



MEDIAWEEK'S NEXT OF THE BEST AWARDS 2025  
FRIDAY 13 JUNE, 2025 | W SYDNEY

Mediaweek's Next of the Best Awards celebrate the emerging leaders in the advertising, media, and marketing industries. Open to individuals who have worked in their current profession for 15 years or less, these awards focus on recognising those who are making a significant impact through their contributions to their company, sector, and the wider industry.

The awards honour professionals who are driving the industry forward with innovative thinking, fresh approaches to content, cultural influence, boundary-pushing work, and inspiration to others.

The Next of the Best Awards recognise not only the achievements of today's leaders but also their potential to shape the future of the industry.

Dates:

- ENTRIES ARE OPEN
- ENTRIES CLOSE: Friday 9 May 2025
- ELIGIBILITY PERIOD FOR SUBMISSIONS: 31 March, 2024 to 31 March, 2025
- FINALISTS ANNOUNCED: Wednesday 21 May 2025
- AWARDS EVENT: Friday, 13 June 2025 from 6:30pm

To Note:

- The deadline for entries is Friday 9 May 2025 (11.59pm AEDT).
- There is NO COST to enter the Mediaweek Next of The Best Awards
- To be eligible to enter you must have worked in the media industry within your current field for fifteen years or less.
- Work must be completed during the submissions period.
- You are eligible to enter if you have already entered a previous Next Of The Best Awards.
- Each entrant must create a separate entry for each category entered.
- Third-party nominations and self-nominations are accepted.
- Mediaweek reserves the right to move entries into other categories.
- All sections of the entry must be completed in order to be judged. Incomplete entries will be disqualified.

Awards:

1. Audio Talent (Host, Producer, Creator)
2. Marketing Talent
3. Marketing Strategy
4. Journalist (Digital/Print/TV/Radio)
5. Advertising Creative
6. Digital Content Creator & Influencer
7. Publicist (Agency/In-House)
8. AdTech Specialist
9. Media Salesperson
10. Media Planner & Buyer
11. Publishing Innovator
12. TV and Film Production Talent
13. Data & Research Specialist

14. Change Maker

15. Leadership

## **1. Next of the Best: Audio Talent (Host, Producer, Creator)**

Recognising standout voices or producers driving growth, innovation, and engagement in the audio and podcasting industries.

Criteria:

- Demonstrates a proven history of producing high-quality, engaging audio content, whether through storytelling, interviews, or research, over the past 12 months.
- Exhibits proven success in growing and maintaining an engaged audience, with strong retention and interaction metrics.
- Shows creativity in audio formats, delivery, and subject matter, bringing a unique perspective or voice to the medium.
- Strong professional network, with successful collaborations with brands, creators, or other industry leaders to expand reach and elevate content.
- Must submit a three-minute sizzle reel (via MP3) and data (e.g., listenership, engagement rates) to support the application

Who Should Enter:

This award is open to all audio professionals, including radio hosts, podcast hosts, producers, and others working across audio platforms such as radio, podcasts, audiobooks, and more. If you've consistently created high-quality, engaging content and have demonstrated proven audience engagement, creativity, and industry collaboration, this is the award for you. Whether you host, produce, or collaborate across radio, podcasts, or other audio formats, if you've cultivated a loyal audience and contributed to the growth of the audio industry, we want to hear your story.

Key Attributes:

Individuals who demonstrate audio excellence through high-quality, engaging, and innovative content across multiple platforms, show proven ability to grow and retain a dedicated audience, showcase creativity and innovation in format, subject matter, or production, and have made a significant impact on the industry through collaborations and influence that elevate the audio landscape.

## **2. Next of the Best: Marketing Talent**

For professionals making waves in the marketing industry.

Criteria:

- Holds a crucial role within a marketing team, with decision making KPIs.
- Developed or led a highly successful campaign or campaigns that exceeded expectations, with measurable data to showcase success.
- Demonstrated innovative thinking.
- Examples of campaigns that achieved or surpassed KPIs with references and or explaining data.

Who Should Enter:

This award is designed for marketing professionals who have made a significant impact in their roles, driving successful campaigns with measurable results. If you've played a crucial role in a marketing team and have led or developed campaigns that exceeded expectations, whether through innovative thinking, data-driven strategies, or groundbreaking creativity, you should apply. Show us how your marketing initiatives have created real business value.

Key Attributes:

Campaign leadership, creativity, measurable success, and impact.

## **3. Next of the Best: Marketing Strategist**

Celebrating a talent in marketing strategy from an independent or holding company agency.

Criteria:

- Developed or executed highly effective marketing strategies that have driven successful measurable business outcomes.
- Demonstrated clear data-driven decision-making, using insights to optimise campaigns, customer journeys, and product positioning.
- Demonstrated expertise in audience segmentation, personalization, and media buying.
- Driven cross-channel strategies, utilising digital, social, and traditional media effectively and innovatively.

