

# thefutureofadvertising

CREATIVE SHOWCASE

The Pond  
Lassoo  
GSL Network  
Q Brand Network

Telling the story. Advertising and marketing may be changing thanks to the arrival of Web 2.0, but the task of the advertising agency as idea generator, expert communicator and persuader has never been more important

In a year that saw the meteoric rise of Twitter and the undisputed dominance of Facebook as the social networking site of choice, the success of a brand or product seems to be at the mercy of the connected consumer. One negative tweet can turn into a raucous morning chorus and a company's hard-fought reputation is pecked to shreds.

“Advertising-only ideas won't succeed in capturing people's attention. Our trust has shifted too far for that. Our attention has become too precious. Those ideas that our friends email us about or post about on their Facebook wall will break through.”

On the flipside, all it takes is a Facebook update about a cool new phone, café or movie and its popularity can rapidly circumnavigate the globe.

The expansion from more traditional forms of advertising to online, viral marketing, digital media, mobile advertising and PR stunts has forced ad agencies to think harder to come up with more diverse and flexible campaigns with ideas and stories that can find expression across all of these media.

In a recent blog, John Bell of 360° Digital Influence says the channels are heading in two directions. “Anyone in or around the ad business knows full well that clients and agency folks love ‘a big idea’—a clutter-busting concept that rises above the others in the brainstorm, the one that seems to spring multi-channel executions like a post-apocalyptic centipede. Big ideas have been the traditional response from advertising over

the years to grabbing people's attention.”

But social media doesn't lend itself to the big idea, he says. In social media, iterative evolution that is responsive to what people want is more valuable than a big brand idea.

“Advertising-only ideas won't succeed in capturing people's attention,” says Bell. “Our trust has shifted too far for that. Our attention has become too precious. Those ideas that

our friends email us about or post about on their Facebook wall will break through.”

This means more time is being spent on difficult-to-quantify elements like idea and concept generation that involves thinking even further outside the box. The result is a shift in the way agencies are charging for their services. Where once it was easy to charge commission on a TVC or print ad, fees are being attached to creative.

TVNZ last month controversially proposed to cut media commissions to ten percent. While this will upset the status quo and indeed many agencies will struggle, most people in and out of adland agree that:

- a) the current model is anachronistic and only partially applies anyway
- b) unfairly remunerates agencies for placing advertising, not creating winning comms strategies
- c) is unlikely to survive the economic logic

of where media is heading.

The new role for agencies—as ideas and communications specialists—will need a new funding model that consists of retainers, media rebates and perhaps even this crazy idea: fees for service rendered.

The trick is in the transition.

Responding to the TVNZ decisions, the president of the Communications Agencies Association of New Zealand, David Walden, warns of unintended consequences: the dumbing down of creative departments. “New Zealand has long punched above our weight in attracting top talent like Andy Blood, Nick Worthington, Toby Talbot and others. That's why we have such a strong creative reputation,” he told *Idealog* sister publication *Stoppres.co.nz*. “But the knock-on affect of this move will be to reduce overall budgets, especially for creative work.”

Walden suspects that if clients were billed for the creative work alone, few would be prepared to pay sufficient for the top notch talent. We'll see. Paying for ideas and advice works well for lawyers and accountants. Why not for advertising creatives?

TVNZ's decision to extend the change to 2010 was a win for the ad agencies, and provides some cushion for those smaller agencies that have yet to work out a fees-based model.

One consequence of a change to the commissions system could be this: the true valuation of creativity. If retail noise works less and less in this social media age, then true creativity will earn its keep as it reaps rewards for clients.

### Ad figures

For 2008, advertising revenue across all main media was \$2.317 billion, down slightly on the 2007 total of \$2.335 billion\*

In 2008, online advertising accounted for 8.3 percent of all adspend, reaching an all-time high of \$199.8 million. Given current trends, the figure should exceed ten percent for 2009, according to IAB marketing manager Alisa Higgins ‡

For the second quarter of 2009, online advertising grew by 6.5 percent to \$52.5 million, from a first quarter figure of \$49.3 million ‡

Display advertising in the second quarter of 2009 was up 26.5 percent over the first quarter, and 5.75 percent over the first quarter of 2008 ‡



\* Source: Advertising Standards Authority, 03/09  
 ‡ Source: IAB/PricewaterhouseCoopers Insight Report, from AdMedia 09/09

# Find creative independence

They have their own brand reputations. A bunch of international awards. And business brains to boot. Meet 50 creative consultants who have turned their backs on a regular paycheck and a corner office to contract their services out through The Pond

When Arjan Van Woensel arrived in New Zealand after selling his award-winning Amsterdam ad agency, the first thing he did was take a long walk along Muriwai beach ... then he made a very smart phone call.

