

THE POWER OF BEING BRAVE

I always strive to push boundaries. I ask the same of my clients.

Cut-through creative ideas that are, impactful, insightful, engaging and thought provoking - you know the ones. Ideas that drive you somewhere. Be it online or to a store to buy a product or service. This is the kind of work you, the client, wants to see.

But in the cold light of day these ideas are rarely approved. This type of work is about being brave, taking a risk. Why? Because it means stepping out of convention; listening to your heart and not just your head. Consumers do this already. In fact 80% of purchase decisions are reputed to be based on the heart, not the mind. Put it another way; emotions win over logic four times out of five.

Marshall McLuhan (the Canadian marketing visionary who now lectures at the University of Toronto) once said: "everyone experiences more than he or she understands - but it is the experience and not the understanding that influences behaviour".

Are our expectations too high? Is it too hard to be brave in Asia? Work filters down from global offices and templates are invariably set. Mindsets also tend to lean towards not rocking the boat; not upsetting the status quo; playing it safe; not putting your neck above the parapet. True perhaps, but I think these feelings act as a barrier preventing a company's exploration to mine new innovative ideas.

For work to gain traction, to stand up to rigour and testing, it must stem from a brave idea. Bravery is the thing that takes you across the line. It makes you stand up for the big ideas.

Influencing is what we're about. Agencies cannot actually sell product or services; this is up to the sales person, the product, the store, the location. What we do as marketers is to persuade, taking you to a point where you're ready to accept the brand idea as part of your lifestyle.

Your mind is engaged your heart (more importantly) is open. We've all acted in a safe manner on occasions; killed ideas because they are off brief and off brand. But this is what a sensible person does - keeps things on track in a commonsensical manner, but bravery is



Dare to venture where no one has gone before

something else. It makes your heart skip a beat, your stomach churn and your mind play games.

Safety is the antithesis, the enemy of risk. Safety doesn't advance you. Ask yourself the question: have you ever met, or read about a self-made billionaire who hasn't taken a risk?

How can we encourage ourselves to take that leap of faith, travel the uncertain road and invest in a risk, worth investing in?

The solution: engage an agency that isn't your waiter, one who doesn't just take an order. Get a team that will offer solutions that will stretch you, just a little. Separate your budget and, like playing the stock market, split the budget between low, medium and higher risk. Take an educated gamble on just one or two ideas that make you feel daring. Trust your gut instinct. Challenge your boss to do

the same. If you still don't believe me, check out Dove's 'Campaign for Real Beauty' and Adidas' Vertical Limit 'Impossible is Nothing'. Both have replaced product with big ideas centered on emotional drivers stemming from the consumer.

Brilliant work changes the landscape. Enhances sales to limits only dreamt about. Attracts the attention of the press normally reserved for rock stars... OK, I won't stretch the truth too far but they were effective, highly effective, brave ideas, approved by brave clients.



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