- Has contributed to business growth through innovative marketing techniques, with demonstrable success( e.g., influencer marketing, loyalty programs).
- Examples of work must be shown.

Who Should Enter:

For marketing strategists who have built and executed data-driven strategies that have led to measurable business outcomes, this award is your chance to shine. If you've demonstrated innovative thinking in audience targeting, media buying, or cross-channel strategies and have contributed to business growth through your marketing expertise, we want to hear from you.

Key Attributes:

Data-driven strategies, innovation, and measurable success.

#### **4. Next of the Best: Journalist (Digital/Print/TV/Radio)**

Celebrating a journalist who has demonstrated exceptional talent and impact.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated outstanding reporting skills, whether investigative, feature writing, or news-breaking throughout career.
- Demonstrated high-impact stories that influenced public opinion, or achieved successful outcomes with reaction or measurable audience numbers.
- Demonstrated creativity in how stories are told, researched, and presented
- Recognised for breaking exclusive content or producing work that achieves significant attention.
- Maintained a high standard of journalistic integrity and storytelling excellence.
- Examples must be included with video examples submitted as MP3.

Who Should Enter:

This award recognises journalists who have excelled in their craft and made an impact through their reporting. If you've written or produced high-impact stories that have shaped public opinion, driven conversations, or achieved significant audience engagement, this is your moment. Whether radio, digital, print, or TV, we want to celebrate those whose journalism goes above and beyond, offering fresh, creative, and responsible storytelling.

Key Attributes:

Storytelling excellence, investigative skills, audience impact, and journalistic integrity.

## **5. Next of the Best: Advertising Creative**

For standout talent in the advertising industry making an impact in creativity.

Criteria:

- Held a creative role in advertising and showed exceptional proven success in their field, and can demonstrate clear results.
- Demonstrated creative thinking that led to successful campaign/s and beat KPIs.
- Key contribution to campaigns showing originality and engaging audiences in compelling ways.
- Seen measurable success in one or several campaigns, increased brand awareness, consumer engagement, or conversions.
- Has earned recognition through campaign success from clients, peers and managers.
- Examples of campaign/s must be submitted.

Who Should Enter:

If you're a talent in advertising who has demonstrated exceptional creativity and achieved measurable success with your work, this award is for you. Whether through innovative campaign concepts, original approaches, or strong engagement results, we're looking for those who have creatively driven results and caught the attention of both clients and audiences alike.

## **6. Next of the Best: Digital Content Creator & Influencer**

Celebrating a content creator or influencer who has made a significant impact across digital platforms, including social media, YouTube, TikTok, and beyond.

Criteria:

- Shown substantial growth over the past 12 months in key areas; Audience size, engagement, revenue, or brand influence. This may include an increase in followers, expanded reach, or a clear influence on industry trends.
- Exhibit a compelling approach to content production, whether through innovative storytelling, high-quality video production, interactive social media strategies, or pioneering new content formats that engage and inspire their audience.

- A strong ability to leverage their platform for business success, whether through brand collaborations, sponsorships, advertising revenue, product launches, or other monetisation strategies. The applicant should be able to showcase successful partnerships and revenue-generating initiatives.
- The nominee must maintain a high standard of content across multiple platforms, demonstrating both consistency in output and adaptability to evolving digital trends.
- Submissions must show examples of monetisation success, including partnerships, sponsorships, or business ventures.

Who Should Enter:

This award is for content creators or influencers who have made a significant impact across digital platforms. If you've demonstrated impressive growth in followers, engagement, or revenue over the last 12 months and are known for pioneering new content formats or monetisation strategies, this award celebrates your success. Whether on YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, or other platforms, we're looking for individuals who lead with creativity and business acumen.

Key Attributes:

Growth, influence, creativity, and monetisation.

## **7. Next of the Best: Publicist (Agency/In-House)**

Celebrating publicists who have demonstrated exceptional talent and impact in media relations and publicity.

Criteria:

- Has successfully developed and executed PR campaigns that achieved high media traction and industry recognition.
- Demonstrated ability to shape public perception, media narratives, or consumer engagement through strategic publicity.
- Showcased fresh approaches to media relations, brand storytelling, and content amplification across traditional and digital platforms.
- Recognised for securing high-profile media placements, exclusive coverage, or initiating viral campaigns.
- Maintained a high standard of professionalism, authenticity, and ethical communication.

- Case Study/Examples required: Applicants must provide at least one example of a successful campaign, media placement, or crisis comms effort that had a measurable impact.

Who Should Enter:

For publicists who have excelled in crafting and executing PR campaigns that garnered significant media traction and industry recognition, this award is for you. If you've demonstrated an ability to shape public perception, secure high-profile placements, or manage impactful media relations, your work deserves to be recognised. Whether agency or in-house, we celebrate your creativity, strategic thinking, and media influence.

