

local competition rules & categories

The rules, divisions and categories defined here serve as the official policy for the American Advertising Awards competition and replace all others from previous competitions. The name American Advertising Awards, ADDY and the trophy to which this name refers are protected by a registered trademark owned by the American Advertising Federation. The AAF competition rules, category format and the American Advertising Awards competition name should be used at all levels of the competition.

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the american advertising awards



The American Advertising Awards is the advertising industry's largest and most representative competition, attracting nearly 30,000 entries every year in local AAF Club competitions . The mission of the American Advertising Awards competition is to recognize and reward the creative spirit of excellence in the art of advertising .

Conducted annually by the American Advertising Federation (AAF), the local phase is the first of a three-tier, national competition . Concurrently, across the country, local entrants vie to win ADDY Awards—recognition as the very best in their markets . At the second tier, local ADDY winners compete with winners from other local clubs in one of 15 district competitions . District ADDY winners are then forwarded to the third tier, the national stage of the American Advertising Awards . Entry in your local Ad Club competition is the first step toward winning a national ADDY .

Entering the American Advertising Awards supports the entire advertising industry, because the AAF and its local and district affiliates use the proceeds to enhance advertising through programs such as public service, professional development, internships, advocacy groups, advertising education, and consumer awareness .

Selection of the most creative entries is conducted through a scoring process in which a panel of judges—comprised of accomplished advertising creative professionals—evaluates all creative dimensions of every entry . A Gold ADDY is recognition of the highest level of creative excellence and is judged to be superior . Entries that are also considered outstanding and worthy of recognition receive a Silver ADDY . The number of awards given in each category is determined by the judges, based on the relative quality of work in that category .

The American Advertising Awards Student Division is also a three-tier national competition, which is sponsored by the AAF . Occurring in conjunction with the professional competition, the Student Awards recognize and reward creative excellence by students . Information on entering the American Advertising Awards Student Division may be found at [AmericanAdvertisingAwards .com](http://AmericanAdvertisingAwards.com) .



about the competition

AMERICAN
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How to Enter

Visit AmericanAdvertisingAwards.com, or your local AAF Club website . You will be directed to the competition site to register as an entrant. Review the category list in this document or on these websites to find where your work should compete, and follow the simple drop-down menus to enter your information . Make sure you credit the members of your creative team, so that they will be recognized properly in press releases and other AAF winner publications . *Trophies are engraved based on information submitted at time of entry. Please make sure all fields are accurate.*

Submission of entries acknowledges the right of the AAF to use them for publication, exhibition and marketing of the American Advertising Awards competition and show .

Deadlines

Local deadline information is available from your local AAF Club . All Ad Club entry deadlines for this competition year will occur on or after January 1, 2023 . After preparing your entries in the manner outlined in this guide, deliver the entries, before your local deadline, to the location indicated by your local Club . Since you must enter your local American Advertising Awards competition to be eligible for district and national judging, it is important that you do not miss this deadline .

Eligibility Requirements

- All work entered in the American Advertising Awards competition must have first appeared between January 1, and December 31, 2023 .
- With the exceptions of Pro Bono Advertising and Advertising Industry Self Promotion categories, and student entries, work entered must have been the result of paid creative services and/or media placement in the normal course of business .
- Entries must be submitted in the CBSA, DMA or MSA where the work was created (as defined by Arbitron or Nielsen for your local market) . If multiple Ad Clubs are in the same CBSA, DMA or MSA the Ad Club located nearest to the entrant geographically will be the entry site .
- In the event there are entrants located in markets not served by a local American Advertising Awards-affiliated show, the acceptance, processing, judging, forwarding and fees of those entries will be decided by the governing body of the district in which the entrant is located . Additional geographic considerations are covered on page 6 .
- For Student eligibility requirements refer to the Student American Advertising Awards Rules & Categories available at AmericanAdvertisingAwards.com .

“Real” Advertising

The expressed intent of the American Advertising Awards competition is to recognize and reward creative excellence in the legitimate everyday workplace of advertising . Occasionally, an entry is submitted that appears to have been created outside the conventional agency-to-client-to- media marketing structure, as if the entry was created solely for the purpose of winning an award **or an account** . This type of work is not accepted . **Eligible entries must consist of placed media created in the aforementioned timeframe .**

“New” Creative

To qualify as new creative, the copy must be completely different from that used in any previous ads . The same headline with different body copy does not qualify . Changing dates, locations, times, savings, etc ., does not qualify . The illustration or photography can be the same, but the copy (thrust and content) must be new . Some ads present little or no copy . In the instance of no copy (other than time, location, and other basic information data), an ad with a previously used illustration does not qualify . If questionable, the final decision rests with the local, district and ultimately the national American Advertising Awards Committee (N3AC) . Copyright infringement and/or plagiarism (be it intentional or unintentional) will result in the disqualification and, if applicable, removal of awards from any entry deemed in violation . All entry fees will be forfeited .

