



ENTRY FORM

THE AOTEAROA EFFIE AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH TVNZ – ENTRY FORM

ENTRY ID	271-B04
ENTRY TITLE	Correct The Internet
CLIENT	Team Heroine
PRODUCT	Correct The Internet
FIRST MEDIA APPEARANCE DATE	20 January 2023
CATEGORY	B04. Content or Social-First Campaigns
CATEGORY DESCRIPTION	<p>Campaigns that met the client challenge and had a demonstrable impact on business results through a compelling content-led solution. The judges are looking for content campaigns that took the big idea beyond advertising-led solutions and formats. Examples might include editorial-style content, branded entertainment, informational content that influenced brand and business results, or social-first campaigns that leveraged the distinct capabilities of social platforms to drive results. Entries should explain what insight led to content being the best solution to the client brief. You will need to demonstrate how the context or platform in which the content appeared enhanced the relevance and impact of the content. You will need to prove how this solution drove material and measurable results for the brand.</p>

WORD COUNT: 2500 MAX

01. CASE SUMMARY [0%]

Please write a brief summary of the case study and results not exceeding 90 words.

This campaign asked one simple question.

“Who has scored the most goals in international football?”

The internet said Cristiano Ronaldo.

The facts said Christine Sinclair.

We discovered this bias was happening in search across almost every sport, and we created a firestorm around it.

Reaching millions, driving thousands to take direct action, uniting the women’s sporting community, supercharging the profile of Team Heroine, and influencing Google to make changes on how it reflects sportswomen’s achievements.

The next generation will now grow up with a fairer, more equitable internet.

02. WHAT WAS THE CHALLENGE AND WHAT WERE THE OBJECTIVES? (15%)

What was the market context, what was the strategic challenge the client faced, what was the creative challenge the agency was set, and what were the short and long-term objectives that were set for the campaign?

Market Context:

Team Heroine is a New Zealand sports consultancy led by former Football Fern, Rebecca Sowden.

It exists to help brands and sponsorship rights’ holders unleash the power of women’s sport.

It’s a purpose-led company; empowering female athletes, helping brands engage, and furthering equality.

Central to Team Heroine’s mission is supercharging the “virtuous circle” of women’s sport;

The more brands get on board -> the more profile is given to sports and athletes -> the more fans choose to watch -> the more brands get on board.

Strategic Challenge:

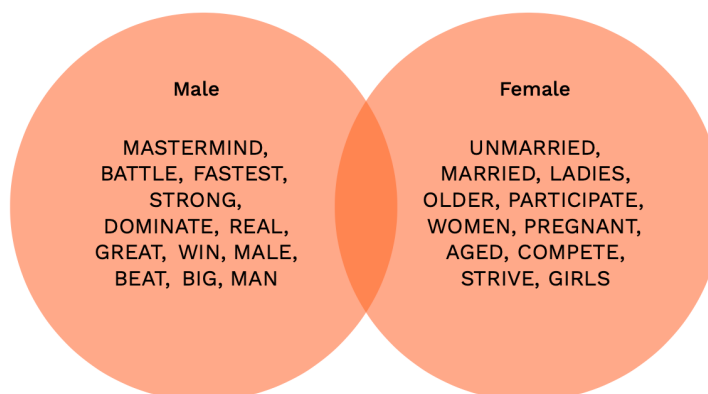
Women’s sports receive just 0.4% of media coverage and 4% of total sponsorship globally.¹

And even with the biggest event in women’s sporting history coming to Aotearoa, interest and coverage was still lagging.

¹ Team Heroine, 2023

The coverage and interest they were receiving wasn't always accurate or fair either:²

Words Associated with athletes in media



Source: Aesthetics or athletics? Cambridge University Press 2016

Team Heroine is a small organisation fighting for equality on a tight budget.

To succeed, we needed to unite disparate voices in support.

Creative Challenge:

Team Heroine's brief to us was to **stop the traffic**, with a circuit-breaking idea that would drive collective engagement and interest in women's sport.

But just talking about how great female athletes are wouldn't suffice.