About 50 kilometres away, in a refurbished Victorian building nestled in the heart of Auckland Viaduct's corporate hinterland, the phone rang at The Pond Creative Consultancy.

Attracting phone calls of that calibre is what has underpinned The Pond's success as it has gathered together 50 of New Zealand's leading consultant writers, designers, art directors, strategists and digital people to conquer all forms of communication bar smoke signals.

From a former digital director of a top-

three New York ad agency to an Italian designer trained in Europe's fashion houses; from a creative director who wrote the award-winning Budweiser 'Jersey guys' commercials in Chicago to a social networker who did many a creative stunt in Europe, The Pond has assembled a formidable line-up.

If three people make a crowd, then 50 creatives make a trend. And that's exactly what The Pond is tapping into.

"On the one hand, top creatives want to take control of their lives—that is, to gain the flexibility to not only create bold new work in the commercial world but also explore other creative projects," says The Pond co-director, Sue Worthington. "On the other hand, more and more businesses need access to top-level creative consultants when and where they want them—on a project-by-project basis."

The solution is a creative consultancy of independent contractors. It's model common in HR or IT, but unique in the creative industry.

"We don't define ourselves by our services, or even our clients, but rather by the need," she says. "You can book an individual for a three day job or brief in a project where we pull together a team of creative specialists and manage the whole job—whatever works best."

While the structure is innovative, in many ways it's a common-sense, horses-for-courses

approach that makes it blindingly easy to connect with award-winning creatives.

The website, [www.thepond.co.nz](http://www.thepond.co.nz), is built to showcase the wonderfully diverse individual creative brands of the 'Pondees'. It's a rollicking read that offers intriguing insights into each consultant, such as: "I'm a prankster. I successfully faked my own death by gunshot wound." That's a true story, by the way.



Behind the flippancy, however, is some serious talent. "Many top creatives return or immigrate to New Zealand but aren't able to get the money they made overseas by going fulltime here," says Leighton Howl, the other co-director of The Pond. "A few years ago we would have lost this talent back overseas, but now The Pond is giving them options."

For example Richard McCoy, a digital director, lives on Waiheke island, does four or

## WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN A POND CREATIVE



five projects a year through The Pond, works for connections back in London and also earns a crust as an illustrator, photographer, painter and sculptor!

Likewise, other creatives are lured to The Pond as a way of balancing commercial creativity with purer forms of creativity, such as designing record labels, writing books and films, exhibiting art or designing sculpture, furniture.

"From Monday to Wednesday, social media creative expert Hadleigh Averill may work on a social networking brief with Simon Pound [who also reports and presents on TV show *Media 7*]. He'll spend Thursday on a client photo shoot. Then on Friday and part of Saturday he'll do some art for his own upcoming exhibition," says Howl.

Flexibility breeds flexibility. The Pond model is actually helping smaller companies to access top talent on a project basis, which enables them to play with the big fish here and overseas.

"With such a depth of talent, we can fine-tune the selection of creatives by discipline, industry expertise, skill level and budgets—even pairing up teams and ensuring the right 'fit' with the company," says Howl.

Behind all of this are several safe pairs of hands. All consultants are heavily pre-vetted and The Pond has the back-end processes to

ensure everything goes smoothly. Consultants are also locked into a contract for services covering essentials like confidentiality, restraint of trade and conflict of interest.

"Everyone's trying to predict what's going to happen with 'media fragmentation' and the 'conversation economy'. For sure, we see big gaps in areas like specialist content writing and 2D/3D flash animation as a result of Web 2.0," says Worthington.

But the changes run deeper than this as a result of the digital decade.

"In 2006, *Time* magazine made Person of the Year YOU. But today this ethos is also flowing into business. 'You' are the marketer, the creative person, the CEO. It's about a greater sense of community, collaboration and individual expression.

