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# Championing Advertising in the 21st Century

**STEPHEN WOODFORD**

Chief Executive, Advertising Association

As the first quarter of this century closes, UK advertising continues to prove its ability to deliver growth for businesses, large and small, despite the economic headwinds we have all weathered since the triple economic, societal and political shocks of the pandemic, Brexit and the banking crisis.

Making the case for advertising has never been more important. That is why in May we were so proud to publish Advertising Pays 2025, a landmark report from our think tank Credos. It showed our industry's tremendous value, with advertising and marketing contributing £109bn in GVA to the economy, supporting 1.7 million jobs across the UK.

These figures, along with advertising's exports and its impact on the wider creative industries, underpin the Government's recognition of advertising as a priority growth sector in its Creative Industries Sector Plan in June. We will continue our spotlight on advertising's value through Advertising Pays in 'The Success Files', a new series of compelling case studies showcasing advertising's real-world impact, launching in 2026.

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Working closely with the Government, policy progress was marked by an Industry Agreement on Less Healthy Food Advertising, a vital development to bring business certainty ahead of the statutory implementation of the new rules. Through our AI Taskforce, we advanced work on responsible adoption of the technology and engaged closely with DCMS’s own Online Advertising Taskforce.

Meanwhile, our core workstreams continued to progress and serve our members’ priorities. We were delighted to see public trust in advertising reached its highest level since 2021, rising to 42%, supported by the latest wave of the ASA awareness campaign. Reminding the public that advertising content is well regulated is a cornerstone of growing and maintaining public trust.

The third All In Census took place in March, helping shape the next action plan to build a workplace where all our industry’s talent can thrive and everyone is welcome. As Ad Net Zero marked its fifth anniversary, significant developments included the launch of v1.2 of its Global Media Sustainability Framework at Cannes Lions.

The year also saw us conclude the final chapter of our 2022–2025 strategy and lay the groundwork for what comes next. To better reflect the rapidly evolving advertising landscape, we have implemented governance changes, including a strengthened role for our Council under the leadership of our new President, Andria Vidler.

2026 is a landmark year for the Advertising Association as we celebrate our centenary. We will mark this with, amongst other things, a new book by Matt Bourn and James Best called Trusted Advertising. This draws upon one of the AA’s original founding principles – to promote public confidence in advertising – and explains how trusted advertising can bring a competitive advantage to brands in the 21st century. We hope this will be of great value to the industry.

As we enter our second century as an association, with the support of our members, our mission to continue championing responsible advertising remains as relevant as ever, along with our confidence in its ability to drive growth and value for businesses, society and the economy.

“

**We were delighted to see public trust in advertising reached its highest level since 2021, rising to 42%, supported by the latest wave of the ASA awareness campaign.**

”





# Policy and Government Affairs

**KONRAD SHEK**

Public Policy and Regulation Director, Advertising Association

“

This year demonstrated the convening power of the AA and coordinated industry engagement. Whether lobbying for data protection amendments, developing AI best practices, or advocating against disproportionate restrictions, we've brought member voices together to seek more workable, evidence-based policy outcomes.

”

## External Engagement

The AA attended major party conferences and co-hosted events with the CBI, emphasising the industry's economic role. The team organised member dinners with Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat parliamentarians, held its annual parliamentary staff reception (co-sponsored with the IPA and ISBA at Channel 4), and arranged 'adland' tours for parliamentarians and civil servants.

## Data Governance

We lobbied for amendments to the Data (Use and Access) Bill, which received Royal Assent. Our efforts secured key industry asks for balanced data protection, consumer rights and growth. The Data Steering Group convened eight times, including meetings with Lord Clement-Jones, DSIT and the ICO.

## Less Healthy Food

The team engaged extensively with CAP and the Government to ensure the new restrictions work for industry. We submitted evidence to the CAP consultation and House of Lords' Food, Diet and Obesity Committee inquiry, advocating for balanced, proportionate regulation.

## Advocacy in Scotland

We advocated against the Scottish Government making cuts to non-essential public service advertising for 2025. Public Health Scotland published a review of the evidence for potential restrictions on alcohol advertising, with our team involved in ongoing discussions to represent industry perspectives.



## European Affairs

We facilitated nine AIG Exchange Partner meetings – eight virtual sessions and one Directors’ lunch – covering topics such as AVMSD, DFA and Digital Simplification, with EU official engagement. Ongoing participation in the EU AI Office working groups contributed to developing an AI Act Transparency Code of Practice. We drafted an ICAS Global Think Tank report on labelling of AI-generated advertising content.

## Skills & Growth

The AA launched ‘Unlocking Apprenticeships to Drive Growth’, drafted with the IPA, CIM, Channel 4 and Google, with input from our Skills and Growth Working Group. The report called for Government ambition with the new Growth and Skills Levy, ensuring it drives sector growth.

## Online Advertising Taskforce

The OAT extended its remit for 12 months, with a new Fraudulent Advertising Working Group announced. The AA, ISBA, IAB, and ASA led workstreams reinforcing the industry’s commitment to responsible advertising. The AI in Advertising Working Group advanced a Best Practice Guide for publication at LEAD 2026, whilst the Information Sharing Working Group progressed towards an operational pilot.

