



Mark Twain once wrote:

"Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising"

Well Mark, me old mate, I have something to say about that.

Mainly this...

Things have changed a bit since your days. And, in a lot of ways, not for the better, either. So, if I may be so bold, let me just bring your quote up to date...

"Many a potentially large thing has been made small by the wrong kind of advertising..."

Hello everyone...Happy New Year!

The first Copycat of 2008...

Late again, I know. But, for all the right reasons.

Most of all, a much-needed Xmas & New Year break in beautiful Surinam, where I was able to thank my body and mind in all the nicest ways, for staying fit and sharp during what was, I think, my busiest year ever, especially Internationally.

By the way, for those of you that don't know, I won an award last year.

Completely out of the blue, I was given a massive honour by the Russian DMA, by being named as *"The Russian Direct Marketing Association Person Of The Year"*

For once in my life, I was totally gobsmacked. It was for *"energising our industry in 2007"* said Mikhail Kapitinsky, board member of the Russian DMA.



That's the award above. It's on my shelf here now. Very heavy, I can tell you. Ideal to repel any nasties who may try to sneak in to the office late at night, or of course, for irritating clients...

Anyway, self-promotion over. Sorry about that. It's my age, you know...

Back to *Copycat*. This is nothing like the article that I was going to put out. That one will have to wait until February...

You see, I was flying back from the Middle East just over a week ago, ironically putting the finishing touches to the original article. When the girls starting serving lunch, I put the laptop away and pulled out *Open Skies* -Emirates inflight magazine - to read during my meal.

It's always been a good source for me of poor or just plain bad ads that I can then share with audiences in conferences and Masterclasses worldwide.

Ads that get created in the Middle East, seem, for some reason, to be amongst the worst anywhere in the world.

This month was just outstandingly bad. It was page after page of stunningly poor work, so I decided to pull a few of them together for you, so we can collectively start off the year with a bit of a chuckle...

Mind you, it's not at all funny when you think about it.

Because pap begets pap. And with pap seemingly becoming the rule rather than the exception these days, people start to switch off.

Which is bad. For all of us at the coal-face of contemporary communication.

Anyway, playmates, here for you to enjoy, are five full page, full colour ads, created by people who have no idea of what they're doing, for people who have no sense.

These ads have cost, just in media terms alone, around \$13,000 each to place.

What a criminal waste...

If the skyline is a canvas
consider this the masterpiece.



أبراج الشاطئ
BEACH TOWERS

جزيرة الريم
REEM ISLAND



With the pride of over 30 years of experience, Al Badie Group proudly presents the Beach Towers, its exclusive property development in Shams Abu Dhabi on Reem Island. The Beach Towers offer a multitude of first class features, such as:

- Over 30 years of experience
- Freehold – all nationalities welcome to purchase
- The luxury of space in each and every apartment
- Breathtaking sea views
- Spacious balconies in all apartments for refreshing outdoor relaxation
- State of the art kitchen amenities
- Luxurious and premium finishing
- Direct access to stunning golden beach
- Residents only swimming pool and gym
- A vibrant location, surrounded by central park, restaurants and entertainment venues

For more information, please contact our exclusive Sales Agent:
Cornerstone Real Estate, Khalidiya, Al Falah Street, Villa No. 17/1, P.O. Box 60178, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Tel: +971 2 665 7055, Fax: +971 2 665 5672
Email: info@cornerstone-uae.com, Web: www.cornerstone-uae.com

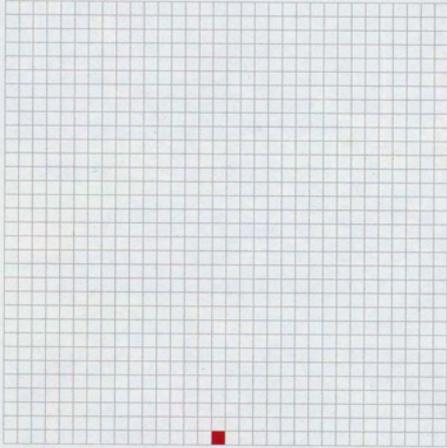


“If the skyline is a canvas, consider this a masterpiece”

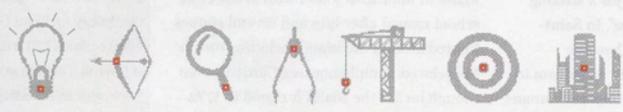
WHAT!