Key Attributes:

Media relations, public perception, creativity, and campaign success.

## **8. Next of the Best: AdTech Specialist**

Recognising talent in the AdTech industry who are driving innovation, efficiency, and effectiveness in digital advertising through technology and data-driven solutions.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated expertise in leveraging AdTech solutions, such as programmatic, data analytics, automation, or AI to enhance advertising effectiveness.
- Proven ability to implement or optimise AdTech-driven campaigns that achieve measurable success, whether through performance metrics, efficiency gains, or revenue growth.
- Showcased creative and forward-thinking approaches to tackling industry challenges, improving workflows, or introducing new technologies.
- Recognised for contributing to the evolution of AdTech, whether through thought leadership, product development, or championing emerging trends.
- Strong ability to bridge the gap between technology providers, agencies, brands, and publishers to drive successful outcomes.
- Nominees must provide at least one example of an AdTech innovation, campaign, or initiative where they played a key role and delivered outstanding results.



Who Should Enter:

This award is for professionals in the AdTech industry who are innovating and driving digital advertising success through technology and data. If you've applied programmatic solutions, data analytics, AI, or automation to enhance advertising performance and have a strong track record of measurable success, we want to hear about your impact. If you've contributed to the evolution of the AdTech landscape or helped overcome industry challenges, you should enter.

Key Attributes:

Innovation, AdTech expertise, and measurable impact.

## **9. Next of the Best: Media Salesperson**

Recognising emerging media sales professionals who are driving revenue growth for vendors across the Australian media industry through strategic thinking, creativity, and strong client relationships.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated ability to achieve and exceed sales targets, contributing to overall business success.
- Proven success in building and maintaining strong client relationships, understanding client needs, and delivering tailored media solutions.
- Showcases fresh approaches to media sales, whether through unique packaging of media solutions, data-driven insights, or integration of new technologies.
- Recognised for contributions to the evolving media sales landscape, including thought leadership, mentorship, or innovative deal-making.
- Strong ability to work across teams, media owners, brands, and agencies to drive successful sales outcomes.
- Nominees must provide at least one example of a successful deal, sales strategy, or client partnership that delivered measurable impact.

Who Should Enter:

This award is for media sales professionals who have demonstrated exceptional skill in driving revenue growth through strategic media solutions. If you've consistently exceeded sales targets, built strong client relationships, and introduced innovative sales approaches, this award is your opportunity to be recognised. We're looking for

those who go above and beyond to drive success in the Australian media sales landscape.

Key Attributes:

Sales performance, client relationships, creativity, and strategic thinking.

## **10. Next of the Best: Media Planner & Buyer**

Recognising emerging talent in media planning and buying who are shaping the future of media strategy through innovative thinking, data-driven decision-making, and impactful campaign execution.

Criteria:

- **Strategic Media Planning & Buying:** Demonstrated ability to develop and execute media plans or buys that effectively reach target audiences, achieve client objectives, and maximise ROI.
- **Data-Driven Success:** Proven track record of using data insights to drive media strategies, optimise media spend, and deliver measurable results like audience engagement, media efficiency, and brand growth.
- **Innovation & Fresh Approaches:** Showcases fresh thinking, whether through cross-platform integration, emerging channels, programmatic strategies, or innovative audience targeting and deal structures.
- **Industry Leadership:** Recognised for contributions to media planning or buying, such as thought leadership, mentoring, pioneering new practices, or driving best practices within the team or industry.
- **Collaboration & Partnerships:** Strong ability to collaborate with media owners, creative teams, clients, and internal stakeholders to deliver well-rounded, impactful strategies.
- **Real-World Impact:** Must provide a case study or example of a successful media strategy or campaign they were a key part of, demonstrating its success and measurable impact.

Who Should Enter:

This award celebrates both media planners and buyers who have demonstrated excellence in driving media strategies and investments with innovation and measurable success. If you've made a significant impact with data-driven, cross-platform strategies or strategic media buying that delivers exceptional results, this is the recognition for you.

Key Attributes:

Media strategy, ROI optimisation, data-driven insights, and innovative thinking.

## **11. Next of the Best: Publishing Innovator**

This award recognises an individual who has demonstrated exceptional innovation and impact within the publishing industry in digital or print. It could be through audience growth, revenue growth/diversification or content excellence - the winner will have made a significant mark.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated fresh, forward-thinking approaches over the last 12 months with positive measurable results.
- Must showcase audience and/or revenue growth with examples of work.

Who Should Enter:

This award is for individuals who could have pioneered a new strategy, transformed audience engagement, created new content, or changed the game in some way that has significantly impacted their business and they can demonstrate that.

Key Attributes:

Innovation, audience engagement, and publishing transformation.

