

Ten ways to get your agency to deliver what you need

# Bridging the Brand-Agency Divide

By Alain Thys & Stefan Kolle

***“Agencies have optimised their business for themselves. Not for their customers.”***

Kris Hoet,  
Digital Media Communications Manager  
Microsoft EMEA



# About This Document

## Executive Summary

While exceptional agencies still exist, there is a growing disconnect between what the marketing industry offers and what brands are looking for. As a result, billions are lost.

The marketing industry needs to change. Agencies need to restructure the way they operate. But brands too need to change the way they brief, pay and manage agencies.

This document provides 10 practical suggestions for brand leaders on how this can be done. These include:

1. Accepting that some agencies are incapable of offering solutions to your business problems, and saving everyone the embarrassment of asking for them.
2. Giving hard ROI targets to your agencies and evaluating every conversation on its business impact.
3. Employing media auditors to validate both the effectiveness and the efficiency of your media plans.
4. Encouraging your agency to *talk back* to you and challenge your beliefs. And be upset if they don't.
5. Breaking the *saturation bombing* habits of the marketing industry. Instead, insist on engagement and relevance to the people you want to communicate with.
6. Validating the digital capabilities of your agency, and once they are established, forget about technology.
7. Ensuring that your agency thinks every initiative through, all the way to the retail floor.
8. Expecting your agency to support you with strategies, data and examples that hold up in the C-suite.
9. Aligning your people/agencies around your initiatives, so every market & media speaks with *one voice*.
10. Breaking the industry orthodoxies that stand in the way of doing what is right. And hire more people.

In all of the above, Futurelab is happy to be of assistance.

## Additional Information

We offer our special thanks to Management Centre Europe for acting as a co-sponsor to this report (for more info, see page 14):



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# Intro: Something needs fixing

In 2007, Marketers gave their collective agencies a Net Promoter Score™ (NPS) of minus 21%.

In spite of this devastating judgment, 93% of these agencies considered themselves to be the driver of their client's marketing success.

In short, only a small group of agencies *get it*. The more brands the others touch, the more marketers they dissatisfy. All while remaining convinced of the quality of their work.

In a way this is understandable. The market is changing quicker than most of us can adapt, and some people just need some time to catch up.

But in the current economic climate, that time doesn't exist. Billions are being wasted. And that is unacceptable.

That is why we wrote this paper. We believe the marketing trade should transform itself.

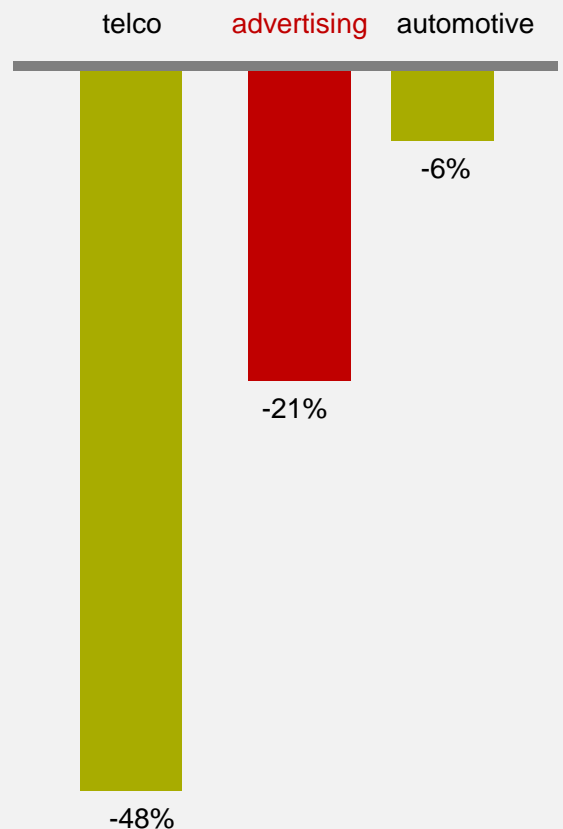
On the one hand, agencies need to change the way they operate (also see our report *Reconsidering the Advertising Industry*).