If ever I was going to choke at 35,000 feet this was nearly the day.

Chronically bad in every respect.



Can you develop, out of **1024** squares
a nice logo for a real estate company ?



Idea Exploration Study Design Execution Marketing Management



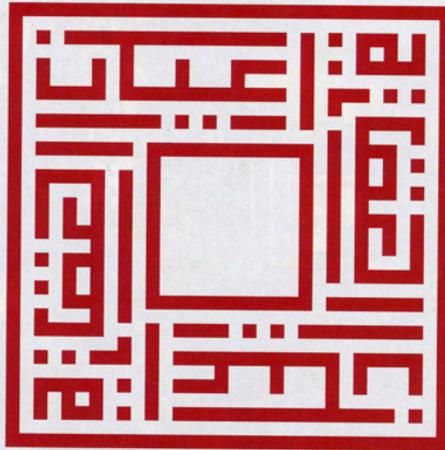
No, I can't develop a nice logo for a real estate company out of 1024 squares.

Do you want to know something else, you buffoon?

I'm not in the slightest bit interested, either...

Go away and leave me alone...although I suspect you won't...

Our Success Continues.. **With a New Identity**

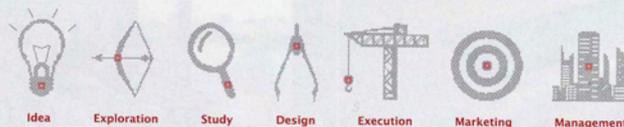


A'AYAN REAL ESTATE

Leaders in Real Estate Development

A'ayan Real Estate is fortunate to have an exceptional experienced team with proven track record in the realty development business, which played a vital role in managing and enhancing the company's rewarding strategies as well as determining its clear goals and achieving its future objectives.

A'ayan Real Estate activities go beyond the investment field... The company expanded the sphere of its activities to incorporate the real estate development services, so that to enhance the realty market future prominence by achieving the right balance between the investment scheme and the development theory.



aayanre.com

شركة أعيان العقارية - دولة الكويت - شرق - شارع الخليج العربي - برج أحمد - الدور السادس - ص.ب 2973 الصفاة - 13030 الكويت، ت: +965 2472282، ف: +965 2472292
Aayan Real Estate - Ahmed Tower, Arabian Gulf Road, Sharq, P.O. Box 2973 Safat, 13030 Kuwait, T: +965 2472282, F: +965 2472292

Yup, I knew it. Back again in the later pages of the magazine, with no connection to the one before, of course. That's too simple.

This ad is even worse than the first if that's possible. Terrible copy, bad grammar, tense problems and wall to wall waffle...

I hope they build property better than they create and write ads...

where location & value meet

E Z D A N
HOTEL & SUITES

Graffeo
Simply the world's finest coffee

Now Open

At Graffeo, we are coffee artisans, committed to producing coffee of rare quality and rich aroma. It is for informal meetings in an authentic relaxing surroundings which offers you a selection of pastries, sandwiches and tasty ice creams that will confuse you on what to choose.

www.ezdanhotels.com

For inquiries and reservations please contact our sales team: Phone: (974) 4969143 - 144
West Bay, Al Dafna; Phone: (974) 4969111; Fax: (974) 4969222; P.O.Box: 23488 Doha, Qatar; e-mail: sales@ezdanhotels.com

This, I kid you not, is a bloody COFFEE ad....

They are coffee ARTISANS would you know. Well, blow me down with a feather.