Documentation

Should a question arise relative to the eligibility or legitimacy of any entry the entrant agrees by his/her signature on the entry form to furnish the necessary documentation for review by the National American Advertising Awards Committee (N3AC) . Failure to do so can be grounds for disqualification without refund of entry fees . Decisions on eligibility made by the N3AC are final .

Entry Fees

Local entry fee information is available on the competition entry website, or from your local AAF Club . Since there is often a substantial savings in entry fees for AAF members, you should consider joining your local Club . Some of the benefits of membership include: personal and professional development through regular meetings and workshops; networking opportunities; a voice in legislative issues; and member discounts on business related services .

All Entries Must

- Meet all eligibility and deadline requirements .
- Be entered in the correct category and be correctly identified .

- Conform to defined submission requirements .
- Conform to all copyright laws .

Invoice/Manifest Form

After filling out the entry forms, *you will be required to sign an Invoice/Manifest Form*, listing all of your entries . This form states that by signing below you:

- 1 . Verify that the above information is accurate .
- 2 . Acknowledge that proper rights were obtained for use of any elements of the entry that were not original .
- 3 . Agree to submit documentation deemed necessary for review .
- 4 . Release the entry for Internet, broadcast and/or print (allow reuse of material) .
- 5 . Verify that the entry was created within the local MSA of the competition .

Entry Submission

Judging will happen virtually this year. No physical entries will be accepted. Digital entries must follow size and file type requirements and need to be submitted in the Open Water portal including digital file uploads, JPEG screenshots or submission of URLs. Further instruction in Open Water will guide you.

Campaign Entries

A "Single-Medium Campaign" is no less than two and no more than four total pieces in the entry .

An "Integrated Campaign" is defined as a campaign or series of ads, commercials or executions that utilize more than one medium . The American Advertising Awards allows entries in all Integrated Campaign categories to submit up to ten executions for judging . Integrated Campaign entries may be accompanied by a written or digital (video) summary not to exceed 250 words (written) or 3 minutes (digital) . Digital summaries must be submitted by uploading the video file during the online entry process .

Failure to adhere to these limitations may result in a portion or all of the noncompliant entry to be removed from judging .

Judging Procedures

Judging will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines found on the [AAF website](#) . Decisions of judges and the N3AC, including eligibility, qualifications and appropriate category placements, are final .

Geographic Considerations

Entries may be entered into only one local American Advertising Awards competition, which is determined by the location of the agency or company that created the work . In addition, the piece MUST be entered under the Geographic Considerations of the entrant . In Elements of Advertising, entries may only be entered in the CBSA, DMA or MSA in which it was created by the original creator of the work, not the agency or company that commissioned the work . If an affiliated competition does not exist in the CBSA, DMA or MSA, the district will direct the entrant to the nearest affiliated competition . {Although not recommended, the entrant, if other than the agency/creator, may choose to enter the work on behalf of the creator (examples include, but are not limited to: photographers, illustrators, printers, production companies or clients) . In this case, the entrant's address will determine into which local show the work is entered . It is important, however, that the parties communicate to ensure the work is entered and eligible in only one market . Should a conflict arise and work is entered without knowledge in two markets, the N3AC defers to the rights of the creator in all cases .}

sales & marketing

NOTE: All entries in the Sales & Marketing division must be physically submitted after the conclusion of the online entry process. This includes submission of a physical copy of the creative work—SUITABLE FOR IN-PERSON JUDGING and two printed copies of the entry form. Failure to comply with these guidelines could result in disqualification. 3-5 digital images and one optional video upload. Requirement of physical entry submissions is at the discretion of the local AAF Club.

SD001 Sales Promotion Single Entry (1 piece)

SD001-1 Sales Promotion Campaign (2-4 pieces)

Product or Service Sales Promotion - Printed promotional materials for products and services whose distribution comes from means other than traditional mass media . Examples of elements that fall within this category are Catalogs, Sales Kits, Product Information Sheets, Menus, Packaging, Point of Purchase, Free Standing Displays, etc

Collateral Material – Elements such as stationery, letterhead, envelopes, business cards, annual reports, newsletters, brochures, editorial spread or feature, magazine design, special event materials, etc.

Direct Marking – Including anything that is mailed via USPS or delivered via special currier (private, FedEx, UPS, etc) with the purpose of eliciting, provoking, or effecting a consumer reaction (response card, phone number to call, sale/event dates, etc). Example includes direct mail.

Specialty Advertising – Examples include apparel and merchandise like pens, bumper stickers, etc, that are created to promote a company, corporate image, brand or event.

print advertising

NOTE: Categories are allowed 3-5 digital images and one optional video upload. Requirement of physical entry submissions is at the discretion of the local AAF Club.

SD002 Print Advertising Single Entry (1 piece)

SD002-1 Print Advertising Campaign (2-4 pieces)

Magazine Advertising – Advertising that appears in periodic (annual, bi-annual, quarterly, monthly, weekly, etc) publications. Both consumer and trade publications are accepted in this category.

