



# TRANSFORMING AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WHITE PAPER

HARNESSING THE POWER OF ZEALOUS  
TO ELEVATE AWARDS

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# The Value of Awards Management Software

Hosting Awards can play a pivotal role in growing your community and establishing your position as an industry leader and trusted brand.

However, the journey from the initial concept of running an award to the celebration of its winners can be fraught with complexity, overwhelm and confusion.

Drawing on Zealous's extensive experience working with organisations to run thousands of successful awards & contests over 13 years, this white paper explores innovative solutions to streamline awards management, reflecting our deep understanding of the unique challenges faced by the sector.



## Challenges of Traditional Methods

Organisations frequently grapple with the pitfalls of traditional awards management, such as outdated application methods using emails and spreadsheets. These methods not only stifle creativity but also escalate risks, from participants dropping out due to confusion to potential breaches of data protection laws, loss of critical data, and administrative overload. These challenges can severely undermine a brand's integrity.



## Submission Handling

The administrative workload involved in managing submissions is both voluminous and prone to errors. Traditional, manual processes for collecting, categorising, and reviewing entries are not only time-consuming but also increase the risk of mishandling or misplacing submissions. This inefficiency not only strains resources but can also lead to frustration among participants, potentially detracting from the perceived integrity and appeal of the awards.



## Participant Engagement

Attracting and retaining the interest of participants is a critical first step in hosting awards. However, outdated engagement strategies often fail to resonate with the expectations of a modern audience accustomed to interactive and digital-first experiences. The reliance on outdated promotional methods limits reach and struggles to capture the imagination and enthusiasm of a diverse participant base.



## Judging Process

Award software transforms in-person judging into a bias-free streamlined experience. With anonymous submissions and uniform scoring, it levels the playing field for everyone. Judges collaborate in real-time through live comments and scoring, whether in the same room or on the other side of the world. The system supports vibrant imagery and straightforward, visual scoring. A stylish online platform helps attract high-profile judges by minimizing their time commitment, bringing more prestige and attention to your awards.



## Results Dissemination

Announcing contest results should be celebratory, but traditional sharing methods can be slow, and with limited reach, dampening excitement. The absence of a clear platform for publishing results can also lead to confusion and frustration from applicants.

Traditional management methods hinder success, impacting participant engagement. This highlights the need for a modern approach that streamlines operations, improves fairness, and boosts interaction, taking your artistic contest to new levels of excellence and inclusivity.



## Improved Engagement

Awards software streamlines operations and significantly boosts engagement. Offering an interactive and visually stylish platform is ideal for social media sharing, resonating with digital audiences. Crucially, awards software engages not just applicants but also entrants' audiences. These features facilitate a dynamic dialogue between participants, organisers and if opted, the participant's audiences too through public vote.

This fosters a vibrant community, extending the contest's reach well beyond traditional methods.



## Solving Administrative Challenges

Awards management software offers an integrated platform that streamlines every aspect of award's administration.

From participant engagement to the sharing of results, this technology is engineered to tackle the inefficiencies of traditional methods head-on.

Automating the submission process, eliminates administrative burdens and drastically reduces the potential for human error, ensuring that every entry is handled with care and precision.



## Enhanced Efficiency and Fairness

Awards software automates administrative tasks, ensuring fairness and transparency. It anonymises submissions and standardises scoring for unbiased evaluation, maintaining your contest's integrity.

Crucially, the platform is constantly evolving with new user-voted features, boosting efficiency without the maintenance costs and upgrade fees of private website ownership.

This not only streamlines operations but also builds community trust, offering a cost-effective alternative to personal site management.