The copy is bewildering. They actually use the word 'confuse'. Perhaps the copywriter was unsure what he was selling here.

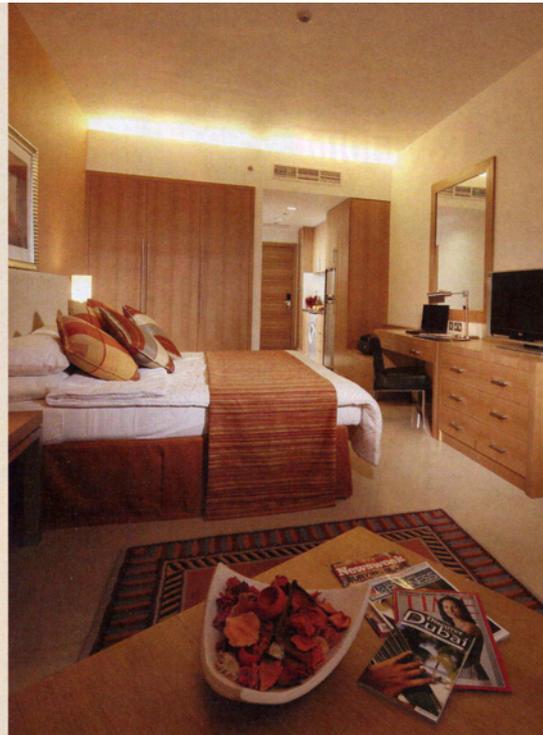
Can anyone explain what the hotel company is getting out of this?

Step 1:

Take in new hotel smell.

Step 2:

Remember to exhale.



Four Points by Sheraton Downtown Dubai

Living rooms to relax and mingle, a great cup of Coffee and warm pie in the lobby. Doesn't that sound nice? Stay at the newly opened Four Points by Sheraton Downtown Dubai for a brand new hotel experience. We promise you'll leave with a smile on your face!

At least a grin!

(04) 354-3333

fourpoints.com/downtowndubai

Comfort isn't complicated.

FOUR  POINTS
BY SHERATON

STARWOOD PREFERRED GUEST.
EARN STARPOINTS.® GET FREE NIGHTS.

But hey, there's more! Look out for the New
Four Points by Sheraton Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai.
Opening Soon.

This has to be a joke, surely? If not, it's up there in the top ten of worst ads EVER...

"Take in a new hotel smell and remember to exhale?" Are they SERIOUS?

I really invite you to look and study all aspects of this ad. It is so bad it beggars belief. If ever you needed confirmation that our industry is in the deepest doo-doo then look no further.

So, there you have it. 5 ads that have cost in total, probably close to \$100,000 in creative, media and related costs, plus management time.

And they are ALL total garbage. Not one redeeming feature anywhere to be seen.

These ads will not sell. What they will do though, is damage the companies and their brands.

And it's difficult to be sympathetic. Anyone brainless enough to waste such vast sums of money in creating such incredibly bad work, deserve all they get.

See you next month, when I'll be discussing word power...and why it has never been more valuable...yet felt less valued...

Keep the faith...



If anyone would like complete copies of any examples reviewed here, please contact Andy direct at andyowen@aol.com

About the Author

Andy Owen is Managing Director of Andy Owen & Associates, a leading International Strategic Marketing Consultancy specialising in all aspects of contemporary direct marketing. The company has offices in UK, Dubai, Bucharest and Moscow.

The company's corporate website is www.andyowen.co.uk The specialist copy division has its own site at www.copywritingthatsells.com

As well as his International speaking engagements, Andy runs in-house copywriting and direct marketing Masterclasses, Workshops and Seminars for companies and organisations all over the world.

If you feel your company could benefit from one of these, please contact Andy for details.

If you would like further information on any aspect of copywriting and creative for direct marketing, please contact Andy direct at andyowen@aol.com

All Andy's previous articles are available to view and download at www.andyowen.co.uk/articles.html