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**Category** Independent Agency of the year

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Name of Agency

The Royals

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In no more than 2x500 words, tell the jury about the two client case studies which best demonstrate the abilities of the agency. Client case study 1:

***Strand Arcade, AW'17 Launch***

**Challenge**

Sydney's iconic Strand Arcade retail destination had been experiencing a plethora of obstacles when The Royals took charge of the account, including low consumer sentiment and severe disruptions to foot traffic caused by light rail construction on George Street. The challenge for our first Strand campaign was to launch the AW'17 collection of the centre's retailers in a new and exciting way, and therefore raise awareness of the Strand Arcade brand and its retailer offering.

**Idea**

The fashion industry is generally traditional in the way it launches new season collections – invitation-only catwalk shows, beautifully shot still images with famous models, glossy magazine spreads. The Strand Arcade was no different, favouring a printed publication distributed within centre. But with a declining retail market and no e-commerce offering, this was no longer going to cut it.

Our audience is young, fashion forward and worldly. Only something uniquely different was going to grab their attention. With bigger retailers outspending us in media, we needed an approach that gave us permission to speak to an extended audience.

**Execution**

We partnered with emerging Australian songwriter Sloan Peterson to create an interactive fashion music video. The video was both a lookbook for the AW'17 collections and a music video for Sloan's debut single, '105'.

Sloan embodied our brand values of craft, innovation and creativity. She released her single at the same time as our campaign, using the same edit of the video. We brought in a troupe of dancers who were alumni from Sydney Dance Company and The Australian Ballet School.

The video was filmed inside the Strand and all outfits worn by Sloan and the dancers were from retailers within the centre. An interactive overlay allowed viewers to click on each of the outfits and learn who designed the garment, price and where to find it at the Strand. Over 100 garments across 20 different retailers could be browsed.

The main video was primarily distributed across Facebook via the Strand and Sloan's pages, with additional content shared on Instagram. The interactive version lived on the Strand Arcade homepage.

## Results

One of the key benefits of the partnership was the ability for each party to reach a bigger audience. Sloan gave the Strand Arcade permission to play in the music scene and the Strand Arcade gave Sloan permission to play in the more traditional fashion-advertising channels, as well as in-centre advertising and each of the fashion labels' own sites.

During the campaign period, the Strand Arcade saw a 247% growth in new Facebook followers and engagement increased by 57% compared to the previous period. Visits to the Strand Arcade homepage went up 47.6% from the previous month, 41% of people actively hit play and watched the video, and 30% of people interacted with the outfits. And as evidence of the power of music videos, the stunning red Scanlan Theodore dress Sloan wore sold out in only 2 days.

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Name of other agencies to be credited (if applicable):

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As supporting material, you may supply up to five examples of the work. For images (jpegs), audio (audio files) or supporting documents (word doc or PDF), please drag and drop files into the box provided below (each individual file uploaded must be no larger than 5MB - max 5 files).

[Download File:Strand Arcade AW '17 1.png](#)

[Download File:Strand Arcade AW '17 2.png](#)

[Download File:Strand Arcade AW '17 3.png](#)

[Download File:Strand Arcade AW '17 5.pdf](#)

[Download File:Strand Arcade AW '17 4.pdf](#)

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For all videos of the work in question, please supply the link (YouTube or Vimeo link) in the below fields (one link per field - max 5 links).

<http://hungerforglory.com/strand-arcade/>

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Client case study 2:

***The Natural Chip Co., 'Natural Selection'***

### Challenge

Australia is a nation of chip eaters. Trouble is, every brand is fighting for that same daily share of mouth. The problem for The Natural Chip Co. was that while it had a small band of loyalists, its chips

weren't the go-to choice of the majority of regular munchers, losing out to established competitors such as Smith's.

Making things worse was the fact that chip lovers were interpreting The Natural Chip Co.'s brand positioning of having all-natural ingredients as being a "healthy chip". In consumers' view, this meant a compromise in flavour. And who wants to compromise on flavour when it comes to your favourite crinkle cut chip?

Our challenge was to make consumers realise that when you use natural ingredients with no additives, the end result is great tasting chips – and no compromise.

### **Idea**

Our task was clear: help Australians realise that real ingredients mean real flavour. Yes, Natural Chip Co. chips are 100% natural, gluten free, with no MSG and no artificial additives. But they're also packed with real flavour.

To bring to life the strategy of Real Ingredients mean Real Flavour, we created a world where Australian native animals were so keen to taste Natural Chip Co. chips that they worked together to deliver sumptuous, naturally delicious ingredients to the factory door.