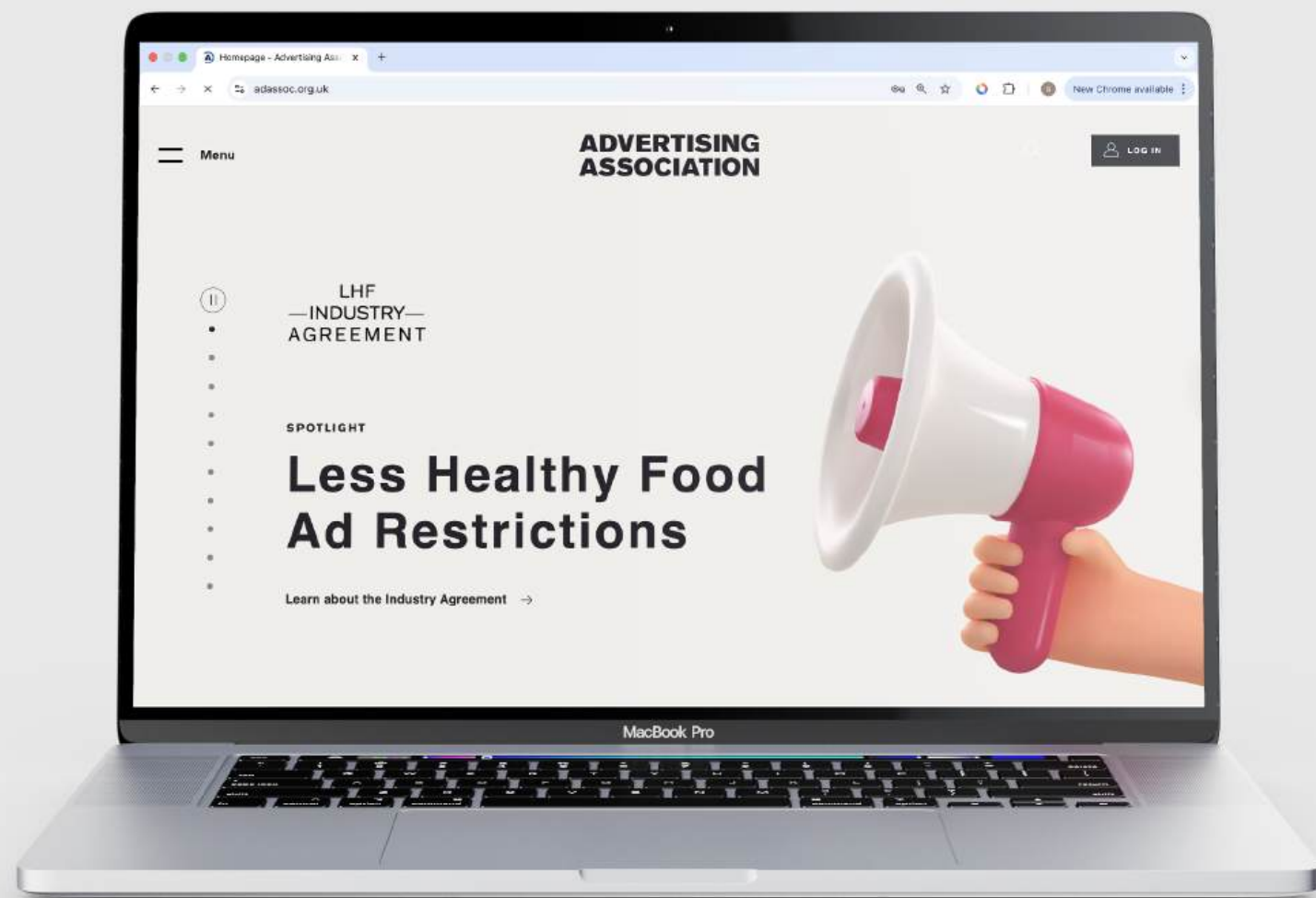
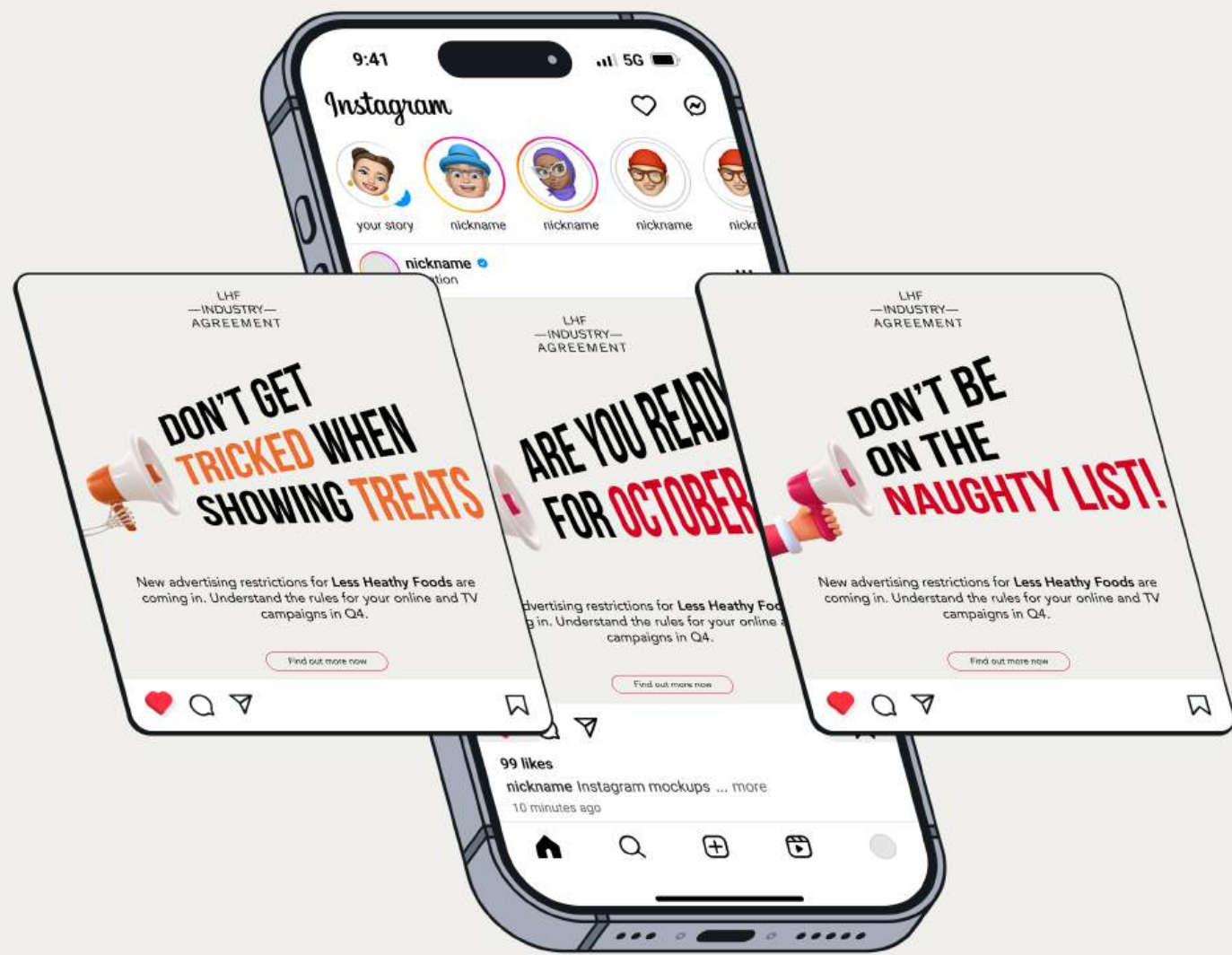
## AI Taskforce

The AI Taskforce met eight times, exploring agentic AI and the use of AI-generated models in advertising. The team developed an AI Skills e-book, nearing completion at year-end, to support industry understanding of human-AI collaboration and complementarity frameworks.



[→ TO LEARN MORE VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)





# Less Healthy Food

**CHRIS WALKER**

Director of Public and External Affairs, Advertising Association

Food advertising has long divided opinion. For almost two decades, the AA has worked to make sure that our industry’s role in the nation’s dietary choices is properly understood by policy decision makers. With new restrictions coming into place in 2025, this year our advocacy with government and the regulator was more critical than ever.

The debate around Less Healthy Food (LHF) advertising has been ongoing since the Theresa May government first consulted on possible restrictions back in 2019. In the subsequent years, the AA has led the industry’s response to an ever-shifting political and policy debate about what exactly the rules should be, what they should include, and which media they should affect.

After several delays, the Labour Government confirmed that the rules would come into force from 1st October 2025. As we started the year there was still a lack of legal clarity around the role of brand advertising – something that successive governments and ministers had repeatedly said would not be affected by the restrictions. The reality was that poor legislative drafting in the Health and Care Act 2022 meant that that promise had not translated into the law. This put the ASA, as the frontline regulator, in a difficult position when it was trying to create its industry guidance with competing legal interpretations making clarity impossible.

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The AA co-ordinated a letter to No.10 and the relevant government departments, signed by 27 concerned trade bodies and businesses, in January to call for government to step in and provide legal clarity. This was followed by months of intense negotiations involving industry, government, and the regulators. So complex were the discussions that it was only in May that we finally got confirmation that the law would be amended to explicitly exclude brand advertising from the scope of the restrictions.

Given the legislative impacts of their decision the Government decided to change the legal implementation date to January 2026, but asked industry to adhere to the rules on a ‘voluntary’ basis from the original implementation date of 1st October 2025. The Voluntary Agreement was co-signed by 19 other trade bodies and media owners on behalf of the industry. This Agreement became the basis for a substantial cross-industry awareness raising campaign spearheaded by the AA in collaboration with IAB UK, IPA, and ISBA and supported by other trade bodies across the advertising and food ecosystem. This incorporated a huge amount of external comms to relevant media alongside webinars that reached over 1,300 industry professionals, e-learning resources hosted across trade bodies’ websites, Q&A sessions, and lunch and learns across member offices.

