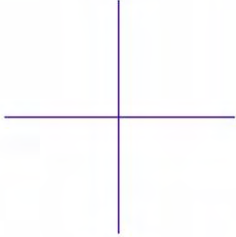


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American Association of Advertising Agencies New Business Webinar Series



MERCER ISLAND GROUP



***Working with Search Consultants
Featuring Mercer Island Group's
Stephen Boehler***

**An AAAA “New Business Webinar Series” Event
November 8, 2007**





Stephen Boehler
Founder
Mercer Island Group



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Introduction to Mercer Island Group



Mercer Island Group: Introduction

Who We Are

Management & marketing consulting firm

Founded 1990

Two partners & several internal consultants supplemented by 100+ network of senior, independent experts

What We Do

Branding & Positioning
Growth Planning
Culture, Values, Teamwork
Business Strategy
Marketing & Sales
Org. Design & Training
New Products
Competitive Analysis
Agency Management

Client Experience

Microsoft, Nokia, Nintendo
Sprint, US Cellular, AT&T
Starbucks, Stash Tea, Kraft
Dial, Dole, Allrecipes.com
Time Warner, Charter, Cox
Lifetime TV, CW Network
Russell Investment Group
InfoSpace, Sprynet, MSN
Money Mailer, Bushnell
Riney, Hill Holiday, FH, TVP

The MIG Difference

Results through a market centric, culture & values driven approach.
Senior, expert driven virtual team = always the right team for the job.
Extraordinary, long term relationships.



Client Consultation

Typical Challenges:

- Agency/roster resource strategies
- Roster consolidations
- Strategic agency searches/reviews
- Agency relationship repair
- Client/agency 360 performance reviews
- Fee analyses
- Processes & procedures
- Compensation models
- Organization structure
- Agency council facilitation
- Training

Partial Client List:

- Abbott Laboratories
- Adobe
- AT&T
- Charter Communications
- Cox Communications
- Delta Dental
- Embarq
- InfoSpace
- Microsoft
- Nintendo
- Russell Investment Group
- Starbucks
- Sprint
- SunCom
- Time Warner
- Toshiba
- U.S. Cellular



Agency Consultation

Typical Challenges:

- Branding/positioning
- Growth planning
- Sales strategies & training
- Client relationship repair
- Client/agency 360 performance reviews
- Presentation/pitch training
- Rent a strategic team
- Processes & procedures
- Compensation models
- Billing rates
- Organization structure

Partial Client List:

- Euro RSCG
- Hal Riney & Partners
- Hill Holiday
- Fleishman Hillard
- Mindshare
- Mullen
- Organic
- Publicis
- Schwartz Communications
- Starcom
- TBWA/Chiat Day
- Tequila
- Vidal Partnership
- VML
- Waggener Edstrom
- Weiden & Kennedy



Agency Search Expertise

Guide to choosing an agency PRWeek Contact 15

Ten steps to the right match



“The work’ is how agencies make their living, and asking them to do it gratis is not only rude, but unnecessary”

Stephen Boehler
Founding partner
Mercer Island Group

Selecting an agency is easy. Selecting the right agency, however—one your firm can partner with for years—is hard. You need to find that perfect combination of chemistry and capabilities from the hundreds of agencies out there, from global firms to local boutiques.

To avoid drowning in the sea of choices, begin by defining the principles you will use to guide your process:

1. Appoint a champion to lead the process.
2. Devote an appropriate amount of time.
3. Don't compromise capabilities for chemistry, or vice versa.
4. Be likeable—make agencies want to work for you, not just for your money.
5. Be selective. Smart shops think strategically and tactically about growing your company's brand and marketing your products and services profitably, not just about PR.

At the Mercer Island Group, we employ a thorough, 10-step process that has helped us serve clients such as Microsoft and Starbucks:

Step 1. Define your needs: Begin by developing a thorough understanding of your own needs in a PR agency. Interview management, your team, and other important parties.

Step 2. Review your current agency's performance: By better understanding your existing relationship, you can help the agency address its weaknesses and gain insight into what the ideal agency may be like.

Step 3. Do the research: Do not rely on your past impressions of agencies; they may be way out of date with today's reality.

