

Writing A Winning

PR Award Entry



I love talking about our work.

[P]

I hate writing award entries.

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Last month the PR team at Propellernet won at the PR Moment awards.

Nights like this make it all worth it.



A caveat:

I don't have all the answers,
I don't have a 100% win rate (who does?)

Hello – I'm Louise and I'm head of PR at Brighton-based search agency Propellernet.



UK 2024
SEARCH AWARDS
WINNER

The Drum.
Awards

GLOBAL 2024
SEARCH AWARDS
WINNER

UK 2024
eCOMMERCE
AWARDS

PRmoment
Awards 2025

CREATIVE
MOMENT
AWARDS 2023

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It's expensive and time consuming, why do we enter into awards?

It attracts talent – who doesn't want to be in an award-winning team?

It's super motivating – who doesn't want to have external recognition?

It cements client trust and makes them look good

It works wonders for marketing – attracting new business leads



Even if you don't win, just being nominated gives you all these benefits too.

IMO, this is what makes for a great award entry

 Give clear objectives

 Show a range of proof points

 Let others vouch for you

 Create a story

 Make it visually appealing

 Dare I say it, use AI

Add as much detail into your objectives as you do your results

Does everything you're reporting on have an objective, target or goal?

Including numeric goals wherever possible, it makes it easier to see 'what good looks like'

Before

Objective(s) & budget (1-10 points)

Objectives:

- Gain links through PR coverage to help SEO
- Raise the profile of My 1st Years in the UK, especially with parents
- Be seen as a parenting expert

Targets:

- 30 links

After

Objective(s) & budget (1-10 points)

Objectives:

- Boost organic search visibility for the Christmas peak period by earning high-quality, editorial backlinks from national and parenting media
- Raise brand awareness among UK parents through coverage in top tier publications

Targets:

30 links

50% follow links, under 5% affiliate links

Increase in branded searches by 5% YoY

Increase rankings and non-brand organic traffic by 15% YoY

Coverage on client's top tier media – Stylist, The Independent and Made [For](#) Mums

Specific

Objective(s) & budget (1-10 points)

Objectives:

- Boost **organic search visibility** for the Christmas peak period by earning high-quality, editorial backlinks from national and parenting media
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Measurable

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Achievable/Ambitious

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Relevant

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Timely

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Utilise other teams to report a bit more uniquely

Have you picked the brains of your sales, social, SEO team?

What your SEO team can tell you

How many people **visited the site** via your coverage

How many **sales** your coverage secured

Give **context to the links** you secured in any coverage

(Using Google analytics)

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CoverageBook BOOKS FOLDERS COVERAGE VAULT

CV Villas / World's Bluest Water / Settings

Book Metrics

Checking backlinks to cvvillas.com Refresh data Updated: Sep 09, 2024

Show and hide metrics on coverage items

These settings control which metrics are visible on **coverage items** throughout this book. If you want to configure what cards are shown in your **summary**, head to the [Summary](#).

Coverage Metrics

Views Calculated based on audience size and social engagement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Engagements Total number of social engagements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Links Number of backlinks found on a piece of coverage.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The screenshot displays the CoverageBook interface for a book titled "World's Bluest Water". The dashboard provides a summary of coverage metrics. A sidebar on the left offers navigation options: Add, Overview, Cover, Summary (selected), Highlights, Sections, and Share. The main content area features a "Summary" header and a "Preview in book" button. Below the header are three control buttons: "Choose metrics" (57 available), "Show/hide summary" (Visible), and "Add custom cards" (1). The dashboard consists of six metric cards arranged in a 2x3 grid. The top-left card shows "220 Pieces of Coverage" (Total number of online, offline and social clips in this book). The top-right card shows "20.2M Estimated Views" (Prediction of lifetime views of coverage, based on audience reach & engagement rate on social). The bottom-left card shows "5.54B Audience" (Combined total of publication-wide audience figures for all outlets featuring coverage). The bottom-middle card shows "16.4K Engagements" (Combined total of likes, comments and shares on social media platforms). The bottom-right card shows "71 Links From Coverage" (Number of links secured to the CV Villas website from all pieces of coverage). The bottom-right card, "53 Avg. Domain Authority" (A 0-100 measure of the authority of the site coverage appears on. Provided by Moz), is highlighted with a light green background.

