

**WeAreFearless.**

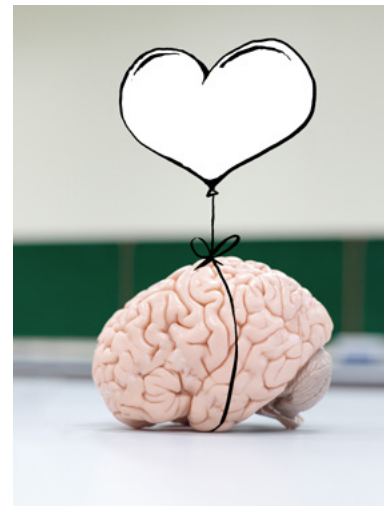
# THE MARKETING SOCIETY AWARDS 2023

BEST AGENCY TEAM 2023

Company: WeAreFearless.  
Category: Best Agency Team

## Exec summary – Best Agency

# WEAREFEARLESS IS A YOUNG, INTEGRATED AGENCY SPECIALISING IN CULTURE, SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT.



We're probably one of the smaller teams entering this award but that's ok because we believe in the power of the underdog, especially those brave enough to call themselves Fearless and make that superpower the very essence of their being.

It all started with a vision to build an agency fit for the future powered by a diverse team of academics, strategists and creatives all on a mission to solve business challenges differently and bravely through the power of creativity and psychology.

In setting up Fearless we were shaped by our lived experience. Too many of the businesses we'd worked in created cultures geared around safe options and mediocre results. An institutional fear of failure too often predominated.

So we thought, what if we could create a psychologically-safe culture where employees, partners and clients could feel safe to make the bold choice every time, rather than just the easy one?

Science shows that 90% of people's decisions are made unconsciously, so we knew there had to be a better way to solve those challenges. We wanted to tap into what humans really wanted to satisfy at that deeper motivations level to provide the truth and certainty to know that our work would really work.

We believe that opportunity, growth, creativity and satisfaction are best created by challenging convention and championing bravery. It's a strategic approach that's based on honesty and psychological safety and a promise around **boldness with backup**. The backup is our evidenced based approach harnessing the latest academic thinking into human psychology to inform our bolder commercial creativity. We always say and do what we think is right, not what we think the client will always want to hear.

It's allowed us, an 8-year-old independent, to build a team and business to be proud of, retaining our key clients and beating some of the world's biggest networks to new clients and a coveted place in Campaign's Best Places to Work 2022.

## The WeAreFearless Story



# WE CALL IT BOLDNESS WITH BACKUP



When it comes to our super team, we live our fearless principles through initiatives like our Fearless Fund. Everyone gets an annual budget payment to spend on something that pushes them out of their comfort zone.

When it comes to our clients, we solve commercial and behavioural challenges through HumanValues™, our proprietary, insight-based tool built from psychology and our international community of cultural pioneers.

When it comes to our creative, we're fueled by the diversity of thought from our international team and in-house 'passion platform experts,' and the agility and resourcefulness of our culture to respond.

We've had several impressive new business wins, from Visa Europe and writing their Women's Football business strategy to developing TeamViewer's new global strategy and campaign to drive greater business return for their Manchester United and Mercedesd F1 partnerships.

Whilst we were doing all that, we also launched our dedicated Women's Sports Division, headed by global expert Rebecca Sowden, bringing a new values and psychology-led approach to help brands, rights-holders and sponsors solve their business problems and unlock new value by creating fresh opportunities to propel Women's Sports forward.

We've won a string of prestigious awards, including being crowned The European Sponsorship Association's Agency of The Year for the 4th time on the trot.

*As Oliver Weingarten, CEO of esports client LDN put it, "I couldn't recommend the WeAreFearless team enough."*





## OUR TEAM AND TALENT

We innovate at a people level to build a greater sense of belonging. And we track and measure it.

We start by recruiting people who care deeply about our core specialisms – culture, sport, esports, entertainment. Whether you’ve rowed the Atlantic, know everything about the Welsh Rugby team or what Dina Asher-Smith likes to eat for breakfast, whether you’re a film nerd, gamer or influencer in your own right, Fearless hire and actively integrate these aspects of our culture. We’re also taking steps towards our DE&I goals, working with our recruiters to hire from more varied backgrounds and non traditional communities.