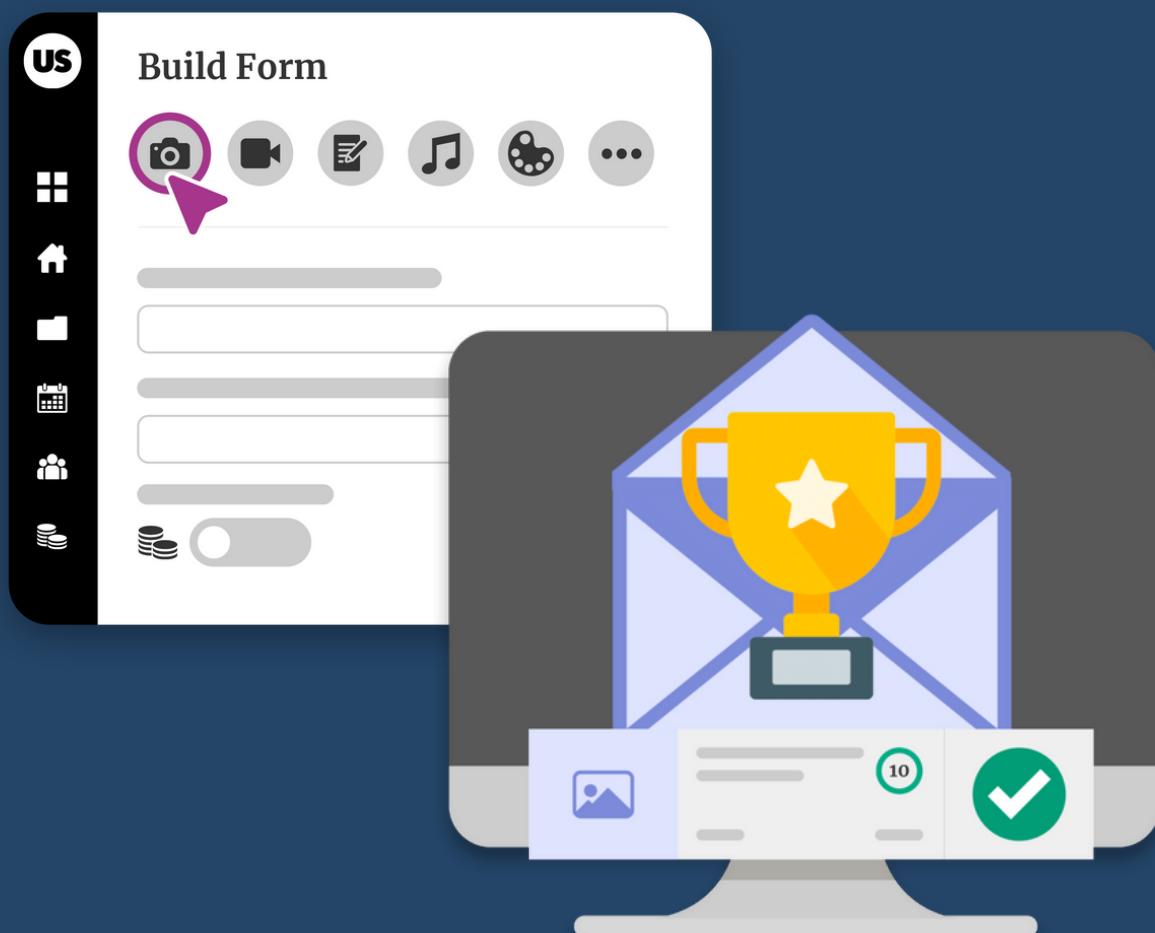
## Awards Management: The Digital Revolution

The UK and US arts sectors are rapidly accelerating towards digital awards management. With over 139,000 UK enterprises demanding efficient solutions, the shift from traditional methods is clear.

The global Award Management Software market is set to double from US\$690.5 million in 2022 to US\$1.4 billion by 2030\*, demonstrating the sector's evolution and the growing necessity for digital tools to stay competitive.

The US market's growth, alongside the UK's dynamic arts scene, indicates widespread digital adoption. The expected growth of software solutions to \$844.5 million underscores a move towards more user-friendly technologies.

Adopting digital platforms like Zealous ensures your brand aligns with this trend and isn't left behind, enhancing operational efficiency and transparency in awards management. This transition is a crucial step in a brand's digital awards evolution, emphasising innovation and excellence.