Metric	Value	Description
Pieces of Coverage	220	Total number of online, offline and social clips in this book
Estimated Views	20.2M	Prediction of lifetime views of coverage, based on audience reach & engagement rate on social
Audience	5.54B	Combined total of publication-wide audience figures for all outlets featuring coverage
Engagements	16.4K	Combined total of likes, comments and shares on social media platforms
Links From Coverage	71	Number of links secured to the CV Villas website from all pieces of coverage
Avg. Domain Authority	53	A 0-100 measure of the authority of the site coverage appears on. Provided by Moz

What the SEO team can tell you about your links

Whether you've ever had a **link from that site before**

Whether that site has **linked to your competitor**

Have your links had an **impact on the brand's rankings in Google**

Have your links had an **impact on the brand's organic traffic and revenue**

(Using SEO tools like Ahrefs, Google Analytics)

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Bring other voices into the entry to reduce perceived bias

Can your **client or boss** say how impressed they were and why?

Could a **journalist** provide a quote about what they found unique about your approach?

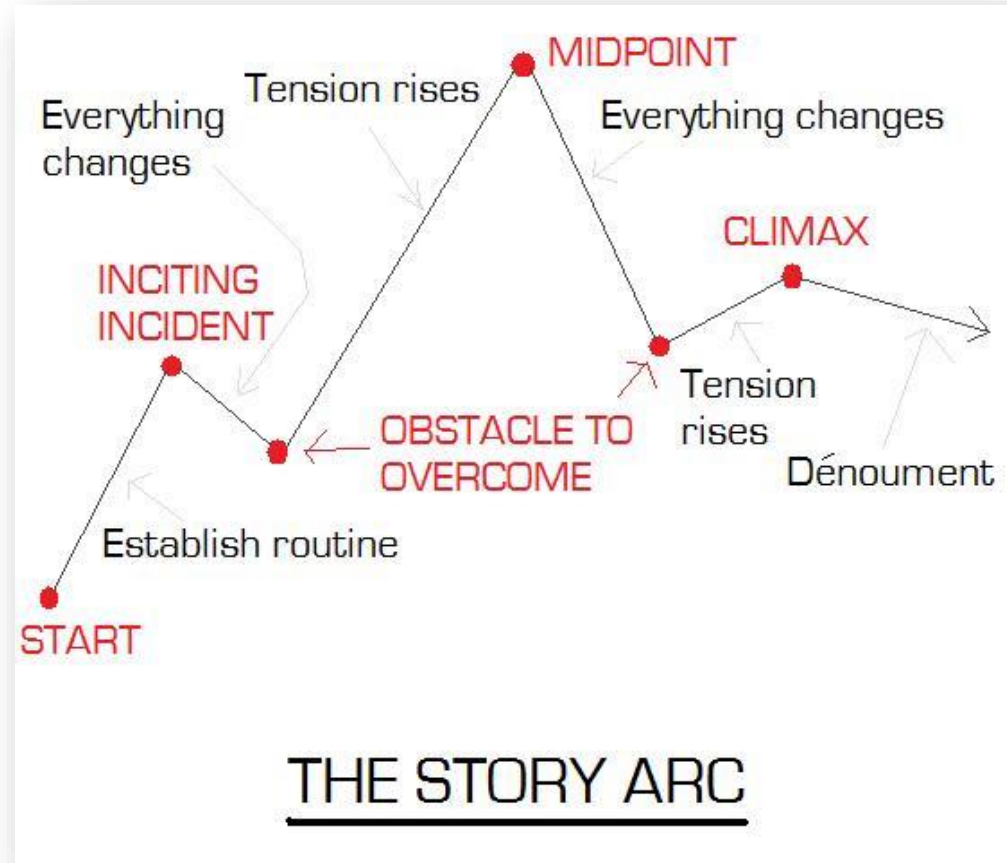
Do you have **customers** that could say how the campaign made them feel?

This isn't a case study, it's a story

What hurdles did you face?

What were the perils?

Think of it as a story arc



Examples of PR peril



The number of client competitors had grown by 50% in the last year

We only had a short period of time

There was a small budget

The subject matter was controversial

Our client had a bad experience with PR at a previous role

The brand's website went down during the campaign

Make it look clear and sound clear

- Bullet points
- Headers
- Images
- Bold type
- Good use of empty space
- One CoverageBook link rather than a big list of blue links
- No jargon
- No marketing speak
- Could your mum/friend/neighbour read it and get it?

