



FIVE REASONS CLIENTS REJECT THEIR ADVERTISING

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Five reasons clients reject their advertising

The agency gets the brief – they do the work – they show the work and get either a yay or a nay. The work is probably of a high standard, so when it is rejected they probably feel the pain acutely. However, if agencies knew the secret sauce, the frequency of rejections should decrease markedly and so should the term ‘Oh well, back to the drawing board’.

Here’s the problem: agencies are just taking briefs. They should never be taken; briefs are there to be discovered. The agency is not there to answer the client’s brief – they are there to solve the client’s problem. There’s a big difference. We often ask ourselves what do we need to do to sell the product, when sometimes it’s better to ask why people don’t buy (more) of the product. Surely if you provide an answer, there must be a question?

That’s why work gets rejected so often – it does not answer a question. There is no problem, so the ‘solution’ is either liked or disliked by the client – whatever takes their intuitive fancy. Granted, the more seasoned the client, the more accurate their intuition, but the agency is now depending on the client for the right solution.

Heed this

Here are five warning signs that the work is going to be rejected:



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1. The agency is determined to find a magic bullet insight that will result in breakthrough communication. The reality is that good advertising does not depend on an insight – it depends on persuasive communication. Advertising is neither art nor science; it is persuasion.
2. You use terms like LSM 8 – 10. That's like saying people are made up of 80% water. There are other demographics that are more descriptive.
3. The client brief includes copious amounts of information. That's all very well, but as the saying goes "I wrote you a long letter, because I never had time to write you a short one".
4. There's just no cohesive theme – it's exactly what the client said plus a whole lot of background information which shows how much work the agency has done. A good brief is like a good map – it points out only the things you need to orientate yourself.
5. There is no problem to be solved. The agency just waxes lyrical about the brand and dammit, everyone should know how great it is, and if they did, they would buy it.

About the author

Sid Peimer is the Executive Director of the Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry. His book 'The Clear Win: Pitching for new business – the strategies that work; the myths that don't' can be found on Amazon [here](#)

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