We then use the renowned Maister Survey, an industry-leading employee engagement tool, to identify areas for development and ways to increase employee satisfaction. In three quarters of our questions, employees rated us in the top 25% compared to the benchmark.

# WE REWARD THE FEARLESSNESS IN OUR TEAM



## The BRICK Award.

A monthly incentive where one employee each month is recognised for boldness beyond the call of duty. It's called BRICK because it symbolises the growth of the agency brick by brick. Voted by every staff member the winner gets £250 and the iconic gold brick-shape trophy.



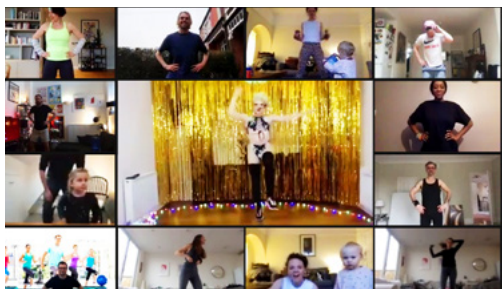
## The Fearless Leader Award.

A six-monthly celebration of the employees who most embody the company's values and goes above and beyond their day job. Voted by every staff member the two winners win £1000 each towards travel that broadens their horizons.



## Funded industry training.

We offer fully funded staff training from the most respected industry organisations including the IPA, ESA, Think!Sponsorship and The Marketing Academy Virtual Campus.



## Fearlessly social.

Our monthly socials are key to our fearless spirit. From drag bingo with the delightful Globe Girls to catching air in a Monster truck, we're always looking for the next amazing experience for the team.





# HOW FEARLESSNESS HELPS OUR PEOPLE, CLIENTS AND BUSINESS



## VISA

We've worked hand in hand with Visa Europe, the world's largest investor in Women's Football to develop a business strategy that used Women's Football as a metaphor for inclusion and acceptance in society to change its perception with its younger audiences.



Our Kia #AcesForOceans content campaign harnessed the power of The Australian Open Tennis and raised awareness of the ocean plastic problem whilst bringing to life Kia's sustainability story (its EV6 is partly made from recycled waste) [Link](#).



We've worked with UEFA to tackle the negativity around their Europa League brand head-on, showcasing the epic drama and excitement through our meme-style content strategy. [Link](#)

## BRIDGESTONE

We've helped Bridgestone, a global Olympic partner in a low interest category that no one cares about, to change people's lives through our inspirational 6 year long Chase Your Dream, No Matter What pan-European brand campaign.

This year we've evolved that campaign for Paris 2024, using the insight that Olympians never rely on luck to perform at their best when they're so well prepared just like Bridgestone's relentless testing and engineering excellence means their tyres are always prepared to perform when it really matters. We're challenging the cultural role of luck in society as this evolves. With Prepared to Perform, our new creative is challenging the role of luck in elite sport. [Link](#)

# HOW FEARLESSNESS HELPS OUR PEOPLE, CLIENTS AND BUSINESS



In our 4th year together, we launched a new global creative campaign for Hays Technology in partnership with Manchester City, pivoting from awareness objectives to driving consideration amongst tech candidates by heroing their roles. The GameChangers campaign championed their off-pitch technology roles that keep Man City on top to appeal to new tech specialists for Hays' new recruitment division. [Link](#)



We're helping TeamViewer, key strategic partners to Manchester United and Mercedes-AMG F1, to maximise the impact of both major partnerships on their global business objectives and B2B audiences through a new strategy and brand campaign with a more human centric emotional approach.



We're strategic and creative partners to the challenger rightsholder Volleyball World, the ultimate online destination for Volleyball fans worldwide, building their brand and driving growth. [Link](#)



We're working hand-in-hand with the Women's Sport Collective, creating a dynamic new identity to help grow this incredible community and empower all women working in sport.



We've supported Europe's first openly gay women's football club, Hackney Women's FC, creating a bold new bespoke kit and PR campaign. Since 1986, in the face of governmental and societal abuse, this pioneering club has created a safe place for all women to play football, and shown you can achieve so much more when you lean into fear. We told this story to the nation with features on ITV News, Sky News, BBC News, Evening Standard, Metro and The Independent. All with no media spend. [Link](#)



And we've helped Harris, a noble but staid century-old paintbrush brand, to disrupt its category through real personality, characters and innovation. The work was shortlisted for a Drum Award for Content in 2022.



