

B2BOLD

The case for creativity in B2B tech

wildfire



B2B IS BORING

There, we said it.

Uniform LinkedIn posts, jargon-stuffed webinars, and white papers so boring they could be used as a mild sedative.


The tech industry is about innovating, so why do B2B tech brands always fall back on the same tired techniques?

Most likely, it's because B2B marketing is really, really, hard work.

Complicated products, niche audiences, and rarely one clear buyer journey. It's a mess.

But in a crowded and complex market, the real enemy is mediocrity. Fail to be memorable, and people will switch off.

The best B2B tech brands are waking up to the idea that creativity isn't a nice to have, it's essential. It's time for your business to do the same.





B2B BUYERS AREN'T BORING

Picking up your average bit of B2B content, you could be forgiven for thinking that B2B tech buyers are some of the most boring people on the planet. Cold, calculating robots that base their decisions on facts, logic, and where your brand sits in some omnipotent magic quadrant.

Bullshit.

Look at the data. Half of B2B buyers (48%) are bored by the content they receive from brands. Seven out of ten say that their decision making is ultimately emotionally led.

Do they want products and services that deliver? Sure. Do they want content that offers more than entertainment value? Of course. But they don't want communication that is completely devoid of enjoyment.

B2B buyers aren't robots...they're consumers. They want to be surprised, delighted, and engaged.



B2B COMMS IS DRY AF

The LinkedIn B2B Institute shares a good example of why B2B comms is often so dry and ineffective.

How would the comms team market Coca-Cola if it was a B2B product?

Probably as an advanced, thirst-quenching solution, selling its sweet, brown, and fizzy features. How incredibly unappealing.

B2B brands — especially those in tech — tend to obsess over product features and forget about the story they want to sell.

What makes your brand memorable? Why should business customers commit to your brand?

Yes, specs and features have a role, but they shouldn't be your opener. You wouldn't rock up to a first date and read off your Tinder profile. You need to build rapport, break the ice, show personality. You need creativity.



THIS ISN'T A LUXURY

The idea that creativity is only for the biggest brands with the largest budgets is a myth.

If you're a challenger brand with a new or innovative piece of technology, creative thinking can be the best way to fight back against the industry giants.

Yes, big players have the budget to create great stunts. But often the boldest, most creative, and most effective PR campaigns have been the cheapest — from a defaced billboard to a perfectly-timed tweet.

Creativity isn't some luxury item exclusive to Microsoft, Intel, and Adobe. It's your key to cutting through in a crowded and all-too-often boring space.

Don't believe me? Let's look at some of the best creative work the B2B tech industry has to offer, big and small.



**WHO'S WINNING
AT B2B
CREATIVITY**



SPOTIFY - A SONG FOR CMOs

Spotify Advertising offers marketers access to 200m+ platform users, a huge pool of data, and a vital resource for brands looking to find new customers. Unfortunately, most marketers didn't even know that the service exists.

That's why Spotify created A Song for Every CMO — to show ad executives what they were missing out on through the medium of song.

Using a hyper-targeted ABM approach, Spotify created 14 custom tunes for 14 CMOs at leading brands including L'Oreal, Mastercard, and Samsung. Each song was an ode to the CMO, with lyrics telling the story of their personal and professional accomplishments.

Each CMO received a commemorative platinum record and a digital release on Spotify. The result? Spotify Advertising saw 75% year-on-year growth, hitting its target of over \$1bn in ad revenue.



JCDECAUX - YOUR FACE HERE

The world's largest outdoor advertising corporation might also have the world's biggest balls, as proven by this daring campaign to attract the attention of Belgium's marketing directors.

With traditional sales tactics falling flat, JCDecaux put the names and faces of high-profile marketing directors on a giant billboard — without their permission.

Cue incoming emails from the confused and angry directors. JCDecaux's response? "Now you see how effective OOH advertising can be."

Every one of the directors booked a presentation to learn more about JCDecaux's services. A 100% response rate for this ABM-led activation.



BANGO - WORST. AD. EVER.

Full disclosure, this one's a Wildfire campaign. Bango wanted to create awareness for its ad targeting tech, taking on major search engine advertisers like Google.

