



**"This industry is too quick to ignore its heritage and its experience. We've lost that sense of where we've come from..."**

For once, these words aren't mine, although Copycat readers will know I have been saying this for years.

Those words belong to the great Sir John Hegarty, interviewed in New York, only three months ago.

Yes, THAT Sir John Hegarty.

An ad man supreme. Someone who has won pretty much every creative award for advertising, known to man.

Someone who has forgotten more about this industry than most people know - and always has something interesting to say.

I saw the interview in a recent Campaign Middle East article while I was in Dubai on business last month.

In the article, Sir John maintained that heritage and experience really matters in this business - and by worshipping at the altar of youth, the industry will struggle to move forward.

He's spot on, of course. But I would go a lot further than that.

It's quite clear that the industry stopped moving forward ages ago. It has been going backwards for years and there seems no stopping that decline.

Knowledge and wisdom about the proven techniques of our business are seemingly non-existent these days. That's why we have wall-to-wall crap around us all the time.

(Wait until you see what I have to share with you later in this article. You won't believe it!)

Very few people in our industry study anything - and testing is very rare these days, except perhaps in a few digital campaigns. There is a totally dismissive attitude towards experience. 32% of the UK workforce is aged 50 or older. In ad agencies, it is only 5%.

It makes no sense - and why it only happens in this business and not in other creative industries, is a complete mystery.

Sir John points that fact out strongly in his article, referring to top architect Frank Gehry, who is still strutting his stuff at the young age of 87. "Nobody in architecture has asked Frank to put his pen down and hand it to a 24-year old"

He also mentions how the widely-held view in the industry that an older person can't write campaigns that resonate with a younger audience, is complete nonsense.

"No one in Hollywood, questions Quentin Tarantino on how he can write a movie that will be watched by 25-year olds"

As I have said many times in Copycat, people in this business seem to have no interest in our heritage. The greats are unknown to them and they feel they cannot learn from anyone who existed before digital.

I know of creative people who work at O & M, that haven't read a word that David Ogilvy has written. Yes, we are talking about the greatest man this business has ever produced. What's more, they are working for a company with his name over the door.

You couldn't make it up. No one would believe you.

One creative director in Dubai even argued with me, that it was pointless to read David's stuff, as it had no relevance and benefit to creative today.

I just shook my head and walked away.

Most unlike me, I have to say. I must be getting old...

Ogilvy, Bernbach, Lois, Abbott and many other top creatives left us with SO much. And, all of it, when studied, can make us better at what we do today.

The same with copywriters. Jayme, Hopkins, Schwab and Caples, to name 4, left us with an amazing amount of valuable advice and guidance.

Their skills and advice are timeless - and hugely relevant to today's challenges. Don't ever doubt that.

So, let me ask you a question here - and I want you to be honest with me. What do you know?

More importantly, what don't you know?

When it comes to marketing, advertising and communication, do you know the key elements of what works and what doesn't? And why?

Do you?

Because, if you are involved in our business these days, whether front line or peripheral, what you don't know, is almost certainly going to hurt you more than you realise.

And hurt your company, too.

You might have a marketing title. You might be a General Manager who gets involved in your company's marketing matters. You might be the MD of a small to medium size business - the big cheese - and you have the final say and approval on all campaign activity.

You might be Head of Subscriptions at a publishing company. Or Head of Sales and Marketing at a hotel.

You might be an agency boss. Or perhaps you work in creative.

Or you might be a writer...

Whatever your role might be, do you know enough of these key things?

Because, let me tell you this. It is very apparent to anyone that has a brain, that most people that make decisions relating to marketing advertising and communications these days, don't know anywhere near enough.

The work we see, every hour of every day, confirms this, without doubt.

Drayton sent me this a while ago, on this very subject. He sent it to me under the heading of "For Andy to laugh at".

I read it and felt like crying, not laughing. You will, too.

### What Marketers Know

- 90% of marketers are not trained in Marketing Performance & Marketing ROI
- 67% don't believe marketing ROI requires a financial outcome
- 64% use Brand Awareness as their top marketing ROI KPI
- 58% place "Likes", "Tweets", "Clicks" and/or "CTR" in their Top 5 marketing ROI KPI's
- 31% believe measuring audience reached is marketing ROI

Staggering, huh? No, not really. But, it gets worse...

### What CEO's really think about marketers

- They talk about the "brand" (issues, values, equity, etc) but cannot link back to results that matter: revenue, sales, EBIT or market valuation (77%)
- They focus too much on marketing trends (social media) because they believe in "new marketing frontiers" but cannot demonstrate how these are actually beneficial (74%)
- When asked to increase ROI they understand it as cost-cutting or negotiations with partners and agencies instead of top-line growth regeneration: more revenue, sales, prospects, buyers (73%)
- They ask for more money but cannot explain how much incremental business the money will generate (72%)
- They bombard stakeholders with marketing data that means nothing. (70%)
- They don't think or behave like business people. They focus too much on the creative "arty" and "fluffy" side of marketing and not enough on business science. They rely on ad agencies to come up with big ideas (67%)
- 73% of CEO's think marketers lack credibility. But 69% of marketers think their strategies and campaigns are effective, despite being unable to quantify or prove it.