But they aren't miracle workers. Clients too need to change the way they brief, pay and manage agencies.

This document gives 10 suggestions on how this can be done. They won't cure all ailments, but they are a good place to start.

After all, it is time to change the industry.

## Net Promoter Score™ by Industry



***“[Agencies,] your clients are in trouble. They are looking to you to save them. The ad inventory that has been sold for the last 50 years no longer works, and marketers have started to figure that out. (...) your clients will fire, hire, fire and hire agency after agency ... seeking someone -- anyone -- who can help them on where to go next”***

John Stratton, CMO Verizon

### Data Sources:

- NPS Score: Advertising Agencies: Help Wanted: The 21st Century Agency, by Peter Kim, Forrester Research, February 2007 (this report can be purchased on [www.forrester.com](http://www.forrester.com))
- NPS Score: Automotive & Telecoms: Joseph Mann, Lousy Customer Satisfaction, It's a global Phenomenon (link: <http://tinyurl.com/6eo5j9>)

For more information on the Net Promoter Score, we recommend the book “The Ultimate Question” by Fred Reichheld. Also, on the website <http://www.netpromoter.com/> additional insights can be found.

The Net Promoter Score™ is a registered trademark of Bain, Satmetrix and Fred Reichheld

# #1 Solutions Instead of Products

## Client Need:

### **A Truly Tailored Approach**

75% of senior brand decision makers that approach a communication agency seek to buy *solutions* for their business problems (\*). They want a strategic partner, not a service provider.

In fact, the absolute number one criterium for agency selection is to have a clear insight in the business of the client (and the ability to respond to this). This comes before chemistry, creativity, service levels or even costs.

Dropping the ball on this front can be costly to agencies. The same survey found that 93% of decision makers said that if they noticed a lack of strategic thinking, this would cause a review of the agency.

## Agency Response:

### **Services that Fit the Model**

Many agencies don't *really* tune in to the client's needs. Instead, they listen to the client's request for a solution and come back with an answer that fits their in-house capabilities and compensation model.

Advertising agencies come with TV and print campaigns. PR agencies focus on press coverage. Digital agencies offer online solutions, etcetera.

In addition, agencies often accept client parameters without challenging them. As a result, initiatives are implemented, even if they have insufficient impact or do not fully integrate with the overall plan.

***Dealing with agencies is like buying a car from Henry Ford. You can have every colour, as long as it's black.***

Brand executive we interviewed for this report.

## **CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION**

Only ask *solutions* from agencies with a strong strategic planning team which:

- Focuses on your business issues, numbers and customer journey.
- Pro-actively liaises with other parts of your business to ensure that any initiatives can be implemented at every touchpoint of your brand.
- Has sufficient political clout in the agency to "make things happen".

If those three criteria aren't met, focus your questions and briefings only on the technical aspects which match the specialisation of the agency. This way its people will not feel compelled to come up with opinions outside their field of expertise. And you benefit from their strengths, rather than being disappointed.

In the process, consider that traditional agency compensation methods often force agencies to sell the services they have available, rather than those you may need. Pro-actively connect the way your agency gets paid to the business deliverables. This may mean even offering to pay *more* or explore a different business model.

(\* Rainmaker Consulting, The Intelligent New Business Survey, 2007 (you can read the full report on: <http://tinyurl.com/59dkff>)

## #2 Return on Investment

### Client Need:

#### **Show me the ROI**

CMO's are under increasing pressure to prove that if a million is spent, more than a million is made. And agencies need to help in this analysis. This support needs to be tailored to:

- A minority who are advanced in estimating the return on their marketing investments. They need agencies that match their sophistication with work that delivers the return the brand wants. And ideally make constructive suggestions for enhancement.
- A group that wants to become more proficient in measuring and reporting on the ROI of their initiatives. These clients seek agencies that accompany their recommendations and ideas with measurement systems that can demonstrate what works and what doesn't.

The second group is by far the largest. Only 24% of marketers measure the ROI of their lead agency relationship(\*). Those that don't, largely think it is simply too difficult to do.