Newspaper Advertising – Advertising that is placed/run in publications whose primary purpose is to inform the public about current events or issues on a daily or weekly schedule .

out-of-home & ambient media

NOTE: Categories are allowed 3-5 digital images and one optional video upload. Requirement of physical entry submissions is at the discretion of the local AAF Club.

SD003 Out-of-Home & Ambient Media Single Entry (1 piece)

SD003-1 Out-of-Home & Ambient Campaign (2-4 pieces)

Guerrilla Marketing – Formerly known as a form of ‘non-traditional advertising’ guerrilla marketing is an unconventional way of performing advertising and/or promotional activities. Guerrilla Marketing entries must be accompanied by proof of usage. Entries in this category should be accompanied by a written or digital (video) summary not to exceed 250 words (written) or 3 minutes (video) . Digital summaries must be submitted by uploading the video file via the American Advertising Awards online entry software . Examples include kiosk, art exhibition, trade show, retail store design, etc.

Events – Entries in this category should be accompanied by a written or digital (video) summary not to exceed 250 words (written) or 3 minutes (video) . Digital summaries must be submitted by uploading the video file via the American Advertising Awards online entry software

Signage – Including posters, outdoor boards, mass transit, site locations (ie mall, airport, bus stops, stadiums/arenas, etc)

online/interactive

NOTE: Entries for categories within the Online/Interactive division do not require physical submission. Judging of these entries will be done online, using the digital content provided via URL or by JPEG screenshots during the online entry process.

SD004 Online/Interactive Single Entry (1 piece)

SD004-1 Online/Interactive Campaign (2-4 pieces)

Websites – including consumer, B-to-B, Microsites, etc.

Social Media – Creative execution of brand advertising, marketing or promotion that appeared in social media.

Apps/Games/Virtual Reality - Apps must advertise a product or service . Apps and Virtual Reality entries will be judged using a digital (video) summary of 3 minutes or less, which must be digitally uploaded by the entrant (not via URL) . This summary should describe and demonstrate the design and functionality of the entry as well as the most important user benefits and attributes of the entry. Judges will not be given access to the app itself or headsets for virtual judging .

Advertising & Promotion – This includes web banner ads, website takeovers, emails, etc.

Blogs and Digital Publications – Eligible blog content must support a brand or advertise a product or service. Digital publications include a digital version of magazines, newsletters, books, etc.

******Note for large campaigns: Up to 10 pieces of work may be submitted using the Cross Platform Category***

film, video & sound

NOTE: Entries for categories within the Film/Video & Sound division do not require physical submission. Judging of these entries will be done using the digital content provided via URL or uploaded during the online entry process.

SD005 Film, Video & Sound Single Entry (1 piece)

SD005-1 Film, Video & Sound Campaign (2-4 pieces)

Audio/Radio Advertising – Audio/Radio advertising is defined as commercial audio (only) messages conveyed to the prospective/target consumer public by the seller of a product or service via mass media transmission . Commercial messages which appear on digital streaming or satellite radio services such as Pandora, Spotify or SiriusXM should be entered in the Regional/National Radio categories .

Television Advertising – A single TV commercial that is broadcast on the station(s) of one market (no more than one DMA) . TV commercials broadcast on stations in more than one DMA (even if placed on only one station in each of two DMAs) do not qualify as “local .”

Internet Commercial - Any commercial that is created to run on the Internet . Broadcast commercials that also receive Internet runs are not eligible in this category unless there is a change in content (see “New Creative” under “Eligibility” above)

Other Miscellaneous Forms that are accepted in this category include Podcasts & Webisodes, Cinema Advertising and Music Videos

cross platform

NOTE: All submissions within this category are classified as campaign entries.

SD006-1 Cross Platform Campaign (up to 10 pieces)

Integrated Campaign - An integrated campaign is defined as a campaign or series of ads, commercials or executions that utilize more than one medium . The American Advertising Awards allows entries in all Integrated Campaign categories to submit up to ten executions for judging . Integrated Campaign entries may be accompanied by a written or digital (video) summary not to exceed 250 words (written) or 3 minutes (digital) . Digital summaries must be submitted by uploading the video file during the online entry process .

Online/Interactive Campaigns with more than 4 pieces of work can be submitted within this category

elements of advertising

Categories are allowed 3-5 digital images and one optional video upload. Requirement of physical entry submissions is at the discretion of the local AAF Club.

SD007 Elements of Advertising Single Entry (1 piece)

SD007-1 Elements of Advertising Campaign (2-4 pieces)

Copywriting

Visual – including logo design, infographics, illustrations, still photography, art direction

Film & Video – Cinematography, Animation, Special Effects & Motion Graphics, Computer Generated Imagery, Video Editing

Sound – Music with or without lyrics, voiceover talent, sound design

Digital Creative Technology – Interface & Navigation, Responsive Design, GPS & Location Technology, Augmented Reality, Mobile Interaction, User Experience, Data Driven Media, etc