Use AI for good

Get AI to mark your homework, using ChatGPT

It can check your word count, whether you've included everything the awards have requested, if you've missed anything, etc

Give ChatGPT all the information that it needs

PRmoment Awards Instant Feedback

The PRmoment Awards offer instant, personalised feedback to every shortlisted entry.

We know it's not great when you hear you've not been shortlisted and that's why it is important to us to offer actionable insights from our expert judges in such a timely manner.

Results & evaluation

Please relate these directly to the objectives stated above. Judges understand that evaluation metrics will vary depending on the campaign objectives. That said, the judges will be looking to reward evaluation that includes KPIs across the campaign outputs, campaign out-takes *and* importantly - campaign outcomes.

Please note: We love paid media and recognise its important role in many campaigns. You won't be penalised for using paid channels, but please don't declare any paid media results as earned media. You can, of course, include paid media in your results, but declare them separately, please. This includes any paid for media placements and advertorials

What the judges are looking for

Here are a bunch of quotes from our jury that give you an insight into the types of things th

"A compelling story that resonates with the target audience and showcases the brand's rais executed. Clear objectives and outcomes together with ROI will go a long way to securing a

Bev Aujla, head of PR & policy, Kelkoo Group

"I'm looking for evidence of insight, creativity, simplicity and above all else, exceptional execu envious that we hadn't thought of it first, then someone has probably nailed it!"

Andrew Roache, external affairs lead UK and Ireland, Mondelez International

"If you can sell your idea in a single sentence, you're probably onto something. I would love t metrics. And ingenious creativity. The kind of creativity that makes you a bit jealous that you



Tips & tricks for writing a winning PR award entry

Winning awards is a compelling way to attract and retain clients. Award-winning work turns heads, brings recognition to your team and dra people who want to work with you and for you.

Here are our top five tips for giving your entry the greatest possible chance of a thumbs-up from the judging panel:

1. Know the difference between objectives, strategy, tactics

This feels a bit like PR 101, but it still seems to get muddled. The objective is the goal or intent; the strategy is the action plan created to mee intent; the tactics are the actual things you do/tools in your toolbox to get the job done and meet your objectives. Make these really clear in

2. Integrated Comms v PR/publicity

A campaign should demonstrate integrated thinking and execution across the relevant paid, earned, owned, and shared channels and inte terms of stakeholder audiences.

Then paste in or upload your entry and ask ChatGPT to look for anything that is missing or could be changed

Prompt:

I'm submitting this PR award entry for [name of award or category]. I've already given you the award guidelines and criteria, and I've attached my draft of the entry.

Please assess my entry against the criteria in the support documents. I'm looking for:

- *A summary of how well the entry meets each of the key judging criteria*
- *Suggestions for improvement (including gaps, unclear sections, or areas that could be strengthened)*
- *Any tone/style recommendations to help it stand out*
- *A general impression from the perspective of a judge*

Let me know if anything feels off, missing, or underdeveloped.

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 Award Entry Assessment – “Best Integrated Communications Campaign” Summary Against Judging Criteria**1. Clear Objectives & Strategy**

✓ **Strengths:** The entry clearly outlines the business challenge and communications objectives, linking them to both brand awareness and sales KPIs.

⚠ **Opportunities:** You mention “improve brand perception” as a goal, but it’s not supported by a baseline perception metric or pre-campaign insight. Including this would strengthen your rationale.

2. Creativity & Innovation


✓ **Strengths:** The “reverse reveal” tactic on social media was a creative way to build suspense and encourage UGC. Judges will likely appreciate the boldness.

⚠ **Opportunities:** Could benefit from more context around *why* this creative route was chosen — was it insight-driven or based on a cultural moment?


3. Integration Across Channels

✓ **Strengths:** Good use of paid, owned, and earned media — influencer partnerships, OOH, and an experiential event are well-articulated.

⚠ **Opportunities:** A simple visual (timeline or channel map) might help show how these touchpoints layered or amplified each other over time.