Throughout this debate and the political and public commentary around it we have worked closely with members across the industry – fellow trade bodies, agencies, brands, media owners, and online businesses – to help ensure that the law was implemented in the way that politicians intended. Through the Food Advertising Working Group we have put forward robust responses to government and Parliamentary consultations, scrutinised legislation, held government to account over promises to industry, and worked closely with the Ministers and regulator to ensure that the new rules both align with government’s stated policy and are workable for industry. The past six years have been an excellent display of the importance of industry coming together under the umbrella of the AA to put forward a clear, united response to an issue of incredible importance to businesses across our sector.

As we look to 2026 and beyond, it is clear that the debate around food advertising will continue to be a political talking point for some time to come. We will continue to work with all of our members to ensure that we put forward a clear, cross-industry position that reflects the evidence-based reality of advertising’s role in the nation’s health. We will also continue to liaise with government and the regulator over the impact of the legislative restrictions and act as a voice on behalf of the industry on this important topic.



→ SEE OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE





# Convening the Industry


**SHARON LLOYD BARNES**  
Commercial Director, Advertising Association

“Feedback from our members tells us that one of our most important responsibilities is to bring people from all parts of our industry together. We created more opportunities than ever before this year for our members to be part of the wider conversation.”

“The Advertising Association is an essential partner for TikTok, providing a critical platform that unites our diverse industry around shared goals. Their work in championing transparency, sustainability, and trust is fundamental to maintaining a vibrant advertising ecosystem that benefits creators, brands, and our community. Our membership in the Advertising Association allows us to collaborate with their partners to drive progress on media literacy and via initiatives like All In hold ourselves to account for building a truly equitable and inclusive industry.”

 **Kris Boger**  
TikTok General Manager, UK, Ireland, Benelux

“Influencer marketing is a fast-growing contributor to the UK’s economy. We are proud to be Advertising Association members, and to support its work championing advertising that is trusted, inclusive, and sustainable. AA plays an invaluable role supporting and shaping the advertising industry. Their collaborative approach helps influencer marketing become ever more credible, creative and commercially powerful.”

 **Scott Guthrie**  
Director General, Influencer Marketing Trade Body








“The Advertising Association is a vocal trailblazer for advertising and its contribution to the UK economy. But more than that, they push us to be better. Their work on both climate action and inclusion is outstanding. We are proud to be Front Foot members, to support the Advertising Association, and to remain at the forefront of debate.”

 **Jenny Biggam**  
Owner, the7stars

“The Advertising Association is fundamental to our industry, delivering both critical insight and the community forum needed to collectively shape an industry to be proud of. Ozone’s Platinum sponsorship of LEAD this year was important for us to demonstrate our commitment to and support for their truly great work.”

 **Damon Reeve**  
CEO, Ozone


“The Advertising Association fulfils a much-needed role in communicating the vital contribution of advertising to UK plc. We are a proven growth engine for the nation, and we are fortunate that our advertising industry is a one of the global centres of excellence. The AA helps ensure we all live up to both this responsibility and opportunity.”

 **Charlie Rudd,**  
CEO of Publicis Groupe UK

“The Advertising Association’s leadership through initiatives like All In and Ad Net Zero inspires all of us to keep pushing for a more inclusive, responsible and sustainable future. We truly value the partnerships and shared purpose that make real progress possible.”

 **Bobi Carley**  
Director of Industry Relations, ISBA

“We are proud to be a member of both the AA and Front Foot. Their leadership on trust, policy, inclusion and industry collaboration is invaluable and they provide a forum to tackle shared challenges and seize collective opportunities. Being part of this community ensures we play an active role in shaping a stronger future for UK advertising.”

 **Karin Seymour**  
Director of Client and Marketing, Sky Media







# Our Front Foot Network

Front Foot is an exceptional senior network of leaders from across the ecosystem of advertisers, media owners and agencies. With a high level of engagement at events, policy forums and across our working groups, this dynamic cohort turbocharges all of the AA's work on behalf of the advertising industry.

## Exclusive Events

We were delighted to co-host the 2025 Front Foot Leadership Dinner with TikTok in March when members enjoyed an evening with C-suite peers at Sucre. The AA's Parliamentary Receptions, in Westminster and Holyrood, and President's Reception provided more senior networking opportunities for our members and a chance to hear from Sir Chris Bryant MP and our new President, Andria Vidler.

## Insight Sessions

This year we hosted a range of popular and topical insight sessions for members. These included 'The Power of Trust' session with Royal Mail marketreach, which we hosted at Talon, 'Navigating the New Economic Landscape: UK Budget Analysis and Implications for the Advertising Industry' and 'The Best Christmas Ads Unwrapped' with Kantar.

## Skills and Talent

Sixty attendees joined online to hear Emily Eisenstein, Head of Sector Engagement at Skills England, explain their plan to tackle skills gaps, boost technical education and ensure we have a skilled workforce needed to achieve the government's ambitions for growth.

## Access to AA Reports

Our industry-defining report, Advertising Pays 2025, launched in May at LEAD North in Manchester. Designed to arm our members with the stats and facts they need to enable conversations about the economic impact of advertising, it features contributions from over 20 industry players and adds to the knowledge bank of key reports our members can access.



## Policy Briefings

The new regulations for Less Healthy Food advertising are a big industry focus this year and we have been working closely with the IPA, ISBA and the IAB to ensure our members are fully briefed. Almost 500 people joined our first ‘All Industry Update’ in March and, as the ASA take over the statutory responsibility for enforcing the restrictions in 2026, we co-hosted a further session in December.

## Cannes Networking

In partnership with Pinterest, we hosted our second Front Foot Leadership Lunch for 30 of our senior members at the Carlton Terrace during the Cannes Lions Festival. As usual, we also ran a programme of curated content all week, in partnership with DBT, representing UK advertising at the Festival, so there were lots of opportunities for members to engage.

## Adland Tours

We ran successful adland tours for Civil Servants and MPs that included Neverland, Dentsu, Bauer Media, Google and News UK. Through the charity BelEve and the Bloom network, we were proud to open up the ad industry for ten young women and visited Front Foot members including IPG, Major Players, the7Stars, TikTok, BBH and DCM.

## Listening to our Members

To ensure that Front Foot continues to meet and exceed expectations of the group, we ran the first member pulse survey in September. The invaluable feedback revealed that members value the senior networking, speaker opportunities and exclusive industry insight most highly.



[→ VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE](#)





# Credos

**DAN WILKS**  
Credos Director, Advertising Association



“At a time when growth is the Westminster watchword, 2025 saw the publication of the much-anticipated reboot of Advertising Pays, outlining the economic case for advertising. Meanwhile, we also produced work on topics as wide-ranging as AI, hybrid working, sustainability and millennial trust.”

## Advertising Pays 2025

13 years on from the first report in the series, we published 'Advertising Pays 2025: Powering the UK's Changing Economy', evidencing advertising's massive economic contribution to the UK.

## Member Presentations

With high-profile reports such as AdPays 25 and our work on the third All In Census, member presentations by Director, Dan Wilks, have been a regular fixture in the Credos calendar.

## Advertising's Big Questions

Our quest to answer the industry's biggest, most important questions continued with a big one: "Is advertising bad for the planet?", authored by Ben Essen.

## Credos Thinks

Using our in-house databank, we produced articles on topics like AI and employment, scam ads, and the importance of the ASA.



# Credos Reports

Alongside the in-depth Advertising Pays 25 report that featured over 20 industry contributors, we released a Hybrid Working report answering 10 key questions facing the industry.

# Surveys

We ran surveys to inform AA policy and strategy development, including the AA Council Member Survey and the Ad Net Zero Supporter Survey.

# Public Trust

Credos’ long-term tracking of public trust in advertising returned the highest levels recorded since 2021. We’ve also completed the fourth iteration of the Drivers of Trust research, identifying what makes people trust or distrust advertising in 2025. The results will be published at LEAD 2026.

