

The Daily: Cannes Lions 2023—AI conversations, the changes Gen Z is driving, and branded jingles at self-checkout

Audio



On today's episode, we discuss the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity 2023—the best conversations from the event, the value of being there, what we heard from marketers, and what we didn't. Tune in to the discussion with our analyst Jasmine Enberg and vice presidents Marissa Coslov and Ina Gottinger.

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Episode Transcript:

Marcus Johnson:

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and a rigorous contextualization process that ensures our clients make better decisions for their business. Join more than a hundred thousand subscribers and learn what Insider Intelligence can do for you.

Jasmine Enberg:

In some ways, it would make sense for somebody like Linda Yaccarino to be here to do what she does best and try to convince advertisers to return to Twitter. At the same time, Twitter has a lot of problems that it needs to deal with, and there's a lot that it needs to be working on right now.

Marcus Johnson:

Hey, gang, it's Thursday, June 22nd. Ina, Jasmine, Marissa, and listeners, welcome to the Behind the Numbers Daily and eMarketer podcast. I'm Marcus today am joined by three folks. Let's meet them. We start with our Vice President of Media Solutions and Strategy currently in Cannes, south of France. It's Ina Gottinger.

Ina Gottinger:

Bonjour, Marcus.

Marcus Johnson:

Bonjour indeed. Welcome to the show. We're also joined by our Vice President, principal accounts' director. It's Marissa Coslov, also hanging out in Cannes.

Marissa Coslov:

Hi Marcus.

Marcus Johnson:

Hello. Hello. And finally, we have one of our principal analysts who covers everything, social media, of course, she's with them in the south of France. It's Jasmine Enberg.

Jasmine Enberg:

Hey, Marcus. Hey everybody.

Marcus Johnson:

Hello. Hello. You might have noticed listeners. I'm the only one who is not in France, unfortunately. It's fine, I'm fine about it.

Jasmine Enberg:

Do you feel a little left out, Marcus?

Marcus Johnson:

A little bit perhaps.

Marissa Coslov:

Why don't come with us next time.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah. What the hell, Stewart? Get me a ticket. Run the team for crying out loud. Stop watching the Knicks lose. What do we have in store for you today? Today's facts, that's where we'll begin. How the Cannes Festival got started. Oh, contextual. How'd it get started? Before 1939, Jean Zay, the French Minister for Education and Fine Arts, had the desire to implement a cultural event in France to rival the International Venice Film Festival. And in May 1939, Biarritz actually in the bottom left of France, was initially chosen as the festival's home. The Cannes supporters ended up winning the competition by offering to increase the municipality's financial participation.

A few weeks later, the city of Cannes and the French government signed the International Film Festival's official birth certificate, if you will. They then had to wait for World War ii, which happens almost immediately after. And then now, yeah, there it's 70th year, and they added the creativity part of the Cannes Lions International Festival around the mid-fifties. And that's why you guys are there. And I'm not, Stuart. Okay, that's cool. Anyway, today's real topic, the most interesting things being discussed at the Cannes Lions International Festival.

In this episode, we're talking all things Cannes. No, in other news today. Let's get into it. The 70th edition of the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity is returned to the Palais in the beautiful city of Cannes sitting on the south coast of France. Thousands of folks from close to a hundred countries descend on the city each year. Three of those folks we just met Ina, Jasmine and Marissa, who are all there at the moment, who have taken a bit of time out of their insane schedules to talk to us slash partying, to talk to us about what's going on at this

year's festival. We'll start here. It feels miles away. And also yesterday that the pandemic happens. And a lot of the talk the year two after that was how things bounced back, how events started to look, is Canne as relevant as it was pre-pandemic?

Marissa Coslov:

I'll take this one because I think out of the three of us, I was the only one who had actually been to Cannes pre-pandemic so I've seen both the shift and what it had been before and what it is now. Is it even more relevant? I think any event where you were in person right now with anybody makes it relevant and useful.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Marissa Coslov:

And interesting and beneficial to be at? I think what the most interesting thing is that changes from year to year, regardless if it were pre-pandemic or now are the players that come. Because what we've seen is that it continues to be different every single year. And if you listen to our podcast that the three of us did last year following Cannes, we talked a lot about the players that had never been to Cannes before, such as retail media. That was a huge base of companies that never had activations before. Maybe they had been here in smaller groups, sent a few people, but they've been back in a much bigger way. We saw that last year, and the presence is still there.

