Choosing the right partners in a changing market

By Wesley Lynch , issued by Realm Digital   23 May 2011

As the print publishing industry fades and digital platforms flourish, market consolidation is the order of the day, with creative agencies scrambling to acquire digital skills.

But it is a slippery acquisition target - the software development fraternity is itself growing and mutating, with complex and differentiated skill sets evolving around social, Digital.co.za/product/mobile-platform/ mobile and online platforms.

Scarce skills

Three things are clear from this: Firstly, the role of software development is getting just recognition in advertising. Development firms with integrative skills (across channels and into enterprise systems) are in exceedingly high demand.

Secondly, given the constant introduction of new digital platforms (of late, smartphones and tablet PCs), these skills are in short supply.

Thirdly, all of this threatens traditional players - the creative agencies that dominated the ad landscape for decades. With all the change afoot, everyone in the game realises that no one firm has all the creative and technical skills needed for a successful digital campaign.

The old way

Traditionally, campaign teams gravitated solely around 'creatives', who interpreted and filtered work 'down' to technology 'suppliers', who as a result often acted on an imperfect understanding of the technological component of the brief.

But as marketing managers become more digitally literate, they're demanding online and social campaigns that offer engagement plus a high degree of usability, integration and content sharing across application platforms.

Besides a lack of sophistication in the above areas, there are many other tell-tale signs of a campaign team out of its depth: Shaky technological foundations may result in a campaign site falling over under pressure. Unfamiliarity with the low cost, speed-to-market and viral potential of Facebook fan pages versus micro-sites may give rise to runaway budgets. When all is said and done, development professionals have much to offer creatives.

Campaign team evolution

To avoid falling behind in the game, it is vital that the right team be assembled to serve client needs - one that has both the creative nous to position the brand and the technical wizardry (knowledge of the Internet and enterprise integration) to provide solid technical backing to the campaign.

For this to be truly effective, technology partners must play an equal role right from the outset - the make-or-break preliminary stages when the brief is received, interpreted, agreed and budgeted for.

Adapt or die

Only by relinquishing total control over digital engagements do agencies stand a chance of understanding the broad seismic shifts in the market, to the extent needed to continue delivering value beyond beautiful but limited digital campaigns.

A marriage of creative and technology skills means the ability to deliver visually stunning Facebook, iPad and Web apps that leverage the innate qualities of these platforms.

Agencies should cozy up to strategic technology partners with the right mix of Web, social and Digital.co.za/product/mobile-platform/ mobile skills and the proven credentials to give joint engagements a high likelihood of success. Forging tight partnerships now will give early movers a head-start in a market that will create the winners and losers of the next era of digital campaigns.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wesley Lynch is CEO of Realmdigital.

- **Why UK businesses are choosing South Africa as their outsourcing destination of choice** 25 Oct 2022
- **'The Great Resignation' meets 'The Workforce of the Future'** 12 Jul 2022
- **Realm Digital announces 3 strategic key hires to enhance innovative, high-value solutions to clients** 25 Apr 2022
- **Realm Digital wins Mail & Guardian digital account** 20 Apr 2022
- **Digital services and solutions... One trend to rule them all** 13 Apr 2022

Realm Digital

Realm Digital is a leading global digital strategy and technology partner helping companies solve problems, unlock value and achieve their vision. We design, build and develop innovative digital business solutions with client experience at the core of everything we do. Our team is made up of experienced individuals who are passionate about technology, digital transformation, and creating intelligent digital solutions.

Profile | News | Contact | Twitter | Facebook | RSS Feed

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com