## Our new approaches

# OUR FEARLESS APPROACH TO CREATIVITY AND INSIGHT

We used a lot of traditional market research in our previous lives. But psychology and behavioural science have advanced dramatically in recent years so when we set up Fearless we developed our own unique approach. It goes deeper into the unconscious values and motivations that drive attitudes, behaviours and decision-making across the world. Because, after all, every marketing challenge is a human challenge. So in partnership with academics and researchers we built a secret weapon called HumanValues™



It's a proprietary psychological tool built off 40 years of global data. It quantifies WHY people make the decisions they do at a deeper unconscious values level so you can segment and engage them differently. We then use it to fuel more relevant and engaging strategy, creative and comms.

But HumanValues™ isn't a one-off. As a team, we're on a constant mission to challenge our industry to be more courageous.

And we're armed with the science to back us up. We work with leading-edge scientists like Dr Kate Goodger, 7x TeamGB's Olympic sports psychologist, Professor Jo Devlin, UCL's head of Neuroscience, and are partnering with Loughborough University on a sports psychology research project to tackle the biases and stereotypes around motherhood and sport.

We work with diverse thinkers like Helen Sharman, Britain's first astronaut, and expert gamers, data scientists and BAFTA award-winning directors. We call these fearless friends our Cultural Studio and they're very much our extended fearless family.

We also work closely with The Marketing Academy and their virtual campus, The IPA, GWI, WARC and ESA to integrate world class insight and knowledge into our thinking. Our team are key to our boldness with backup promise.



# WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING TO PIONEER NEW WAYS OF WORKING.

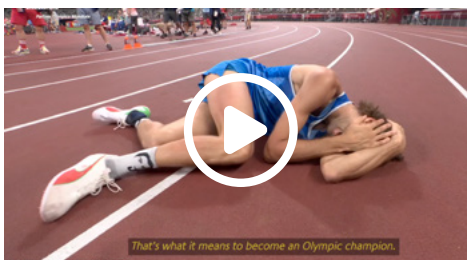
With our strategic insights powered by HumanValues, our creative approach is all about stirring deep emotions. After all, humans don't act if they don't care. Creatively, our storytelling is designed to tap into why people think and feel as they do, not just what they care about.



This year, further evidenced by new research from the B2B Institute - we've applied this emotion-led thinking to B2B to help TeamViewer humanise its marketing and drive greater conversion through their funnel by tapping into those deeper motivations. At Fearless, we don't do category tropes or clichés.



We use our Cultural Studio to help us work anywhere in the world, from engaging Colombians around hummel's new Everton kit, to filming Europa League stories in Bulgaria, to helping clients in South Korea, Switzerland and Belgium.



During Tokyo 2021, we built an in-house content studio and delivered an impressive 6-hour turnaround that featured real-time Olympic Games content. Our 4mins Tamperi Olympic film was watched by 1 in every 6 Italians!!



To ensure authenticity for our UEFA multi-markets work, we employed copywriters across Europe to craft our campaign name and communication, rather than relying on standard translation.



We're constantly championing new ways of thinking. For example, in our co-curated event with The Marketing Academy we set out to inspire senior marketers to embrace fearlessness by putting Britain's greatest ever Olympian, Daley Thompson, on stage with Dr Kate Goodger, ex TeamGB Psychologist to discuss what it takes to be a truly fearless leader both on and off the track. We then ate in the dark to test everyone's resolve!!

## Our results (1) for the business

### Strong financial growth

With our 2022 results yet to be published at Companies House, our latest listed accounts show a fee income of £4,999,303 with strong YOY growth:

Fee Growth = 27%, Gross Profit Growth = 31%, Operating Profit Growth = 84%

### New Business Wins

We have successfully grown our client portfolio to 16 clients, and entered our 7th year (and counting!) working with Bridgestone.

