

Cannes Entries Down 19.9% From 2008

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Press, Film and Outdoor hardest hit, Cyber suffers too

Asia Pacific entries down 10.4% from last year

Regional - A more pragmatic industry is proving it has little appetite for creative festivals this year with the prestigious Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival experiencing a drop of nearly 20% in entry numbers for 2009.

Is it distasteful to enter and attend lavish creative awards when a lot of clients are in real financial strife?

A total of 22,652 entries from 86 countries will be competing for this year's Lions, down 19.9% from the figure of 28,284 in 2008.

Press entries were the hardest hit, down by 32.2%, while other categories such as Film (-25.4%) and Outdoor (-23%) hardly fared any better. But online wasn't spared either, with Cyber entries also dropping by a hefty 20%.

From an Asia Pacific perspective, entries from the region were down 10.4% to 5157 compared to 5757 last year.

The number of entries from Singapore this year is 458, a drop of just 17 from the 475 total of last year. While Malaysia dropped from 283 entries last year to 236, Thailand entered 406 entries compared to 482 last year, India dropped to 982 entries from 1109 and Japan fell from 957 to 747.

At the other end of the scale, Hong Kong and The Philippines managed to increase their number of entries this year, Hong Kong almost doubling their total from 154 in 2008 to 310 this year.

The Philippines also had 35 more entries this time around, moving to 202 from 167 in 2008.

Despite the disappointing entry numbers, the Festival CEO Philip Thomas still managed to put a positive spin on the news, highlighting the launch of the PR Lions which is a new category for 2009.

"We are particularly happy about the launch of the PR Lions, which have been so well supported by our colleagues in the PR industry. With 431 entries from 239 companies in 48 countries participating, it's a great welcome to Cannes for this new category," he said.

"Although there are naturally fewer entries across the categories, the Lions remain the ultimate global awards to win with more than 22,600 entries from 86 countries competing, and we look forward to the 11 Juries arriving in Cannes to honour the finest creative work the world's communications industry has to offer."