### **Execution**

Our integrated campaign, titled 'Natural Selection', included TV, digital, POS and OOH, including innovative ShopaLites with 3D moulds protruding from digital screens.

Spearheading the campaign was an animated 30-second TVC showing hard-working Aussie animals – wombats, kookaburras and possums among them – in a quintessential Australian landscape, gathering natural ingredients such as potatoes, chillies, peppercorns and honey, and transporting them to a large shed from which they emerge as delicious Natural Chip Co. chips. A voiceover by respected Australian actor Deborah Mailman describes the journey as it unfolds, ending with the tagline: "Great tasting chips, naturally."

### **Results**

Unfortunately we can't share any data, but we can say there's been a strong and steady increase since launch. And Natural Chip Co. has briefed us for the next phase of activity to promote a new innovation using the same campaign platform.

Anecdotally, this is the first campaign Natural Chip Co. has ever run where consumers took the time to email and comment on social media, saying how much they loved it. We were particularly chuffed with this comment: "Recently saw your new commercial with the Aussie wildlife. It's beautiful; my grandkids ran to the TV to see it. Best commercial I've seen."

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[Download File:The Natural Chip Co.. Natural Selection .png](#)

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For all videos of the work in question, please supply the link (YouTube or Vimeo link) in the below fields (one link per field - max 5 links).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9ud7dPm-Ok>

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In a further 500 words or less please provide an overview of the rest of the year's best WORK.

### ***White Pages, Connective Collective***

The White Pages believes everyone is better when they're connected. To activate this idea, we created the Connective Collective to help welcome new migrants and refugees to local communities. We crafted a Welcome Pack that included a welcome book, flashcard learning game and a soccer ball. The book was full of inspiring stories and messages of support; and the flashcards used simple and fun illustrations to teach English and Arabic words for important businesses categories. The book and game included the contact information of relevant/friendly local businesses and services. The ball encouraged new connections via sport.

### ***koh, Brand & Packaging Design***

ekoWorx, a start-up cleaning solution "non-brand", came to The Royals for help. To cut a long story short, we liked the product so much we swapped our thinking for equity in the business. We went through a strategy and design process together to develop a new brand (koh) that launched in February 2018. We're working on a content strategy and we will continue to be the koh marketing department, influencing every part of the business - our first incubator project.

### ***Mercedes-Benz, 'Hack my Van'***

Hack My Van is an annual competition that brings together the best entrepreneurial minds and small businesses, inviting them to reimagine the back of a Vito Van (for their chance to win one). The event is run in a 'Shark Tank' style format where six entrepreneurs / small businesses work with Mercedes-Benz's engineers to reinvent the Vito and present their ideas to a panel of judges.

### ***Zooper Dooper, 'Swap boring for fun'***

We launched an imaginary flavour for the brand over summer 2018. Yep, you read that correctly, the flavour was whatever you wanted it to be. With incredible advancements in SM Technology we were able to create any flavour the user's brain could imagine.

### ***Aperol, Best served with friends***

To coincide with the brand's partnership with Australian Open Tennis 2018, we developed Aperol's first brand campaign in Australia. Made up of high impact OOH, the campaign positioned Aperol Spritz as an aperitivo best enjoyed with friends and food as the sun starts to set for the day. Additional campaign collateral also educated people on how to make the perfect Aperol Spritz in targeted areas near bottle shops.

### ***QVB, Lunar New Year Campaign 2018***

To celebrate the Year of the Dog, we built an interactive portrait gallery that sat within the confines of the QVB's iconic centre Dome space. The 'portraits' housed digital footage of five unique dog breeds (each dressed in QVB's most covetable fashion styles) whose gaze was locked to a real oversized tennis ball. Using motion sensor technology, whenever a shopper would pick up and move the ball

around, the dogs would turn their head to track its movement. The campaign also included in-centre posters and social extensions to give shoppers a truly memorable LNY cultural experience.

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[Download File:White Pages Connective Collective .jpg](#)

[Download File:koh brand packaging and design .pdf](#)

[Download File:Mercedes-Benz, 'Hack my Van'.pdf](#)

[Download File:Aperol best served with friends.pdf](#)

[Download File:QVB Lunar New Year '18.pdf](#)

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For all videos of the work in question, please supply the link (YouTube or Vimeo link) in the below fields (one link per field - max 5 links).

