

Best Advertising Campaign Highlights Report



National Media Awards Foundation
Fondation des prix pour les médias canadiens



ONTARIO CREATES | ONTARIO CRÉATIF



Magazines Canada

Prepared by the National Media Awards Foundation
With the support of Ontario Creates

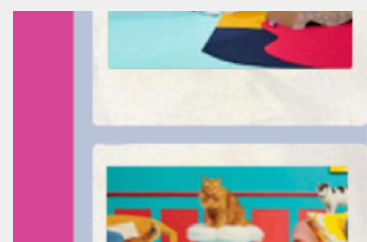
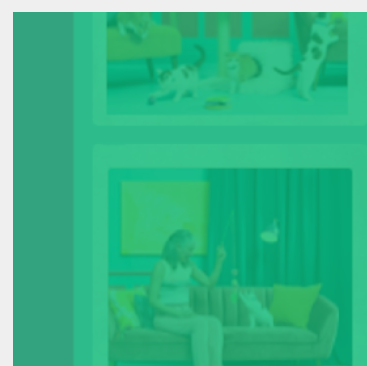
2025



CATELAINE

petvalu x CHATELAINE

Brand Integration



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Introduction

At a time when Canada's magazine industry is navigating profound change, **Celebrating Excellence in Canadian Magazine Advertising** was launched to spotlight the powerful work that happens when creative strategy meets trusted editorial environments. This new initiative—presented on-stage at the 2025 National Magazine Awards—recognizes the most impactful magazine-based ad campaigns of the past 18 months and creates new business connections between publishers and agencies.

This report captures the standout campaigns selected by our jury, surfaces actionable best practices, and highlights emerging trends in print and multiplatform advertising. Our goal is to provide a lasting resource for media buyers, creatives, and publishers—one that champions Canadian media and supports renewed investment in high-impact, brand-safe, and culturally relevant advertising channels.

We thank **Ontario Creates** for its support of this project and for its commitment to sustainable business development in the magazine sector.

Barbara Gould

Executive Director
National Media Awards Foundation

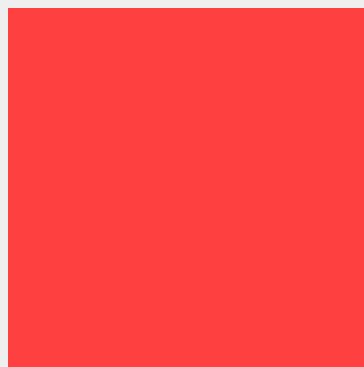


The Selection Process

The Celebrating Excellence in Canadian Magazine Advertising initiative invited Ontario-based publishers to nominate standout campaigns from the past 18 months. Submissions showcased the creative and strategic power of magazine media — from national brands to local innovators and multiplatform executions.

A three-member bilingual jury, convened by the National Media Awards Foundation, evaluated entries using a rubric emphasizing originality, brand alignment, audience relevance, innovation, and effectiveness. Seven finalists were chosen for recognition at the 2025 National Magazine Awards.

One Gold and one Silver campaign were awarded, alongside five Honourable Mentions — a dynamic reflection of magazine advertising today and proof that when smart creative meets trusted editorial, the results are powerful and measurable.



Meet the Jury

Our three-member bilingual jury brought deep expertise across media strategy, design, and publishing — ensuring a balanced and insightful evaluation process.

- Stephan Guenette — A veteran in media strategy and brand development, Stephan has led digital and print campaigns from both agency and corporate perspectives, bringing a sharp strategic eye to the panel.
- Susan Zuzinjak — A seasoned publishing, publicity, and marketing professional, Susan has guided award-winning campaigns and built strong audience connections through integrated media strategies.
- Karl Chen — An award-winning designer, creative director, and educator with 15+ years of agency experience, Karl champions design as a driver of business success and meaningful impact. A certified RGD in Ontario.



Spotlight on Finalist Campaigns

Campaign Name and Featured Brand: Let Us Be Your Lightbulb Moment, Cole's Timber Mart

Ad Agency / In-House Team: In-house team

Publishing Magazine: *Watershed Magazine*

Target Audience: Homeowners and renovators in Brighton, Ontario, and surrounding communities seeking high-quality building materials and design expertise.

