



## Marketing Society Awards

### #BetterQuestions:

How EY galvanized EY people and drove energy behind the EY purpose to build a better working world



# Summary

This is a story about people, purpose and growth.

In 2015, EY needed a step change to achieve the global ambition to grow in an increasingly disruptive environment.

Building a strong, distinctive brand was a critical enabler.

The way EY works provided the insight and catalyst for the campaign strategy and creative idea, as EY people are relentless in their pursuit for better solutions, asking probing and often unexpected questions that provide better answers.

Our strategy was very simple: to bring the EY purpose to life by showing not just why we do what we do, but also how we do it.

This led to the creative idea: the better the question, the better the answer, the better the world works.

We brought the idea to life in 2016 through an integrated campaign, #BetterQuestions that ran across key markets within EMEIA, Americas and APAC.

It followed the C-Suite through a range of channels including airport advertising, pan-regional media collaborations, social media and experiential events. All of which drove to an interactive digital hub – [betterworkingworld.com](http://betterworkingworld.com).

Internally, we leveraged a range of initiatives including *Better begins with you* – our peer-based global recognition program that recognizes and celebrates EY people who have found inspiring and impactful ways to bring our purpose to life, behind the Better Question “*What legacy will you create?*”

According to *Brand Finance: Commercial Services 50, 2018*, an independent external brand strength and valuation report, since inception, the campaign has galvanized EY people, driven consideration and grown brand value by 56% to US\$17.1bn. We’re now the 16th most powerful brand globally, the fastest growing among all our competitors and the second from fifth before the campaign.

But this goes beyond business growth. There are numerous examples of the societal impact of delivering against our purpose by asking better questions. From helping nations become energy self-sufficient, tackling industrial pollution in China, and helping charities become as productive as businesses.

# Main Paper

## The business challenge

EY is one of the largest global professional services organizations in the world with more than 250,000 professionals operating in over 700 offices in more than 150 countries. We operate across core business services such as tax and assurance, as well as through sectors such as power and utilities, automotive, consumer products and life sciences. In the last few years we have broadened digital and consulting services, including artificial intelligence and robotics. EY clients range from start-ups to multinationals and governments.

EY, like EY clients, operates in an ever evolving marketplace that is in a state of constant disruption and change. Convergence and transformation as well as huge changes in the global regulatory environment.

In 2013 we set a bold ambition to become a distinctive professional services organization by 2020. EY had been growing steadily but to create a real step change we needed to support growth across EY in a very disruptive landscape. Competition is strong; not just from other Big Four organizations but wider consultancies.

Building a strong, distinctive brand was a critical enabler in competing against a wider, more challenging competitive set – as well as driving pride amongst EY people who are our most important brand ambassadors and attracting talented people.

## The communications challenge

In 2013, we launched our purpose: *building a better working world* and set the ambition to become the most distinctive global professional services brand. This meant punching above our weight against competitors. We set three global objectives:

### 1. Unlock and demonstrate the power of our purpose

The EY organization is made up of member firms across over 150 markets with over 11,000 partners. We needed to inspire the our 250,000 people as well as ensure that EY clients and prospects knew what we stood for and what made us different.

### 2. Broaden the consideration of services, particularly at market level

EY was known best in its heartland of assurance and tax core services, but operated across a more diverse range of services (including digital consultancy). Most EY clients and prospects might interact with just one part of EY services and, to reach our growth ambitions, increasing consideration is an imperative.

### 3. Inspire EY people

EY ultimately provides quality services, not products, therefore we know that EY people are our valuable assets and so continuing to attract, inspire and retain the talented people is critical.

## The big idea

Show how EY works: demonstrating that better questions lead to better answers which in turn help to build a better working world.

**EY**  
Building a better working world

**Can you understand the full picture without seeing what lies beneath?**

Our **Analytics** use advanced data analysis to reveal underlying patterns and trends. A high-quality audit is both a **practice** and an **art**.

[ey.com/insights](http://ey.com/insights) #BetterQuestions

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The better the question. The better the answer. The better the world works.

**EY**  
Building a better working world

**How will blockchain unlock your value chain?**

[ey.com/insights](http://ey.com/insights) #BetterQuestions

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The better the question. The better the answer. The better the world works.

