

New York Festivals Advertising Awards

Creating amazing work may be its own reward. Having your work seen and recognized by the global creative community is inspiring, encouraging and energizing. Nice fuel for your next project.

New York Festivals Advertising Awards are a simple way of telling clients and vendors that you are not interchangeable, that there is a standard of excellence in which quality and passion matter. It's a reminder that the agencies who represent these values are truly the ones you want working for you and the ones you want to work for.

Maximum of 800 words limit for this entry.

Brand: Charles Schwab

Campaign: Breakaway

Category: Entries in this Category Group, Financial Advertising, are all about gaining the rarest kind of consumer trust. These accounts are dedicated to educating consumers to the value of the product while convincing them to entrust the brand with their finances and most sensitive personal data. These campaigns have to be captivating, creative and informative while being held to the highest legal and ethical standards. Winners in these categories may include all types of media used in service of financial advertising and marketing.

Judging Criteria: 40% / Idea/Concept 35% / Brand Relevance / 25% Execution

[Previous written entries/Video asset/Images/stills](#)

Who we are and why we are different

At Charles Schwab, we provide a broad range of financial services for all investors but aim to highlight clients embodying our company values of staying engaged and challenging the status quo. We attract a diverse range of investors, so tapping into the meaning behind their investments is crucial as a uniting quality for our brand's audience.

The distinction was crucial in 2020 as market volatility drove new investors into the market with dreams of rapid windfalls. We needed to distinguish ourselves among an audience considering investments on a longer timeline while gaining the trust of potential customers through showcasing our dedication to ethical investors. This was especially important during the risky financial unknowns introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Breakaway Campaign Strategy

To position our campaign with a human-centric approach, we partnered with CNN, utilizing their fourth season of the "Champions for Change" series to emphasize how investing can provide even more meaning than material gain. The campaign aimed to humanize the customer's financial journey, inspiring potential investors by recontextualising "ownership" into something more heartfelt.

Breakaway was formulated as a video serving as our campaign's emotional centerpiece. It showcased Charles Schwab customer Bill Greenberg, the father of a disabled son dedicating his time and energy to create a sled hockey team for disabled athletes. Greenberg's journey was inspired by his son's desire to play sports, which exemplified how to "own your tomorrow" by challenging the status quo.

Intentionally, Greenberg's accomplishments in *Breakaway* are not framed around monetary acquisition, but in enrichment of the young player's lives as he looks after them from a place of goodwill. We took a risk in minimizing our own product offering and brand presence to allow Greenberg's humanity to embody an ideal Schwab customer's mindset: someone who asks questions and is engaged.

In addition to its emotional impact, *Breakaway* charted new territory in terms of strategic campaign deployment. In addition to the hero TV spot, our campaign deployed across CNN's robust linear, digital, and social platforms, tapping into Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook for the advantageous manner their algorithms prioritize emotional videos.

Our goals

Breakaway, and the larger "Champions for Change" generated brand awareness and drove engagement, measured through views, engagement rate and completion rate. We strove to ensure even more success than the 2019 campaign.

Though branding was subtle, the campaign relied on its emotional impact to inspire awareness, consideration, and conversion of potential customers through creating a highly shareable story appealing to the emotions. The emotional trigger was foremost, and our branding was ancillary. This distinguished us as an ethical investor understanding that investments can be life-enhancing beyond money.

In partnering with CNN, we aimed to scale up the campaign's visibility to a mass audience, while activating organic promotion through emotional intrigue in Greenberg's story.

Our Challenges

The production of *Breakaway* occurred just before the COVID-19 shutdown in New York City. This meant our challenge was twofold: crafting our message to be as precise and emotive as possible while stay-at-home orders radically changed the investment environment.

The story of Greenberg's sports team not only elicited emotion, but also emphasized the trustworthy principles of Charles Schwab while re-enforcing that some of the most worthwhile investments pay off in moments, not merely money. As the financial services industry is not typically known for its human-centric ethos, we took a maverick approach in bridging this gap through utilizing a nimble strategy to create a heartfelt campaign.

The partnership with CNN proved fruitful for their research and understanding of how financial stories were being discussed and evolving during 2020's unique challenges and opportunities.

Fulfilling our Purpose

The blend of linear and social deployment was successful, especially as the dynamic between Greenberg and his son influenced social participation. *Breakaway* garnered over 33M impressions via linear appearances of which 5.3M were verified as the target audience, aged 35-64.

On social, *Breakaway* satisfied the awareness goal, generating 1.49M video views on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. Comments showed a 99% positive emotional response, overdelivering social estimates by more than 30k views. The campaign's engagement rate was 69% higher than 2019's campaign, and completion rate on the video was 12% higher, even though it was the longest "Champions for Change" campaign video ever.

3.9M pageviews, 4.9M total visits, and 4.1M total unique visitors came to the campaign landing page, delivering on consideration from potential customers. These figures easily stood as the best of the "Champions for Change" seasonal campaigns.

Our *Breakaway* campaign resulted in a major success for our company. This is not only in regards to the fantastic response rate, but also in the way our potential customers associate

us with a financial services company holding itself to the highest socially-ethical standards, while benefitting customers who aim to do the very same.

To recap:



CS outstanding -

1. Charles Schwab - write-up feedback Schwab has approved the write-up. Here are their words:
No changes – this looks really good and is the best write up yet. The background is a good description of the company's offering and approach and leads really well into the strategy.

2. Pfizer - write-up feedback and credits We have not heard from the clients yet, but will keep you updated.