"When you truly embrace the future of communications, you can see how a company such as The Pond can do very well simply by offering flexible creative resourcing on your terms."

Hence The Pond's slogan: Find Creative Independence.

For more information, contact Sue Worthington at [sue@thepond.co.nz](mailto:sue@thepond.co.nz) or Leighton Howl at [leighton@thepond.co.nz](mailto:leighton@thepond.co.nz), phone 09 373-3791 [www.thepond.co.nz](http://www.thepond.co.nz)

## Disciplines covered by Pond consultants

- Strategy
- Advertising
- Design and branding
- Digital
- Writing (creative & specialist)
- Social media

## Growth areas in 2010

- Content writing for web and business in general
- Flexible, creative resourcing
- International clients tapping into Kiwi creativity



# Doing it for the whanau

How GSL Network got women talking, acting and saving their own lives

Advertising's important, sure. But can it save lives? Absolutely. And a campaign by GSL Network for the Ministry of Health's National Screening Unit is testament to the fact.

Cervical cancer is preventable, yet New Zealand women continue to die from it. In 1990 the National Cervical Screening Programme was set up to try and reduce the number of women succumbing to the disease by increasing screening rates.

Wellington-based GSL Network was charged with devising a campaign that would encourage New Zealand women, particularly Maori and Pacific women, to take responsibility for their health and make the time to go for a smear test.

## Changing attitudes

GSL Network discovered that for many women cervical screening was simply not a priority, particularly for Maori and Pacific women, who have higher mortality rates from cervical cancer. With screening rates at only 47 percent and 46 percent respectively (compared to 80 percent for other women),

Maori and Pacific women are twice as likely to be diagnosed with cancer and three to four times more likely to die from it.

The real challenge was to find ways into the busy lives of women as mothers, wives, carers and workers, says Trevor Shailer, general manager of marketing and business development.

"We needed to get them to recognise the impact cervical cancer could have on their lives and their families, and to persuade them to make the time for a cervical smear," he says. "This campaign has a huge target audience. There are 1.2 million New Zealand women eligible for screening [all women aged 20 to 70 years]; 200,000 women were not enrolled, so they had to be encouraged to join the programme. The campaign also needed to remind all women in the total audience to continue to be screened every three years."

## Communicating the message

GSL's main strategy was to create conversations, using language that women

could relate to. Their research identified that direct, compelling messages would work best for Maori, while humour would facilitate discussions about screening among Pacific women. Support from friends would increase the likelihood that all women would go for screening.

The main message of the campaign was that regular cervical screening could save your life and the lives of women you love. Advertising included a range of emotions, real people's stories and motivational themes such as music and humour. Advertising has been placed on a range of media including Maori and Pacific specific media.

Highly effective online creative and strategy was also used to drive women to the National Screening Unit's website and other resources. In the first three weeks of September, 8,000 women visited the site.

## Life-saving results

The success of GSL's cervical screening campaign is undeniable. Tens of thousands of women, some of whom would have died, have

been screened already.

"With a population-based programme like this, the percentages may seem small, but the actual numbers are enormous," says Shailer. "The campaign saw an increase of 31,500 in the number of women being screened between its launch, in September 2007, and March 2009. And more than 26,000 of these women were from the priority audiences."

In just 12 months, over three-quarters of women reported taking action as a result of the campaign, phone calls to the 0800 service line were up by one third, and screening rates have lifted hugely—almost 16 percent amongst the priority groups.

GSL's work is a valuable part of the Ministry of Health's programme and has prevented at least 15 cases of cancer and five deaths, not to mention its significant role in reminding women already enrolled in the programme to be rescreened.

"The quantitative data associated with the campaign is overwhelmingly positive—as is the feedback received from screening providers," says Shailer. "GSL's work has

added value to the National Cervical Screening Programme at every level, making sure that New Zealand women live longer, healthier lives, continuing to contribute to families, communities and society."

This successful campaign has achieved the ultimate objective—saving lives.