<http://imaginaryflavour.com/>

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**COMMERCIAL SUCCESS, INDUSTRY IMPACT AND MOMENTUM:** The jury will be looking for evidence that this is the agency's year - please share details of commercial success over the 12 months including client retention and account wins, tell us how the agency has moved forward during the last year and please set out the contribution of the agency and its staff to the wider industry. Where possible, please provide actual revenue and profit numbers; where not possible please provide percentage comparisons to the corresponding 12 months.

In 2017 we continued to focus on creating impact for our clients, our people, our business and extracting maximum value from everything we do.

We challenged ourselves to set a new standard as an independent creative business, to push ourselves closer to our vision - "The Most Interested Agency in the World". We believe that if we're most interested, it leads to the most interesting ideas, leading to having the most impact in the market.

A number of achievements that demonstrate our success, impact and momentum, are:

- Helping build our first start-up investment (koh) into a business valued over \$12m after a first tranche of funding.
- Launching Polly, a new mobile research tool that allows clients to gather consumer intelligence in real time.
- Galvanising the creative industry around the Marriage Equality postal survey with 'Say No to No'.
- Running our own small business breakfast seminars called 'Small Heroes' to discuss how big business and politics can help SME's.
- Being listed on the 2017 AFR Fast 100 (third year in a row).
- Being a 2017 Telstra Business Awards finalist.
- Our Head of Strategy and Innovation Partner speaking at Vivid Ideas on machine learning.

- Being shortlisted at the recent AdNews and B&T Awards for Independent Agency of the Year, and winning B&T People and Culture award (under 100 people).

However, our defining moment was winning iSelect in October 2017, a significant marketing organisation and now our largest client. The pitch was daunting, requiring us to “go all in”. Beyond demonstrating our smarts across strategy and creative, we needed to prove to the client that we could handle such a large account, and do it better than competing multinational agency networks four times our size. The client warned us that we only had a slight chance of being successful. But our values of audacity, camaraderie and revelry – with a huge dose of grit – got us through the process and apparently in front by a large margin.

The win transformed our business. After hiring 40 additional people to manage the account and fill positions on other pieces of business, we are now a creative business with a first-class CX team and an even stronger strategy, creative, technology and production capability.

In the 12 months to March 2017, agency revenue grew by 19% over the same 12-month period prior (average revenue growth over the past four financial years is +40%). Growth came from three key areas – existing clients, 18 new accounts and assignments and our new product R&D lab.

Our existing clients remained steady and grew substantially:

NAB – 2013

Sensis (White Pages) – 2013

Deakin University – 2013

Campari – 2014

Google – 2014

INTEL – 2014

Shine Lawyers – 2015

Melbourne Racing Club – 2015

Mercedes-Benz – 2016

Ipoh – 2016

We added considerable revenue from new assignments:

Northern Territory Tourism

iSelect

Afterpay

PennyTel Mobile

MyState Bank

Abbott Medical

Australian Super

World Vision

RedZed

City of Melbourne

Lion Nathan

Snack Brands

SONOS

Koh (Ekoworx)

Australian Marriage Equality

Snow Dome Foundation

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**CULTURE:** In no more than 500 words outline details of the organisation's innovation in recruitment and retention, focus on staff development, insight into building a wider team culture and delivery of high-performance outcomes. Please set out details of gender and cultural diversity within the agency and outline what specific plans you have in place to build on this. Please include details of staff retention, including a specific percentage of staff employed by the agency on the first day of the judging period who were still on the payroll on the last day. (The agency may also enter the Mumbrella Award For Culture based on this portion of the agency of the year entry if it wishes).

### **Recruitment**

We've democratised recruitment because we believe no one knows a "Royal" better than an existing one. Incentivised by \$2,000 of free flights, this empowers our staff to help build their future agency.

Our 'Membership' toolkits include step-by-step interview guides with bespoke questions to identify the 12 traits we look for in a Royal, such as a compelling backstory, HQxEQ (Humility with Emotional Quotient) and ferocious curiosity. We plot candidates' overall score to ensure only the #mostinterested are hired.

Personalised welcome packs mean new Royals feel part of us from Day 1.

### **Retention**

'We cultivate your curiosity' is our active career promise to nurture the characteristic we value most, and we have a full calendar of events to deliver it. A highlight is our annual SXSW "lucky-dip" – one lucky Royal wins an all-expenses-paid trip and we extend the invitation to all Royals. Pay your own way there and entry and accommodation are on us.

Staff reviews are quarterly to ensure regular feedback. Every employee contributes to developing their own objectives, gaining ownership and motivation to hit their career progression goals.