# Credos Quarterly

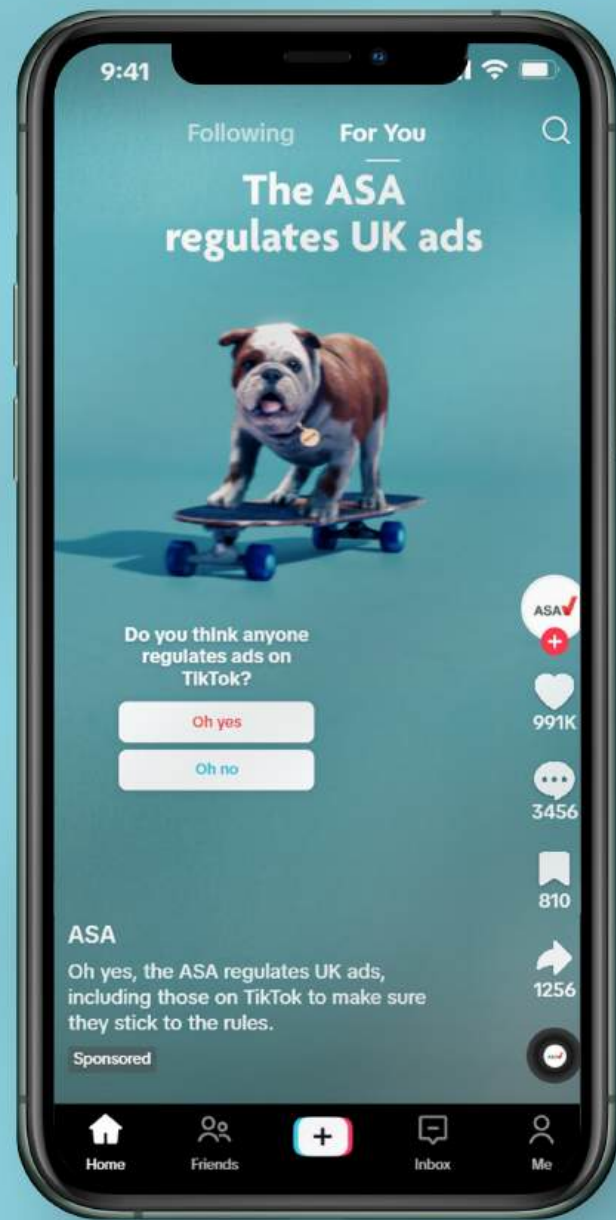
With over 500 subscribers, our quarterly newsletter mailing list is growing. Keeping members up to speed on the latest and most valuable research.





The ASA makes  
sure UK ads stick  
to the rules.  
Simples.

Advertising Standards Authority | [asa.org.uk](https://asa.org.uk)



# The Value of Trust

**JAMES BEST CBE**  
Chair, Credos

“  
There’s been more written about trust this year than ever and its value to advertising has been reinforced by new studies. We have seen public trust in advertising gradually rising, but there is more to do. The industry must remain committed to that; advertising will only be trusted if it is trustworthy.  
”

## ASA Awareness

In a year when trust has been a topic of concern and interest across the ad industry and beyond, it’s been heartening to see the success of the ASA campaign. The public tell us that their suspicions over the authenticity and honesty of ads have grown, so knowing that there is a ‘bobby on the beat’ to protect them is a vital reassurance. Supporting the ASA is more important than ever.

## Tracking Progress

Credos research and tracking have shown how threats to trust in advertising have increased. Scams and fraud have become of increasing public concern; the rise of influencers has generated uncertainty over what is or isn’t advertising; and the arrival of Gen AI has sparked intense debate. But the industry’s good work has helped overall trust levels keep moving upward and our research programme aims to bring more insights to boost that further.







# Advertising's Trade Missions

**AISSLING CONLON**  
International Trade Director, Advertising Association

“  
Our mission is to champion UK advertising worldwide, opening doors for UK businesses. In 2025, we delivered export opportunities, strengthened global networks, and laid foundations for future growth highlighting UK advertising as the unsung hero of the UK creative sector.  
”

## Trade Missions

This year, 99 UK companies joined UKAEG’s international missions at SXSW Austin, SXSW London, Cannes Lions, New York, Miami, Saudi Arabia, and China. Curated programmes enabled successful relationship building with new markets and many companies return year after year, showing the sustained value of UKAEG missions.

## An Export Powerhouse

UK advertising exports reached £17.9bn in 2024, more than three times higher than a decade ago, making the UK the world’s second-largest exporter of advertising services. The UK’s creativity, talent, and reputation, combined with our strategic geographic position, enable successful collaboration between time zones across Asia and the Americas.

## Total UK exports in 2024:







## Government Recognition & Policy

UKAEG's advocacy ensured advertising was recognised as a priority sector for growth and a key contributor to the UK economy in the Government's Creative Industries Sector Plan. Through whitepapers and engagement with DBT and DCMS, UKAEG influenced initiatives for trade mission support to raise the profile of UK advertising globally.

## Expanding Global Reach

UKAEG connected companies with senior decision-makers from global brands, agencies, and government bodies, forging strategic partnerships and building long-term pipelines. Events were held at the British Embassies in New York and Riyadh, while the Leadership Icon Award in New York and Friendship Honour in Saudi Arabia celebrated global collaboration.

## Cannes Business Programme

UKAEG delivered 28 events for 40+ companies under the theme "The Business behind GREAT Creativity," connecting UK businesses with global industry decision-makers. This year, 45 UK companies won 106 awards, placing the UK in the top three countries globally.



**VISIT THE UKAEG WEBSITE FOR MORE**





# Media Smart

**RACHEL BARBER-MACK**  
Executive Director, Media Smart

“ This has been a pivotal year for Media Smart. From our first consumer campaign to parents on digital literacy, to extending our mission, we’ve strengthened our role in championing advertising literacy to a whole new audience – thanks to the long-term commitment of our supporters. ”

## Enhanced Brand & Mission

In April, Media Smart unveiled its new brand and mission with creative communications agency Livity. It now has an extended age range to under 25s and will also inspire young people into careers in advertising and the media.

## Careers Roll-Out

We introduced a new in-person school workshop, delivered by OMG UK, to inspire careers in advertising and the media. Roadshows included a visit to Sir Chris Bryant MP’s constituency in the Rhondda.