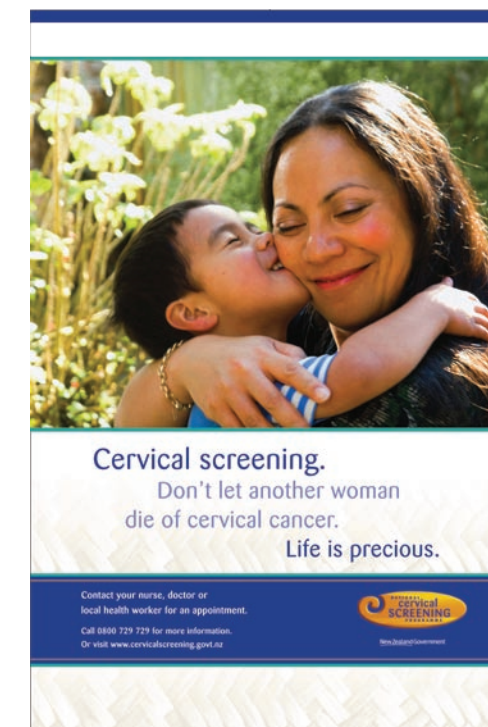
It's also gained industry attention for GSL Network, making the finals of the 2009 TVNZ/ NZ Marketing Awards and the EFFIE Awards.

## Who's behind it all?

Established 11 years ago by managing director Leigh Graham, GSL Network has a core team of 17 strategy, project management, digital and media experts, and a further 30 people actively working within its network.

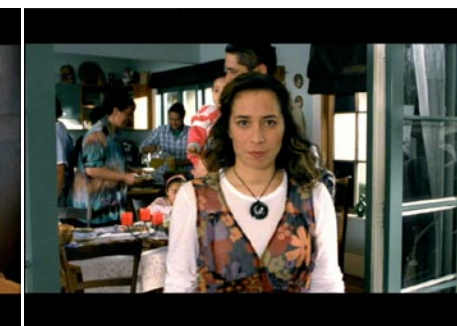
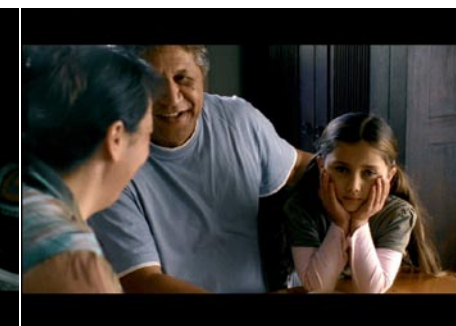
This collaborative and engaging approach allows GSL to be nimble, cost-efficient and effective while delivering a tailored package to its clients.

Contact Trevor Shailer at GSL Network on 04 384-1909 or email [trevor@gslnetwork.co.nz](mailto:trevor@gslnetwork.co.nz) [www.gslnetwork.co.nz](http://www.gslnetwork.co.nz)



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# Roping the big one

Lassoo moves at whip-like speed to deliver cracking integrated campaigns

Some companies can describe their product or service in a few succinct words that make their offering crystal clear to all. It's easy when you're selling a straightforward product such as vodka, chocolate, or broadband Internet. But what do you do when the explanation of your client's business induces confusion or glazed eyes?

That was the challenge facing Ponsonby-based agency Lassoo. Founded by Bridgette Franklin and Anna St George, Lassoo combines media, public relations and creativity in an approach that's quick, nimble and entrepreneurial.

"We don't think in straight lines at Lassoo," says St George. "We explore every avenue in every direction to deliver the best results and help our clients maximise their investment."

describe Cisco's business would elicit. With the brief to significantly stimulate demand for 'unified communications' in the small-to-medium business sector, the focus was to showcase product.

So Lassoo created an integrated campaign using editorial, case studies, promotions, and advertising in as many environments as possible.

"The campaign ran in October 2008 and June 2009, and included a competitive element. The prize was \$50,000 worth of Unified comms equipment, and entrants had to explain how they would improve their business with these new tools."

The result was a 93 percent improvement in lead generation.

## Multiple channels

Lassoo optimised what had been learnt from the first campaign, to add further elements into the second. Partnering with the MediaWorks stable, they implemented a campaign across radio, online, on-demand and morning television.

*ASB Business* showcased the second competition for a month and featured an interview with the first winner. A separate television promotion ran throughout the competition period. While a TV3 micro-site gave immediate information, Cisco's website provided specifics, case studies and product information—all contributing to further leads. Brand ads online and on TV added further layers to the campaign, while additional radio interviews cemented awareness and understanding of Cisco and the competition.

