

Media Release
Friday, October 24, 2003

APPRAISE YOUR WAY TO ADVERTISING SUCCESS

“Regularly appraising your ad agency and assessing the relationship between that service provider and your company, can mean the difference between advertising that works and a waste of money,” says Clive Webster, Senior Partner of Objectivity, a leading perception measurement and management firm.

In the same manner that staff appraisals identify problem areas, breakdowns in communication and stumbling blocks to the employee doing his or her job well, appraising your ad agency can clear the air and set the scene for truly effective advertising.

Regular appraisals make for a good working relationship and provide results as a result of setting guidelines, boundaries and, in particular, identifying the performance expectations you have of your agency.

“Given that advertising has a three-fold purpose, to create or increase awareness; create or shift perceptions; or to generate a response; and that all three are measurable, the achievement of these measurable deliverables should be at the heart of your appraisal. In doing so, your agency appraisal becomes based upon fact - actual goal achievement - rather than on intangibles and the value thereof increases dramatically. Advertising is after all, or should be, an investment rather than a ‘spend’ and an appraisal provides the means via which to measure the return on your investment. Often a brand review with the agency is the best, most appropriate time to conduct the appraisal.” adds Webster.

“In the past,” he says “annual agency appraisals were very much the norm. There has, however, been a marked decline in this trend over the past few years. Our 2003 Objectivity Ad Agency Performance Profiles reveal that of the agencies surveyed, more than half don’t request appraisals nearly as much as their clients would like them to. This according to the clients interviewed.”

The reasons for this are many and varied and range from complacency, to fear of the outcome, avoidance of conflict, a lack of interest and in some instances, sadly, just plain arrogance. Where problems do exist, however, they certainly don’t go away when they’re not addressed.

In the course of providing its client retention service to ad agencies, effectively a third party mediation and appraisal service, Objectivity has seen a great many relationships resuscitated with very little effort. Webster says the key components in these salvage situations are, firstly, the act of defining the performance expectations, the measurable deliverables, the client has of the agency and secondly, measuring, then monitoring the agency’s delivery against those parameters.

Webster concludes: “Whether your advertising budget is large or small is not relevant. What matters, is that the money you do spend, is well spent and that it achieves the results you require. The biggest stumbling block to achieving this is an ad agency that has no clear picture of what you’d like it to achieve and how you’d like it to conduct itself in that process.”

In addition to its pioneering work in the fields of perception measurement and management, Objectivity provides a range of services that assist companies to choose the right advertising agency for their business and to measure and manage the ongoing effectiveness of their advertising.

ends

words: 522

Compiled by, and to contact, on behalf of Objectivity (Pty) Ltd.:

Tracey-Ann Carroll
Anti-Clockwise
Tel: +27 11 467-6133
Fax: +27 11 467-6928
e-mail: tracey@anticlockwise.co.za

Objectivity (Pty) Ltd.
Clive Webster
Senior Partner
Tel: +27 11 465-7160
Fax: +27 11 465-4500
e-mail: perceptions@objectivity.co.za