

## Live From Worldwide AdForum, New York, Day 4

### Day 4, Thursday

Today feels like an exercise in brain capacity testing and whilst not even at the end of it yet I'm already starting to see cases of involuntary lazy eye. By tomorrow I fully expect to see smoke rising.

First up was Publicis Groupe's VivaKi, a new strategic initiative encompassing Starcom MediaVest, Zenith Optimedia, Digitas and Denuo. VivaKi, with combined meanings of 'life' and 'energy' seems a fitting nomenclature for this million-words-a-minute dazzling display of technological prowess and the resultant seriously big business developments.

Their VivaKi Nerve Centre is to be the world's largest centre for developing new technologies necessary for client growth, and with an ex-Media guy who seems more Steve Jobs-y to me heading this up, has shown us another structure of how to truly deliver 'digital' to clients. The piece that really spun our wheels was their Audience on Demand (AOD) – a network built on Microsoft, Google, Yahoo! and Platform-A tools (how they managed to pull off that love-in we've left to our imaginations.). This allows for completely tailored audiences (eg dog lovers, house hunters) vs simply buying media by demographics, and overcomes that dirty reality of media fragmentation of the ad networks.

The beautiful end to this impressive display of tech-iority was Rishad Tobaccowala, CEO of Denuo who brought us reassuringly back from digi-space to suggest that albeit we are now firmly entrenched in a data-based world, he sees the creative agencies actually being more important in the future than ever. After all as he said, despite all the sexy bit-talk, 'as humans we will still choose with our hearts and then use numbers to justify what we just did.'

Next up was MRM Worldwide, the first learning of which was that it no longer stands for McCann Relationship Marketing but is in fact simply meaningless letters to represent an agency that is really 'punching above its lack-of-awareness weight'. If the presentation were to be thought of as a 30 second ad spot they certainly get top marks for the single minded proposition: Consumer Utility. A new 80/20 rule of consumer engagement by CEO Reuben Hendell was a nice way to quantify the extent of their belief in this; the old model being 80% media (distribution) and 20% content, the new model being 80% content (platforms) and 20% distribution (driving traffic). Use the offshore production capabilities of MRM Supply and you're saving some rather nice greenbacks too.

So off we go now to the AdForum dinner, where all the weeks' agencies can bond up a storm and work out who out i-Podded each other in the goodie bags. With the risk of my own lazy eye setting in and smoke coming from the ears I'd best go and join them to unwind with perhaps just one more cocktail...