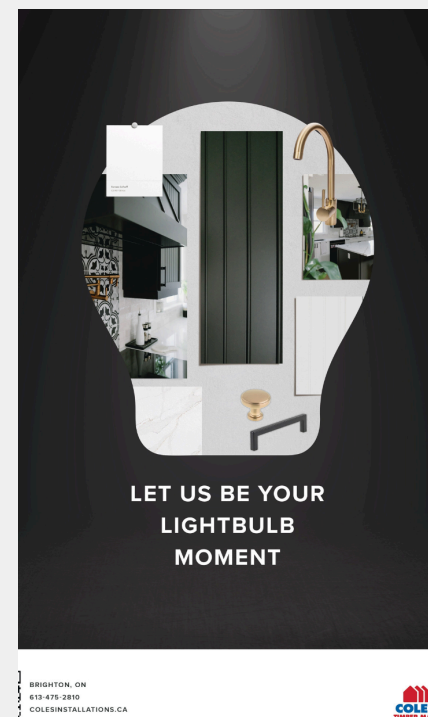
Campaign Objective: To highlight Cole's Timber Mart's craftsmanship, product range, and design expertise, positioning the brand as the go-to resource for kitchen projects.

Media Strategy: Print-only placement in *Watershed Magazine*, using the trusted and targeted readership of a local general interest publication to reach homeowners with purchasing power. The minimalist yet sophisticated ad design was intended to stand out in a visually busy print environment.

Creative Approach: The ad integrates the concept of a lightbulb both visually and verbally, reinforcing the "aha" moment of choosing Cole's Timber Mart. A clean, minimalist layout conveys sophistication and product quality. The inclusion of a QR code adds interactivity, bridging print and digital engagement.

Business Outcome / Success

Metric: Not provided



Spotlight on Finalist Campaigns

Campaign Name & Featured Brand: Giant Tiger x Chatelaine Summer Looks, Giant Tiger

Ad Agency / In-House Team: In-house collaboration between Giant Tiger and the Chatelaine editorial/creative teams

Publishing Magazine & Publisher: *Chatelaine*, SJC Media

Target Audience: Canadian women seeking affordable, stylish clothing options for summer, particularly value-conscious shoppers looking for fashion inspiration.

Campaign Objective: To position Giant Tiger apparel as both stylish and accessible by leveraging Chatelaine's authority in fashion and lifestyle content, while driving brand engagement across multiple platforms.

Media Strategy: A cross-platform campaign anchored by a high-impact print cover feature that integrated Giant Tiger clothing directly into the Chatelaine Summer 2024 issue. Inside, seven branded outfits were curated for a dedicated content spread, supported by online features and video content to extend reach and engagement.

Creative Approach: The cover integration provided immediate visual impact, validated by Chatelaine's editorial voice. Branded content inside offered practical styling inspiration, while online and video formats reinforced accessibility and broadened audience touchpoints. The seamless blend of editorial credibility with brand messaging elevated perceptions of Giant Tiger fashion.

Business Outcome / Success

Metric: Not provided.

[View PDF of Campaign](#)



Spotlight on Finalist Campaigns

Campaign Name & Featured Brand: Couture Cocktails — Grey Goose Vodka

Ad Agency / In-House Team: In-house collaboration between Grey Goose and FASHION's editorial/creative team

Publishing Magazine & Publisher: FASHION, SJC Media

Target Audience: Fashion-forward Canadian consumers who value style, luxury, and elevated lifestyle experiences.

Campaign Objective: To align Grey Goose with sophistication and high fashion by authentically integrating the brand into FASHION's editorial environment, while driving engagement across multiple media touchpoints.

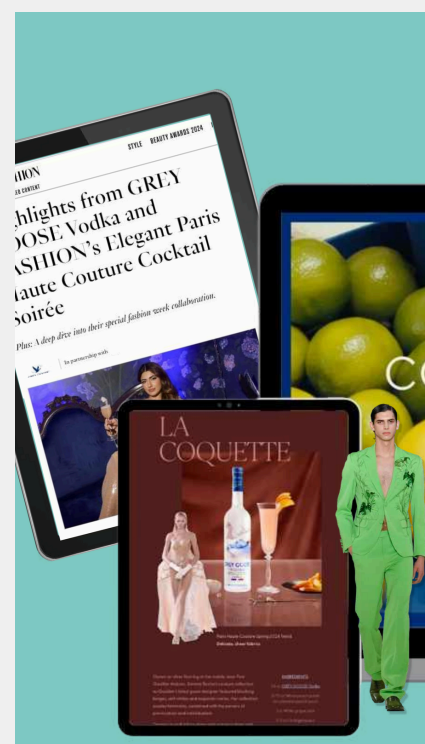
Media Strategy: A fully integrated cross-platform campaign that translated Paris couture runway looks, curated by FASHION's Creative Director, into bespoke Grey Goose cocktails. Supported by a custom digital hub, native content, video storytelling, social and newsletter promotion, and a high-profile influencer event.