When it comes to initiative ROI the same applies. A 2007 WARC (\*2) study found that of 880, mainly UK, cases reviewed only 39 (4%) had validated ROI measures. In fact, 35% had no campaign objectives specified at all.

***Have you ever wondered why advertising agencies don't advertise themselves? The answer is clear: They really don't believe advertising works.***

Mark Stevens, CEO MSCO

### Sources:

- (\*) Advertising Agencies: Help Wanted: The 21st Century Agency, by Peter Kim, Forrester Research, February 2007 (this report can be purchased on [www.forrester.com](http://www.forrester.com))
- (\*2) Marketing in the Era of Accountability. Les Binet, DDB Matrix & Peter Field, Marketing Consultant. Published by IPA dataMINE, WARC, 2007
- (\*3) Rainmaker Consulting, The Intelligent New Business Survey, 2007 (read the report on: <http://tinyurl.com/59dkff>)

### Agency Response:

#### **We Are Very Creative ... and Big ...**

Most agencies don't talk ROI. Instead, they emphasise the budgets they manage and the awards they have won.

There is a basis for this. Creative work does score high as an agency selection criterium for brands (\*3). But it needs to be seen in combination with the need for insight in the client business.

In other words, creativity matters but should be focused on CURRENT work being proposed to the client, not the past work delivered to others.

And as for the size of budgets under management. Well, clients don't really care what agencies do for others. They do care about what they can do for them.

### **CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION**

Disregard the traditional agency rethoric and focus your agency on results, not awards.

Give them hard targets where possible. Encourage their creativity, but ask for the business rationale behind each initiative. Request impact scenarios for the various media-message combinations that were considered. Why TV? Why a girl with an umbrella? Why spend that much? Why not more? Why not less?

And if awards are won, acknowledge them. But immediately shift the conversation back to the business measurements you put in place. For they're the only thing that matter.

## #3 Media Transparency

### Client Need:

#### **Be a Trusted Media Partner**

At best, the advertising and media industry, can be called *intransparent*. This is causing brands world-wide to request a better insight in their agency's dealings. Especially on the media front.

In a 2005 landmark study, media-auditors EMM found that a vast majority of the world's largest advertisers held the conviction that "under the table deals" were a reality when it came to media-work (see box).

This call for transparency, and objective media recommendations, will become ever more important as media consumption fragments. Brands want to move to media-neutral (or as others say *media-agnostic*) planning methods.

The people who advise them on these matters, need to be above reproach.

#### **Of the 50 largest advertisers in the world ... (\*)**

- 91% consider the media buying process to be insufficiently transparent.
- 85% are convinced their media agency had *deals* outside the client agreement.
- 74% opined that these deals caused *bias* in the choice of media and recommendations.

### Agency Response:

#### **Bad Apples**

While pressure mounts, agencies are not easing the minds of brand leaders.

#### Continued intransparency:

Currently about US\$110 billion in media funds are being audited each year. This means that four-fifths of marketing dollars are still "unaudited" (\*\*). Especially outside the UK and Europe, brands have to *rely on the agency's word* that all is in good order.

#### Underperformance & creative math:

Confidential interviews with media auditors in Western and Eastern Europe show us that even today "creative" arrangements are made in many agencies. GRP's are "forgotten" to be delivered. Free airtime doesn't get passed on to clients that paid for it, yet resold to others. Media bills get "topped up".

#### The occasional scandal:

Sometimes things get out of hand. In 2006 Aegis Carat 's Central European CEO, Aleksander Ruzicka was arrested for allegedly diverting millions by reselling "free advertising minutes" for his own account. The scandal raised eyebrows among German marketers.

***"Every [media agency] sold free minutes and pocketed the cash. It's the normal way of business. Everyone denies it but Alex wasn't doing anything others weren't (aren't?) doing. He was just stupid to fill his own pockets."***

Recently retired Sr. agency executive

#### **CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION**

- Always appoint an independent media auditor who validates – with the agency – that a proposed media strategy makes sense, and that everything that is delivered as promised.
- Review the compensation models you force upon your vendors. A key reason for them to make under the table deals may be that they simply aren't able to make a *straight living*.