That information came from the Fournaise Marketing Group Global Marketing Effectiveness Program Report.

They're a company that measure the effectiveness of over two and a half million advertising strategies each year, worldwide.

Not one word of that surprises me, I have to say - and goes a long way to explain why on average, marketers only hold on to their jobs for 11 months, these days.

They simply get caught out.

In the main, marketers seem to just bumble along with a few bits and pieces that they've picked up over the years, that get them by. They actually know very little.

Why is this the case? It's a question I have asked for over 30 years in this business - and I still don't have the answer.

Let's face it, it is not difficult to get better and to know more. It's simple. You just study. The important things.

But, as Sir John Hegarty said, the industry "has lost the sense of where we've come from". I would add - "and it has no interest in changing its attitude, either".

Stephen Woodford, the CEO of The Advertising Association, said in the same article, "There is much to be learned from what happened in the 60's. So much of the work produced then, remains fresh and relevant, because of the way it communicated with people, with understanding, wit and simplicity".

Communication. The key word. As I said in Copycat last month - in marketing, nothing is more important than knowing how to communicate correctly and effectively. Anything else - is a waste of time and money.

And it seems that real people, like you, agreed with me, as that particular Copycat, gave me the biggest postbag for a very long time.

92% of the mail I got - yes, 92% - felt the quality of communications they see and receive these days is pretty awful - and would not influence them to even respond, let alone buy.

What an indictment.

Some of you sent examples, too - some with staggeringly poor experiences received at the hands of brands that should know better.

It was a real damning verdict on the industry today.

As I mentioned earlier in this article, I was recently in La La Land (Dubai). The only place on Earth, where Peter Pan and Wendy are given state welcomes.

Currently, in the marketing and advertising world, things are very tough down there. Advertising revenues are through the floor.

Client budgets have been slashed and media owners are closing titles down and laying off staff. Very few people can make advertising work.

That's little surprise to me, as I see the ads the agencies and client companies create. They were poor 20 years ago. Nothing has changed.

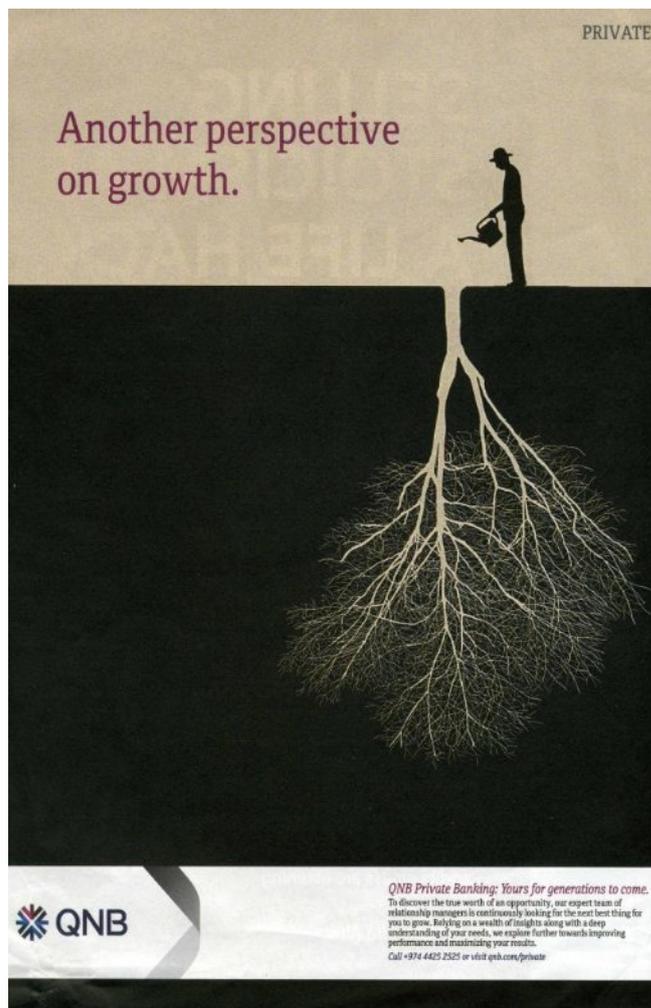
On this trip I saw so many desperately poor ads, it was hard not to go to the top of Burj Khalifa and throw myself off. On the A380 on the way back, I gathered together all the ads collected during this short 4-day trip.

There were 8 of them. And they probably cost the companies concerned - in creative and media terms, well over \$150,000.

Not one of them would have made money. Not one.

They were so bad, it beggared belief. Concept, layout, copy and overall delivery, were desperately poor.

