

Rothco CCO shares his recipe for award-winning work

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On day one of Loeries Creative Week 2020, Alan Kelly, CCO at Rothco, based in Ireland, shared the three ingredients needed to win an award.



Alan Kelly, CCO at Rothco

Having worn the hat of copywriter, creative director and executive creative director, Kelly has worked with some amazing clients and brands over the last decade, winning Lions, D&AD and The One Show pencils, Grand Clios and the prestigious Grand Prix in Cannes. He has also judged at Cannes Lions, D&AD, Dubai Lynx, LIAs, The One Show and Clios.

"It's a huge honour to be doing this with you and to be judging the Loeries over the last couple of weeks," said Kelly in the opening of his talk.

If you're a creative and you're wondering, 'How do I win an award?', and do work that the world takes note of, Kelly has the following tips for you.

1. Have a good idea

“ You cannot do award-winning work if your work isn't going to live up to it. No amount of creative writing can

polish a bad idea into an award-winning idea. ”

This award-winning idea refers to the concept of a book that grows by showing how to create a sustainable future. Agriculture is an important pillar of Ireland's economy and by demonstrating the power of natural resources, Rothco partnered with Allied Irish Bank on "The Book That Grew".

Fabiano Dalmácio, senior art director at Rothco, went to Kelly after seeing designer Diana Scherer's work, and he was blown away by the idea and knew he had to do something with this concept.

“ If she can grow a pattern, we can grow a word, and if we can grow a word, we can grow a sentence, and if we can grow a sentence, we can grow a book, and that book can tell our story. ”



Kelly says they could have given up many, many times because growing grass is a naturally slow process and Scherer had never tried anything like this before, but together they knew this would be something special and worth persevering.

This takes us to the next ingredient...

2. Tenacity

One of Rothco's best award-winning projects was JFK, one which is quite a personal point of view of Kelly. His mother's surname was Kennedy and growing up, there was always a picture of John F. Kennedy in the household. They always wondered if they were in some way related and attempted numerous times to draw family trees. Kelly developed somewhat of an obsession throughout his young life and to this day he still looks out for the next JFK documentary, and this is where it started.

Kelly was briefed by *The Times* to find a launch activation for their new campaign, 'Find Your Voice'. *The Times* was seen as a right-wing newspaper at the time. The reality was that the newspaper had loads of journalists with different opinions. While watching a documentary on JFK, the narrator said something that struck Kelly, something along the lines that JFK was on his way to deliver a speech at the Dallas Trade Mart.

Kelly then started thinking, what if technology had advanced so much to allow JFK to finally, after 55 years, deliver the 'Trade Mart Speech' that he was due to deliver on that fateful day in Dallas?



Working together with tech company CereProc, after weeks on end, The Dallas Trade Mart Speech was recreated in JFK's own voice, making it a world first AI audio speech made completely out of data.

After reviewing approximately 831 JFK speeches and interviews and through an intricate process of advanced sound engineering, the world was finally able to hear the Trade Mart Speech that never happened.

“ ***Do not give up, grab an idea with both hands and make sure it gets to the world.*** ”

The last ingredient is...

3. An ambitious client

“ You need a client who is almost going to be a part of your team and be with you all the way and know what you're trying to achieve and have a collective ambition. ”

He advises that clients don't want to do work that is *just ok*. They want to do work that the world will notice. Across the world, there is no single symbol that represents a country more than its flag, and in many countries, no group of people represents that flag with more pride or passion than its defence forces. Military veterans risk everything to serve their flag, but it doesn't always serve them, and Ireland is no different.

Despite being peacekeepers around the world, support for veterans is somewhat non-existent, leaving many destitute and a number of them homeless.



O.N.E is a charity that provides emergency accommodation for homeless veterans who desperately needed a way to make the public aware of their plight.

Together, Rothco and O.N.E decided to use the national flag as a symbol and start a much-needed conversation. If their veterans were laying in the gutter, then so too would their flag.

The Sleeping Flags campaign was covered by every national TV, radio station and newspaper in Ireland, creating such an impact that it was discussed on the floor of the Irish Parliament. Within 48 hours, O.N.E. had received a 4,560% increase in donations versus the previous year.



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