(\*) Marx, Anne. Von TV-Modellen, Transparenz und Vertrauen, Media Spectrum, February 2008

(\*\*) Source: Accenture Marketing Sciences Website, 2008 - <http://tinyurl.com/6hma9d>

# #4 Creative and Operational Integrity

## Client Need:

Clients want their agency to be a trusted advisor. A mental sparring partner. An asset manager for their marketing investments. Someone with the flexibility of a great vendor, yet the resolve of a doctor who is not prepared to give bad medicine.

## Agency Response:

We know many admirable agency executives. But sadly, they are matched in numbers by those who have less regard for their client's best interest.

Whether this is driven by cynicism, questionable motivations or competitive pressures is hard to assess. But the quotes below are real. And while many *Truth in advertising* videos on the internet may be funny, we still need to meet the first agency executive which categorically denies their accuracy?

## Video Tips

- Truth in Adsales: <http://tinyurl.com/6njgnw>
- Truth in Advertising: <http://tinyurl.com/29emdt>
- Truth in Advertising II: <http://tinyurl.com/5f2yfh>

## CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION

Trust your agency, but test. See how it reacts when presented with the occasional red herring and opportunity for abuse.

Say something silly. Propose a non-sensical modification to a campaign. See whether people agree.

If they challenge you back, praise and encourage discussion in the future.

If things don't go as you like, confront this. Clarify the behaviour and ideas you are looking for. Then give people a second chance.

If things don't improve, let the market know *why* you walked away.

*"I don't care about making money for my clients. I just want another award before I jump this ship."*

Agency CEO of an A-list mediterranean agency

*"We knew that it wouldn't work, but the client wanted it. So we made it happen. After all, under all the gloss, we must accept that we are prostitutes."*

Head of business development commenting on modifications to a global campaign you know.

*"Listen, we know that spending x million in above won't fix the issue, but they're going to spend it anyway. We can just as well try to grab as much as possible."*

Pitch team on an international account

*If a client thinks a brand is great, but you find out his consumers disagree, you'd only tell him if you'd get more business out it. Otherwise, best to leave these things untouched.*

Major agency creative director instructing a recent recruit over lunch

Source: Quotes are first hand accounts of Futurelab associates and partners from conversations with major agency executives soliciting or using our services. We didn't pursue any further business relations with either of them.

# #5 Engagement Instead of Noise

## Client Need :

### **Engage Our Audience**

Brands want and need to engage with their customers. They need to conduct conversations. Build communities. Create a dialogue. This means that they need to develop marketing messages which their customers WANT to hear rather than force-feeding them through intrusion.

Brands need to interact with customers (as individuals) rather than establish “one-way communication mechanisms”. They need to fragment their messages to the places where their consumers can be found, rather than assume they will obediently sit in front of the TV at 20:15 on a Thursday evening.

In short, brands need totally neutral transmedia planning which delivers a relevant story, at the relevant time to the relevant individual. Ideally in a way that this individual will *seek out* the information, rather than have it blasted at him.

### **CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION - 1**

Make it clear in the briefing that you will ask for every proposed initiative:

- How it will capture the attention of the targeted audience, rather than intrude on it?
- How the proposed media/message combination is relevant to the audience’s situation? How it will make their conversations and life more interesting?
- How it will help the target customer progress on the customer journey? What is the next communication?

## Agency Response:

### **Saturation Bombing**

In spite of all the talk at conferences, many agencies are still in the business of “saturation bombing”. Make one highly-efficient message and blast it through as narrow a number of channels as possible. Brands still get recommendations to buy *enough* GRPs to break through the clutter and maintain their *Share of Voice*.

While in some cases these are perfectly valid strategies, many agencies apply them as a rule. They are driven by habit and the industry’s business model. The “higher the budget” and the “higher the level of efficiency in spending it”, the more money and prestige the agency accumulates.

As a result, B-52 style agencies find themselves at odds with advertisers who desperately want to build a relationship based on respect, insight and passion.

***“If you talked to people the way advertising did, they’d punch you in the face”***

Hugh MacLeod

### **CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION - 2**

Encourage your agencies to embrace a media-neutral, customer-centric approach to communication planning.

