



New Business Talent

INSIGHT ARTICLE

Digital Infuses Everything

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How would you describe working on new business for Strawberry Frog and can you list a few of your flagship clients?

I love leading the new business efforts at Strawberry Frog simply because it is one of the sexiest brand in the advertising industry. It has a very distinctive proposition, which is not limited to a peculiar agency name but rooted in the dna of the firm. The agency was founded to challenge the domain of the big networks in the business, so being different it is part of our mantra, team, work and everyday life. We work for brands such as: Opel -Vauxhall, Panasonic, Barilla, Asics-Onitsuka Tiger, Sara Lee – Douwe Egberts, just to name a few.

With so many agencies springing up all the time do you think the competitive landscape is getting tougher for communications agencies?

I would say it is getting generally more exciting. Strawberry Frog has unique business goal. Deliver strategic and creative excellence for blue chip clients on a pan-European and global level. We only work on international accounts. Our mission is to create campaigns, which must run cross-borders. This allow us to compete in a specific segment of the market, where the "usual suspects" challenge each other on a regular basis. So the competition is the result of the harsh battle for creative excellence, more than the higher number of shops around.

As Head of New Business at an agency known as "your friendly neighbourhood global advertising agency" do you work solely on the Amsterdam pitches or do you also get involved in collaborations with your New York and Tokyo offices?

The Amsterdam office focuses predominantly on pan-European business (we are not a Dutch agency but an international one), whereas the NY office on North American one. We recently open an outpost in San Paolo teaming up with creative star Pereira, in order to have a presence in the booming Brazilian (and South

American) market. In case of a global pitch or assignment, the NY and Amsterdam offices work as ONE team. We share the culture, the enthusiasm and the people. Creative briefs normally fly over the Atlantic and back in order to have the global reach, which is peculiar of our type of consultancy.

The founder of Strawberry Frog recently said that “Digital is no longer one area of expertise, digital infuses every idea and every agency role”. Do you incorporate new media techniques in your agency new business strategy and pitch process?

Well, digital is incorporated in our media strategies as much as PR, direct marketing, events, buzz/guerilla and whatever other media to connect with our consumers. The most important aspect for us is to seek out a broader space where brands can make cultural connections. The result is what we call The Big Idea. Then a channel planning strategy and smart creative executions follow naturally. But yes, new media play a more central role nowadays than in the past. We love having the digital concepting expertise in-house, that’s why some of our creative teams have strong interactive backgrounds.

We’re collecting peoples funniest pitch stories from around the world – do you have any memorable moments that stand out in your mind?

I warmly remember one of my first pitch presentations. We invited the client to a cozy dinner at our CSD house in Amsterdam with a professional cook feeding us. After supper we presented our ideas. The atmosphere was very relaxed and I was loving it, thinking how cool working in advertising was and presented whilst sitting on the floor. One of my senior colleagues gave a threatening look and brought me back to reality. I had to stand up and pretend to be casual about it. We got the business in the end.

Our website is for anyone working on creating new business for agencies anywhere in the world – do you have any thoughts you’d like to share with our readers?

I was thinking we should create a dynamic new business professional global network on facebook where we can share business stories but also funny ones. Talking about funny stuff, there is a group on facebook I am part of called CRAPNET, with mainly Amsterdam international advertising professionals playing with it. There’s crazy stuff in it. Nothing serious about it, business wise, but worth taking a look.

You’ve read our minds Allesandro. No-one will believe we haven’t paid you to say that. We do already have a facebook group for new business professionals worldwide which is growing fast. Feel free to plug us in Amsterdam!

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2627401062>