## Parental Consumer Campaign

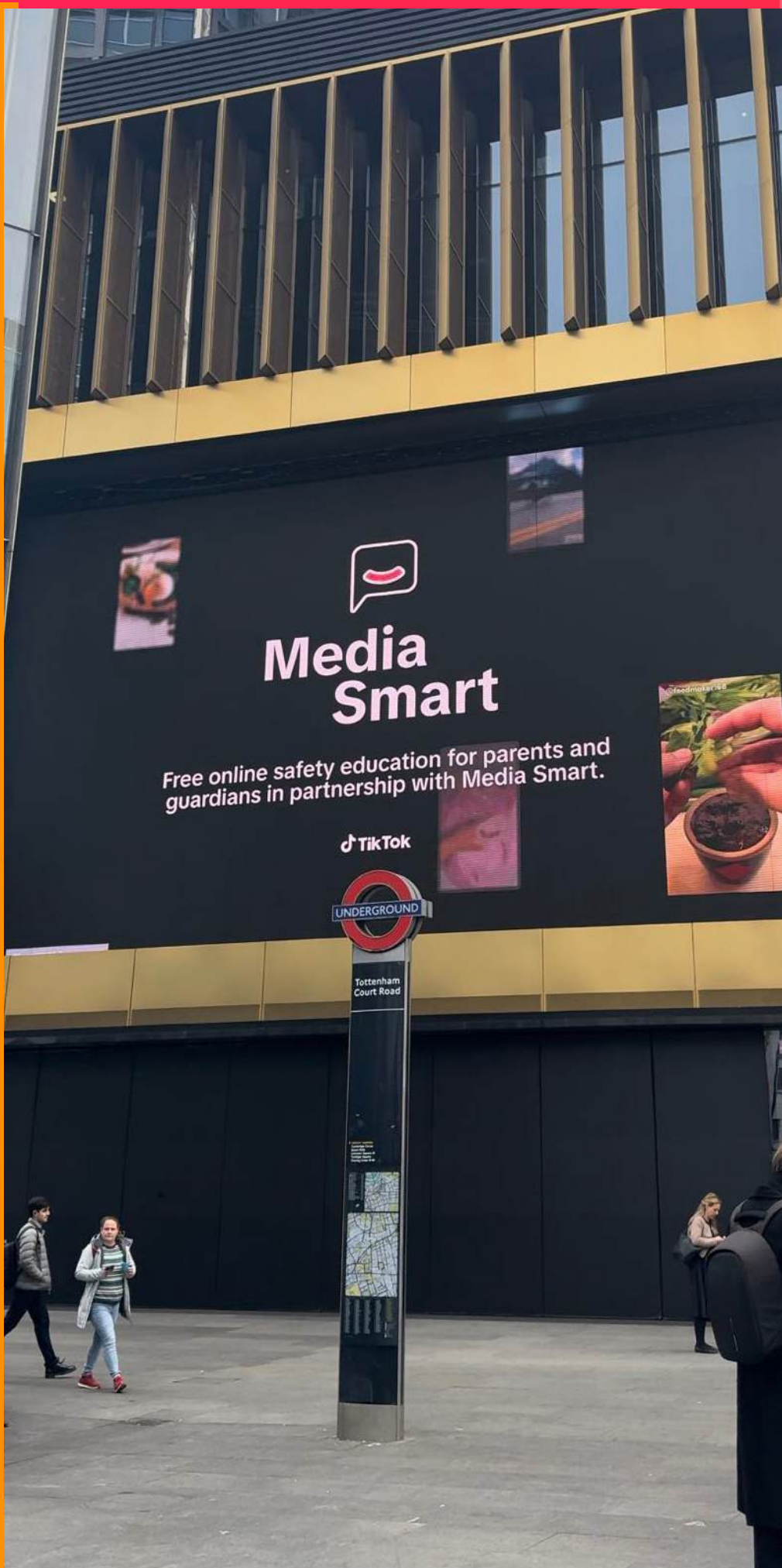
We launched ‘Teens, Social Media & You’ with TikTok, to help parents have conversations with teens about their online safety and experience. With 50 million views and counting, it is extending to parents who don’t use social media in 2026.

## Ministerial Support

We promoted Safer Internet Day and Media Smart’s scam awareness resources with backing from the Home Office’s STOP! THINK FRAUD campaign and Fraud Minister Lord Hanson.

# MediaSmart

Understanding Ads. Inspiring Careers.







MEDIA SMART SUPPORTERS

- adam&eveDBB  
Advertising Association  
ASA  
asbof  
Boots  
British Toy & Hobby Association  
Channel 4  
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport  
EDAA  
Ferrero  
First News  
Fun Kids Radio  
Generation Media  
Giraffe Insights
- Google  
Government Equalities Office  
History of Advertising Trust  
IAB  
IMTB  
The Industry Trust  
Intellectual Property Office  
Into Film  
IPA  
ISBA  
ITV  
Livity  
Mail Metro Media
- Meta  
MPA  
Netflix  
Next-Gen Media  
Omnicom Media Group  
Pearl & Dean  
Rocket  
Sky  
Snap  
The Week Junior  
TikTok  
Yahoo

ASA Awareness Raising

As part of the industry’s wider drive to raise awareness of the regulator, Media Smart rolled out the ASA campaign to a youth audience for the first time (online and in person) with 41 million advert impressions in universities and sixth form colleges.

“I’m delighted to support Media Smart’s brilliant work to inspire students about creative careers in Rhondda and Ogmore.

Businesses in the UK, including the advertising and media industry, are not just economic powerhouses; they can provide opportunities for people from all backgrounds. Every young person deserves a good creative education and the chance to see themselves in these careers.

Programmes like Media Smart help open those doors, and I’m pleased to see this happening right here in our community with Omnicom Media Group UK.



Sir Chris Bryant MP  
Minister of State

→ VISIT MEDIASMART.UK.COM TO LEARN MORE





# Talent and Inclusion

KATHRYN JACOB OBE  
Chair of the Inclusion Working Group

“ This year our industry rallied for the third All In Census, underscoring real momentum in inclusion, representation, and equity. We supercharged our Training Hub with 600+ new courses and released our first policy report on accelerating skills and growth through apprenticeships. ”

## All In Census

This year’s All In Census gathered 14,000 responses, remaining the largest industry survey of its kind in the UK, and continues to provide invaluable data on both the make-up of our industry and how we feel about the work we do.

## All In Champions

There are now 158 All In Champion companies actively adopting the industry Action Plan – with more joining all the time. It aims to build a workplace where everyone feels they belong.







## New Actions

We released new All In actions for mental health and age inclusion, empowering businesses to take meaningful action to address barriers and make workplaces equitable for all.

## Spotted in the Industry

All In was featured in a brand-new report by Creative UK, looking at diversity in leadership across UK creative industries. All In also featured as a case study of best practice in industry inclusion efforts.

## Skills and Growth

With advertising a key sector in the Creative Industries Growth Plan, our newly formed Skills and Growth Working Group has achieved its first key objectives, including the release of the 2025 report, 'Unlocking Apprenticeships to Drive Growth'.

## Training and Development

We released our largest ever update of the Advertising & Marketing Training Hub featuring over 600 new courses and brand-new training providers including Google, WYK Digital and Tesco Media.

## Awards and Recognition

We ended the year celebrating the winners of the Talent Trailblazer Award in partnership with Marketing Week, and All In Champion Award in partnership with Media For All (MEFA), with each highlighting the importance of best practice in talent and inclusion from our membership and All In Champion companies.

We are in

We are in

I'm in

I'M IN

WE ARE IN

I'M IN

→ VISIT [ADVERTISINGALLIN.CO.UK](https://advertisingallin.co.uk) TO FIND OUT MORE





# Climate Action

**SEBASTIAN MUNDEN**  
Chair, Ad Net Zero

“

Ad Net Zero, grown in the UK, is the global ad industry’s sustainable business programme, supporting markets that account for 49% of all ad spend. We provide tools, frameworks and networks for the industry to take a positive role in tackling climate change, equipping businesses to win today in the fast-growing green economy, fit for future generations.”

”

## Decarbonising Media

Ad Net Zero’s Global Media Sustainability Framework (GMSF) V1.2 was launched at Cannes Lions with significant global industry support. This workstream is the highest priority for the programme, as media represents the bulk of advertising supply chain emissions. The GMSF offers a way to calculate these emissions more accurately and consistently across the industry increasing efficiency and enabling emission reduction.

## Campaign Ad Net Zero Awards

In our fourth year of the awards, in partnership with Campaign and supported by Google, we saw entries rise 26% year-on-year, with work submitted from 14 global markets. For the first time, a government-funded campaign won - and took home the UK Grand Prix, exemplifying progress from business and government alike.



## New Tools and Resources

In late 2025, AdGreen added AI Usage measurement to its Carbon Calculator, a breakthrough feature enabling teams to track emissions from AI-driven content creation. Covering text, image, and video generation, it delivered transparency and control over the environmental impact of generative AI during the production of advertising.

## Marking Progress

New research among UK Ad Net Zero Supporters showed strong ROI from sustainability action: 62% reported stronger client or partner relationships, while 52% cited improved employee engagement and retention. These findings reinforce the business case for integrating sustainable practices across the advertising industry.