Step 4. Create a questionnaire: Develop a questionnaire and invite the 10-12 agencies that received the best recommendations to respond. It should include conflicts, resources, related experiences, case histories, key successes and failures, size, growth details, key personnel, and references. This inquiry should be thorough without being overkill—agencies have their current clients to attend to.

Step 5. Select finalists: Cut the agency list down to three or four finalists. At this point, you should conduct an orientation session for the finalists so that they share a similar understanding of your team's challenges.

Step 6. Check backgrounds: Conduct the appropriate background check of the references provided by the agencies as well as our own independent research.

Step 7. Review credentials: Ask finalists to deliver a “credentials review presentation” covering the following topics: leadership backgrounds and key accomplishments; who would be on the account team, with samples of their best and most recent work; details of the agency's best work and who did it; several key “process” and “approach” issues; how they go about measuring results; the agency's beliefs; and its compensation structure.

We rarely ask firms to develop “spec” plans or creative. “The work” is how agencies make their living, and asking them to do it gratis is not only rude, but unnecessary. We do occasionally request agencies address a strategic question, so we can gauge their thinking skills.

Step 8. Check your chemistry: By now, you should have a strong feel about the agencies' technical capabilities and some understanding of their culture and your chemistry. To provide a better feel for chemistry, conduct short-notice visits to two of the finalists. This allows us to see the “real agency” at work during the course of a normal business day.

Step 9. Make a selection: Finally, after all the visits, presentations, and evaluations, select the best agency for your needs based on two key factors: the quality of the work going on at the agency, and the chemistry between your group and theirs. Negotiate a win-win contract, and thoroughly orient them to get the relationship off to a fast start.

Step 10. Stay close to the runner-up: Maintain a strong relationship with the agency that finishes second, so in the unlikely event the agency chosen does not work out, you won't need to redo this entire process.

If you involve a search consultant in the process, be thorough in your selection. Ask if the consultants accept finders' fees from agencies, and ask which agencies were on the short lists and which were finalists in each of the firm's last five to 10 searches. A thorough consultant will be able to display medium and short lists with limited agency duplication.

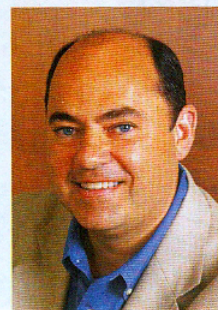
Congratulations. You are on your way to an outstanding agency selection process.

Stephen Boehler

Guide to choosing an agency PRWeek Contact 15

Finding the perfect partner

Consultant Steve Boehler offers some insights into new-business pitches



Steve Boehler is the founder of Mercer Island Group (MIG), a firm that comprises a network of marketing management consultants. MIG's services include strategic marketing, product planning, brand consulting and positioning, competitive analysis, consumer research, and agency searches and performance evaluations.

Q: Are some clients predisposed to agencies based on their size or affiliation? Do agencies from holding companies pitch better than independents?
A: Culture and chemistry are both more important than size in terms of finding the right match. When I work with senior executives on the client side, we find out if they have predispositions to size and location. Most wise clients don't; they're looking for the right results and people.

Q: You deal with advertising and PR agency searches. Is there anything that ad agencies do better than PR firms?
A: There are strong and weak new-business folks in both fields. It doesn't really relate to the industry as much as it does to the people. Both industries have a range of quality.

Ten keys to find a firm

1. Define your needs. Interview management, your team, and other important sources

2. Review your agency's performance. This will help you pinpoint what your ideal agency needs

3. Research firms. Don't rely on past impressions

4. Create a questionnaire. Ask the 10-12 long-listed agencies to reply

5. Select finalists. Cut the list down to three or four

6. Check backgrounds. Use firms' references as well as independent research

7. Review credentials. Ask finalists for presentations covering personnel, experience, and compensation structure

8. Consider chemistry. Make short-notice visits to the finalists' offices

9. Make a choice. Base it on the quality of work and chemistry

10. Stay close to the runner-up. If the first-choice relationship fails, you don't have to start from scratch

“Most wise clients [aren't predisposed to agency size]; they're looking for the right results and people”

Steve Boehler
Founder
Mercer Island Group

Before the internet bubble burst in 1999, PR agencies had become dreadful at new-business development because there were many more opportunities than there were agencies. The good ones were turning away business.

