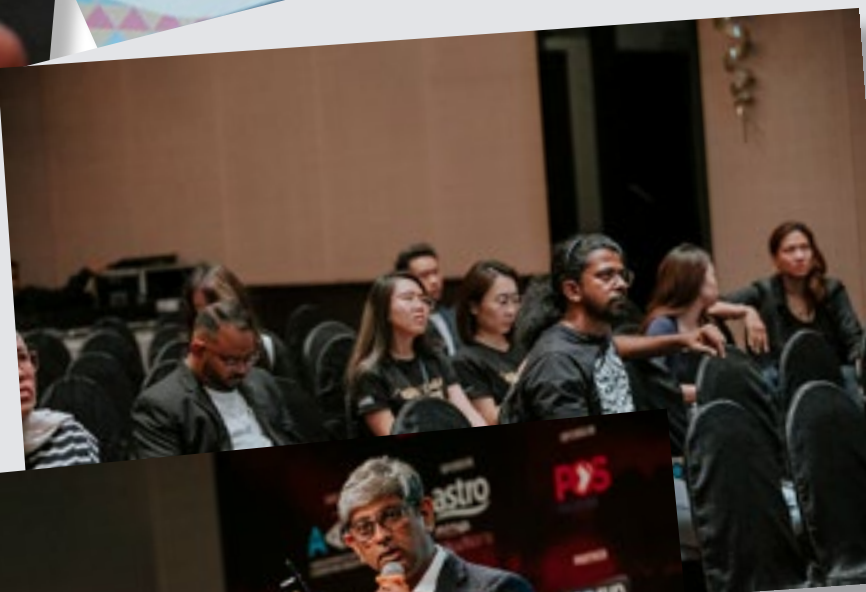
2016 - 2024



FLASHBACK



FLASHBACK





Cannes by Foot, by Boat, and by the Glass

What the World's Biggest Festival of Creativity Taught Me About the Power of Presence

By Srikanth Ramachandran, Founder & CEO of Moving Walls Group



The 2025 Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity took place from June 16 to 20 in the postcard-perfect town of Cannes, France. If you work in marketing, advertising, or brand-building, this is the Mecca, the place where creativity is awarded, celebrated, debated, and occasionally even redefined.

CANNES IGNITE

“Cannes is more than panels and parties. It’s where creativity walks beside you, talks over rosé, and quietly reminds you why you fell in love with this industry in the first place.”

As someone who’s been in this industry long enough to have seen trends come and go, Cannes still manages to surprise me. It’s not just a showcase of the boldest work or the glitziest parties. At its best, it’s a reminder of why we’re in this business to connect with people, to shift culture, and to tell stories that matter.

I arrived in Cannes with a full calendar and high expectations. I left with aching feet, a head full of insights, and a slightly sunburned sense of perspective.

There are many ways to experience Cannes. There’s the main stage version full of panels, award announcements, standing ovations and the echo of applause. But then there’s the Cannes that happens off-script: deals discussed on boats, breakthroughs shared over late-night glasses of rosé, and honest conversations that unfold on long walks between venues. I walked nearly 20,000 steps a day, not chasing content, but leaning into every spontaneous encounter.

“Cannes is more than panels and parties. It’s where creativity walks beside you, talks over rosé, and quietly reminds you



CANNES IGNITE

why you fell in love with this industry in the first place.”

Surprisingly, it wasn't always the marketing veterans who delivered the best takeaways. One of the most profound sessions I attended was led by a Formula One driver. He talked not about speed, but about focus, the discipline to wait before



... In an industry often obsessed with pixels and platforms, Cannes reminded us that the power of real-world interaction hasn't faded. In fact, it's being reimaged...

accelerating, the patience to observe before acting. In a place like Cannes, where the energy is constant and the schedules are packed, that lesson landed hard. Sometimes, creativity isn't about going faster. It's about knowing when to pause.

This year, Brazil stood tall. Crowned the first-ever Creative Country of the Year, Brazil took home 107 Lions, including six Grand Prix and a Titanium. But it wasn't just the volume of awards that impressed me. It was the nature of the work so much of it lived in the real world, bold outdoor executions, street-level storytelling, physical installations that connected with people where they lived and moved.