But I've even seen some different types of companies take over the beaches here at Cannes. The activations tend to be different every year. I think it's rare now that a client will have the same space as they did the year before. I only see a handful that are in their same spaces. But we're seeing something like a sport beach where there's a lot more athletes that have come to Cannes now as a part of influencer marketing. We've seen some additional tech companies come into play. I've even seen some new consulting companies that have never activated. There's a few CPGs that are here that never had activations. I've seen Pepsi, I've seen McDonald's, Sprite. Those are some new ones that are here. I think every year, brands and agencies and tech companies continue to find value in this event.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Marissa Coslov:

And benefit to being here.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Jasmine Enberg:

And not only do they continue to find value, in some ways I think it's even more relevant than it was, or it's becoming more relevant than it was because it's actually starting to transform with the time. Thinking of new players, one new player on the beach this year is influential, which is an influencer marketing firm took over Twitter beach. Twitter of course, does not have an activation this year. And we're seeing creators featured on panels from Spotify really getting on the stage and talking about their stories and their creation strategies. And I think that's a big shift for the advertising and marketing industry. And they're really embracing creators across the board. And this is my second can, but there certainly weren't as many creators here last year as there are today.

Marcus Johnson:

You mentioned Twitter. I want to talk about some of the themes that you guys are seeing, but Jasmine is someone who covers social for us. Are you surprised Twitter's not there considering how much work it has to put in to try to put things right when it comes to its advertisers?

Jasmine Enberg:

Yes and no, there are a few events that bring together more CMOs than Cannes Lions so in some ways it would make sense for somebody like Linda Yaccarino to be here to do what she does best.

Marcus Johnson:

Right, new C E O.

Jasmine Enberg:

And try to convince advertisers to return to Twitter. At the same time twitter has a lot of problems that it needs to deal with, and there's a lot that it needs to be working on right now.

And maybe this isn't priority number one at the moment for the company.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah, that's fair point. Okay. Twitter not there. I guess that is tough for that to be a theme. Maybe it's a theme inside conversations, people talking about whether they're going to return to Twitter, whether they're not going to. Still a very small share of the pie though. It gets a lot of the headlines, but it's still a very small share of a digital ad spending pie that actually goes to Twitter. Ina, if Twitter's not one of the big themes from this year what is?

Ina Gottinger:

I have three words for you. AI, AI, AI. It's everywhere.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Ina Gottinger:

It's really everywhere. And it's funny, we had a conversation actually with a C E O and he said, "what would we have talked about at Cannes Lions, if it hadn't been for ChatGPT it would've been extremely boring.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Ina Gottinger:

This particular [inaudible 00:07:52] almost all the people we would've probably talked about addressability and identity and attention metrics, which is the new thing. But that's all boring, if you will. And that's something that we talked about last year as well.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Ina Gottinger:

ChatGPT really changed the course of the discussion. Also, on the flip side, we talked to actually someone else who was a journalist and he said among the journalists, they cannot talk

about it anymore. They are almost.

Marcus Johnson:

Oh, really?

Ina Gottinger:

Sick and tired of it. Because it's all about AI and every session, every panel is AI, but seriously, AI is a major trend.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah, really quickly on that, what are they talking about more specifically with artificial intelligence? Are they kind of keying in on one thing or few?

Ina Gottinger:

Well, the mean, the opportunities, but also the dangers, right? And the challenges and how helpful can AI be and to make sure that there's a human element in it. But there's so many different panels on it. Another key trend that we have been seeing is just talk about Gen Z. Like last year, the two main themes we identified was connected TV and retail media. And that's still very important this year.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Ina Gottinger:

But this year for me, I feel like it's like AI, alternative AI and Gen Z.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay.

Ina Gottinger:

These are the key themes that you see pop up everywhere.

Marcus Johnson:

The Metaverse, any mention or are you thrown out of the event if you bring it up?

Jasmine Enberg:

I haven't heard the Metaverse yet, no.

Marcus Johnson:

No. Nothing.

Marissa Coslov:

Not a peep on the metaverse. Nope.