New wins included:

TeamViewer  
Volleyball World  
Allianz  
Kia Worldwide  
UEFA Europa Conference League  
Compare The Market  
The UK Government  
Hackney Women's FC  
The Women's Sport Collective

### Multiple awards

Here's some of our more recent award wins:

- Agency of the Year 2020, 2021, 2022 & 2023 (European Sponsorship Association)
- Campaign 100 Best Places to Work 2022
- Highly commended Best Sports Film, Brand Film Festival 2022
- Highly commended Best Integrated Campaign, The Drum Content Awards 2022
- Bravest International Campaign, The Marketing Society Awards 2019
- Best use of PR, UK Sponsorship Awards 2019
- Agency of the Year, Single Nation, European Sponsorship Association 2019
- Sponsorship Agency of the Year, UK Sponsorship Awards 2018
- Silver, Heartstring, Brand Film Festival 2018

## Our results (2) for our clients



The world's leading tyre company was struggling to make headway in Europe. Partly this was down to strong local brands like Pirelli, but increasingly profitability was undermined by a flood of cheap Chinese imports – and motorists didn't know or care enough about tyre brands to want to pay more for quality.

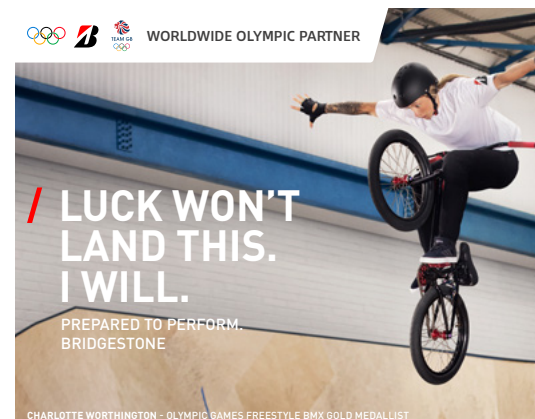
Over six years, using the brand's IOC partnership, we used our HumanValues™ insight tool to create a tyre campaign that didn't show or talk about tyres! Instead 'Chase Your Dream, No Matter What' focussed on inspirational athletes as brand metaphors who'd overcome incredible life struggles to showcase the importance of tenacity and determination in striving to reach your goal – a mirror for Bridgestone's importance to life's journeys.

We've just launched an evolution of this campaign, Olympians Don't Rely On Luck (Prepared to Perform), hijacking the frequent but misguided use of the term "Luck" in the world of elite performance. Charlotte Worthington, GB gold medalist in Freestyle BMX, epitomises the campaign strategy and product truth, landing the brand message literally and metaphorically!

She mitigates risk with rigorous training and mental preparation, her success having nothing to do with luck. Just like Bridgestone's products and innovative solutions, their meticulous preparation means they will deliver in the moments that matter most. As the evolution has only been in market in 2023, we do not yet have results for it, but last year's results were excellent.

### Results:

- Brand Affinity – KPI index of 140 vs RESULT: 187
- Target for Purchase Intent – KPI index of 140 vs RESULT: 239
- Bridgestone's Olympic sponsorship average awareness increased 16% to 20%
  - UK doubled from 6% to 12%





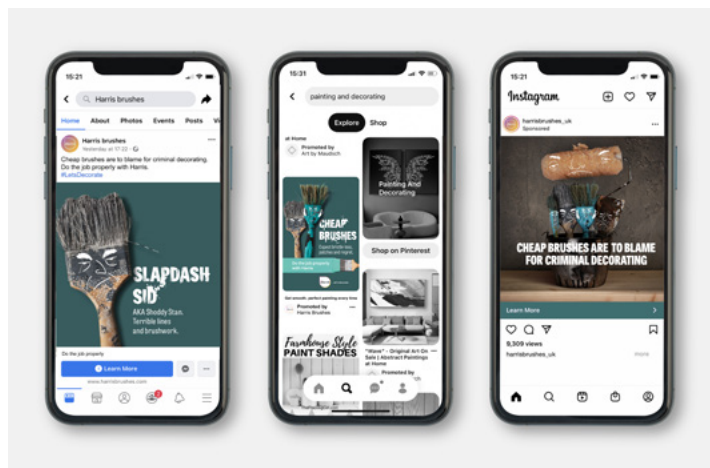
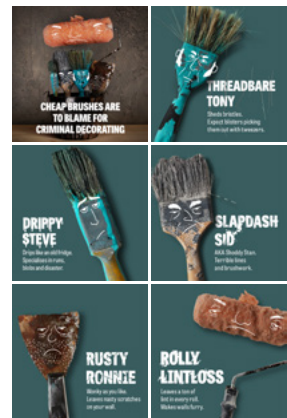


A leading manufacturer of decorating brushes and accessories. Their problem could be encapsulated in something Theodore Levitt once said 'People don't want to buy a quarter-inch drill. They want a quarter-inch hole.' People don't want to buy a paintbrush. Or a paint-roller. They want painted walls. And if they can get a cheap 'disposable' brush multipack, they don't see the point in paying for Harris quality.