Ensure that your budget, negotiations and actions do not re-enforce the existing agency silos (media, creative, ...).

Request various specialist agencies to cooperate on one “holistic” view of your audience’s communication landscape.

# #6 Walk the Digital Talk

## Client Need: Walk Digital

With consumers massively shifting online, marketing budgets are following. Brands need their agencies to handle digital media with the same facility as traditional media channels.

In a 2008 Sapient survey, over 200 CMO's and senior marketers, responsible for digital marketing, were asked about the elements they were looking for in an agency.

While Sapient – as an interactive agency – may have a vested interest in the *right* survey results, the numbers are hard to dispute. Clients want their agencies to understand the online realities and “walk the digital talk”.



### What marketing leaders want from their agencies when it comes to digital (\*)



(\*) Sapient via The Web Guild: <http://tinyurl.com/5jwdpf>

(\*\*) Inspired by: Bruce Nussbaum, Business Week, Are Big Ad Agencies So Clueless That Corporations Should Avoid Them? (<http://tinyurl.com/35g644>)

## Agency Response: Talk Digital

Most agencies “talk digital” at conferences, but many don’t act on their words:

- Traditional agencies talk well yet often can’t back their digital claims:  
Key creative positions are held by individuals from the *pre-digital era*. Processes, politics and organisational walls keep the right people from doing what it takes. And for some *digital* is still an uncomfortable change.
- Digital Agencies often miss depth in communication and strategy (\*\*):  
Many “new media” agencies digitally outskill and outthink traditional houses. But they often lack the broader perspective that comes with true 360°, ROI based thinking. As a result, their work cannot solve everything either.

And many of the above *chase the technology* rather than look at the end customer’s actual media engagement. As a result, traditional campaign thinking gets exported to the digital sphere. And the consumer just gets even more annoyed.

***“Is digital in your [agency] DNA? (...)  
The world’s gone digital and it’s not another touch point—it’s a way of life.”***

David Armano

### CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION

Audit the digital skills of your agency, not in words, but in actions. If techno-buzzwords are used in pitches or proposals, question why.

Consistently shift technology conversations to the topic of engagement.

# #7 Think of the Shopper

## Client Need:

### Shopper Marketing

There are those who consume, those who buy, and those who influence the two above. Recent research in word-of-mouth has only re-emphasised the importance of these influencers and consumers on the actual purchasing decision. This puts shoppers at the centre of the marketer's agenda.

In fact, Deloitte finds Shopper Marketing to be the fastest growing element in the branded manufacturer's marketing mix (see box).

The increased attention for Shopper Marketing makes brands look well beyond the above/below divide. They want truly integrated initiatives that provide relevant impulses at various stages of the customer, shopper and influencer journey.

Rather than *one big idea*, they want agencies to look for *a hundred little ones* which address influencers and buyers in different ways.

They want to provide input and advice on retail dynamics, shopping behaviour, store staff engagement... In short, brands want agencies to do more than bring possible consumers to the front door of the shop.

They also need to make them buy.

## Agency Response:

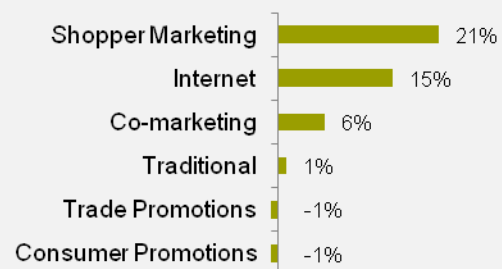
### Retail Ignorance

Agencies struggle with the retail floor. Their people typically never worked in stores, never sold to real consumers. Don't know how a cash-register works. As a result:

- Traditional agencies either ignore the retail implications of their brand-driven initiatives or fall short of delivering what brands, retailers and shoppers need.
- POP or In-store agencies lack the mandate or capabilities to truly think beyond the next display (or *narrowcasting* solution). And those that do, often aren't taken seriously by mass-media agency executives that place a premium on glitzy traditional media expressions.