There was an entire generation of PR agency executives tasked with finding new business in the early years of this century that hadn't done it before. They had lost a lot of ground with the ad agency businesses in the late '90s. Recently, I've seen the same kind of range of skills in both industries.

Q: Are agencies predominately erring on the side of caution when pitching? Is it a more worthwhile strategy to go for a unique approach?

A: Right now, firms are erring on the side of caution in an incredibly important area: reinvention. The entire marketing services industry is in desperate need of reinvention to be strategic problem-solvers for their client partners, as opposed to being silo-oriented, highly tactical elements in a mix.

Today, there's as much churn of staff on the client side as the agency side, so one of the values that the agency can bring to the business is the ability to

help knit together different aspects of a company's brand proposition so that it's well-integrated. Yet the way the industry is set up today, the client has to do that [integration] because there are multiple agencies doing multiple aspects of the marketing mix.

That is going to change. I don't know when, but I know there are both big and small firms experimenting with more integrated structures. But that is the number-one challenge facing the industry. I believe whoever cracks that code will win. I know there are firms working on it, but I haven't seen firms do it very effectively.

Q: How important is it for agencies to know how many times a client has switched AORs, and then incorporate that knowledge into its decision about whether to pitch for business? Is it foolish to think that your agency will be the one that makes a company satisfied?

A: There are definitely companies that are constantly churning firms and it's “always the agency's fault.” Agencies would be well-served to avoid pitching those clients. In a case where any company changed agencies multiple times in a few years—without significant structural changes such as new senior management that could be trusted to be more disciplined when approaching agencies—I would advise to stay away.

I won't do a search for a company that simply churns agencies all the time unless there's that structural change or a significant new strategy. I believe a good marriage between a company and an agency is a two-way street. When an agency fails, there's almost always some shared fault. So if a company is constantly changing agencies, they have to be part of the problem. It's likely that if you're the new agency, you'll also be gone in a year.

—interviewed by Keith O'Brien



AAAA Webinar: How to Work with Search Consultants

“You tell your story and show your work and if the consultant thinks you are a ‘safe choice’ for their client, they will include you.”

Mike Swenson
Barkley



Today's Webinar

- Interviews/Surveys:
Agency Search Consultants
- Interviews/Surveys:
Agency Business Development Directors
- MIG's Views



How many search consultancies do you know well? (choose one)

None	38%
One	20%
Two	15%
Three	13%
Four or more	14%



Search Consultants Participating

ABA Consulting
Alan Krinsky Associates
Ark/AAI
Bob Wolf
Compass
Gilbert Company
Hooper Consulting
Jackie Walts Consulting

Joanne Davis Consulting
Jones Lundin Beals
Mercer Island Group
Pile & Company
Robb High Associates
Rojek Consulting Group
Source Martin
Topsail Group

Non Participants

AAR Partners
ADvice & ADvisors
Roth Associates

Ad Management Insights
Hasan & Co.
Select Resources



What should a small/mid-sized firm to do to get/stay on your radar?

“It’s not the responsibility of the agency, rather it’s the consultant’s job to be sure you’re on his ‘radar’ ”.

Don Gilbert
Gilbert & Company

At MIG, we agree completely.

Unfortunately, this opinion is not the norm by consultants in general, and definitely not with regards to small/mid sized agencies.



5 Rules to Getting Noticed by Consultants

(Per the Search Consultants)

1. Communicate effectively.
2. Great work.
3. Build your brand. Be special.
4. Be judicious & practical.
5. Be responsive.



Search consultants want detailed, comprehensive mailings from agencies.

True	30%
False	70%



Getting Noticed: Communicate Effectively

- Real news, real efficiently.
- Tailor communications to the consultant.
- Respect the consultant's time.
- Leverage the press.
- Save trees & plastic.

“Respect our time. E-mail us, don't send us boxes the size of Texas.” Joanne Davis, Joanne Davis Consulting

“Only communicate when you have bonafide news – a new piece of business, an important hire, etc...”

Brian Goodall, Jones Lundin Beals



Getting Noticed: Great Work

- Work that gets noticed.
- Work that generates buzz.
- Work that wins awards.