# Streamlining Awards in the Arts: A Zealous Case Study with UKNA



## Background

The UK New Artists (UKNA), a prominent arts organisation known for managing the Robert Walters UK New Artist of the Year Award, aimed to improve its award management workflow. Before adopting Zealous, they faced significant administrative challenges.

Manual data entry and the gathering of materials were notably burdensome and time-consuming. This highlighted the need for a more streamlined approach to reduce their workload and enhance efficiency.



## Challenges

Before using Zealous, UKNA had encountered challenges in hosting their awards. They realised the necessity for a more advanced application system after facing difficulties with online cloud spreadsheets. They also had concerns about email automation, notifications for finishing rounds, and the overall ease of navigating the platform, which presented learning curves. Moreover, ensuring a smooth judging process was critical, as the experience of the judges directly affected the credibility and success of their awards.



# Insights from UKNA's Experience: A Case Study

**Solution:** Zealous provided a comprehensive, user-friendly platform that transformed UKNA's award management process. Key features that stood out for UKNA included:

## Seamless Submission Process

Simplifying the entry submission process for artists reduced administrative work and streamlined operations for UKNA.

## Automated Communications

Zealous's automated email system allowed for precise control over notifications, ensuring judges and participants received timely updates without premature or accidental sends.

## Intuitive Judging Interface

Judges could easily access and review submissions without needing to download or manually collate materials. The judges had such a great experience which encouraged them to spread the word and return next year.

## Comprehensive Support

The platform's help files and responsive support team ensured UKNA could easily find solutions to their queries, significantly reducing the need to seek external assistance.

## Outcome

The adoption of Zealous significantly transformed UKNA's operations from labour-intensive procedures to an efficient, streamlined system. This platform's user-friendly interface and comprehensive features eased administrative tasks, improving the experience for judges and participants.

With Zealous, UKNA shifted their focus towards the creative and promotional sides of their awards, enriching the UK's arts culture. As an indispensable tool, UKNA felt that Zealous stands out as the quintessential solution for arts organisations grappling with award management challenges. Its intuitive design, strong support, and smooth processes highlight the importance of specialised software, empowering organisations to take their award programs to new heights. They also received a huge 22% increase in submissions.

“

We received our highest number of submissions, an increase of 22%!



# Best Practices for Organising Successful Awards

Organising successful awards and contests involves more than just logistical planning; it requires a strategic approach that fosters inclusivity, diversity, engagement, and celebration. Here are the best practices for ensuring your contest not only reaches but resonates with a diverse range of applicants, ultimately enhancing your impact.

## Strategies for Accessibility and Appeal

### Inclusive Language

Use language in your contest callouts and communications that is welcoming to all, avoiding jargon or terms that might alienate newcomers or specific groups. Ensure that your messaging reflects a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

### Accessibility Features

Implement features on your contest website and submission platform that are accessible to people with health conditions or impairments. This includes alt text for images, video captions, screen reader compatibility, and easy navigation.

### Targeted Outreach

Actively reach out to communities and artists from underrepresented backgrounds. This can involve partnering with organisations that work with these groups, advertising in forums that cater to diverse audiences, and ensuring that your contest judges are representative of a broad spectrum of perspectives.

