



MEDIA RELEASE

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Dumb Ways to Die campaign dominates best radio ads of the year

The ad "Set Fire to Your Hair", part of the "Dumb Ways to Die" campaign for Metro Trains Melbourne, has won the 2013 Gold Siren award for best radio ad of the year. The ad, written by John Mescall and Pat Baron from agency McCann in Melbourne, also won a Silver Siren for winning the single category and the campaign also won the campaign category, announced today at a breakfast in Sydney.

The ad, "Set Fire to your Hair", and campaign, "Dumb Ways to Die", aims to spread a rail safety message, using a catchy tune and black humour. The campaign includes three ads: "Set Fire to your Hair", "Sell Both Your Kidneys" and "Eat a Tube of Superglue",

The campaign gained worldwide viral momentum when it was launched in November last year. Within 24 hours of its release, the song was in the top 10 on the iTunes chart and a video released on YouTube was reportedly viewed 28 million times within two weeks.

According to Metro Trains, the "Dumb Ways to Die" campaign contributed to a more than 30% reduction in "near-miss" accidents, in the three months between November 2012 and January this year.

Judge, Brad Grisaffe from Audiobrien said about the winning ad: "Everyone loves a catchy song: clever lyrics with a strong message and a simple melody that you just can't get out of your head...the benchmark for pop success! In this case, all the right elements for great radio advertising. Once you hear it, you won't forget it...in fact, you'll probably be thinking about the message while singing it in the shower".

Judge, Paul Le Couteur from Flagstaff Studios said: "Sometimes we just need the obvious stated before we get things. "Dumb Ways" manages to charm its simple message through the ether and really get in your head. If you're going to do music, do it well. Yep, tick. Humour, charm, communication and cut throughtick, tick, tick, tick!"

Writer of the winning ad and executive director of McCann, John Mescall said: "We knew that people didn't want to hear our message at all. It's rail safety. Not only do young people not care about safety messages, but we know that they actively tune out these kinds of messages.

"So our idea was to embed our rail safety message into a song: a piece of content so desirable, that our audience would not only willingly listen to it, but if we put it on iTunes, maybe actually pay money to own it. I guess the inspiration was to make a radio ad that was nothing like a radio ad, but a lot more like the content on either side of the ads: the music.

"We tried to make a radio ad that was nothing like a traditional radio ad. It's a song first and foremost with a subtle but unmistakable message embedded into it. The fact that a lot of radio

stations around the world have chosen to play the 3 minute version of our ad for free, as part of their music programming, tells us that we may well have pulled it off.”

Chief executive of Commercial Radio Australia, Joan Warner said it was rare to win both the single and campaign categories at Sirens, which was a testament to the effectiveness and impact of the campaign.

“This campaign also highlights how well radio combines with other media, particularly the internet, to engage the audience and get a message across. It really exemplifies the strength of good radio advertising.”

The winning writers will receive airfares, accommodation and tickets to this year’s Cannes Advertising Festival, to be held next month. The client, Metro Trains Melbourne, also wins a trip to Cannes and the festival.

The “Dumb Ways to Die” campaign also won the 2013 Siren Client Award, the best ad voted by a judging panel made up of clients, with the writers receiving a cash prize of \$5000.

The national Siren Awards, now in their ninth year, are run by Commercial Radio Australia and are designed to recognise the best radio advertising in the country. A winner is announced in three categories: single, campaign and craft, which receive Silver Sirens as well as an overall winner which receives the Gold Siren. The awards are judged by the Siren Council, comprised of creative directors and producers from leading advertising agencies and studios throughout Australia.

The Silver Siren winner for the craft category was an ad for anti-bullying organisations, including Bullying No Way, Project Rockit and Reach Out, called “Earphone Bully”, produced by sound engineers, Ralph van Dijk and Michael Bates, from production studio, Eardrum in Sydney.

Today’s breakfast was hosted by Mix FM’s drive time host, Tim Ross.

Media contact: Jenny Stevenson (02) 9281 6577 or (0402) 214 039.

**Media note: Winning ads can be heard and downloaded on website: www.sirenawards.com.au
Pictures from today’s breakfast will be available at the same website after 9.30am**

2013 Siren Award winners

Siren Awards 2013 Overall Category Winner (Gold Siren) (also winner of 2013 Single Category)

Agency: McCann Melbourne
Creative Team: John Mescall & Pat Baron
Client: Metro Trains Melbourne
Commercial Title: “Set Fire to Your Hair”

Siren Awards 2013 Single Category Winner (Silver Siren)

Agency: McCann Melbourne
Creative Team: John Mescall & Pat Baron
Client: Metro Trains Melbourne
Commercial Title: “Set Fire to Your Hair”

Siren Awards 2013 Campaign Category Winner (Silver Siren) (also winner of the Client Award – cash prize)

Agency: McCann Melbourne
Creative Team: John Mescall & Pat Baron

Client: Metro Trains Melbourne

Commercial Title: "Dumb Ways to Die" includes ads: "Set Fire to Your Hair", "Sell Both Your Kidneys", "Eat a Tube of Superglue")

Siren Awards 2013 Craft Category Winner (Silver Siren)

Sound Engineers: Ralph van Dijk & Michael Bates

Production Studio: Eardrum, Sydney

Client: Anti-bullying organisations, including Bullying No Way, Project Rockit and Reach Out

Campaign Title: "Earphone Bully"