“There’s no substitute for doing good work that gets noticed.” Brian Goodall, Jones Lundin Beals



Getting Noticed: Build Your Brand, Be Special

- Special talent.
- Special capabilities.
- Build your reputation.

“Be clear in how you’re positioned – culture, capability and competency”. Lorraine Stewart Rojek, The Rojek Consulting Group



Getting Noticed: Be Judicious & Practical

- Be “real”.
- Be straightforward about your capabilities.
- Candor.

“First, determine if you should be on our radar. We are hired by national brands that are looking for companies doing world-class work (regardless of their size). If your work is less than stellar, quite frankly your firm is not going to be of interest to most search consultants.” Russel Wohlwerth, Ark/AAI



Getting Noticed: Be Responsive

- Do what you say you'll do.
- Meet the consultant's needs.



A Final Word on “Getting on the Radar”

“Get project work along side of existing AOR resources at sophisticated client orgs, as point of entry to do great work, leverage relationship externally and cross sell against...”

Lorraine Stewart Rojek
The Rojek Consulting Group



Do you keep a detailed, up-to-date profile regarding the needs/habits/practices of each major search consultancy?

Yes 15%
No 85%



5 Ways to Impress Consultants

(Per the Search Consultants)

1. Great interactions.
2. Be distinctive & special.
3. Great work.
4. Effective presentations.
5. Thoroughness & attention to details.



Impressing Consultants: Great Interactions

- Listen.
- Ask.
- Be responsive.
- Communicate effectively.

“Agencies that ask intelligent questions and stimulate interesting dialogue during the search process – versus using the time to talk about themselves.” Menno Ellis, ABA Consulting

“A good attitude that’s centered around keeping clients happy. It’s not about YOU.” Brian Goodall, Jones Lundin Beals

“An agency that understands honestly what their capabilities are and don’t try to chase everything.” Judy Neer, Pile & Company



Impressing Consultants: Be Distinctive & Special

- Clients.
- People.
- Results.
- Capabilities.

“Having a genuine, clear point of difference. Virtually all agencies use the same terms to ‘distinguish’ themselves, so they all remain very commodity like.”

Robb High, Robb High Associates

“A differentiating point of view about the value you provide your clients and the world at large; sense of higher purpose”

Lorraine Stewart Rojek, The Rojek Consulting Group



Impressing Consultants: Great Work

- Big campaigns.
- Big results.
- Big ideas.
- Fresh & original.

“Agencies that do great work that we read about and clients brag about.” Joanne Davis, Joanne Davis Consulting



Impressing Consultants: Effective Presentations

- Respect your own people.
- Manageable team size.
- Finish early.
- Be interactive.



Impressing Consultants: Thoroughness & Attention to Details

- Accuracy.
- Details matter.
- Do your homework.
- Be resourceful.

“Ask what the process is for being listed by a consultant and do that.” Jackie Walts, Jackie Walts Consulting



Agency Bus. Dev. Execs Participating

Barkley

Bernstein-Rein

The Brooklyn Brothers

Deutsch

Eric Mower

Firehouse

Hal Riney

JWT

Korey Kay

Mullen

Ten United

Sullivan Higdon & Sink

Weiden + Kennedy



2 Rules to Getting Noticed (Per Agency BD Execs)

1. Communicate Effectively & Efficiently.

Relevance. Personalization. Real news. People.

“Be relevant in your communication. Don’t bombard consultants with every new campaign.” Mike Duda, Deutsch

“Pass on relevant news about the agency – new biz wins, special recognitions, significant media coverage, etc.” Rand Mikulecky, Sullivan Higdon & Sink

2. Great Work.



5 Ways to Impress Consultants

(Per Agency BD Execs)

1. Agency differentiation.
2. Clear & efficient communication.
3. Results! (client & agency)
4. Great work.
5. People.



A Final Word From Agency BD Execs

“Beyond your work, your people and your process, you need a POV on how you see the world. Ideally everything else conforms to it. Agencies aren't great at articulating what makes them different. Having a POV makes you stand-out.”