At the end of the competition, Lassoo

secured an interview on morning television for Cisco and the second competition winner.

## Building on past successes

This successful campaign model will be soon be implemented for a third time.

"It'll be dissected and improved upon where necessary—although it's certainly the ability to work across both PR and media, and in close collaboration with Cisco that helped us bring this together," says St George. "Cisco's Country Manager, Geoff Lawrie, described the campaign as one of the most effective they'd run all year."

## Focus attention

When Cavalier Bremworth embarked on their tactical sales promotion, Lassoo made sure the activity concentrated on triggering the audience to think about the sale.

This involved editorial and experiential PR, which included engaging the retailers, activating leads via television, magazine, online and newspaper placement and postcards, and running competitions to drive inquiries. Lassoo partnered with Federation who developed strategy and creative, providing a seamless team for the client.

A limited-edition fashionable 'carpet' bag was commissioned from local designer Saben and sent to media and high-profile personalities. It received rave media reviews and was a talking point at events.

## Clear results

The layers of the campaign generated a large database for future use, while the campaign

itself delivered sales results surpassing those of previous months, even at the peak of the economic crisis.

Lead generation is one of Lassoo's key strengths. The company's philosophy centres around commercial reality for clients, and a regular element of many campaign strategies involves activity that engages consumers to build databases, which Lassoo manages for its clients.

"We have recognised that database management and analysis, email marketing, and micro-site development complete the circle in media—from PR to creative to database," says St George.

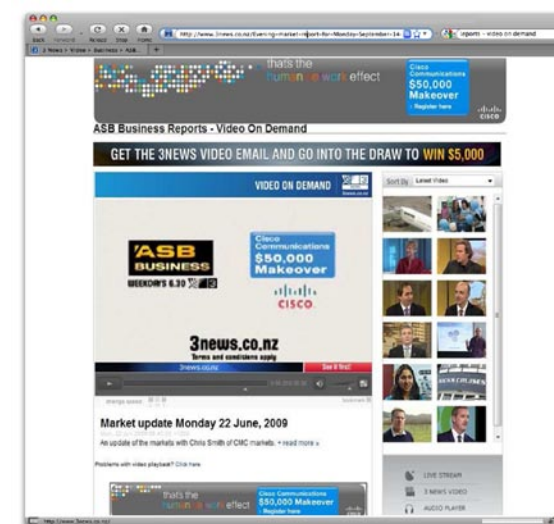
Marketing directors need to focus on 'return on investment' in the database/online space, and Lassoo's ability to manage this from start to finish, being accountable throughout, is key.

As online moves beyond standard placements to the many different options for purchasing online, this enables testing of cost-per-click deals, mass media and niche sites, as well as breaking down newsletters and traditional formats into links, key words and video, says St George.

## Measurement and analysis

Lassoo recently completed another online campaign, where site usage was tracked right through to the point of registration. Critically, this also included those users who may have viewed the banner, but who returned to the site at a later date, and who registered at any point.

This 'post-impression' information is extremely valuable. It means Lassoo can optimise creative, sites, formats and,



ABOVE: The Cisco TV3 Commutations Makeover competition page  
RIGHT: Cavalier Bremworth carpet bag



## GIVEAWAYS

LAST WEEK'S giveaway of a Saben handbag made from Cavalier Bremworth carpet generated more than 1100 responses. I was flabbergasted. So was my inbox. As the bag was so popular we thought we better give away another one. Same story - just email [bridgettsaunders@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bridgettsaunders@xtra.co.nz) to be in to win.



just as importantly for its clients, provide feedback on parts of the site where users are losing interest. Client investment is based on performance, measurement and analysis—so this medium is truly accountable. There will also be a market for clients to partner with independent, nimble communication companies who appreciate that every dollar spent needs to deliver results. "Well thought-out layers of communication will always provide the best result."

For more information go to [www.lassoo.co.nz](http://www.lassoo.co.nz) or contact Anna St George at Lassoo on 09 370-0423 or email [anna@lassoo.co.nz](mailto:anna@lassoo.co.nz)

The Lassoo management team; Anna St George, Bridgette Franklin and Garry Jordan



# Change the only constant

For Q, every creative strategy is driven by the concept of change

Our world is constantly changing and with each new technological leap or communication innovation, the ways in which we market our products and services change too.

