

## ***Multicreativity: the creative power of teamwork***

To build “relationship communications” and brand loyalty

*by Marzio Bonferroni*

I was born In Florence (Italy) the son of Carlo Emilio and Jolanda. My father, a University Professor, was one of the most distinguished mathematicians and statisticians of our time, and is famous for his studies and publications in the field of probabilities, which has important applications in life insurance, in medicine, etc.etc.

I remember one thing in particular that my father often used to say:

“The most important question is always one of method”.

I have found this particularly true in the field of marketing and communications.

I took a degree in Economics in Florence in November 1966, graduating seven days after the catastrophic flood, with a thesis entitled “psychological factors in economic cycles”, and so began to explore the “synergy game”, which is the basis for my approach to creativity in advertising.

Over the past hundred years, economists have discovered how to use psychological theories and applications, to put economics into a more realistic human context, linking socio-demographic factors and statistical models with psychological and sociological factors.

By the same token, in the field of marketing communications, the analysis and interpretation of different targets has become more and more useful, to help identify consumers and their needs, both rational and emotional, with the aim of targeting messages in a more focused way. With these ideas in mind, I entered the advertising profession.

During my years at University, I twice received the best student award at the Faculty of Economics and graduated with honours.

In my spare time I became a musician, writing and playing my own songs, and giving over five hundred performances in numerous venues that were very popular in Italy in the 1960’s. I also made some records for the Ricordi label in Milan.

This experience has been useful in helping me prepare for my career in advertising, highlighting for me the fact that a song is like an advertising campaign to this extent: if it doesn’t have a strong concept and good copy, it won’t enjoy lasting success.

When my group was performing on stage, I remember people coming up to us and requesting a song – giving us the title or just a few words.

These songs would have been forgotten in five minutes if they hadn't had - not only a memorable tune - but also good lyrics.

Music is still my hobby, but when it came to choosing between that and advertising, I had no doubts whatever. I went straight from University into the advertising profession, instinctively drawn to the world of marketing and communications

In 1972, after several years' experience selling advertising space in the press and on radio and television, I became a copywriter with an agency in Florence and then, in 1974, I founded my own firm, from which I ran campaigns for a number of small, medium and large companies.

Then, in 1990, I and two of my associates founded a larger agency with branches in Florence and Milan, where I have been living since 1997.

From September 1999, I and everyone at my Milan office joined the Italian subsidiary of RAPP COLLINS (DDB Communication).

From 2002 to 2004 I was Development Director at DDB Communication Group in Italy.

I'm now founder and President of UniOne – Architetture di comunicazione, company with special responsibility for developing new communication and putting my method into practice.

This gives me the opportunity to perfect a new approach to creativity, which involves all the individual creative techniques working together in synergy, without being totally dependent on any one of them.

I believe this is essential as the “complexity factor” becomes more and more apparent in our age, increasingly in evidence in the great multiplicity of trade marks, messages and communications media. I think that this complexity cannot be controlled by just one technique but needs a “multicreative” team approach...the aim of which is to design strategies, and then media messages, that reflect everyday reality, offering the consumer the kind of communications services that are best suited to his needs, both emotional, rational and ethical.

The final result are campaigns which do not merely focus attention on the trade mark and products, but put across facts and ideas that will improve the quality of life for the client.

When advertising was in its infancy, it was true to say that

awareness = sales

but in this day and age, as many important surveys have revealed, the truth is that not always but in many cases

awareness = awareness

I first began to experiment with these ideas in the early 1970's when I was able to try out the “synergy game” in my first own Agency, linking for the first time the functions of the copywriter and art director with that of the professional journalist, thus turning a creative duo into a creative

trio. In practice, by formulating a strategy and creating advertising messages by this new method, we were able to see the benefits that can come from this kind of synergy... a synergy achieved by combining the experience of the journalist, who is used to producing news, titles and all kinds of informative articles, with that of the copywriter and art director, who have to synthesise the message and give it a creative impact.

We produced advertising campaigns for a number of tuscan companies, particularly in the fields of fashion and building materials, who were interested in trying out our new approach.

