



The Marketing & Communications Industry 2024

"A brainless facade, populated, in the main, by talentless aliens I simply don't recognise..."

Happy New Year! Welcome to another year of madness, frustration and a continuation of the race to the bottom, in the marketing and communications industry.

I thought I would open up the New Year with that positive thought to keep you all on your toes and get you ready for what is coming.

Mind you, most of you know what's coming, don't you? Many of you have shared your thoughts with me over the past year.

And we pretty much all agree. Another year of wall-to-wall crap.

To be honest, this particular Copycat came down from the sky.

I had pretty much written the first Copycat of the year. All I needed to do was to edit it a few more times and then it would go live.

But this piece has pushed its way in, because of a couple of things that happened quite close together in December and early January.

So that one will now have to wait a month or two.

The first thing that happened, was the month of December. A month that saw me receive probably the worst bucketload of marketing, advertising and promotional tripe I have ever seen.

This included direct mail, emails (how can they keep on getting worse?), advertising, radio ads, TV ads, door drops, social media posts, posters, websites – you name it, it was all – yes ALL – so bad it beggared belief.

For the whole of the month, I was shaking my head more than Stevie Wonder.

The lunatics haven't just taken over the asylum anymore. They have now taken over the complete communications industry.

So, there I am, in the hiatus between Christmas and the New Year needing inspiration to drag me from this pit of frustration and incredulity.

Music has always been my go-to medicine.

A few days ago, I turned to Pink Floyd. And, while listening to the wondrous '*Comfortably Numb*', the magnificent lyrics of Roger Waters, encased in the music of David Gilmour, seemed to echo exactly what I was thinking and how I was feeling.

Although not written for that, Roger's words completely describe the demise of a once-wonderful industry.

So, this special Copycat was born.

Roger's original lyrics are in bold...

"Hello, is there anybody in there? Just nod if you can hear me, is there anyone home?"

Where has the marketing and communications industry gone?

What have they done with it?

We left them so much knowledge and expertise. We showed them how to communicate *effectively*.

We showed them what to do and what not to do.

And we told them *why*.

They have ignored pretty much all of it – and clearly the industry is now totally without hope.

It's gone.

"Come on now. I hear you're feeling down. I can ease your pain and get you on your feet again."

They don't know how to sell anymore.

But we taught them how.

We can still teach them how, but most of them won't listen.

They prefer charlatans and robots. They are arrogant and think they know it all.

But they know jack shit.

And my God, does it show...

"There is no pain, you are receding – a distant ship's smoke on the horizon."

Yes, unbelievably, it's getting worse.

Clearly, 2024 will be even worse than '23.

Who are these people? What are their credentials?

How were they allowed to get into this business, when they know so little? Why don't they study?

The industry is populated by idiots.

Sod off and go do something else.

"You are only coming through in waves - your lips move, but I can't hear what you're saying."

Their communications don't touch us anymore.

They don't connect.

They don't engage.

They don't know the basics, such as how to originate creative that attracts and influences - and how to write copy that sells.

How are they working in communications, when they don't know anything about communication?

"When I was a child, I caught a fleeting glimpse out of the corner of my eye. I turned to look but it was gone."

What was a thriving industry, full of hugely talented, passionate individuals who genuinely cared, has now completely disappeared.

We not only delivered astonishing results in those halcyon days, but learned so much doing it.

Then we shared with each other – and the world - how we did it.

All that information and knowledge is still available, but no one these days, is even slightly interested in it.

"I cannot put my finger on it now, the child is grown. But the dream is gone."

That child was surrounded by love when it was born.

It grew into a healthy adult in an exciting, stimulating environment, where people knew stuff, worked furiously to know more, smiled and had fun.

Now, that is long gone.

And will never return.

In its place is a brainless facade, populated, in the main, by talentless aliens I simply don't recognise.

"I have become comfortably numb..."

Numb, yes. Comfortable, no.

As you will know, I have written a great deal about this sad situation in Copycat, many times over the years.

What has happened to direct marketing and the art of communication, hurts me greatly.

I am totally appalled by it - and will continue to shout about this sad shit-show and expose the charlatans that are responsible, until that final large scotch sends me to the agency bar in the sky.

When I walk into that bar, I know it will be a long session with some old friends. After all, Ogilvy, Jayme, Hopkins, Caples, Raphel, Jutkins, Gordon-Lewis and many, many others, will be there...

How the industry could do with them down here right now...

Thanks to Pink Floyd for the inspiration...

Keep the faith



ABOUT YOUR AUTHOR

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

Andy has been writing selling copy for over 39 years.

He writes traditional and digital marketing campaigns, including direct mail, sales letters, emails, SMS's, PPC and FB ads, media ads, websites, landing pages, brochures, radio scripts and much more.

He works with clients in three continents and was inducted into the [Direct Marketing Hall of Fame](#) in February 2015, one of only two copywriters in Europe with that honour.

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Andy launched an innovative new copywriting service late in 2019, called [Copy Chief](#) - which guarantees professionally written copy every time - for a fraction of the normal rate card cost.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of copywriting and creative for direct marketing, please contact Andy personally at andyowen@aol.com

All Andy's [previous Copycat articles](#) are available to download and enjoy

Don't forget to visit Andy's [personal website](#) where you will find many interesting tales, amazing yarns and wonderful stories - completely devoid of any corporate claptrap.