Here are half of them. Make your own mind up...



Whoever came up with that headline and image, wants to get out of the business.

The best headlines must offer a benefit. Surely every creative knows this?

Apparently not.

The whole concept of this ad made me laugh when I first saw it - and still does.

The lifeless copy is full of errors and corporate twaddle.

Do the authors really believe that anyone is going to be stimulated by this tripe?

**SNC · LAVALIN**

# Building What Matters

For over 40 years we've been working closely with our clients in the Middle East to deliver their projects efficiently, safely, on time and on budget. They count on us to provide the flexibility they need for their projects, from specialist consultancy services and feasibility studies to large and complex EPC projects.

OIL & GAS | MINING & METALLURGY | INFRASTRUCTURE | POWER  
CAPITAL | ENGINEERING | PROCUREMENT | CONSTRUCTION | OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

snclavalin.com

Dear oh dear, oh dear...

'Building WHAT matters!

Are you serious?

Really?

Copy is dreadful too-and there's no call to action.

What was this supposed to achieve, besides seriously damaging their brand?

**Aster@30**  
Three decades of compassionate care

We've built all our institutions on this foundation.  
**YOUR TRUST.**

For 30 years Aster DM Healthcare was bringing world class healthcare closer to people. It's a journey that is being driven by compassion, commitment & enabled by innovation. Above all its been founded on the unflinching trust of our customers.

307 Operating facilities including 18 Hospitals | 90 Clinic | 199 Pharmacies

**We'll Treat You Well**

Corporate Office : Aster DM Healthcare, Aspect Tower, 33rd Floor, Business Bay, P.O. Box: 8703, Dubai, UAE  
Tel: +971 4 4546 001 / 002 Email: info@asterdmhealthcare.com | www.asterdmhealthcare.com  
UAE | OMAN | QATAR | KSA | KUWAIT | SAUDI ARABIA | JORDAN | INDIA | PHILIPPINES

Dreadful layout, no natural eye-flow, weak and ineffective corporate waffle.

All the talk is about THEM. One of the most common mistakes that people make.

No one is interested in you, Aster, or what you do. They are only interested in what you can do for them.

And, you don't say.

The copy is also priceless...

"For 30 years Astor Healthcare was bringing..."

WAS bringing? So, you're not bringing it anymore, then?

Muppets...



Do the people who created this load of tripe - and those who signed it off, think this will be read?

Because if they do, they are sadly mistaken. The page of the magazine will be turned, without even a glance.

'Explore new horizons' is useless, because it says absolutely nothing. No benefit, no reason to read on.

But you can't read on anyway, because the reversed-out copy is virtually impossible to read, with words disappearing as you go.

For those that try and brave it, the copy is error-strewn and is up its own backside.

A typically poor hotel ad.

Are we asking audiences these days, to accept us in this industry, as serious professionals, when we write and create useless garbage like these apologies for ads, above?

Let me say this once again, in case anyone is interested.

On average, five times as many people will read the headline of your ad and letter, than read the body copy. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the winning idea, the proposition, the benefit, must be in the headline, as well as in the copy.

If it's not, there will be no selling proposition to 90% of your audience.

If you have news to tell, shout it loud and clear in your headline. And employ a copywriter who understands the power of words and how to use them effectively.

Most of the best ones, by the way, are over 50 years of age. They possess knowledge and expertise that you will rarely find in a more youthful (and cheaper) alternative.

Take Sir John's advice and look back into history, at the rich treasures that are waiting there. You will be amazed at what you will discover.

Don't waste money like these dopes above. Open your eyes and your mind - listen and learn from improved results.

If you visit these pages on my website, you will find a lot of the information you will need in this respect - and all of it, is FREE.

Books you should read:

<http://www.andyowencopyandcreative.com/thebooksyoushouldread.html>

FREE marketing advice:

<http://www.andyowencopyandcreative.com/marketingadvice.html>

I'll leave the last word to Sir John:

"In the past, the top people, were Bernbach, Millward, George Lois and David Abbott. Go to Cannes now - and on stage are the heads of these big groups, who've never had a f\*\*\*ing good idea in their lives. We've allowed them to take over, because they are good at the numbers. Then they eventually kill the business".

They have, Sir John. Unfortunately, they have...

Keep the faith...

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy".

#### ABOUT YOUR AUTHOR

Andy Owen is MD of Andy Owen Copy & Creative Ltd, one of the world's most respected and experienced International direct marketing consultancies, specialising in all aspects of creative, copy and strategy for direct and digital marketing.

Andy has been writing copy for 31 years. He writes traditional and digital marketing campaigns, letters, emails, SMS's, websites, brochures and much more. He works with top clients in three continents.

He was inducted into the Direct Marketing Hall of Fame in February 2015.

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Andy runs in-house copywriting training for companies of all types and also presents direct marketing Masterclasses, Workshops and Seminars all over the world.

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