Jamie King
Hal Riney & Partners





Mercer Island Group's Views



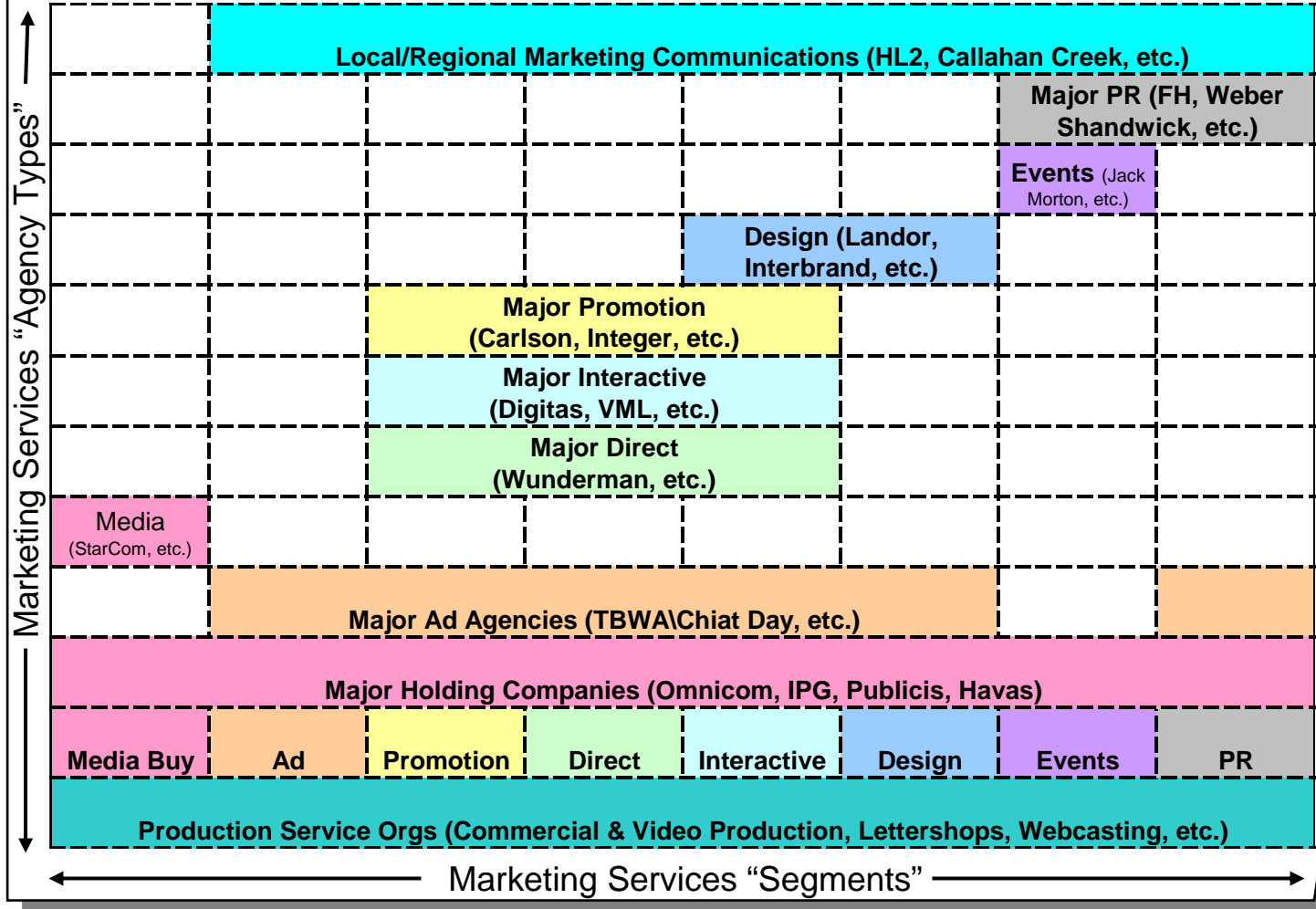
Have you had your agency's new business practices professionally reviewed by a third party? (choose one)

Yes, recently	33%
No, never	43%
Not recently	24%



Huge, Complex Industry: Tough to Standout

Marketing Services Industry - 2007



Takeaways

- ✓ Numerous major segments
- ✓ A great deal of overlap
- ✓ Largest & smallest cover the widest range
- ✓ Positioning & sales skills are critical

The AAAA can advise you on resources that can help evaluate your new business operation.

Agency Positioning Matters

DDB's battle cry is **BetterIdeasBetterResults®**.

