



The alternative guide to integration

Here are some of the common themes when advertising people start talking about integration:

- Matching luggage
- Not matching luggage
- Complexity
- Simplicity
- Big ideas
- Appropriate channels for each expression
- (And most worryingly) T shaped people

It's weird, because on most matters ad folk are fairly consistent, it's in the sizzle that they find a point of difference. We're the disruption/engagement/participation/entertainment agency. All broadly the same, just different flavours of sausage. So why does integration cause ad folk to get their knickers in a twist? It seems to lay bare their different structures, different component parts, different business models and different ambitions.

Here's the alternative guide to integration:

Ban presentations

Seriously, once something has been committed to powerpoint all is lost. Why? Because powerpoint destroys compromise. It's like trying to edit the Book of Kells. Nobody budes and without compromise, any hopes of integration vanish. Instead, do all of the strategy by email; everybody gets stuck in on email, they are willing to listen (or read at least), it's designed for distribution, and you have to be at your best because it might get sent who knows where. If I was a client I would try this.

Let them eat deep fried food

Viewing facilities have for too long been the private members clubs of the creative agencies. I think part of the problem with integration is that everybody is using different sources of research; advertising has its groups, media its TGI, digital and DM are swamped with data, PR uses ... erm. No wonder it's not aligned, it's starting from about fifteen different places. The answer is to force all of them into a dark room for the evening, fill them with Becks and trans-fats and give them a shared starting point.

Remember, nothing's really changed

I've always said that punters find integration really easy, it's only the industry that finds it difficult. Consumers don't think about online and offline, brand or response, tease or reveal. If advertising is a tiny tributary of marketing then it's no more than a damp patch for consumers. They meander quite happily through life bumping into communications, as indeed they have always done. And honestly they don't care about which ad is Tweeting or whether the shelf wobbler is strategically trussed to the sky scraper. Observe, listen to and be inspired by people but then leave them to their business of bumping into our business.