As Rebecca Sowden put it, *"everyone's doing their own thing. For me, it's all about faster, bigger, bolder. We need more innovative work and be more united to create change. Because it hasn't been working in the past. It's been so slow."*

We needed action.

A small voice wouldn't get noticed, but a tangible solution could get lots of public interest on a shoestring budget, and unite brands and fans.

In line with this theory, our objectives were to;

1. **Drive campaign awareness:** More conversation and profile afforded to women's sport in New Zealand, via earned media and social sharing.

² Cambridge University Press, Aesthetics or athletics?, 2016

2. **Drive action:** Brands and organisations in Aotearoa and around the world supporting our campaign, and engaging with Team Heroine.
3. **Drive impact:** Lifting up women’s sport as a collective, and giving sportswomen greater recognition.

03.

WHAT WAS THE STRATEGIC THINKING THAT INSPIRED YOUR BIG IDEA? (15%)

What was the insight or insights identified as key to unlocking the solution? How and why did the strategic thinking address the objectives set?

With limited budget, we needed a way to cut-through. An empowering 'you go girl' piece of comms (while these have their place) wouldn't suffice. Instead, we needed a different way-in.

We needed to provoke righteous anger.

Social equivalence is one of NZ’s defining cultural codes.³ Nothing riles up Kiwi more than someone not getting a “fair go”. But this now *“runs deeper than...day-to-day respect...it also involves looking at the fairness of the system itself.”*⁴

When it comes to women’s sport, systemic injustice is everywhere; from the ongoing fight for equal pay^{5 6}, to unequal facilities⁷ or sexist comments - sometimes even from presenters.⁸

It turned out, a big injustice was staring at us from the homepage.

Humans are biased. Which means search is biased, too.

AI encodes human bias into search algorithms, so much so that *“1950s ideas about gender are still embedded within our database systems”*.⁹ Like a child born with no existing knowledge, how algorithms understand reality is by observing.¹⁰

Search engines aren’t omniscient; they hold up a mirror to the good, bad and ugly parts of society.¹¹

Search was especially biased against sportswomen.

If you Google, *“what’s the tallest building in the world?”*, you **will** see the Burj Khalifa.

³ TRA New Zealand, 2023

⁴ TRA New Zealand, 2023

⁵ Stuff New Zealand, The state of pay for women in sport on International Women's Day, Mar 2022

⁶ The New Zealand Herald, Let's hear it for the women: Pay equality and sport, Nov 2022

⁷ The New York Times, Anger Erupts Over Disparities at N.C.A.A. Tournaments, 2021

⁸ The Guardian, BBC warns presenter over 'little Barbie' comments to female cricketer, Aug 2023

⁹ The Swaddle, Gender Bias in Search Algorithms Shapes Hiring Choices, People's Beliefs: Study, Jul 2022

¹⁰ McKinsey, A conversation on artificial intelligence and gender bias, April 2021

¹¹ McKinsey, A conversation on artificial intelligence and gender bias, April 2021

Aesthetically it might not be your favourite skyscraper, but you can't argue about whether it's the tallest.

Equally, you might not be an avid fan of women's sports, but many records are - objectively - held by women.

But when asked objective sporting questions, search showed the more famous male athletes.

This bias was across all codes.

Lydia Ko has won the most golf majors for NZ. The England Roses have won the most consecutive rugby tests. Eugénie Le Sommer has scored the most goals for France.

All were invisible.

You can't be what you can't see.

As retiring Brazil football legend Marta said this year;¹²

"When I started playing, I didn't have a female idol...How was I supposed to see other players? How was I supposed to understand that I could arrive at a national team and become a reference?"

Search engines are significant because they shape our view of the world.

They *"help or hide... redirect, reveal, magnify, and distort."*¹³

Biased searches don't only reflect existing bias; they reinforce it.^{14 15 16}

Because search has made many sportswomen's achievements invisible, the next generation looking to follow in their footsteps don't see themselves represented.

We needed human intervention.

These problems have developed over centuries¹⁷, and you can't fix algorithms without fixing humanity itself.

But there was a shortcut.