The drastic upheaval brought about by the global financial crisis has given many companies no choice but to change in order to survive, says Phillip Sunderland, founder of Q—and he's no stranger to the concept of adaptation.

Over the last 15 years the Q agency has done many things—from owning film and TV companies to developing bespoke software—and has grown from its initial two creatives to a full-service agency of 22, and then recently

moved back to a more simple structure.

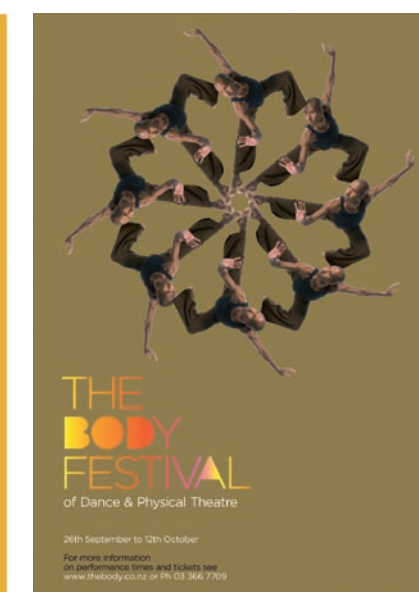
Three companies currently come under the Q umbrella: the branding agency, the software specialist and the event management company.

“For us, advertising has always been partly about solving problems—wrong perceptions, falling numbers, misinformation, not being heard, to name a few,” says Sunderland. “A client's ability to accept change, linking with the agency's ideas on how to change the current communication can result in dramatic shifts of market awareness and consumer uptake. We love the simplicity of well-crafted design and insightful targeted creative. Clients come to Q to cut to the chase.”

Two recent projects carried out by Q illustrate the ways in which change was central to the campaigns' success.

## Changing for good

Christchurch City Council had the mammoth task of communicating the need to change people's handling of their domestic rubbish. As with all habits, when you've been doing something a certain way for so long, you need guidance and encouragement to change those habits. The volume of unnecessary rubbish ending up in Canterbury landfills was a blight on our 100% pure New Zealand image. But one of the main issues was our lack of



understanding. We leave our rubbish at the end of the drive and have no idea what happens to it after that—many of us wouldn't care even if we knew.

“We decided our role was not to manipulate people into recycling through scare tactics or guilt, but instead to make them feel an emotion towards their weekly ritual of putting out the rubbish,” says Sunderland.

## Not a load of rubbish

The council needed a campaign that wouldn't alienate people, and one that would embrace every demographic, rather than targeting isolated age or gender groups. With every dollar coming from ratepayers, it couldn't be seen to be extravagant, either.

“The Christchurch City Council was investing heavily on building new processing plants, new vehicles and new wheelie bins. It needed a campaign that would educate, encourage and embrace change.

“Q competed against several agencies for the opportunity to communicate this dramatic change in our local rubbish management. Our idea in the end was simple—we needed to make people care about what they did with their rubbish—we had to get them to 'love their rubbish'.”

## Expressing the values

The solution was simple: concept of love crosses all age, social, gender and ethnicity barriers. It's inclusive, friendly and embracing. Rather than commanding people to act a certain way, the campaign Q devised asks them to think differently about their rubbish—to love it enough to separate it into each of the three

new colour-coded bins.

The love-heart shape shows residents what to place in each bin, giving the design a clean, crisp and easy-to-understand layout that helped educate them about recycling.

“The campaign's been a great success with the creative helping to eliminate much of the backlash and helping CCC get their new direction off to a great first year of change in new recycling habits for all Cantabrians,” says Sunderland. “Other local councils are now duplicating this formula.”



## The changing face of dance & physical theatre

The Body Festival is Christchurch's annual dance festival that features a selection of dance offerings from professional shows to amateur productions. Focusing on the community aspect of dance, the festival also

incorporates a number of workshops and participation events.

However, in the past, the Body Festival had attracted a narrow demographic of potential audience participants. It needed to introduce a whole new audience to the quality and diversity of entertainment on offer, enticing them away from the mainstream shows and heavily funded festivals and opening them up to a new experience.