With one in three search ads failing to reach the right audience, it seems marketers would be better off buying a billboard in the middle of nowhere...so that's what we did.

Buying up the UK's least viewed billboard behind some bins on a little-known Manchester estate, Wildfire plastered the poorly placed ad with a simple message "This billboard is more targeted than your search ad".

The controversial campaign started an industry debate on the effectiveness of search advertising, encouraging marketers to experiment with Bango's new targeting tech.



HECTARE - TINDER FOR COWS

So it's Tinder...for cows? Yep, you read that right.

Hectare wanted to raise awareness of its digital platform, which sells livestock to farmers.

In the process, the brand wanted to dispel the myth that farming is an antiquated profession and prove the role that technology can play in running modern farms.

Enter Tudder — a novelty livestock swapping app designed in the style of Tinder. The app allowed farmers to swipe left or right on their favourite cows, complete with mooing sounds and profile pics.

This simple stunt by Octopus put Hectare on the map, driving previously unseen engagement among its niche farming audience and even national conversation around tech in farming.



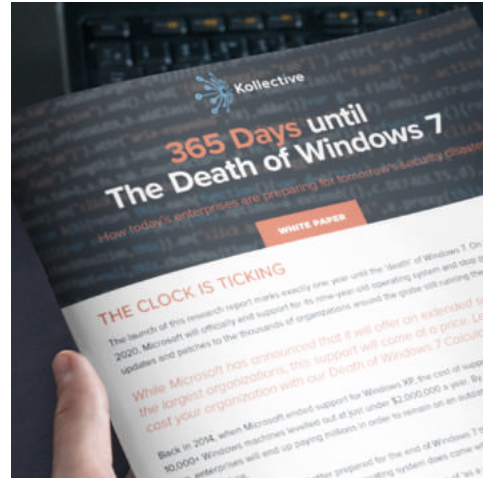
KOLLECTIVE - RIP WINDOWS 7

Another campaign from the Wildfire archive. IT migration company Kollektive wanted to raise awareness for Microsoft's pending 'end of life' for the Windows 7 operating system.

In support of that effort, Wildfire kicked off a year-long countdown of creative content, media messaging, and morbid stunts, celebrating the life — and death — of Windows 7.

Wildfire launched a 'doomsday clock', ramping up the tension for CIOs and firing the starting pistol on the race to migrate. With the doomsday clock about to strike midnight, Wildfire staged a public funeral for Windows 7, complete with a branded tombstone, floral tributes, and grieving mourners.

The result? Kollektive dominated the end-of-life conversation, receiving more coverage and enquiries than any other IT migration brand.