- Clearly position yourself
- Solve issues & deliver results



Does your new business team have formal business development training?

Yes	34%
No	66%

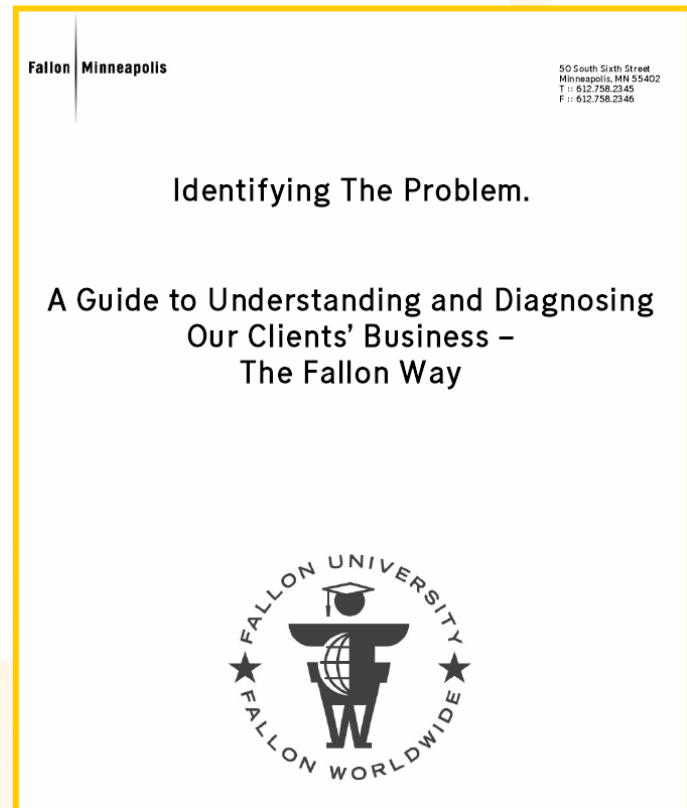


Selling Well Matters – & It's NOT About You

➤ New business development is driven by much more than a well written RFP or presentation...

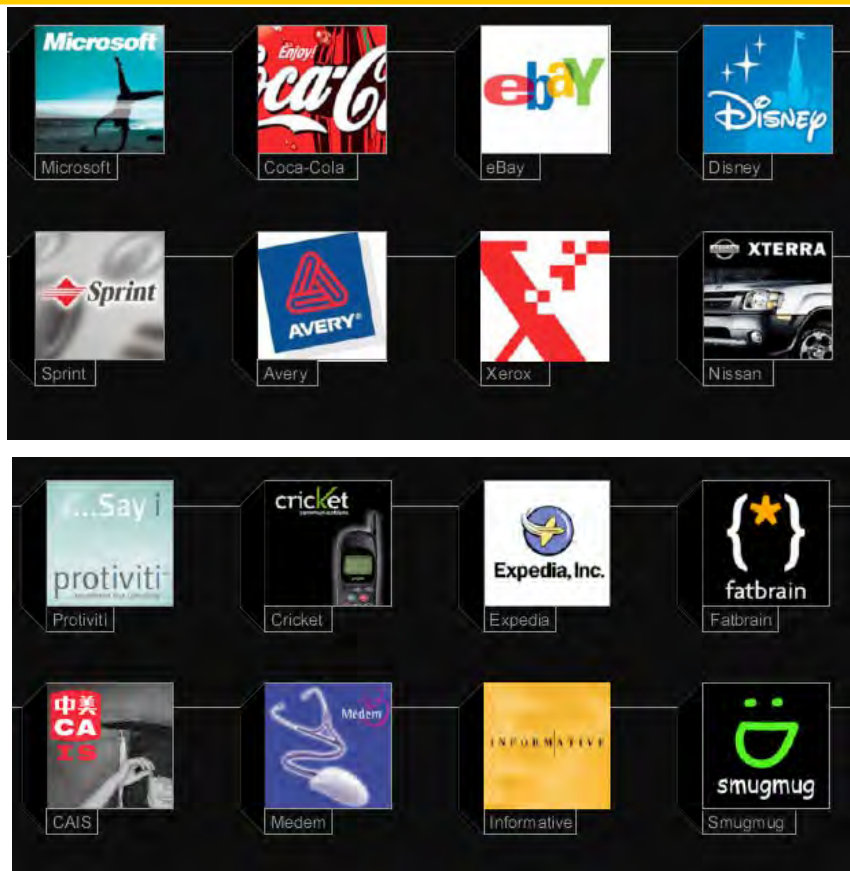
... rather, it's about understanding a client's business issues...