## The solution

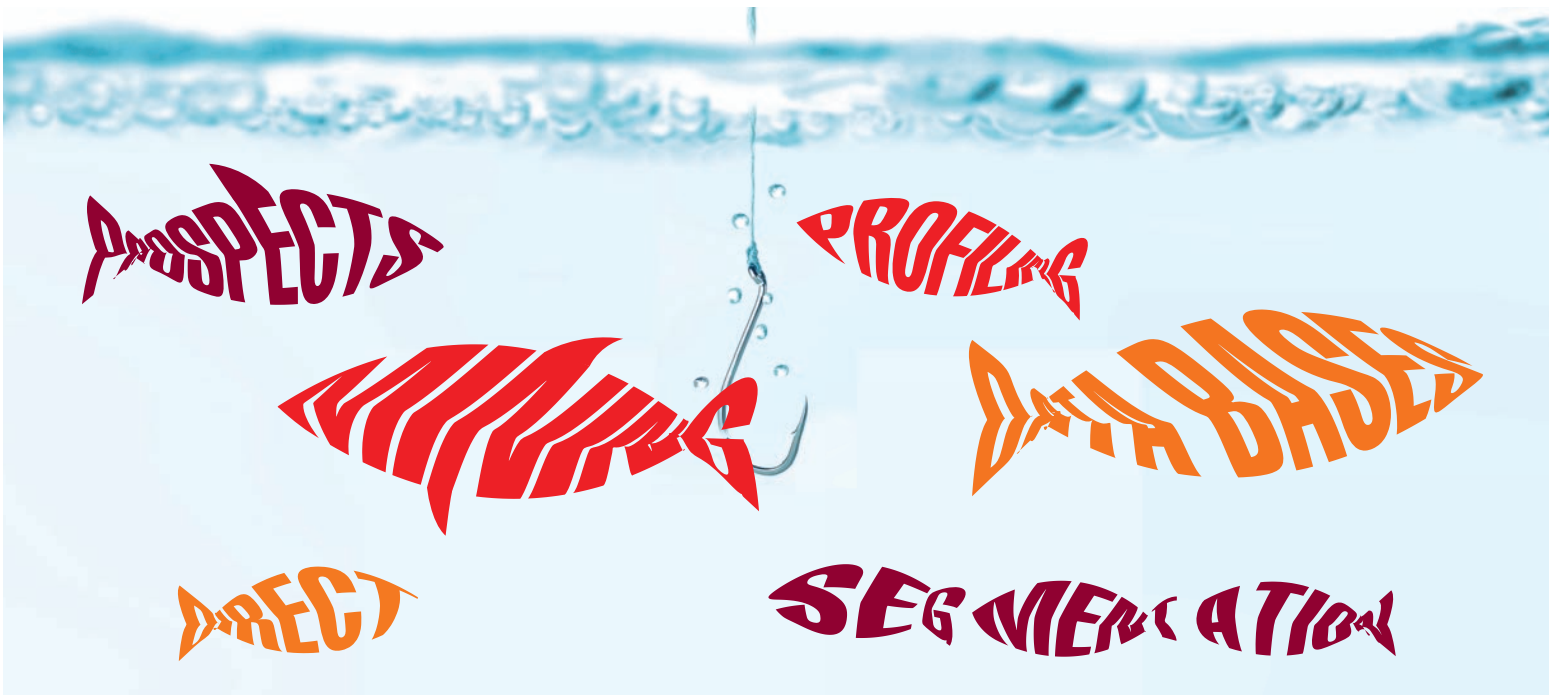
Q understood that the identity for the festival had to change to show a quality and credibility that would reflect the numerous shows and performances on offer. In the year shown above, Q designed a spirograph motif that echoed the dancers and their individual movements, using this visual on street posters, newspaper advertising and a 36-page festival programme.

“Thanks to the Dance & Physical Theatre Trust's vision and its openness to Q and our concepts, we ventured into creating crafted communication that would raise awareness among locals and visitors alike,” Sunderland says.

The festival has continued to grow year on year, with a substantial increase in support and participation, a result that Q sees as testament to the success of a design approach to dance and physical theatre.

For more information go to [www.qbrandagency.com](http://www.qbrandagency.com) or contact Phillip Sunderland at Q Brand Agency on 03 962-0370 or email [phillip@qbrandagency.com](mailto:phillip@qbrandagency.com)





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