## Training

We invest over 2% of our revenue in L&D (double the industry average). From up-skilling in technology, coding, project management, leadership and creative writing, conferences or monthly 'Lunch & Learn' sessions, we implement a wide range of staff development initiatives. All initiatives support our three core values: *Audacity* (the courage to ask and act), *Camaraderie* (work as one) and *Revelry* (bring all your passion and energy to work).

## Culture

Our annual three-day Royals UNconference is the highlight of our 'one agency' approach. To show our gratitude, we take the agency away for quality time together in different settings, from Hobart to Byron Bay and Thredbo.

Every month we give one Royal the day off, to take part in an 'interested' activity, on us. It can be anything from flying trapeze, to beekeeping, or a French cooking masterclass.

We celebrate what makes us unique as well as what makes us the same. The Royals hail from 15 countries, speak 12 languages, span three generations, with a 52% female / 48% male ratio.

Camaraderie means working side by side, never in front or behind. Pay equality, flexible hours and working remotely to accommodate family commitments and promote work-life balance. We offer extended maternity leave and have 100% return rate among Royal mums with positions tailored to their individual needs.

## High-performance outcomes

To monitor our culture, we commissioned an independent staff survey, covering Motivation, Recommendation, Pride, Present and Future Commitment. Our 2016 engagement score was 81% (85% is utopia/ the industry averaged 67%). In our Best Places to Work 2017 survey, we scored 92% for Engagement.

But the best way to keep staff motivated is to give them a say in how the business is run. Our Culture Action Committee includes representatives from all corners of the agency to ensure initiatives are bottom up, not top down.

## Overall

We recruited 40 new Royals in 2017 (29% staff growth) with 85% retention.

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**INNOVATION AND BRAVERY:** In no more than 500 words, explain what the agency did to change the game in the year under scrutiny, whether internally or externally. (The agency may also enter The Mumbrella Award For Innovation and the Mumbrella Award for Bravery if it wishes).

**The Royals continue to harness our vision to be “#Mostinterested” through the following innovative endeavours:**



## **Innovation - Advance Party**

A product research and development lab whose origins were first explored with existing client Deakin (when looking at their objectives and areas of focus for the year). To coincide with the launch in May 2017, we released a report on Conversational Experiences called 'Talking to the Machine', which explored the abundance of opportunities these technologies present to organisations of all kinds.

Since this time, we've commenced projects with a number of clients, with the focus being on product development and creating processes for client's such as Mercedes Benz, World Vision, iSelect and Australia Post. In addition, we commenced student based projects. Our most notable being our research residencies. These are an important part of Advance Party and provide organisations with the opportunity to contribute meaningful and innovative work that conceives a new frontier of their business, while offering candidates the opportunity to advance their research in media and creative technology. To date, our residents have worked on prototyping products on new topics of Interior Networking, Machine Learning and AR.

Mid-2017 Advance Party conceived another initiative - the 'Make My Idea' challenge, inviting all Royals to pitch a product idea to be prototyped by a team of technology students at Deakin University. The ideas pitched needed to be viable, sustainable, feasible and explainable. Two innovative young Royals' ideas were chosen to embark upon the journey of taking something from an idea through experimentation, prototyping and making. Art Director Andrew Grinter saw it as a way to *"put forward passion project-ideas we've been chipping away at in our own time, and give them more energy and resources to become a reality. In an industry where concepts often die, this initiative gave us the chance to get an ambitious idea produced in a short period of time"*. The opportunity thus far has given both Royals exposure to an external team of coders and IT experts from Deakin to fill their experience and knowledge gaps. Currently, original visions and ambitions for both ideas are in development phase and both are excited to get into the next stage of testing and launching of their ideas publicly.

Since late 2017, Advance Party has been working with startups and larger organisations on how to take advantage of the blockchain, and the opportunities it brings. With these partners, we are prototyping disruptive business models in the areas of education, real estate and art buying.

## **Bravery - Say No to No Campaign**

Once the same sex marriage postal vote was called, we took it upon ourselves to unify the entire creative and media community with "Say No to No" - to eliminate harmful, hateful and false messages from the debate. The idea received an overwhelming level of support from the greater creative community (over 500 agencies and 1700 members signed on), a project that made us proud to bring our industry together on an issue we believe in so strongly.

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Please upload a team photo (files must be no larger than 5MB)

[Download File:Independent Agency of the Year The Royals.jpg](#)

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Please upload an EPS file of your company logo (files must be no larger than 5MB)

[Download File:Royals.eps](#)

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If i am successfully shortlisted, I agree to a face-to-face session with the Jury on May 23 2018. Please ensure that this date goes into the appropriate calendar now, as inability to present will disadvantage the team.

Yes

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