

GrayMatterz

THE ZIMMERMAN GROUP, INC.

Marketing/Consulting

OCTOBER 2000

BASICS STILL BASIC.

With all the new technology options, do the basic principles of advertising still apply? Yes, say the experts.

"It's hard to believe now," starts a *Wall Street Journal* article (5/18/00), "but not too long ago tech-savvy doomsayers were confidently predicting that the Internet would destroy the traditional advertising and media world."

Shel Holtz, online communications guru, cautions: "The newness of the Internet and its related technologies inspires many communicators to forsake what they know about effective communication . . ." (*Communication World*, February/March 2000).

ARE YOU AVERAGE?

A recent Gallup poll claims that the average American worker receives 202 messages each day:

Telephone calls: 52	Pieces of inter-office mail: 18
E-mails: 36	Pieces of U.S. mail: 18
Voice-mails: 23	Faxes: 14

So our job as communicators — more than ever — is to break through the noise. To pierce the inertia of the reader. To compel to action.

How can advertising do this? By starting with a thorough understanding of what's paramount to the customer. By using communications tools to build relationships. And by remembering that we are talking to real people, not to faceless companies.

COUNTING CALLS.

We're now getting results from two of our ad campaigns: one to a local consumer market, one to a national business-to-business market.



Brains for hire.

Our approach to both campaigns was similar:

1. First, we distilled the main message after studying the customer's points of pain, thereby focusing on the WIFM (what's in it for me) of the customer.
2. Second, we built that main message into a visual format that cuts through the clutter and stops the reader. Simple, clean visuals. Limited copy.
3. Third, we bought large enough ads to ensure page dominance.

How are we doing so far? In the consumer campaign, the client averaged **300 new calls** each week.

In the business-to-business campaign, the client started getting phone calls from the day that the first issue hit subscribers' desks, an unusual and welcome phenomenon for them.

MAKE A CONNECTION.

So our advice is to remember the basics of good communication. Start with strategy and core message. Know the client's brand essence. Then use this wisdom to create an emotional connection with your customer.

As CEO Kevin Roberts, Saatchi & Saatchi (leader of the London agency with 7,000 employees in 92 countries) counsels: "Stop obsessing about technology and start obsessing about ideas."