Jasmine Enberg:

To be fair though, we should probably say it's, we've only been here for a couple of days so far. There is a possibility, but I don't think it's as big of a theme as it has been in the past. AI is really the topic that everybody is talking about, and two Ina's points. I moderated a panel yesterday and I started the panel asking everybody to raise their hand if they'd used the word AI or heard the word AI in at least one conversation. And this is day one of Cannes, every single person in the room raised their hand. There is.

Marcus Johnson:

Wow.

Jasmine Enberg:

No escaping AI wherever you go on the [inaudible 00:09:49].

Marcus Johnson:

Okay. No Twitter, no Metaverse.

Marissa Coslov:

I think also Marcus, the fragmentation conversation continues, although it shifts from one area to another. For a few years we have been talking about fragmentation in the media landscape, in the video space, in all of the streaming services. And was that going to be consolidated? Now that conversation has moved over to retail media and the number of retail media networks that are out there in the market and the fragmentation. I think that conversation continues, but it moves from one place to another.

Marcus Johnson:

Okay, interesting. All right, We've got AI, we've not got the Metaverse, we've got some retail media networks. Jasmine, you wrote a piece before you went out there looking at some of the themes to watch for, and one of those was DEI, diversity, equity, and inclusion. How much has that come up?

Jasmine Enberg:

It's come up, it's been a theme at Cannes and Marissa, you can probably speak more to this, but for many years. And it's something that marketers are always talking about. I think this year in particular, because we are in this incredibly polarized era, so to speak, it is more important than ever. And we also have Gen Z who are really driving a lot of changes within the digital advertising industry. And one of the things that they really care about is brands speaking up for causes that they believe in. I think it's become much more top of mind for marketers. And it's certainly come up in multiple conversations that I've had today. And I think it's thinking about diversity, equity, and inclusion. And I think it's a question that marketers are still struggling with and trying to figure out how to be able to implement it. And everybody is still learning, and it's a process for sure.

Marissa Coslov:

There was also the plea almost for consistency in DENI and I efforts and saying, you can't only focus on certain ethnicities during one month of the year. This has to be consistent throughout because I think that that has been a huge pain point in that area of the industry. And the plea was really to have brands really focus on all of their marketing efforts to be much more inclusive for 12 months of the year and not just one month at a time, depending on who they were speaking to.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Jasmine Enberg:

And not just marketing efforts. I think the other part of it to that I've been hearing and quite frequently is that it's not just about the message that you put out into the world, but it's the way that you operate internally. You need to actually make changes within your business to

make sure that you are really representing different communities and providing equal opportunities in the same way that you're putting out messages to consumers.

Marcus Johnson:

I'm surprised that no brand or company has kind of jumped on that and said in August, this is National Pride month and then September, this is National Pride month and then keep going and keep going. Or in December, national Women's Month, but then also bringing it up in January and February and March and making that point of, you don't just get a token month, but this is an issue. This is a theme, this is a conversation that should be had year round. Hit me with some of the best nuggets that you've heard from some of the panel's, keynotes or presentations that you've been going to or maybe been on or hosted.

Ina Gottinger:

I don't have a nugget for you, but I have a little factoid.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah.

Ina Gottinger:

And I know you into quizzes, Marcus.

Marcus Johnson:

Maybe.

Ina Gottinger:

And Marissa you know the answer. What do you think looking at Cannes Lions, now this here, what's the country with the second-largest population after the US?

Marcus Johnson:

The second largest? Oh, at the event?

Marissa Coslov:

That's represented here.

Marcus Johnson:

That's represented.

Ina Gottinger:

Second that are here at the event. And after the US. The US is obviously the largest population.

Marcus Johnson:

Second-largest? China?

Ina Gottinger:

Nope. Jasmine?

Jasmine Enberg:

I don't know the answer, but I'm going to say Germany.

Ina Gottinger:

Nope, it's Brazil.

Jasmine Enberg:

Wow, really?

Ina Gottinger:

Which is so interesting.

Marcus Johnson:

Interesting.

Ina Gottinger:

Well, it also ties into the whole online creative awards. What's coming out of Brazil in terms of creative and creative advertising is really, really top-notch so innovative. They get a lot of awards here too, but I thought that was really interesting. They are here and I've heard them. I've heard them on the Corset.