Creative Approach: The concept fused haute couture fashion with mixology, creating a fresh narrative for Grey Goose that resonated with FASHION's audience. The execution went beyond traditional product placement, embedding the brand seamlessly into the magazine's trusted editorial voice and premium aesthetic.

Business Outcome / Success

Metric: Significantly exceeded campaign targets and established a new benchmark for brand integration in Canadian fashion media.

[View PDF of Campaign](#)



Spotlight on Finalist Campaigns

Campaign Name & Featured Brand: Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) x Explore Magazine, Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada

Ad Agency / In-House Team: In-house collaboration between ITAC and Explore Magazine's marketing/editorial team

Publishing Magazine & Publisher: *Explore Magazine*, Explore Outdoor Media Inc.

Target Audience: Outdoor enthusiasts, adventure travellers, and consumers seeking culturally rich tourism experiences within Canada.

Campaign Objective: To promote Indigenous-led tourism experiences and destinations across Canada, fostering cultural understanding while driving awareness and engagement among Explore Magazine's readership.

Media Strategy: An eight-month, fully integrated cross-platform campaign that included three full-page print ads, a 1,500-word sponsored article, multiple social media posts, five website display ads, four newsletter "shout-outs," a custom marketing email, a podcast episode, and over 100,000 viewable website display ads, reaching audiences across both print & digital touchpoints.

Creative Approach: Leveraging Explore Magazine's credibility with its audience, the campaign blended storytelling and striking visuals to highlight authentic Indigenous tourism experiences. The mix of longform editorial, high-impact advertising, and consistent digital promotion ensured broad visibility and sustained engagement.

Business Outcome / Success

Metric: More than 1.3 million total impressions delivered, with extremely positive client feedback on both execution and results.

[View PDF of Campaign](#)



Spotlight on Finalist Campaigns

Campaign Name & Featured Brand: Y We Travel, Toronto Pearson International Airport & Canadian Airports Council

Ad Agency / In-House Team: Produced in-house by The Walrus Lab in partnership with Pearson Airport and the Greater Toronto Airports Authority

Publishing Magazine & Publisher: *The Walrus*, The Walrus Lab

Target Audience: Canadian and international travelers, policymakers, and readers engaged with thoughtful, long-form journalism exploring the future of travel.

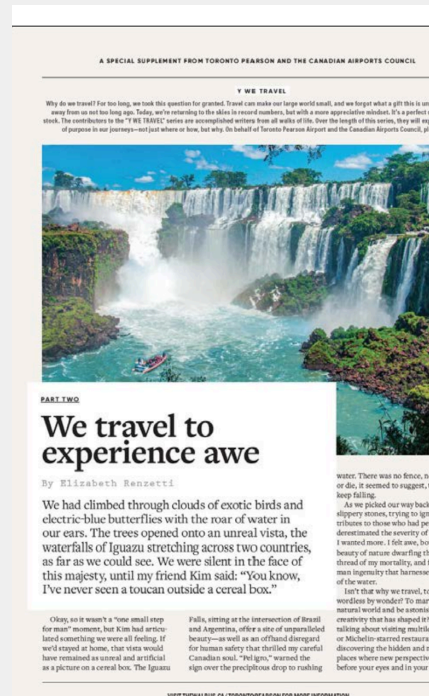
Campaign Objective: To inspire and inform audiences about the evolving nature of global travel while positioning Toronto Pearson and the Canadian Airports Council as thought leaders in mobility, innovation, and sustainability.

Media Strategy: An 11-part branded content series blending reported features, essays, illustrations, and audio storytelling. Published in both print and digital formats, the series explored key themes such as environmental change, digital transformation, and shifting traveler needs.

Creative Approach: Leveraging The Walrus' reputation for journalistic rigor and narrative depth, world-renowned journalists and authors crafted insightful stories connecting personal travel experiences to global innovations. This multifaceted storytelling approach integrated visual art, immersive reporting, and audio elements for a rich reader experience.

Business Outcome / Success

Metric: Established a high-profile, multi-platform content presence that reinforced the brand partners' leadership in shaping the conversation about the future of travel. [View PDF of Campaign](#)



Spotlight on Finalist Campaigns

Campaign Name & Featured Brand: Guiding Light, Value Village
Publishing Magazine & Publisher: FASHION, SJC Media
Ad Agency / In-House Team: Produced in collaboration between FASHION's editorial and creative teams with Value Village's marketing team

Target Audience: Fashion-conscious consumers, sustainability advocates, and thrift-shopping enthusiasts looking for style inspiration with an eco-conscious twist.