If we wanted to correct search bias, the answer lay at the door of those creating these systems to implement a manual solution.¹⁸

This demanded an unignorable people's movement that would;

1. Raise awareness of bias in search by uniting the disparate voices of the women's sports community in a cry of outrage.

¹² Hola!, Marta delivers an emotional farewell to the World Cup, Aug 2023

¹³ James Grimmelmann, Some Skepticism About Search Neutrality, University of Maryland, 2010

¹⁴ Jennifer Langston, Who's a CEO?, University of Washington, 2015

¹⁵ Madalina Vlasceanu and David M. Amodio, Propagation of societal gender inequality by internet search algorithms, Princeton University, The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 2022

¹⁶ Emily Reynolds, Online search algorithms reflect – and perpetuate – gender bias, The British Psychological Society, Aug 2022

¹⁷ Julia Angwin, The Markup, Confronting the Biases Embedded in Artificial Intelligence, 2022

¹⁸ Emily Reynolds, Online search algorithms reflect – and perpetuate – gender bias, The British Psychological Society, Aug 2022

2. Create a common, accessible action that could change things.
3. Make so much noise that the search giants would have to prioritise a more equal internet. Not just on International Women's Day, but permanently.

04. WHAT WAS YOUR BIG IDEA [10%]

State in one sentence. What was your core idea that drove your effort? Consider 'idea' in the broadest sense, ie. ranging from communication-based to the creation of a new service or resource. The idea should not be your execution or tagline.

Unite the sporting community in collective outrage over biased online search, to make invisible female athletes **visible**.

05. WHAT WAS THE CREATIVE EXECUTION AND HOW DID IT BRING THE BIG IDEA TO LIFE? [15%]

Describe how the creative solution helped the idea break out of the category and resulted in unexpected solutions.

Search giants have known about bias for years. But despite teams trying to address it, internal politics often favour monetized opportunities over facts.

So we did what anyone would do.

We went to the UN.

Because the very thing we were solving for was one of their key Sustainable Development Goals.¹⁹

5.B: Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.

Team Heroine was granted the status of accredited UN partner under *Football For The Goals*,²⁰ and with their support we created:

Correct The Internet.

An initiative to make search engines take tangible action to correct bias.

¹⁹ United Nations Development Programme, Goal 5: Gender Equality, 2023

²⁰ United Nations, Football for the Goals, 2023

To drive change, we needed to apply:

1. Internal pressure: getting thousands of users to submit reports of incorrect results to make search giants prioritise this issue.
2. External pressure: raising awareness and PR of the search giants' bias to make them publicly uncomfortable.

We started by turning the internet's feedback button against itself.

Correcting search results is challenging, with a tiny "feedback" button that then leads to a tedious web form.

So, we developed an online tool that highlighted incorrect search results and allowed people to report them in a few clicks, to elicit a clear response to search engines; correct this result.

To ensure search engines didn't dismiss our feedback as bots, we created hundreds of unique report messages to be sent from different IP addresses.

Our simplified way of giving feedback made it quick and easy to report feedback on a scale search engineers couldn't ignore.

We followed with a call to arms.

We released a film that showed the reality of what happens when someone asks the internet a sporting question.

In the spot, we see a young girl in a dimly lit Eden Park; the spiritual home of NZ sport.

But instead of people in the seats, there are rows and rows of smart speakers filling the stadium – a visual metaphor for search engines and the internet at large.

It's a dystopian scene, with the speakers dwarfing the girl and her innocent questions.

The girl asks them, *"Who has scored the most goals in international football?"*

The speakers respond *"Cristiano Ronaldo"* in robotic unison, reflecting the bias.

The spot concludes with a call to help report incorrect search results at CorrectTheInternet.com.

06.

WHAT WAS THE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY? [10%]

Outline the media and communications thinking and strategy that brought the creative solution to life in the most powerful and relevant way for the target audience. Include all significant touchpoints and channels in this section.

Internal pressure: a people's movement driven by social

With a social ad spend of \$0, we needed to be clever.

This meant relying on the outrage of those people most likely to care about the bias, share the campaign, and submit manual feedback to search giants; specifically young women; women with children; sportswomen; and women's sporting organisations.