In a highly rational, functional, price-driven category, we looked to emotion and behavioural science for the answer. Using HumanValues™ and the principle of Loss Aversion we reframed the benefit of Harris from something extra that's worth paying more for, to something that will save you from the misery caused by inferior cheap brushes.

**Results:**


- Increased brand awareness from 55% to 65%
- Increased perceptions of Great Quality from 53% to 80% and Great Value from 64% to 76%
- Increased purchase intent from 17% to 45%
- And 14% of those who'd seen the campaign said they'd bought a Harris brush because of it.




## Our team, their work and the impact on the business

Our business would be nothing without our team, their fearless spirit and the work they've done. The best way to explain the impact they've had is in the words of our clients:

“ A huge thank you to team WeAreFearless for the brains, strategy and awesome creative to help integrate our partners into LDN UTD content in an authentic way. Audience insight and community understanding are key for successful long-term sponsorships in esports, and I couldn't recommend the WeAreFearless team enough for developing creative and strategy that lies at the heart of what makes esports fans tick.

– Oliver Weingarten,   
CEO, LDN UTD (esports)

“ Apologies for not being in touch this season, Dan seemed to have it all in control and the end result as expected - and in my view, the best campaign I have seen in my time at Hays. A personal thanks again for your professionalism and perseverance with us. From a very tough start you really did deliver what you had envisaged from the start and something I really believe articulated the real synergies between us (as Hays Tech) and Man City FC.

– Freida Moore   
Head of Corporate Communications

Industry insiders also recognise what makes our team and their work so special. In awarding us with the title of Best Sponsorship Agency in Europe 2022, the European Sponsorship Award judges described Fearless as “an outstanding agency with a truly differentiating approach based on creativity and science”.

It's as a direct result of the bold work backed up by science, personal qualities and team culture that we've been able to attract plaudits like this. It's how we retain 100% of our clients throughout the challenges of the pandemic years, how we expanded the scope of work we do for them, and how we won seven pitches for new projects. And the fact that everyone in our team feels more courageous in their work and personal lives is probably our biggest win!!







## Pushing the reputation of the industry forward



The marketing industry has changed significantly in the past few decades. More than ever, marketing and advertising must measure and prove their worth.

But in becoming more grown-up and responsible, there's a danger of playing things too safe and losing the spark of irrepressible genius that made our industry what it once was.

We're here to say that it doesn't have to be that way. Because with today's science, and with measurement and financial responsibility to back us up, we can be free, once more to take calculated risks that make a real difference.

What the industry needs is more evidence, innovation, creativity, discomfort, and the courage to speak truth to clients.

That's why, in 2022/2023, we ramped up our Fearless Thought Leadership. This work has so far included speaking on hate speech around the Lionesses and the Women's EUROS at the Equalities Summit, leading the panel on DE&I at Think!Sponsorship, speaking on the Unofficial Partner and The Marketing Society podcasts on trends in our industry, and publishing whitepapers on the Future of Women's Football and Olympic & Paralympic games marketing.

But Thought Leadership doesn't stop there. We're partnering with Loughborough University on research to identify the impact of stereotypes on athlete performance, we're judges on the European and UK Sponsorship Awards, tutors on measurement best practice on the annual ESA Diploma, and mentors at the School of Communication Arts.

Bravery works, and with fearless leadership behind it, it is the key to marketing innovation and success. It solves business challenges differently. It delivers effective commercial results. It inspires teams to be their best selves, and harnesses uncertainty to find opportunity and growth.

Boldness with backup proves that you can harness science and creativity in highly effective ways and bring more certainty to the boardroom. And it's key in an industry where waning attention and greater demands for proven ROI matter.

And in an age of mergers, acquisitions and global communications giants, this paper shows that there is still a place for underdog independents.