... and helping them solve those issues



Results Matter

Very Good Client List



Excellent Client List

MULLEN

A Track Record of Delivering for Clients



Now used in 15% of all GM vehicle sales



From regional bank to leading financial services company



Increased #1 market share position against new competitors



From 350K to 11.7MM subscribers in 7 years



Increased sales and share in a declining category



Obliterated the competition to become #1 in 2 years



#1 and outpacing competitive growth 3 to 1



From a jobsite to the dominant brand in 1 year

"Being Easy to Track" Matters

We keep detailed summaries of roughly 400 agencies...

Horton Lantz & Low (HL2)		
<p>222 Dexter Avenue North Seattle, WA 98109 Contact: Tom Horton Title: Founding partner, president, CEO Email: tom@hl2.com Website: www.hl2.com Phone #: (206) 223-0055 Fax: (206) 223-9665</p>	<p>Client Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amazon ● Baja Fresh ● Cinnabon ● Coca-Cola ● Expedia Corporate Travel ● FlipStart ● H&R Block ● Holland America Line ● Microsoft ● Marriot International ● Pike Place Market ● Safeco ● Sage ● Seattle's Best Coffee ● Suncadia ● Sweet Factory ● Taco Del Mar ● T-Mobile ● UW School of Engineering 	<p>Capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brand development & integration ● Broadcast ● Graphic design ● High technology ● Interactive ● Internet/web design ● Print Advertising ● Strategic planning/research ● Travel/tourism ● Advertising Campaigns ● Online Advertising
<p>Ownership Independent</p>		<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Microsoft: HL2 helped create a memorable launch at the CES using a humorous, guerilla-focused campaign that introduced the "problem" of "Digital Amnesia." The website drew 15,000 visitors, with 45% from the CES announcement. Sponsorship banners generated over 15 million ad impressions. Garnered best in show awards. Windows Home Server booth visited by 12,000 journalists ● Flipstart: HL2 created branding, packaging, a teaser and full web site, plus advertising and marketing materials for this super compact PC
<p>Billing History/Staffing 2006 Agency Billings, US: N/A 2006 Agency Revenue, US: N/A Professional headcount, US: 80+ Professional headcount, this office: 50+ Number of US offices: 2 Number of WW offices: 2</p>		<p>Recent Awards and/or Notable New Clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2007 Design of the Times Awards - Gold, Silver and Bronze ● Webby Awards ● Web Marketing Awards ● Step-Aside Design - Best of Web
<p>US Offices Seattle, WA Santa Ana, CA</p>	<p>How They Describe Themselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specializing in integrated brand campaigns. 	