Marcus Johnson:

Fascinating.

Marissa Coslov:

Wow.

Ina Gottinger:

But it was interesting, and it's new this year, this particular person told me that that's definitely new this year.

Marcus Johnson:

Yeah. Okay. Huh.

Jasmine Enberg:

I listened to a really fascinating panel discussion with Emma Chamberlain, who is a, she's a creator, she's very young, but she was telling her story about how she became a creator first on YouTube and now she's launched her own brand. And it was just really interesting and inspiring to hear somebody so young who has really entered the market and created a brand for herself. This is something that we're hearing a lot more of within the creator economy. And having somebody on stage and speaking in such an authoritative yet real and human way about it was something that really stood out to me.

Marcus Johnson:

All right. Next question. Most interesting conversation that you've had with someone personally at the event?

Marissa Coslov:

Some of my favorite conversations always here tend to be around loyalty, customer experience, and what is really driving someone to be more brand loyal. I think a lot of the conversations, and this is not a new topic, but still, which I think is telling, is that marketers are continuing to focus on thinking about what is going to drive brand loyalty, what types of, whether it's creators, whether it is an audio sound, whether it's an opportunity for more personalization. I think that is still something that people are really challenged with and are still continuing to figure that out. We've heard some interesting stories about audio and how sound resonates with people so much. We all know certain brands that are associated with

certain sounds. We heard a story about AB testing, point of sale opportunities with a sound and if that created more brand loyalty. That was an interesting conversation. That's a personal favorite topic of mine is loyalty. And I'm glad that that continues to be a topic of conversation.

Marcus Johnson:

Interesting. Let's wrap it up folks, so you can get out of here and get back to the beach. Let's be real, you all know what you've been up to. What's the event told you about the rest of the year and how it's going to look? Any conversations about the state of the ad space? People worried, people pretty chipper about the direction it's heading in?

Jasmine Enberg:

I mean, I think the mood in general is optimistic and buoyant right here. But I think we are at this event and the backdrop is the state of the economy and all of this uncertainty within the market. And I think that that is a reality and it's been acknowledged by some of the executives that I've heard speak. Some of them have called it a challenging environment and one that isn't going to improve drastically anytime soon. But I think for a lot of marketers and a lot of the companies that are here, it's still really hard to say where we're going to be six months from now. There have been so many changes just within the past couple of months that it's just difficult to say. I don't know if Marissa, you know, have had a different experience in your conversations.

Ina Gottinger:

Yeah, we have heard the pretty much similar thing. I mean brands, ad tech providers are cautiously optimistic, but they also realize. Age one was really difficult for everyone and I know it'll take a while for really to recover. It's not that age two is going to be much, it's going to be better and different, but it's not that it's going to be the recovery that we saw in 21, 22. But folks are optimistic.

Marissa Coslov:

I think so, I think the timing of Cannes is very good. The reason for that being is we all know that the first half of the year was very challenging for many businesses. Hopefully this has revitalized a lot of brands and marketers to really come back to the US or wherever they've

come from and to come back with some fresh ideas and excitement for the second half of the year.

Marcus Johnson:

I thought you were going to say the timing's really good because I really needed a vacation and thank you insider.

Marissa Coslov:

I really needed that to that start to my summer tan here.

Jasmine Enberg:

Marissa has been calling this the official kickoff to the summer.

Marcus Johnson:

Thank you guys for hanging out with us to tell us all about what went on this year's Cannes event. Thank you so much for your time. Thank you to Jasmine.

Jasmine Enberg:

Thank you, Marcus. Thank you everyone.

Marcus Johnson:

Thank you to Ina.

Ina Gottinger:

It was a pleasure Marcus.

Marcus Johnson:

And thank you to Marissa.

Marissa Coslov:

Thank you Marcus. Always love this Cannes podcast.

Marcus Johnson:

Yes, indeed. And thank you to Victoria who edits the show, James, who copy edits it. Stuart, who runs the team and buys me and Victoria, a ticket to Cannes for next year. Thanks to everyone listening in, we'll see you tomorrow hopefully for the behind the numbers Weekly Listen and eMarketer podcast. Stuart, I'm going to need at least premium economy minimum. Okay. You listening? At a minimum.

Jasmine Enberg:

Funny, funny.