## Maintaining Interest and Building Community

### Interactive Voting Systems

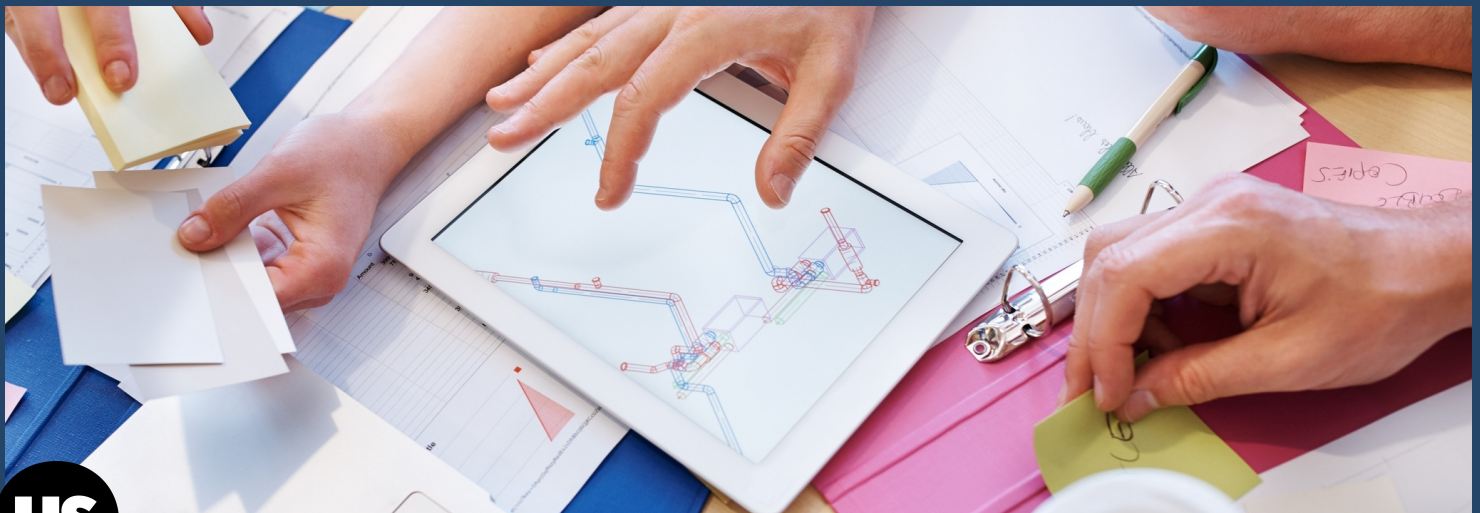
Engage your audience by incorporating public voting for certain contest aspects. This not only increases participation but also gives the public a sense of investment in the outcome.

### Regular Updates

Keep participants and the wider community informed with regular updates throughout the contest lifecycle. Share behind-the-scenes insights, judge deliberations, and highlight submissions (with permission) to keep the momentum going.

### Constructive Feedback

Offer participants the option to receive feedback on their submissions. This constructive critique, especially when delivered thoughtfully, can be invaluable to artists' development and encourages them to participate in future contests.





# Best Practices for Organising Successful Awards

## Highlighting Achievements and Fostering Recognition

### Awards Ceremonies

Virtual ceremonies can be just as impactful as in-person events. Organisations often choose to stream the awards ceremony online too, ensuring it's accessible to all participants & the public. This approach enhances the sense of community, adding to the live event.

### Press Releases and Social Media Spotlights

Utilise press releases to announce winners and highlight their achievements and use social media to extend the award's reach. Feature winning submissions and notable entries on your platforms, tagging artists (with their permission) to increase visibility.

### Certificates and Digital Badges

Provide winners and participants with digital certificates or badges that they can display on their websites or social media profiles. This not only celebrates their success but also contributes to their professional portfolio.

## Onboarding and Training Staff and Judges

### Comprehensive Training Sessions

Award's software like Zealous offers onboarding support for all PRO subscriptions along with live chat and help videos to assist applicants, organisers and judges at all levels. These sessions cover every aspect of the software.

### Provide Support Materials

Create user-friendly guides, FAQs, and tutorial videos that staff and volunteers can refer to when needed. These resources should be easily accessible and updated regularly.

### Establish a Support System

If you aren't using Award's software, make sure you set up a robust support system for addressing any questions or issues that arise while hosting your awards. This could be in the form of a dedicated internal team.



# Promoting Awards & Maximizing Engagement

## Leverage Social Media and Email Marketing

Use your software's internal system to download high-quality visuals to promote across social media platforms and through email marketing. Zealous has a creative newsletter perfect for bringing more eyes to your awards with over 45,000 readers. Highlight the ease of submission, the fairness of the judging process, and any public voting components to attract participants.

## Host Live Events

Utilise live events, such as webinars, Q&A sessions, or live streams, to discuss the contest, answer questions, and engage with your audience in real-time. This direct interaction can increase interest and participation, especially if you can feature previous winners or industry experts.