## Engagement and Education

Ad Net Zero delivered an extensive training and insight programme, helping supporters build knowledge and skills. Topics included Sustainability x AI, showcasing 2024's Campaign Ad Net Zero Award winners, and taking a look at sustainability-focused campaigns from Cannes Lions.

 **TO LEARN MORE VISIT [ADNETZERO.COM](https://adnetzero.com) AND [WEAREADGREEN.COM](https://weareadgreen.com)**

## Every Brief Counts

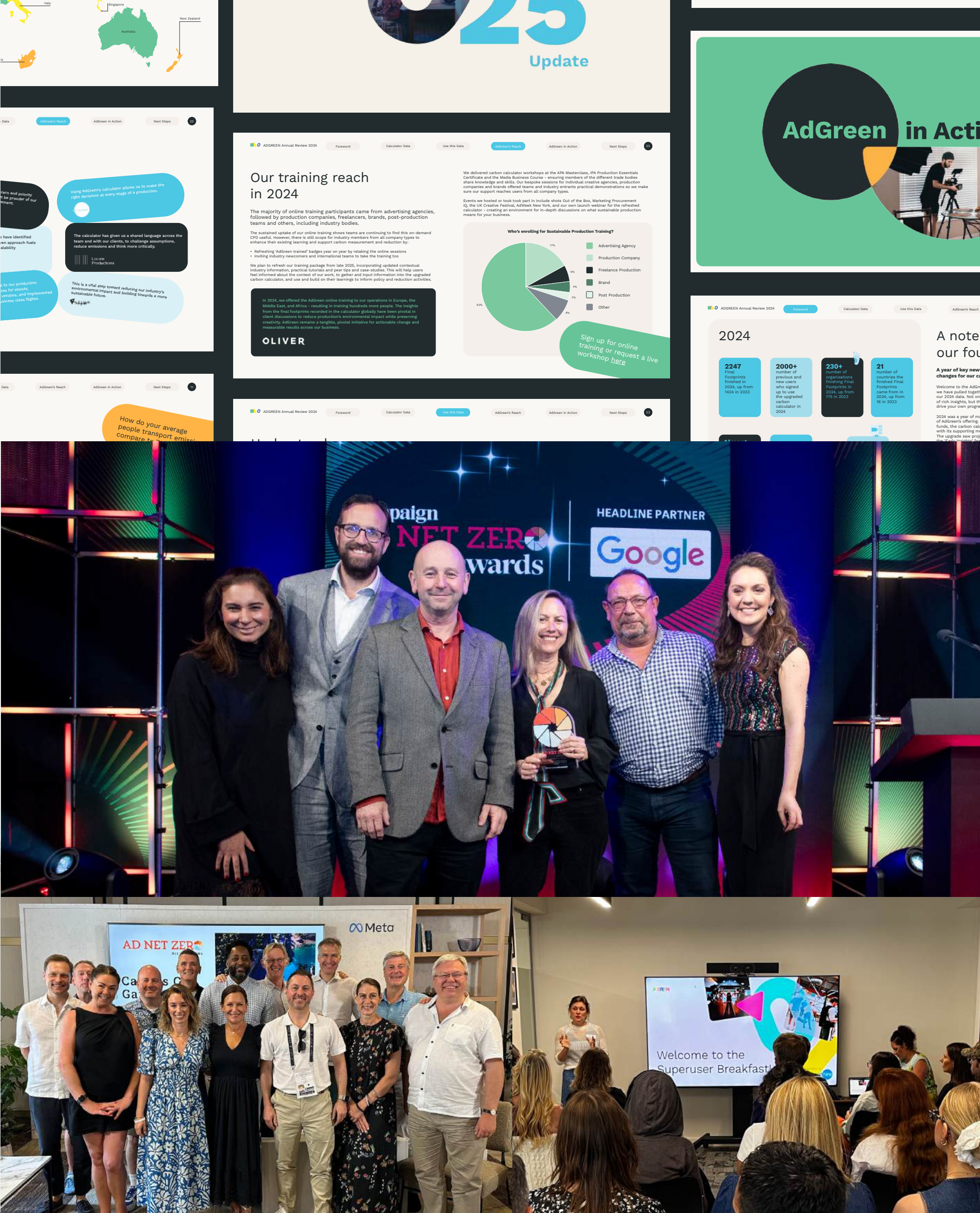
Ad Net Zero advanced its Every Brief Counts initiative, working with Kantar to develop the Sustainable Ad Tracker. This new partnership measures how often pretested ads feature sustainable behaviours across markets and sectors, supporting efforts to educate the industry on how to embed sustainability from brief to execution.

## Supporter Expansion

To accelerate progress across the advertising ecosystem, Ad Net Zero introduced a new membership structure, rolling out in 2026. The three-tiered model - Supporter, Supporter+, and Accelerator - provides resources and leadership opportunities for businesses across the sustainability spectrum.

## Global Advocacy

John Osborn, Sebastian Munden, and Rachel Schnorr represented Ad Net Zero at Davos, CWNyc, and COP30 events, sharing case studies and strategies in which marketing and advertising help accelerate the green economy with customers and consumers while reducing costs and greenhouse gases in the advertising supply chain.







# Industry Profile

**MATT BOURN**  
Communications Director, Advertising Association

“

Advertising sits right at the heart of our lives and we see this play out through national debate about our industry’s work. Rarely a day goes past without some kind of story featuring advertising in the news. Our task is to try and make sure responsible advertising’s value is properly recognised.

”

## Reputation Group

Our Industry Reputation Working Group met quarterly to review and develop communication campaigns to evidence advertising’s responsible contribution to the UK. Our well-attended meetings have ensured wide industry support for work around a variety of key issues.

## Economic Contribution

This year’s launch of ‘Advertising Pays 2025: Powering the UK’s changing economy’, was a priority at events and in the media. It was an opportunity to both remind and refresh key stakeholders about how and where advertising makes a vital economic contribution. Key numbers around GVA, jobs, and the ROI of advertising were widely shared.



## Spreading the Word

AA spokespeople were out and about all year speaking at events including Cannes Lions, Advertising Week Europe, Future of Media Manchester and CreatorFest. We worked closely with industry and national media to always make sure the views and activities of our industry were well represented.

## THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

51

news releases and official statements

32.1%

average open rate for Ad Matters newsletter

112,003

website visits

142,825

total impressions on LinkedIn

 **VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT MORE**

## LHF Awareness

One critical campaign was to help build industry-wide awareness of the Voluntary Agreement about the new Less Healthy Food restrictions. We worked in partnership with fellow trade bodies, including ISBA, the IPA and IAB UK, to signpost key resources and delivered multiple media briefings, webinars and in-person presentations.