## **12. Next of the Best: TV and Film Production**

Recognising the talent behind the camera in on-screen content production, from big to small screen, through creativity and commercial success.

Criteria:

- Demonstrates innovation and originality in storytelling, cinematography, or production in a film or TV project released in the last 12 months.
- The project has achieved significant success in terms of ratings, streaming viewership, or box office performance, reflecting both commercial appeal and critical acclaim.
- Was critical to the success of a production that sparked significant conversations, resonated deeply with Australian and global audiences, or made an impact on the broader media landscape.
- Played a pivotal role within the production team, from concept to final cut, including directing, producing, or other behind-the-scenes contributions that led to the project's success.

Who Should Enter:

This award is for the visionary production teams, producers, directors, and behind-the-scenes creatives who have set new benchmarks in TV and film production over the past year. If you've worked on a standout project - whether through groundbreaking storytelling, technical excellence, or commercial success, we want to recognise your achievements. From driving viewership to delivering critically acclaimed productions, this award celebrates the talent shaping the future of screen content in Australia and beyond.

Key Attributes:

Creativity, impact, collaboration, commercial acumen, and problem-solving in production.

### **13. Next of the Best: Data & Research Specialist**

Recognising individuals who excel in the use of data and research to drive decision-making, insights, and innovation within the media industry.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated ability to leverage data and research to provide actionable insights that influence media strategy, campaign effectiveness, and client outcomes.
- Proven success in using cutting-edge research methodologies or tools to uncover trends, patterns, or opportunities that contribute to business growth or media innovation.
- Ability to translate complex data into clear, strategic recommendations that drive measurable business results or improve media performance.
- Strong collaboration with internal teams, clients, and industry partners to ensure research and data insights inform decision-making and shape media strategies.
- Recognised for contributions to advancing research and data practices within the media industry, through thought leadership, publications, or participation in industry events.
- Must provide at least one example of a project or initiative where their data-driven research led to tangible improvements in media planning, buying, or client results.

Who Should Enter?

This award celebrates data and research professionals who transform information into impactful insights, shaping media strategies, improving outcomes, and contributing to the advancement of data-driven decision-making in the media

industry. If your work has driven significant business results and innovation through research and data analysis, we want to recognise your expertise.

Key Attributes:

Data analysis, research innovation, strategic insights, business impact, and collaboration.

#### **14. Next of the Best: Changemaker**

Recognising individuals who have made a significant impact in driving change, innovation, or transformation within the media industry.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated ability to lead or contribute to major changes within their organisation or the broader media industry, whether through new strategies, processes, or innovative approaches.
- Proven track record of introducing innovative ideas, technologies, or methodologies that have disrupted traditional practices or created new opportunities within the media landscape.
- Played a pivotal role in leading change, whether in company culture, operations, or media practices, with a focus on improving efficiency, inclusivity, or sustainability.
- Actively advocates for positive change, promoting initiatives related to diversity, equity, inclusion, sustainability, or ethics within the industry.
- Recognised for impactful contributions that have shaped the direction of the media industry, setting new standards or creating a positive shift in business practices.
- Must provide evidence of how their actions or initiatives led to tangible improvements, whether in business outcomes, industry practices, or societal impact.

Who Should Enter?

This award is for individuals who are driving meaningful change within the media industry, whether through disruptive innovation, cultural transformation, or leadership that inspires progress and sustainability. If you have been at the forefront of creating change and making a difference, we want to recognise your impactful contributions.

Key Attributes:

Innovation, leadership, transformation, advocacy for progress, and measurable impact.

## 15. Next of the Best: Leadership Award

For exceptional leadership and impact at senior or executive level within the media industry.

Criteria:

- Demonstrates a clear, innovative vision for the future of the business and industry, driving the direction of the company towards sustained success and growth.
- Played a crucial role in the development and execution of high-level strategies that have transformed their organisation, leading to measurable business success or industry-wide recognition.
- Recognised as a thought leader and influential figure within the media, marketing, advertising, or tech sectors, shaping trends and standards in the industry.
- Has built or nurtured an organisational culture of innovation, inclusivity, and excellence, ensuring that their team thrives, develops, and achieves great success.
- Demonstrates commitment to ethical business practices, sustainability, and community impact, showing how leadership extends beyond profitability to make a positive difference in society.
- Proven track record of exceeding business targets, growing market share, or navigating challenges effectively - driving the company forward in an ever-changing landscape.

Who Should Enter?

This award is for seniors, executives and C-suite leaders who have led their organisation through periods of change, growth, or industry disruption with strategic foresight, operational excellence, and a commitment to values-driven leadership. If you've made a measurable impact as an executive in the media industry, this is the highest recognition for your outstanding leadership and success.

Key Attributes:

Vision, innovation, strategic impact, leadership excellence, and industry influence