BBDO North America		
<p>1285 Ave. of the Americas New York, NY 10019-6028 Contact: Mark Goldstein Title: Vice Chairman, Chief Marketing Officer Email: mark.goldstein@bbdo.com Website: www.bbdo.com Phone #: (212) 459-6411 Fax: (212) 459-6645</p>	<p>Client Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AOL ● Armstrong ● Bank of America ● Braun ● Campbell's ● Dey Pharmaceuticals ● Diageo ● eBay ● E*Trade ● FedEx Kinkos ● Frito-Lay ● GE ● Gillette/P&G ● GlaxoSmithKline ● Havaianas ● Lowe's ● Mars Inc. ● Mitsubishi ● NJ Devils ● Pepsi-Cola ● Pfizer ● Pizza-Hut ● Red Rock Labs ● Schering-Plough ● Starwood Hotels ● Target ● USGA 	<p>Capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocacy/Campaign Advertising/Promotion ● African-American Specialty ● Asian-American Specialty ● Brand Development ● Business-to-Business ● Consumer Advertising ● Corporate Comm. ● Creative ● Database Marketing/Management ● Direct Marketing ● Entertainment Marketing ● Events ● Gay/Lesbian Specialty ● Healthcare Specialty ● High Tech Specialty ● Hispanic Specialty ● Infomercial ● In-Store ● Interactive/Internet ● Market Research ● Media Buying/Placement/Planning ● Out-of-Home ● Packaging Design ● Production ● Public Relations ● Recruitment/Employee Comm. ● Sales Promotion ● Sports Marketing ● Strategic Planning/Marketing ● Yellow Pages
<p>Ownership Omnicom</p>		<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bank of America - The "Keep the Change" initiative made it easier for people to save money, and the number of new checking accounts and money saved among BOA customers increased.
<p>Billing History/Staffing 2006 Agency Billings, US: N/A 2006 Agency Revenue, US: N/A Professional headcount, US: 1,972 Professional headcount, this office: 634 Number of US offices: 17,000+</p>		<p>How They Describe Themselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BBDO is a full-service marketing communications company equipped with all the necessary resources to bring any imaginable idea to life. ● We are a 21st century version of a kick-ass 60's boutique. Powerful global reach and capability, but still relentlessly focused on creating the world's most compelling commercial content.
		<p>Recent Awards and/or Notable New Clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agency of the Year more often and in more places than anyone else ● 2006 Global Agency of the Year by Campaign, Adweek, and Advertising Age ● 2005 B2B, "Food & Beverage" Agency of Year

... you can help yourself by making it easy to access this information.

Do you have a consultant-only section to your agency's Web site?

Yes	1%
No	99%



MIG's View: What Works w/Consultants

❖ Channel management.

Search consultants are a “channel”. Learn from “channel” experts. Consultant-only section of Web site. Contact calendar & strategy.

❖ Real news.

Not every piece of creative.

❖ Tailored programs.

Search consultants are not a homogenous group! 1-to-1 marketing. CRM-like efforts. No bulk mailings/e-mails.

❖ Easy to repackage.

PPT, not PDF. Info readily available on Web site. FAQ. Fact sheets.

❖ Learn to sell.

MIG sales training: “pull”, not “push”. Leverage curiosity & credibility. Make the call about them, not you.

❖ Band together.

Great example: Ad Club of KC's agency consultant “tour”. Leverage AAAA resources.



Your agency participates in a formal 360 performance assessment process at least annually with what % of your accounts?
(choose one)

Under 20%	41%
More than 20% but less than 40%	14%
More than 40% but less than 60%	15%
More than 60% but less than 80%	11%
More than 80%	18%



What's Wrong With the Advertising Industry

❖ Wrong reviews.

Agency reviews with no/limited “warning”. Creative shoot-outs.

Lack of 360 performance assessments.

❖ Wrong focus.

Spec creative versus solving significant business issues. Awards.

The Super Bowl.

❖ Wrong lionization.

Example: Beer & soda face a distinctly different ad paradigm versus most industries, yet get undue attention.

❖ Wrong timeframes.

Quick fix mentality. The “CMO issue”.

❖ Wrong blame.

Bad clients get bad work. Good clients can get good work.



Our Search Beliefs at MIG

- ❖ Agencies shouldn't have to pay to play.

Not to participate in a review. Not to be "listed". Not to be in a database. No subscription.

- ❖ Transparency should be a given.

Consultants should identify when they consult to agencies. Agencies should be clear about their client list (re conflict issues). Clients should conduct 360 performance assessments at least annually.

- ❖ Gift free zone.

At MIG, we prefer to buy our own lunch. Clients and consultants should buy, not receive.

- ❖ Conflict assessments should not be a surprise.

Definitions should be agreed upon at the outset of a relationship.

- ❖ Procurement can add valuable discipline.

Assuming: they work with marketing leadership; emphasis is on ROI; they understand the industry.



Free Mercer Island Group White Paper

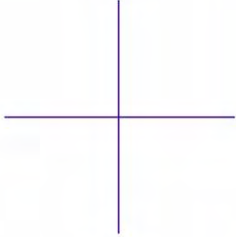
“Best Practices in Client/Ad Agency Relationships”

Free download at www.migroup.com
(link at bottom of homepage)



Questions?





***Working with Search Consultants
Featuring Mercer Island Group's
Stephen Boehler***

**An AAAA “New Business Webinar Series” Event
November 8, 2007**