1.66bn

coverage reach

1300+

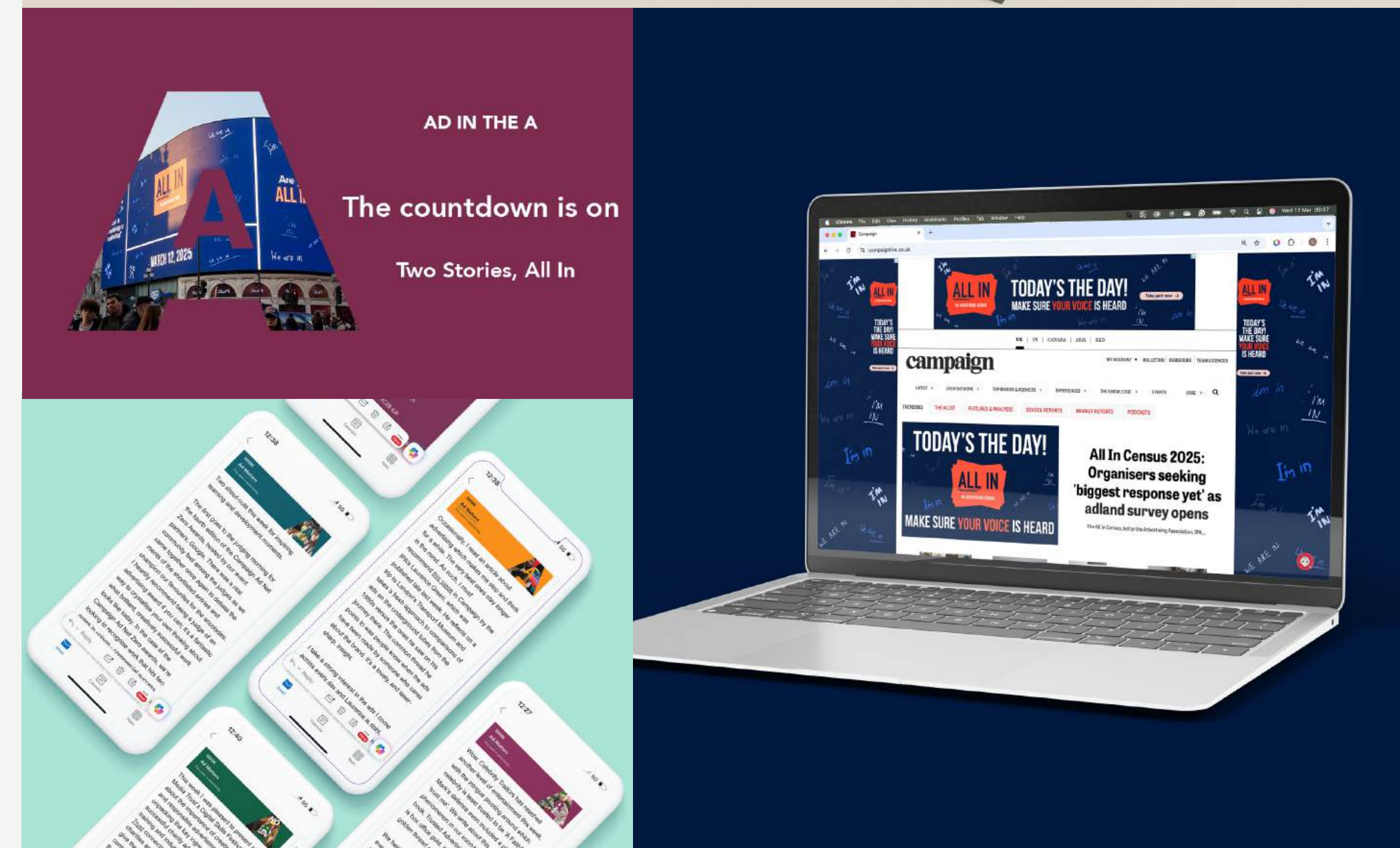
attendees for our Less Healthy Food webinars

261.5mn

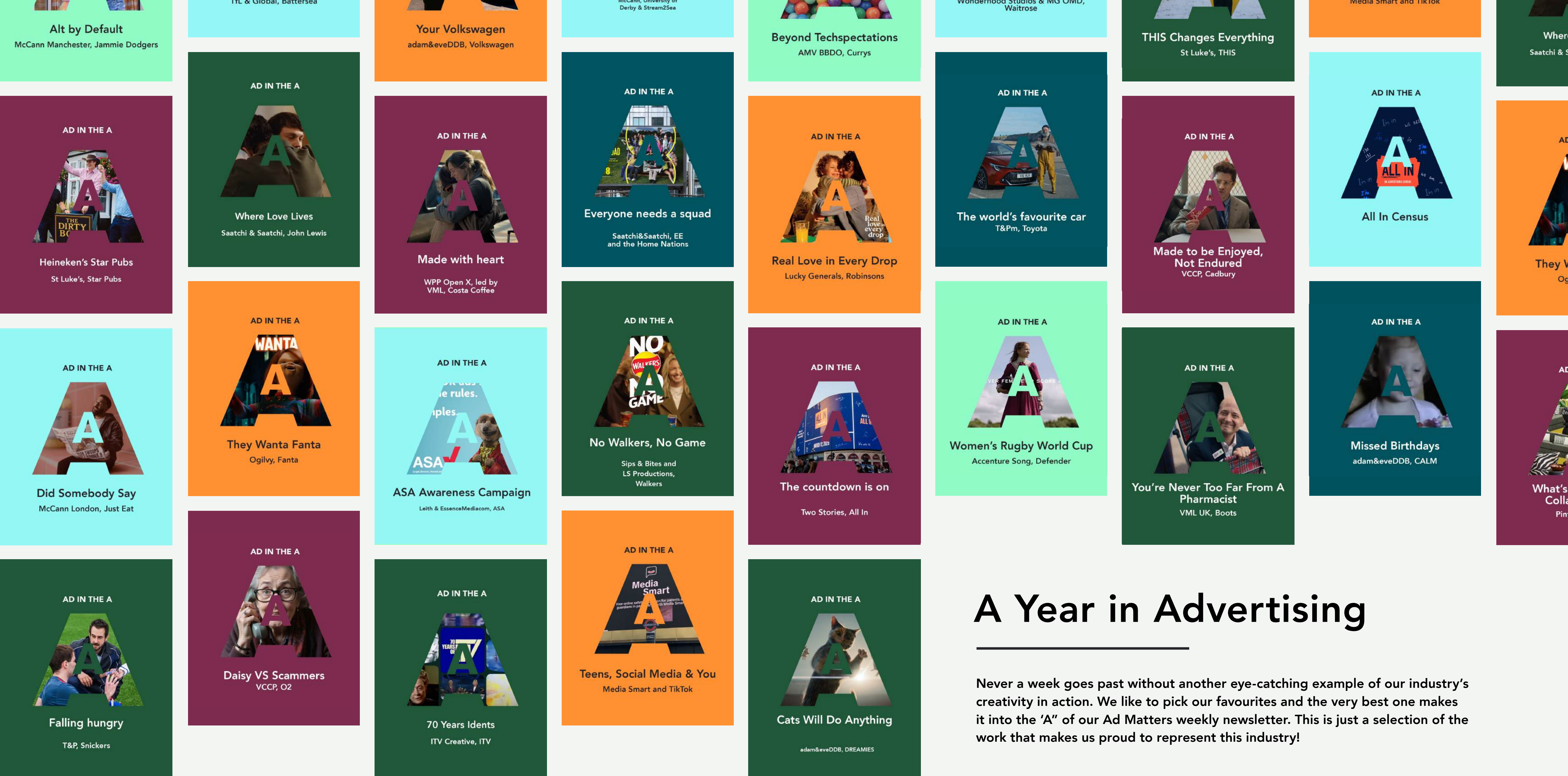
reach for our Less Healthy Food Industry Agreement Campaign

106

## UK wins at Cannes Lions







# A Year in Advertising

Never a week goes past without another eye-catching example of our industry's creativity in action. We like to pick our favourites and the very best one makes it into the 'A' of our Ad Matters weekly newsletter. This is just a selection of the work that makes us proud to represent this industry!