Prior to launching the campaign, we sent out content packs and posting-guides to Team Heroines' known supporters as well as people of influence.

Consistency was critical; keeping to a simple, templated orange and black design ensured they were clearly recognisable across Facebook and Instagram. So regardless of which incorrect stat someone shared, it was easily attributable, showed the scale of the problem, and brought more supporters on board.

External pressure: harnessing the media to provide pressure and credibility

We've run an awareness campaign since mid-January to get global attention.

Pre-launch, we secured exclusives, including Newshub's national 6pm bulletin. As part of Discovery's global broadcast network, this allowed our segment to be shared around the world.

We used media to maximise PR and attention, timing the campaign to coincide with International Women's Day (this year's theme? "*Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality*")²¹, and the unofficial curtain-raiser of the FIFA Women's World Cup, NZ vs. the USA in January; with USWNT star Alex Morgan backing the campaign publicly in a FIFA press conference.

For PR, we focussed on female journalists and commentators. Once a groundswell of coverage was achieved, we targeted wider; to women's media and general news.

We distributed NZ media releases with relevant facts, statistics and spokespeople to selected journalists including; Sport, Female, Tech and Digital.

We drip-fed new stats each day, each targeting different sports, teams, athletes and fan-bases, creating enough internal and external pressure from the public, media and athletes, for the search engines to act.

List all supplementary consumer communications touch points used in this campaign (the touchpoints that were not central to the campaign).

-OOH
-Radio

07.

WHAT WAS THE \$ SPEND? [0%]

Outline the media and production spend on the campaign within the campaign period. Use actual spend rather than rate card. In the case of donated media please list the rate card value separately from the bought media spend.

²¹ International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2023

Media Spend (if applicable): \$0

Outline the media spend in relation to competition and versus last year:

ATL Media was entirely pro-bono, incl. OOH, street posters, radio, broadcast TV, and regional broadcast.

Donated media rate-card value: approx. \$480K

Creative Production Spend: \$75,000

08. WHAT OTHER MARKETING EFFORTS WERE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS CAMPAIGN? [0%]

List all other marketing or communications programmes not considered part of this campaign, that may have also affected the results e.g. coupons, sales promotion, planned PR, sampling, direct response, point-of-purchase, etc.

Indicate the extent to which any revised pricing, distribution or promotion programmes also affected the results.

Any marketing communications that contributed significantly to delivering an integrated campaign strategy and results should be described elsewhere in the entry form and any relevant contributing partners acknowledged in credits separate to the entry form.

The challenge, as defined by Team Heroine, was to bring disparate voices together and create tangible action - and our campaign was shared and repurposed by some of the biggest voices in sport to help us.

The specific action we were driving was a correction in search, rather than an increase in coverage and discussion that was taking place in the lead up to the FIFA Women's World Cup.

No other campaigns to our knowledge were targeting search bias.

09. WHAT WERE THE RESULTS? [35%]

Outline the results achieved by the campaign against the short and long-term objectives set, provide conclusive proof that it was the campaign that drove the results.

In this section, the judges will be looking to see a clear cause and effect between the communication activity and business performance over time. Show the compelling evidence that will convince even the most cynical finance director. They will be awarding points on the following basis:

- _ Overall achievement against objectives. Clear proof that objectives established in earlier sections have been achieved. Judges will be seeking quantified results. Demonstration of ROI is helpful. [15%]
- _ Clear demonstration of long term results beyond 6 months [5%]
- _ Convincing proof that the results were a direct consequence of your campaign, the inarguable evidence. [15%]

Please Note: All results must be sourced to be judged; any unsourced results will not be taken into consideration.

1. Drive campaign awareness:

During the first two weeks of the campaign, we achieved more than 16 pieces of earned media coverage in NZ, including all the “big six” media outlets.

AVE (advertising value equivalent) is calculated at a conservative \$105,170, with NZ impressions exceeding more than 7 million (7,318,936).²²

The real value is likely much higher, given this came from trusted 3rd parties and doesn't count international publications (also read by Kiwi).

