

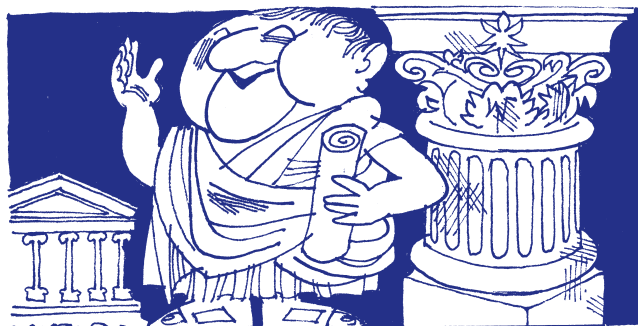
FORUM – A miscellany of your views and reviews. Write to us with whatever's on your mind and we'll try to find a place for it. This issue, the debate over integration continues to rage after Ron Leagas's piece in the Summer issue, while Peter Gilbert follows up Hugh Davidson's thesis on organisation

What makes an integrated campaign a success?

FROM JOHN GRIFFITHS

Here we go again. Integration has reared its ungainly head and refuses to lie down (Ron Leagas, 'Integration: wake up!', Forum, Issue 17). Why is this? Is it anything to do with a downturn in advertising income encouraging ad agencies to jostle their way over to the overflowing direct marketing trough? Can it be that overtaxed marketing departments are once again using the 'partnership' word to devolve some of the marketing function into agency land? Or is it the marketing press baiting agencies to show that their creative department can produce campaign ideas bigger than television sets?

Why can't we dispose of integration once and for all? Because however nebulous the concept, however complex the implementation, however cynical the nay-sayers, the fact is that 1 and 1 can be made to add up to 3. The combined effect of a single idea and multiple channels ought to make brand-building and customer acquisition more cost-effective. After the integrated campaign has run, it should go on working longer than campaigns that use only a few channels. The trouble is that to date no one has figured out how to measure it – or if they have they've kept it to themselves.



At least that is until now. At a recent Account Planning Group summit on integration, Brian Aspen of Royal Mail threw down a challenge: Royal Mail will fund the best proposal by any agency of any kind to research how different media interact to create consumer effects and how in consequence to allocate the budget to these candidate media.

Entrants will have their work cut out. Submissions will have to be more than play-the-jingle-on-the-radio-to-increase-recall-of-the-TV case studies.

First there will need to be different approaches depending on consumers' distance from the brand. Integration has to be measured against those who are heavily involved with the brand compared with those whose involvement is fragmentary and marginal.

Second there needs to be a recognition of the complementary roles of different communication channels. Rather like McLuhan's hot and cool media definitions, some channels are push and some are pull. The layering of channels and messages has to be more than additive; they have to integrate to enhance consumer experience. Integrated campaigns that bulk up channels to assault the customer with the same message from

57 directions only provide the excuse to filter it all out. It is the interplay of media which ought to intrigue and involve.

Third, the overall campaign will need to be effective at achieving different tasks. Genuine integration ensures that within the theme, all of the different communication tasks can be carried out.

At the heart of the campaign there needs to be a powerful idea, a promise which every communication echoes. This is more than art direction. Superficial integration has been likened to a set of matching suitcases: nice to look at, notionally useful when waiting at the carousel in Terminal 4 but not adding one ounce of value to the task of carrying stuff from home to your hotel.

Call your lead agency and ask if they are submitting a paper. And ask them to. Perhaps they aren't because they are worried about upsetting you and breaking confidentiality; or is it that they're protecting your (or their) ignorance?

If they are working on a paper, remind them about the matching suitcases. They will have to show that integration works as well as it looks. ☺

John Griffiths is a freelance planner and runs the website www.planningaboveandbeyond.com

Integration exists

But not as we knew it

FROM TOM RAYFIELD

For 40 or 50 years, the UK's full-service advertising agencies were just that. S.H. Benson, Crawfords, Dorlands, The London Press Exchange, Mather & Crowther and Masius Wynne-Williams all had dozens of in-house departments. They could integrate pretty well anything a client wanted without leaving home. I know JWT best, so I will use it as an example.

From 1934, JWT London's full-time, in-house departments included, though not all at the same time (hold your breath): account handlers, account planning, art buying, billing, casting, catering, control, creative, creative research, creative workshop, film studio, healthcare advertising, legal and personality, home economics, information, mailing, marketing, media planning and buying, merchandising, new business, operational research, outdoor publicity, packaging, personnel, personnel advertising, photo studio, public relations, radio and TV production, recording studio, talent buying, telecine, training, TV buying and typography.

By the late 1970s, it had become clear there was a problem. As these were all agency departments and JWT was a full-service agency, few clients were inclined to pay extra for their services. While virtually all the clients were