CANNES IGNITE

And that was a pattern I noticed across many of the most awarded campaigns. From India to Singapore, physical presence, out-of-home, activation, ambient media was front and centre. In an industry often obsessed with pixels and platforms, Cannes reminded us that the power of real-world interaction hasn't faded. In fact, it's being reimaged.

That validation felt personal, I've long believed that great ideas should live beyond screens in cities, on streets, in shared spaces. When we meet audiences in their world, rather than waiting for them to scroll past us, the result is often more human and more impactful.

My own Cannes journey this year was more grounded quite literally. I skipped the fancy hotels and lived on a boat for six days, sharing the space with two trusted industry allies: Barry Cupples, whose wisdom has steered many of us through uncharted waters, and Vishnu from SledgeHammer, whose infectious energy could power its own agency.

It wasn't luxurious, but it was perfect. Mornings with coffee on the deck, nights with wine

and real talk under the stars. That boat became our floating boardroom, crash pad, and think tank. Even now, weeks later, I can still feel the soft sway when I stand still. It was the kind of rhythm that grounded the entire Cannes experience.

But Cannes, like the industry itself, isn't without its blind spots. The official Cannes Lions app promised better networking but didn't deliver. It's time the festival embraced smarter tools perhaps even AI-powered matchmaking to help creatives find each other beyond the cocktail circuit. Imagine if your journey started at your departure gate at Doha, KLIA, Changi with pop-up lounges or welcome zones curated for connection. Why wait until Nice to start the conversation?

And then there's the city itself. One evening, after leaving a rooftop gathering, I passed several people begging on the street. It was a sobering moment. Just metres away, Cannes was lit up in luxury, and here was the very real reminder of imbalance. I'm not naive. This is the world we live in. But if we, as creatives, can solve billion-dollar problems for global brands, surely we can

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spare some imagination and resources for the cities that host our celebrations.

There's one iconic Cannes experience I didn't have this year: the Gutter Bar. That infamous late-night hangout has been described as the true heart of Cannes, raw, unfiltered, open till 4 a.m., where the best ideas are scribbled on napkins and reputations are made under neon. I meant to go. I didn't. Somehow, the timing never lined up.

But I'm oddly glad I missed it. Like the character in *The Alchemist* who dreams of Mecca but never goes, there's something beautiful about leaving one story unfinished. It gives me a reason to return.

Cannes is chaotic, energising, and contradictory, a place where billion-dollar ideas are scribbled on the back of a business card, where you're applauded for a case study at 3 p.m. and debating ethics on a yacht by midnight. It's where creativity still feels like currency, not in CPMs, but in connections the kind you feel in your bones, not just your inbox.

If you've never been, go. If you've been many times, go

again but slower. You'll hear more, see more, and maybe remember why you chose this field in the first place. I'll be back next year. Maybe with a better plan, maybe with better shoes. But definitely with the same hunger for ideas, for perspective, for that unmistakable spark that only Cannes seems to ignite.

And maybe next time, I'll make it to the Gutter Bar. Or maybe not. Either way, I've already taken home the story I came for.



Srikanth Ramachandran is a distinguished architect of the modern media-tech landscape and the Founder and Group CEO of Moving Walls, a globally awarded enterprise shaping how brands engage audiences in motion.

With an unerring eye for the future, he has led the company to global acclaim from TiE50 to Unilever Foundry30 and Campaign Asia's Most Valuable Product by marrying data precision with contextual storytelling across the physical world. Educated at Nanyang Business School and seasoned by leadership tenures at IBM Singapore, Srikanth also founded Knowledge Dynamics, which later merged with a NYSE publicly listed firm. His career is defined by an elegant fusion of strategic insight and technological stewardship. A firm believer in technology's moral imperative, Srikanth champions the idea that innovations especially in AI must not only scale but serve, enriching human experience while upholding social integrity. His voice remains one of the region's most influential in bridging the divide between what is possible and what is purposeful.

MOST READ ON www.MARKETING.com.my (27th June 2025 – 04th July 2025)



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2025

MALAYSIA
MARKETING CAMPAIGNS AWARDS



APPIES MALAYSIAN CONFERENCE 2025

9 & 10 July, 2025

Sheraton Petaling Jaya Hotel

8.30am to 5.30pm