Campaign Objective: To showcase Value Village as a leader in sustainable fashion by positioning secondhand clothing as stylish, aspirational, and aligned with high-fashion trends, thereby inspiring consumers to adopt a #ThriftProud mindset.

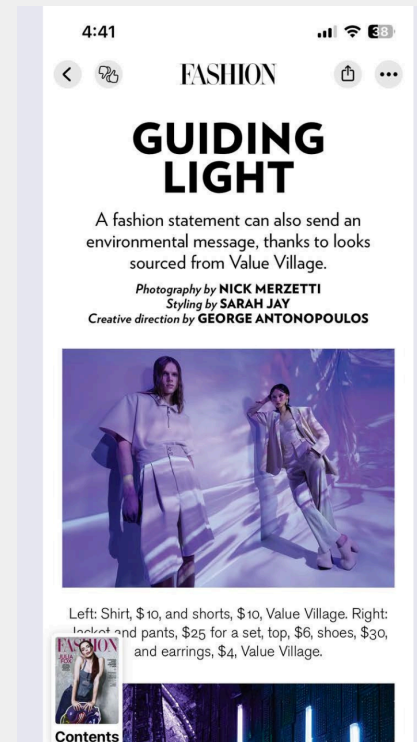
Media Strategy: As part of FASHION's April 2024 Sustainability issue, the partnership integrated branded content directly into the magazine's core editorial. The campaign included:

- Print: Custom editorial feature "Guiding Light" with a full fashion photoshoot.
- Digital: Feature article with styling tips, video content, and interactive storytelling.
- Social: Instagram and others

Creative Approach: A custom photoshoot at Arcadia Earth paired high-fashion looks sourced from Value Village with immersive, environmentally themed art installations. This visual storytelling uniquely embedded the thrift-shopping narrative into the high-fashion world, elevating sustainable style through premium editorial treatment.

Business Outcome / Success Metric: Successfully reinforced Value Village's role in the sustainable fashion movement, delivering a campaign that resonated with eco-conscious consumers and exceeded client expectations through high engagement and brand lift.

[View PDF of Campaign](#)



Left: Shirt, \$10, and shorts, \$10, Value Village. Right: Jacket and pants, \$25 for a set, top, \$6, shoes, \$30, and earrings, \$4, Value Village.

Spotlight on Finalist Campaigns



Campaign Name & Featured Brand: “Catelaine”, Pet Valu

Ad Agency / In-House Team: In-house collaboration between Pet Valu and Chatelaine’s editorial, creative, & marketing teams

Publishing Magazine & Publisher: *Chatelaine*, SJC Media

Target Audience: Pet owners, animal lovers, and lifestyle readers engaged with Chatelaine’s trusted editorial voice.

Campaign Objective: To elevate Pet Valu’s brand presence among a broad lifestyle audience by integrating it authentically within Chatelaine’s print, digital, and experiential platforms—creating a memorable, pet-centric editorial moment.

Media Strategy: A first-of-its-kind partnership that temporarily rebranded Chatelaine as “Catelaine” with a unique flip cover. This immersive approach combined standard Pet Valu ads with authentic editorial integration across a dedicated digital hub, social media, influencer outreach, and coordinated in-store activations, anchored by the magazine’s reach and credibility.

Creative Approach: Playfully aligning Pet Valu’s brand identity with Chatelaine’s established lifestyle authority, the campaign blended rich storytelling, vibrant visuals, and tactile print innovation. The “Catelaine” rebrand created an immediate, buzz-worthy connection with readers while embedding the brand naturally into Chatelaine’s tone and style.

Business Outcome / Success

Metric: The multi-platform, 360° execution resonated deeply with audiences, delivering engagement and sales results that far exceeded campaign objectives.

[View PDF of Campaign](#)



Conclusion

The campaigns featured in this report demonstrate that award-winning magazine advertising thrives at the intersection of creativity, credibility, and collaboration. Each example underscores how trusted editorial environments amplify brand storytelling and deliver measurable impact across platforms.

As the industry continues to evolve, these best practices offer a roadmap for advertisers, agencies, and publishers seeking to create work that resonates deeply with audiences—anchored in authenticity, strategic insight, and the enduring power of Canadian magazine media.



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