# Our Members

## ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION

- AIA

AOP

APA

CAA

Channel 4

CIM

Clearcast

COBA

Global

Google

IAB UK

IMTB

IPA

ISBA

ITV
- Meta

MRS

NMA

Outsmart

Paramount

Pinterest

PPA

Radiocentre

Royal Mail marketreach

Sky Media

Snap

Spotify

TikTok

Warner Bros Discovery

Yahoo

## FRONT FOOT

- Accenture Song

adam&eve DDB

Allwyn

Amplifi

AMV BBDO

Anomaly

Asbof

Bauer Media

Bauer Media Outdoor

BBH

Boots

The Brandtech Group

BT

Channel 4

Carat

Centrica

Clearcast

dentsu Creative

dentsu Media

dentsu X

Digital Cinema Media

Digitas

Drum

Drummond Central

Dunnhumby

EssenceMediacom

FCB
- Fuse

Giffgaff

Global

Good-Loop

Google

The Guardian

Havas

Havas Media

Hearts & Science

Initiative

IPA

IPG Mediabrands

iProspect

ISBA

ITV

JC Decaux

Kinesso

Lane

Leith

Leo

Lloyds Banking Group

LS Productions

Mail Metro Media

Major Players

McCann

McDonald’s

Mediaplus
- Merkle

Meta

MG OMD

Mindshare

Mullen Lowe

Nationwide

Neverland

NewsUK

Ocean Outdoor

Ogilvy

OMD

Omnicom Media Group

Open Media

Ozone

Pearl & Dean

Performics

PHD

Pinterest

Posterscope

Publicis Media

Rapport

Republic of Media

Royal Mail marketreach

Saatchi & Saatchi

Seedtag

Sky Media

Smartly.io
- Snap

Spark Foundry

Spotify

Starcom

STV

T&P

Talon

Tesco

TFL

the7stars

TikTok

UM

VCCP

VCCP Media

VML

Wavemaker

WPP Media

Yahoo

Zenith



# LEAD 2026

**ADVERTISING  
ASSOCIATION**  
FOUNDED 1926

**IPA**  
Incorporated  
by Royal Charter

**I S B A**

## THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY'S SUMMIT

5 February 2026 | Queen Elizabeth II Centre

[adassoc.org.uk/events/lead-2026](https://adassoc.org.uk/events/lead-2026)

INTRODUCTION

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FOOD

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AA SOCIAL  
ACTIVITIES







# AA Council and Front Foot Board

## ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

- Jonathan Allan, Channel 4
- Dennis Apo, Spotify
- Paul Bainsfair, IPA
- James Best CBE, Credos
- Lord Black, NMA
- Kris Boger, TikTok
- Tom Curry, Yahoo
- Simon Daglish OBE, ITV
- Chris Daly, CIM
- Steve Davies, APA
- Julian Douglas, AA Export Champion
- Shruti Dube, Meta
- Richard Eyre CBE, IAB
- Charlotte Frijns, AA Hon Treasurer
- Jane Frost CBE, Market Research Society
- Mike Gordon, Global
- Amanda Griffiths, Royal Mail marketreach
- Scott Guthrie, IMTB
- Kathryn Jacob OBE, Pearl & Dean
- Tim Lumb, Outsmart
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- Sajeeda Merali, PPA
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- Jon Mew, IAB
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- Sebastian Munden, Ad Net Zero Chair
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- Caroline Orange-Northey, Pinterest
- Marie Owen, AA Scotland Chair
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- Richard Reeves, AOP
- Jeremy Rosenberg, Warner Bros Discovery
- Karin Seymour, Sky Media
- Mitchell Simmons, Paramount
- Tariq Slim, Snap
- Sam Smith, Clearcast
- Andria Vidler, Allwyn
- Stephen Woodford, AA CEO

## FRONT FOOT BOARD

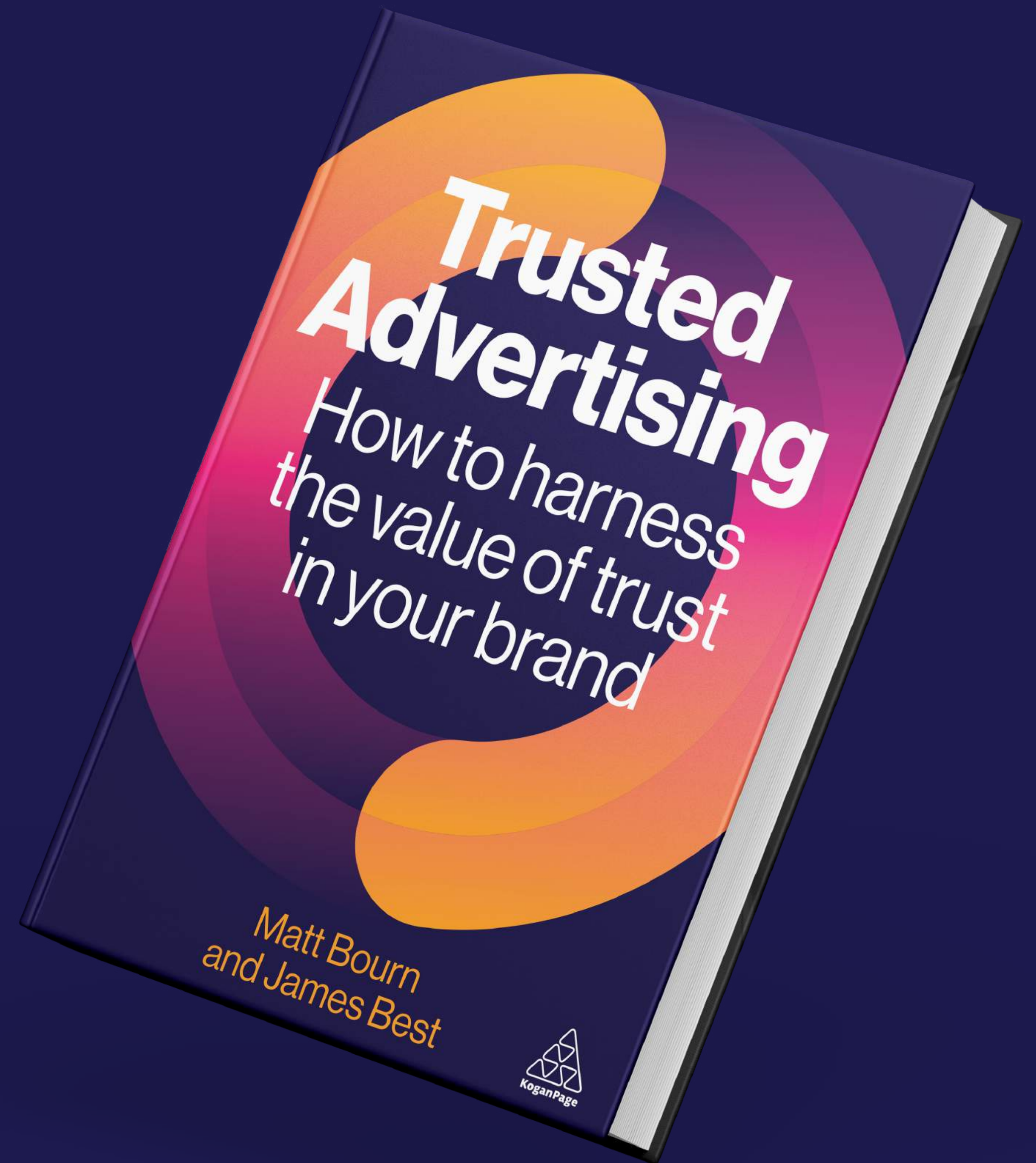
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- Natalie Bell, Manning Gottlieb OMD
- James Best CBE, Credos
- Matt Bush, Smartly.io
- Dominic Carter, News UK
- Simon Daglish OBE, ITV
- Miranda Hipwell, adam&eveDDB
- Charlotte Frijns, AA Hon Treasurer
- Simon Michaelides, ISBA
- Karen Stacey, Digital Cinema Media
- Stephen Woodford, AA CEO



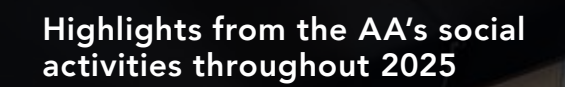
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Out February 2026

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