Globally, our campaign reached over 200m people²³, driven by 120+ pieces of media coverage from the likes of ESPN, the BBC, NBC, CBC, Fox Sports, El Espanol and Sky News.

There were too many social likes and shares to count; (just one Instagram post from @433 went out to 69m followers).

Over 45 athletes and sports journalists took up the cause, including some of the most famous names in history.

Tennis legends Billie Jean King and Andy Murray wrote, “my favourite campaign” and “this needs to change”.

Brian Habana commented to correct his OWN incorrect fact - that he was not the leading try-scorer in World Cup history - NZ's Portia Woodman holds this honour.

2. Drive action:

Thousands of people used our tool to correct the internet.

42k people visited our website, and after spending an average of +1 minute there, 66% clicked out to Google or Bing to manually correct a result.²⁴

61% of users corrected more than four stats.²⁵

Women led the charge with 58.6% of conversions. As did New Zealanders, with 28.8%.²⁶

But it wasn't just individuals taking action. The list of organisations continues to grow;

Togethr, a women's sporting powerhouse, created a campaign to support ours. Support also came from Sport New Zealand, New Zealand Football, Warner Bros, The Female Lead, DAZN, Women's Sport Australia, the USWNT Players Association, and the UK Lawn Tennis Association (Wimbledon).

We created a movement that brought together disparate voices for one common goal; *“uniting everyone together to have a conversation that people had previously been talking about in their own way.”* - Rebecca Sowden

Correct the Internet is now supported by over 50 global brands, including the United Nations.

²² Agency PR results, 2023

²³ Agency PR results, 2023

²⁴ Google Analytics, Jul 2023

²⁵ Google Analytics, Jul 2023

²⁶ Google Analytics, Jul 2023

3. Drive impact:

As a result of this campaign, Team Heroine's profile has exploded.

Founder Rebecca Sowden has been interviewed on TVNZ Breakfast, Three News, Sky News, BBC UK & NBC USA, alongside pieces in the New York Times, Reuters and the Wall Street Journal.

She's met with the NZ and Australian PM's, and Kamala Harris's "better half", Doug Emhoff.

In her words, she's;

"...Having conversations from the top athletes to the top agencies or sports organisations. From a trade marketing perspective, that stuff has been huge. We're the go-to now on anything women's sport business globally...For this campaign to come out of NZ is something quite special. It definitely put New Zealand on the map."

This campaign has also helped Team Heroine engage with a new generation. Partnering with Creatable, Team Heroine has now developed an educational teaching unit on gender bias online. Over 40 Australian schools have implemented this to date.

4. Bonus result: Correct the Internet

After decades of bias, within six months we started to see search results changing.

Sachin Tendulkar made way for Belinda Clark.

Chris Wood made way for Amber Hearn.

Sir Bob Charles made way for Lydia Ko.

Alongside at least 10 others.²⁷

The internet's bias is being corrected.

Then we started to see search engines change themselves.

We can't talk about off-the-record conversations with tech giants.

But we can share a new product update from Google; *"How we're making it easier to find results on women's sports."*²⁸

In response to a post from Team Heroine, Google directly replied, **"it takes all of us."**

There are now improvements to search engines' gender-neutral queries (showing both male and female results to more searches); improvements to make women's sports search results more relevant; enhanced 'Information Boxes' on live scores, and greater partnerships with women's sports broadcasters - among many others.

"Gender equality starts with recognising the biases...campaigns like Correct The Internet are a great way to unmask how the same biases have entered the virtual world."

²⁷ Agency search screenshots pre- and during-campaign, 2022-2023

²⁸ Google, How we're making it easier to find results on women's sports, Jul 2023

-Maher Nasser, director, UN Outreach Division

“Your advocacy is changing the way we consume information on a global scale. Truly impactful.”

-Kim Anderson, Head of Marketing for FIFA Women’s World Cup 2023

Now, when the next generation search, they’ll see all kinds of amazing women achieving amazing things.

That’s going to change what the world looks like for them.

Which will change what the world looks like for us.

(By the way, the top result now shows both Ronaldo **and** Sinclair).