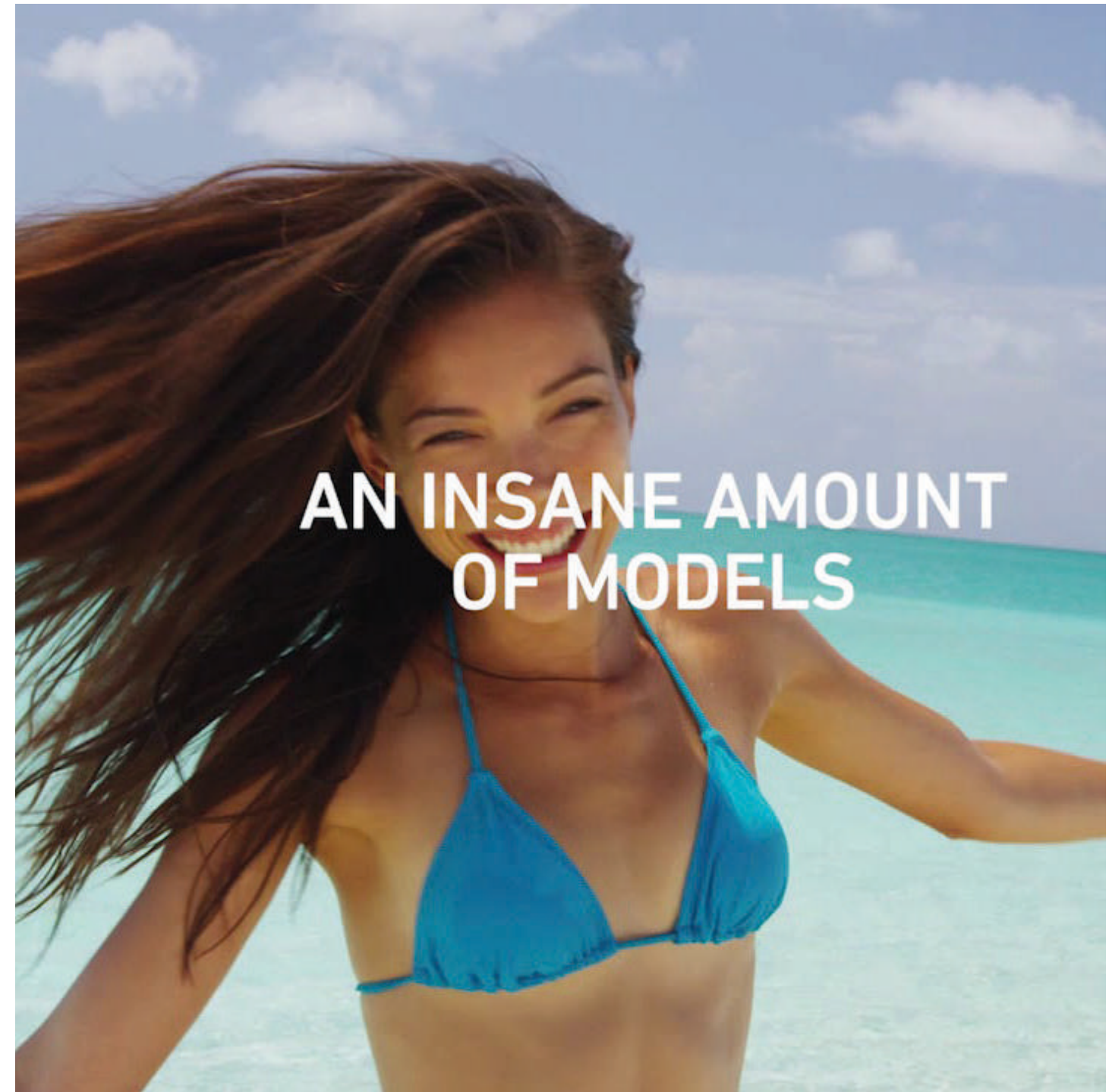
SHUTTERSTOCK - FYRESTOCK

Stock photography website Shutterstock set out to make a name for itself with the slogan “It’s not stock, it’s Shutterstock”.

The B2B brand wanted to prove to marketers that high quality content can be developed with stock footage alone.

Jumping on the back of the recent Fyre Festival disaster (notorious for its misleading video trailers), Shutterstock launched a promotional trailer for its own fake festival — Fyrestock.

Using stock footage to parody the original Fyre Festival promo videos, the campaign racked up more than two million views in the first week alone. The timely stunt proved that Shutterstock understood marketers and marketing, making the site a go-to destination for promotional video footage.





**THAT'S
AWESOME.
WHAT'S NEXT?**





NOW IT'S OVER TO YOU

Tech brands are on the cusp of something great. All they need is the motivation to get creative.

We get it. Faced with limited budgets and targets from the board, creativity feels risky and a lot of hard work. But the reality is, you need it.

Research from WARC — the world's most trusted source of marketing insight — shows that B2B campaigns that are memorable, emotive, and creative are the most effective at driving business results.

Creative campaigns aren't a nice to have, or an excuse to fill your shelves with shiny industry awards. Creativity is essential for successful communication.

There's a tangible business case for creativity. It's down to us as comms professionals to make it.



TECH PR THAT THINKS BOLD

The best creative campaigns come from a team effort. From surrounding yourself with individuals who think creatively, who get your tech and understand your business' needs.

2023 is the year of creativity in B2B tech, and we want to help you make the most of it.

So, how do you get started?

Check out our latest insights on B2B creativity

Get inspired with our award-winning B2B case studies

**Ready to get creative?
Set up a call with our team**

wildfire