This puts a heavy burden on marketers to coordinate the efforts of their various vendors. And more importantly, it generates tremendous opportunity costs in lost sales and margins.

### CAGR by Marketing Mix Element Manufacturers (2004-2010 Est.)



Source: Deloitte, 2007

***“The point of sale is a brand's first moment of truth”*** - A.G. Lafley, CEO – P&G

### CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION

As retail (B2B sales/showroom) situations are alien to most agencies, force the conversation. Always ask for the salesfloor implications of every initiative. Introduce retail metrics. Insist creatives talk to real shoppers. Have their account managers filling racks on the salesfloor, or assist in the warehouse. Make it clear the job isn't done until the customer has bought.

## #8 C-Suite Credibility

### Client Need:

#### **Support me in the C-suite**

It is an unfortunate reality that many marketers struggle to be taken seriously in the boardroom. Marketing is seen by other parts of the business as a *frivolous* and *unaccountable money spending department*.

Having interacted on this topic with +1,000 European marketers, we found that half this problem is due to presentation issues.

The predominantly right brain inclination of the communication trade means that marketing departments and their vendors *speak and think in a different language than their colleagues* in finance, sales, operations or the C-Suite. As a result, even good work gets swept under the table.

Clients need agencies that can talk C-suite/Executive language with them. They need strategies, left-brain argumentations, numbers and facts, rational & analytical approaches that match the traditional way businesses operate.

This approach will not only make marketing initiatives *sound better* in the boardroom, they will also be more effective as they gain support across the business.

### Agency Response:

#### **Look how cool and fun we are ...**

Rather than adopt a more conservative C-suite approach, communication agencies have always had an air of creativity and cool.

This approach is important. It creates an environment for ideas to flourish. It makes the workplace agreeable. It attracts and retains creative talent which does not like stuffy places. And every client likes a good laugh and a glitzy brainstorm room.

Yet many agencies stick with the *creative & cool* act when they encounter other parts of the client brand's organisation. Rather than change the behaviour and presentation style according to each stakeholder's preferences and needs, they communicate in *one way*.

To non-marketing parts of the business this behaviour confirms the stereotypes. Informal style, lack of (financial) data to support ideas, esoteric language, yes even the casual dress code can detract from the credibility of the marketers that employ them.

***While 48% of CEO's are involved in the final selection of an agency most agencies do not regain access to the C-suite after they've been selected.***

Millward Brown (\*)

### **CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION**

Brief your agencies to present their ideas so it is easy for you to let them travel throughout the business. Have them talk strategy and numbers. Include an internal alignment and information processes for various stakeholders. Avoid marketing-speak.

If an idea doesn't excite the CEO, CFO and head of sales, it's probably not worth doing. Agencies need to help you provide this excitement. Not just creatively, but also in business sense. By aligning sales, service and operations behind your plans.

(\*) "Agency Search – What Matters? Winning Strategies for Ad Agencies" – full report, Millward Brown, April 2007

# #9 Agency Co-ordination (360°)

## Client Need:

### **Integrated international action**

When more than one agency comes to the table, they need to act in a co-ordinated manner. Not just when it comes to creative execution, media buying and production, but especially in getting *the business result*.

This is especially true for international clients who in addition to multiple functional agencies, need to co-ordinate multiple markets as well.

That is why clients need agencies to:

- Actively co-operate with their specialist colleagues in other agencies on getting the client result.
- Integrate with the client's international structures in a way that balances global consistency with local market feedback.

The client needs the best minds to work on his brand as one team. In this it shouldn't matter where individuals are located or which agency they work for.

## Agency Response:

### **A nice storefront**

Agency teams typically don't "mix well" when they have to look outside their functional or geographic borders. This is driven by two elements:

- The *winner takes all* nature of the agency game means that one party's budgetary win, is the other's budgetary loss.
- International networks have typically grown through acquisitions and alliances. But little attention has gone to the actual integration of these agencies.

As a result, agency cultures clash, commercial priorities differ, local agenda's conflict. And many clients spend as much time aligning their agencies, than they do on aligning their own business.

Where the occasional agency HQ tries to provide some consistency, it typically lacks the political and financial clout to really bring everyone in line.