 **Style & Tone Suggestions**

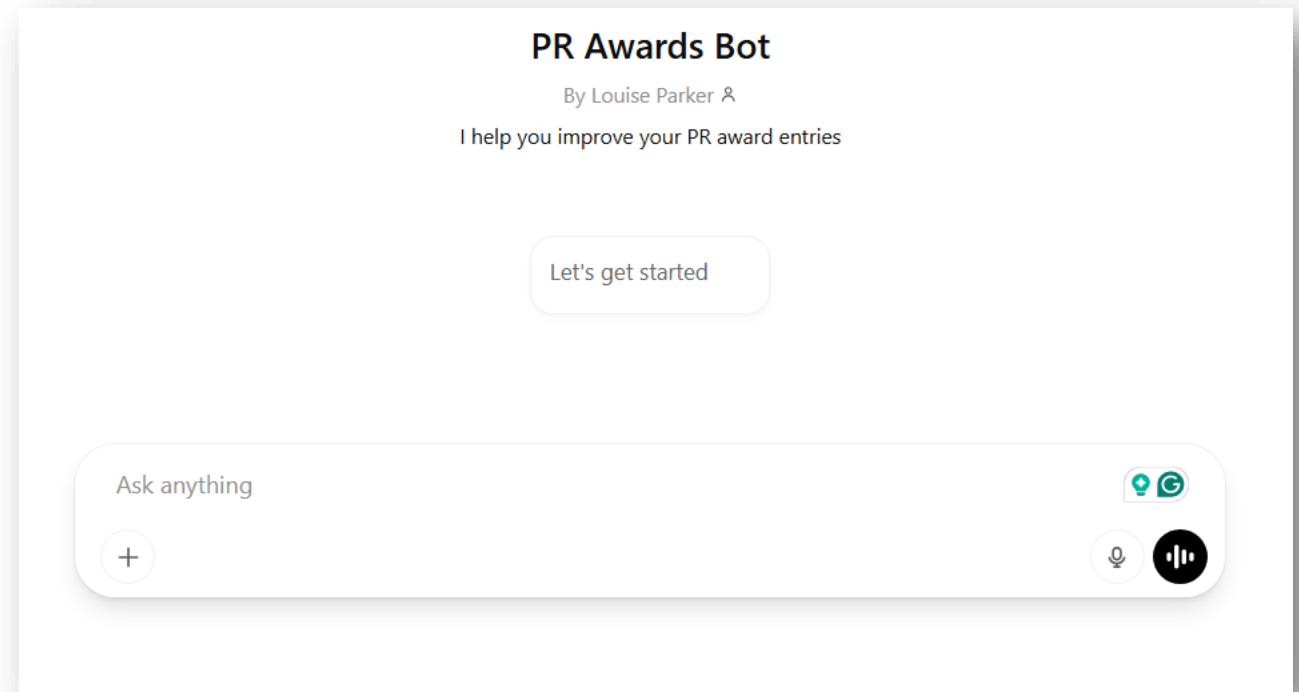
- The tone is confident but humble — great.
- A few areas (especially the “Results” section) lean too heavily into listing numbers. Try tying them more explicitly back to objectives to show impact.
- One or two sentences are a bit jargon-heavy — e.g. “leveraged an omni-channel approach” could be simplified for clarity.

 **Judge's General Impression**

This reads like a smart, well-run campaign with good integration and strong results. What’s missing is that final layer of storytelling magic — the emotional hook or a moment that gives the entry a distinctive personality. Consider opening with a powerful 1–2 sentence summary that sells the “why this matters” in plain, compelling language.

You can even make yourself a virtual awards judge

In fact, I have, and you can use it too!



The PR Awards Bot has been trained on awards information and tips from PRCA Awards, Sabre Awards, PR Moment Awards, PR Week Awards and CIPR Excellence Awards.

PR Awards Bot

By Louise Parker &

I help you improve your PR award entries

Let's get started

Ask anything









Use AI for good


Please don't get it to write it for you – it will sound like AI and it famously can make up things

Also it *shouldn't* use any of the data for training but anonymise if you're cautious

And don't worry, I can't see anything

So to remind you:

-  Give clear objectives
-  Show a range of proof points
-  Let others vouch for you
-  Create a story
-  Make it visually appealing
-  Dare I say it, use AI

 PR Awards Bot:
Now live on the Propellernet blog

Thanks for listening!

You can find me on LinkedIn 😊