The results were very encouraging: a lot of people brought the adverts with them when they came to the points of sale, and many more were writing in for detailed information about the products and brand names.

At that time I called this new approach “adjournalism” and, after a number of campaigns, I became convinced that, if marketing communication is to be successful, it must above all be creative, of course, have impact and achieve positioning, but also be informative and interactive.

“Adjournalism” offered a new concept: the synergical link between advertising techniques and a journalistic way of presenting information that is realistic and based on fact.

Traditional techniques can help to draw attention to a product, but as surveys have revealed, when used on their own, they have limited potential to increase sales.

Learning all the time from experience, my colleagues and I have enhanced this approach and given it a structure: a process which has become gradually linked to more and more techniques, not simply journalism and advertising as was the case with “adjournalism”.

So “**Multicreativity**” was born in the mid-1990’s offering, I hope for future years, a fresh method of teamworking which harnesses a new “creative power”, with the basic task of formulating and producing a unified communications strategy in which each individual technical skill is fully represented...by which I mean advertising techniques, journalism, interactivity, “loyalty” services, mediamix planning, and other useful disciplines.

**Human satisfaction**, (no more only customer satisfaction), must always be the central goal of a unified marketing communications system.

To achieve this, it is essential that we can accurately measure the effectiveness of our communications, and their influence on consumer behaviour.

The ultimate goal of any company’s marketing strategy is consumer loyalty:

loyalty to their brand name

In other words I think that communications in the future will be more and more oriented towards

relationship communications

A unified strategy, built by creative teamwork, becomes a single source for the necessary mediamix. By this process, each message adapts itself to each different medium, without losing sight of a

unified concept for communicating.

Through this vision, there can be genuine “two-way communication” between a company and its customers, in a kind of exchange based on what the customer needs and what the company can offer and supply.

At the same time we can retain the power of advertising techniques as part of a coordinated and unified multicreative approach, whose fundamental purpose is -- and must always be -- to enter the “emotional room” and prepare the way for other techniques aimed at entering the “rational room”.

Both these “rooms” are a natural part of the human psyche.

Finally to foster “relationship communication” with every customer  
*(sorry...with every client !).*

I firmly believe that now, by combining my method and experience, with the full resources of UniOne, we can go on to greater and greater achievements ...like navigators exploring the boundless ocean of marketing communications.

That’s the challenge, as I see it.

And what should our ultimate goal be ?

I truly hope one that will offer, through multicreativity and multicreative teamwork, an instrument that can contribute to building, developing and maintaining good relationships between companies and people. Also to help companies increase brand loyalty and enhance it day by day, thus establishing a human bond that is both rational, emotional and ethical, and that can be mutually enriching, just like ..... a longterm friendship between two people.

**Multicreativity: a model (not a formula) for the method**

$$(C1+C2+C3) S = C$$

$$\underline{C = V}$$

C1 = advertising  
C2 = relationship communications  
C3 = loyalty

S = synergical factor  
C = communications  
V = value

Note: for “value” (value for money) in communications, I mean how valuable a message is to the people in

**solving his particular problems or addressing his personal needs**

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## “Multicreativity” in a metaphor

To explain "multicreativity" a little better, I have drawn up a little scenario, in which we have a number of characters:

- |                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. The communicator          | as a barman |
| 2. The customer              | as a client |
| 3. Communications techniques | as drinks   |
| 4. Communications media      | as glasses  |

The story:

A communicator, wants to serve the best possible cocktails, so in the first instance he asks the client what he would like (marketing research), his aim being total ...customer satisfaction.

Then, he takes the shaker (multicreative teamwork) and adds all the various different drinks that are necessary to produce the perfect cocktail (communications strategy). As he pours the finished cocktail it becomes the message, and the glass, or glasses are the communications mediamix.

Each glass (sorry...each medium), will lend its own distinctive shape to the cocktail.

The client, drinking the same cocktail from different glasses, will appreciate its taste and aroma all the more and will recognize it as his ideal solution, so long as the barman has done his job well.