## Utilise Analytics for Targeted Outreach

Analyse participant data and behaviour insights provided by the software to tailor your marketing strategies.

Understanding your audience's preferences allows for more effective outreach, increasing participation rates.

## Incorporate Influencer Collaborations

Partner with influencers or industry leaders who can amplify your contest to a broader audience. Their endorsement can lend credibility and attract participants who follow them for insights and recommendations within your sector. Choose influencers whose audience aligns with your target demographic for maximum impact.



# Summary

Navigating the complexities of awards management requires more than just intention; it demands innovative solutions that can transform challenges into opportunities for growth and engagement.

As illustrated through the case study of UKNA and the broader insights provided, Zealous offers a pathway to simplifying the intricacies of awards administration, elevating the standard of fairness, efficiency, and engagement in the process.

The future of awards management lies in embracing digital transformation, where the focus shifts from merely conducting contests to creating memorable, impactful experiences for all participants.





## What Next?

Are you ready to elevate your organisation's awards management to the next level?

Embrace the digital revolution with Zealous and discover how our specialised software can streamline your operations, and reduce time and human error while engaging your community and audiences.

Start your journey towards a more vibrant and inclusive creative culture today by contacting us for a demo or to learn more.

Transform your awards management process and let creativity flourish without bounds!

<input type="checkbox"/>		AA096 <b>Chasing' Dreams AW18</b> by Amy Thomson  Category A
<input type="checkbox"/>		AA088 <b>Post-Truth and Beauty</b> by Tim Murray-Browne  Category C
<input type="checkbox"/>		AA103 <b>Anisha Parmar London Jewellery</b> by Anisha Parmar  Category C
<input type="checkbox"/>		AA078 <b>Simulacrum</b> by Maria Almena  Category A

Tim Murray-Browne

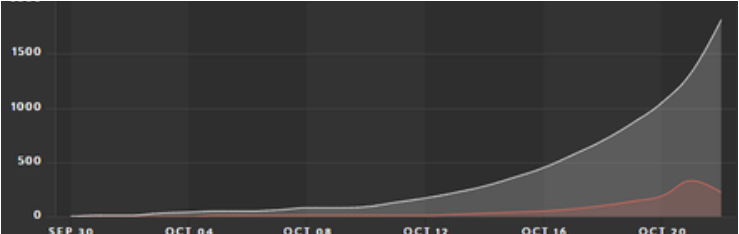
Submission Form Other Submissions

Execution [More info](#) Low High 18

Originality [More info](#) Low High 18

Challenging Social Norms [More info](#) Low High 7

Cancel Save Score



## Zealous: A Closer Look at Revolutionary Features

Zealous distinguishes itself through a suite of features tailored to simplify awards management.

Key functionalities include:

### Integrated Submissions Portal

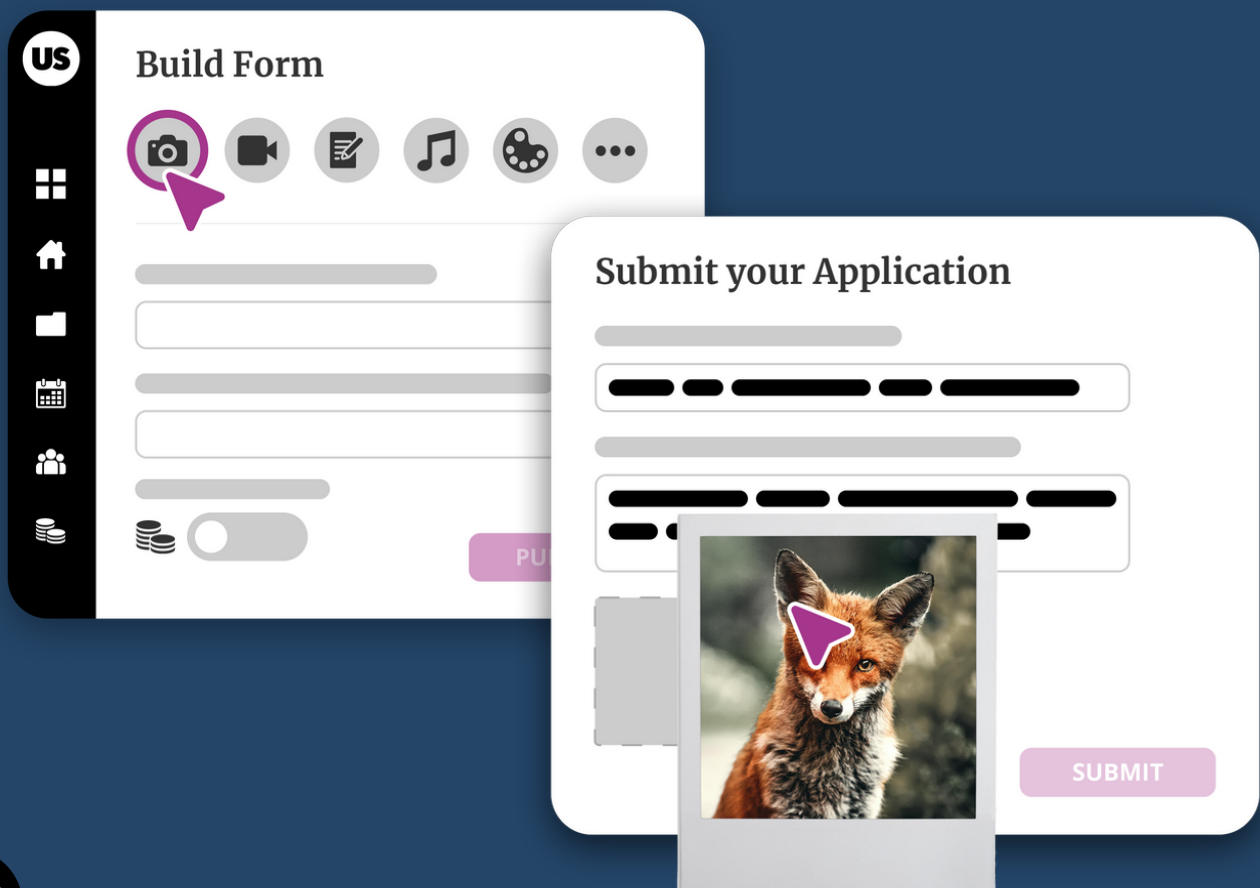
Applicants can submit their work via an intuitive interface, enhancing the viewing experience for you and the judges. Features include filtering by categories, image zoom, and embedded video and PDF viewing, all from one platform.

### Judges' Dashboard

Judges enjoy streamlined evaluations, accessing all materials easily. They can collaborate effortlessly, seeing comments and engaging in private scoring in real-time. Criteria-based scoring is also available, enhancing fairness and transparency.

### Boost Submissions

Get access to your applicant's draft submissions. Connect with these applicants and support them to get their submissions across the line before the closing date.



# Zealous: A Closer Look at Our Revolutionary Features

## Fully Automated

By automatically sending out emails at different stages of the application and review process, Zealous ensures timely and consistent communication with all stakeholders. From helping candidates complete their entries, to updates about results, to letting judges know when and how to score.

## Live Human Support

Live support ensures users receive immediate assistance for technical difficulties or queries when using the platform. This immediate one-to-one technical support enhances user satisfaction and confidence in the platform.

## Thinking Beyond

Download your data in CSVs and PDFs to enable you to archive them for future reference. Keep your projects and duplicate them, ready for your next launch, so you don't have to start from scratch.

## Ready to Elevate Your Awards Experience?

Discover how Zealous can transform your awards management process with precision and ease. Connect with our experts for a personalised demonstration and see firsthand the difference that intuitive software and exceptional support can make.

Connect with us today by emailing our director, [yukie@zealous.co](mailto:yukie@zealous.co).

We're here to assist you every step of the way.

Your Award-Winning Future Awaits!

Try for free