**EY**  
Building a better working world

**Why do uncertain times need the certainty of purpose?**

[ey.com/betterworkingworld](http://ey.com/betterworkingworld) #BetterQuestions

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The better the question. The better the answer. The better the world works.

**EY**  
Building a better working world

**Do you change your people or change the way your people work?**

ET's global **People Advisory Services** help you enable your people to **transform** your business.

[ey.com/insights](http://ey.com/insights) #BetterQuestions

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The better the question. The better the answer. The better the world works.

**EY**  
Building a better working world

**Why is the best digital strategy a human one?**

[ey.com/digital](http://ey.com/digital) #BetterQuestions

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The better the question. The better the answer. The better the world works.



## How it evolved

The first wave of activity (launched in 2016) encompassed a fully integrated campaign, run centrally. Local and regional teams were encouraged to push the campaign through local channels and individual service lines created and used their own campaign assets in a re-use and re-purpose approach.

In 2017, the strategy evolved. Building on greater awareness of the EY purpose, phase two focused on adding credibility to the “how.” We used case studies from key markets including Germany and China to actively bring the idea to life.

All campaign elements were linked to content housed on our specially created brand hub, [betterworkingworld.com](http://betterworkingworld.com).

## Bring the idea to life

We brought the idea to life in 2016 through an integrated campaign centred around the C-suite and future leaders which ran in key markets across EMEIA, Americas and APAC.

A digital hub – [betterworkingworld.com](http://betterworkingworld.com) – holds interactive digital content and was designed to showcase our thought leadership as well as arm EY professionals with perspectives that help us shape the dialogue with EY clients.

#BetterQuestions campaign questions drove people to the hub and identified other provocative challenges the world is facing:

- Airport advertising
- Pan-regional media partnerships
- Social media
- Experiential
- Existing marquee and professional events

Internally, we leveraged a range of initiatives including Better begins with you - our peer-based global award program, in which we recognize and celebrate EY people who have found inspiring and impactful ways to bring our purpose to life. For example, program winners from Ernst & Young GmbH Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft in Germany were inspired by a Syrian refugee who was spotted on social media saying his life ambition was to work for EY. The team tracked down this refugee and hired him and today are bringing together businesses, government bodies and social groups to integrate the large influx of refugees with the local workforce and society.

In the second phase of the campaign in 2017, despite a reduced media budget, we continued building on the same channel strategy and also developed an interactive film distributed through social media and housed on the digital hub.

This brought to life the brand purpose using real EY business stories and, using interactive elements within the film, allowed viewers to find out more about individual cases and contact the services teams directly.

## Results

Outstanding results were achieved:

Over the judging period, Brand Finance, an independent agency provided insight on how effectively the brand now supports EY businesses. It found that:

- Strong brand equity (a key metric to brand strength) has boosted EY to a AAA+ global brand
- In 2017, EY became the 16th most powerful global brand, up from 50th in 2015
- EY saw the largest brand value growth from 2015-2017, increasing by 55.8%
- In 2017 alone EY achieved a 28.5% increase in brand value, driven by the strength in brand growth

A range of other metrics show awareness and consideration have been driven across the range of communication objectives.

Since launching #BetterQuestions, Universum's annual *World's Most Attractive Employers* ranking suggests that EY sits directly behind Google and Facebook.

## Societal Impact

These results show how EY member firms galvanized EY people and energized behind purpose to grow and Build a better working world. This goes beyond business growth and there are numerous examples of the societal impact of delivering against our purpose by asking better questions. From helping nations become energy self-sufficient, to tackling industrial pollution in China, and helping charities become as productive as businesses.

## Conclusion

This paper shows how we galvanized a 100 year old organization around a brand purpose to drive distinctiveness, grow brand strength and value, build pride in our people and helped build a better working world.

We brought our purpose to life by showing how EY works at its very best, demonstrating how better questions lead to better answers that in turn help build a better working world.

This remains a distinctive part of our DNA – our north star – and sets us apart from our competitors.

## **About EY**

**EY is a global leader in assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services. The insights and quality services we deliver help build trust and confidence in the capital markets and in economies the world over. We develop outstanding leaders who team to deliver on our promises to all of our stakeholders. In so doing, we play a critical role in building a better working world for our people, for our clients and for our communities.**

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