***"Agency coordination becomes a nightmare"***

Robert Tochtermann – Ralston Purina

## **CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION**

Your agency network can only speak with one voice, if your people do the same. Work with your lead agency or appoint a project manager to develop an alignment programme that ensures your own marketing teams, as well as the agency's have the same objectives, priorities and goals. This needs to cover every step of the customer journey, every touchpoint and every agency or vendor you work with.

And once the plan is made, project manage everyone so they stick to it. Put people in the same room. Focus them on the objectives. Be encouraging where possible, and firm when needed. And where budgetary traditions get in the way of true co-operation, change them. Or even create additional budget to make sure things can generate the business effect they target, rather than just "get stuck half way".

(\*) "Agency Search – What Matters? Winning Strategies for Ad Agencies" – full report, MillWard Brown, April 2007

# #10 Break Orthodoxy

## Client Need:

As the market changes quicker than brands can follow, clients want agencies to *break the mould*. Come up with new ways to address the market. New insights. New opportunities. Make a difference to the brand, the customer and the bottom line.

## Agency Response:

Marketing communication is an industry interested in sustaining itself. The quest for volume and awards, leads to standardisation of processes, homogenisation of messages and blandness of solutions.

***“When the going gets tough, you’ve got two types of [communicators]: those that will cut the experimental budgets ... and those who now more than ever will be prepared to invest forward (...) My advice is to take that path forward.”***

Joseph Jaffe

## CLIENT-SIDE SUGGESTION

Where agencies lack initiative, brands should break the marketing orthodoxies themselves. Some thoughts include:

### **Facilitate a captive agency**

Set up a “one client” agency purely dedicated to your brand, your customers and your bottom line.

Integrating *the agency* into your business can dramatically improve the impact of your marketing initiatives. Especially if the people are actively put in touch with their *colleagues* in sales, logistics, retail, etcetera.

### **Set up pool agencies**

Some marketing activities have been standardised to the point that they are not really a point of competitive difference for brands. Create multi-brand buying pools to simply and efficiently fulfill these services.

Use technology to automate these processes (e.g. there is no objective reason why media cannot be bought from the marketer’s desktop, just like an airplane ticket).

### **Break headcount rules**

There is no way to avoid the conversation. New style marketing techniques are more work than old style brand-based shouting. This means you need people. Whether they are on your payroll or outsourced to specialised vendors, is a tactical choice. But the budget to pay them needs to be available. And as talent is scarce, this will need to be sufficient to pay for increasing prices and daily fees. The only way to achieve this is to seriously look at your communication budgets and shift the ratios your CEO, CFO and HR team are used to.

### **Crowdsource creative**

Agencies typically rely on a small group of local people to come up with strategies and ideas. But the answer to your brand’s challenge may be in the mind of someone in Sao Paolo or Seoul.

Organise (or join) open creativity and innovation platforms for your brand. Appoint curators to select and shape ideas.

### **Join Communication Labs**

In spite of all claims to the contrary, only very few people have real experience in media-neutrality, transmedia storytelling, branded entertainment, in-game advertising, customer journey planning, etc.

Rather than rely on one agency for wisdom in these matters, join multi-brand medialabs (or initiate them). Pool resources to learn and experiment.

# How Futurelab can help your brand

## About Us

Futurelab is a marketing strategy consultancy focused on customer-centricity and innovation.

We help consumer and business brands to:

- Obtain the highest possible return on their marketing investments.
- Create meaningful innovations.
- Connect their business to their customer.

We achieve this by putting the best people, tools and insights we can find at the disposal of our customers. And then we attempt to push the boundaries even more.

We dislike thick reports, consultancy speak and needless complexity. Instead, we prefer to “get on” with making money for your business.

## Relevant Services

When it comes to the suggestions in this document, we can assist you when:

- Selecting, briefing, managing and reviewing your media, creative and retail agencies.
- Developing media-neutral, customer-centric communication strategies based on engagement (traditional, digital and retail).
- Measuring and increasing the return on your marketing investments.
- Launch projects to shake up the marketing industry.

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