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05-08-2008: Seven habits of highly effective media people

by Aznita Ahmad Pharmy

[Email us your feedback at fd@bizedge.com](mailto:fd@bizedge.com)

GREG Paull, principal of R3, was in town early last month to talk about What Clients Want. The talk was part of the Hot Topics Series organised by the Media Specialists Association.

R3 is Asia's largest independent consultancy on marketing efficiency and effectiveness. Started in 2002 in Malaysia, Singapore and China, it works closely with marketers and agencies to improve output.

Last year, it managed the largest global creative pitch led out of Asia for Singapore Airlines, the largest global media pitch for Johnson & Johnson, and the largest creative pitch in China for Coke Olympics.

Taking a leaf out of Stephen Covey's book, Paull lists his "Seven habits of highly effective media people" below.

1 Immerse yourself in what the clients want: Unilever in India sent its staff responsible for rural marketing to live in a village for two months so the person could begin to really understand the target audience. It may take time but it earns you a lot of respect.

2 A five-star SOP (standard operating procedure): Successful agencies are the ones that have a proper regimen in place.

3 Insight — put first things first: Agencies must invest more to gain insights. Saatchi & Saatchi said that if you want to catch a tiger, don't go to the zoo, go to the jungle. An agency in Singapore gave 10 students a diary to jot down what they did for two whole weeks. To gain good insights, you have to go beyond a day in the life of consumers, and beyond Nielsen and other data sources.

4 Think win-win: Think of benefiting both the agency and the clients. In 2006, Coca-Cola joined hands with Chinese instant messaging giant Tencent to build up customer base and increase customer loyalty.

5 Aim true: Value the power of execution, set goals with the agency and invest in speed.

6 Never stop innovating: The challenge for an agency is to keep moving. Research the risks and evaluate effectiveness against efficiency. For the Beijing Olympics, Coca-Cola formed a three-year standalone unit comprising Leo Burnett (creative), Starcomm (media), Momentum (activation), WWINS (digital) and Heartland (outdoor).

7 You can't be what you can't measure: Set up a system to evaluate clients' needs. Agencies seldom ask clients what they want once the agencies have won the pitch. The biggest relationship equation is Satisfaction = Performance ÷ Expectation.

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