

Survey Marketing & Corporate Communications Environment

Over the past few years, US market conditions have negatively impacted nearly every sector of our economy. The combination of recent international events and the scandals in corporate finance have undermined both investor and consumer confidence, accompanied by exponential leaps in technology which have redefined the very nature and pace of how we work. The mainstream business adoption of the internet and e-business have promoted both consumer and business-user expectations of real-time access to information and services. Against the backdrop of these changes, widespread budget cuts have affected many of the choices and decisions involved in resource allocation, particularly in the arena of promotional spending. Budgets for advertising and investor communications have been slashed across-the board, bearing the potential for generating unintended business repercussions.

As long-standing members of the creative community that serves the promotional needs of the business sector, my partner Jim Sims and I have been interested in researching the influence these changes have made in the attitudes, practices, and relationships among our creative counterparts in the industry. Over the past two years, we have done extensive research on the communications industry through my MBA graduate work at Marylhurst University. This survey is one element of a research project for my business research class (MKT545) this fall.

The project report including coding and statistical analysis of the data is due on Dec. 9, so I have chosen e-mail as the most expedient method of distribution and collection of the questionnaire. Jim has designed the survey as a PDF form document, so it can be easily completed using Adobe Acrobat, and returned via e-mail. There is a button on the last page that automatically gathers your responses and creates an e-mail message with the FDF attached... all you have to do is press "send" to return it to me. I intentionally configured the survey questionnaire to operate as an independent document with no personal identifying elements or demographics, so that all survey responses could be answered candidly, tabulated anonymously, and the privacy of all participants could remain secure. Please feel free to pass the survey along to any of your associates... the more responses I can collect, the more credible the results.

As working professionals I realize the time constraints we all face, but it would be greatly appreciated if you could take a few minutes to fill out the questionnaire and return it to me by Nov. 22, 2004. Jim and I are planning to have the final research report posted on our server by the holiday season, so the results can be of benefit to all who have so graciously participated.

Thanks so much for your time.

Amy Boynton

1 Changes

Many sectors of the communications and advertising industry have been sharply affected due to the widespread budget cuts in promotional spending by the business sector over the past three years. Please indicate to what degree such changes in budget allotment by your clients have impacted your own company.



1.1 Overall, how much of an impact has this trend had on your business?

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.2 From your perspective, to what degree have budget cuts impacted the overall quality in the communications industry? (consumer advertising and corporate communications in all media)

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.3 From your perspective, to what degree have budget cuts impacted the overall effectiveness in the communications industry? (consumer advertising and corporate communications in all media)

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.4 In your judgment, have budget cuts affected your overall relationships with your clients?

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.5 In your judgment, have budget cuts affected your overall relationships with your suppliers?

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.6 In general, to what degree have budget cuts influenced the primary direction in your thinking when conceiving the solution for a new project?

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.7 In general, to what degree have budget cuts directed your creative choices when selecting a particular solution for a project need? (copy, printing, illustration, photography, etc)

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.8 In general, to what degree have the technological advances in data access and the speed of data transfer affected your protocols on a given project?

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 Attitudes & Protocols

This portion of the survey regards the impact promotional budget cuts have on the choices, protocols, and relationships in the communication creation process.

In your judgment, please estimate the extent to which smaller promotional budgets have affected the following attitudes and protocols of the participating individuals when conceiving and executing a communications project.

2.1 Willingness of clients to take risks...

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.2 Willingness of my own company to take risks...

1	2	3	4	5
none	small	average	large	huge
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.3 Hierarchical level of client contact at the project initiation...

1	2	3	4
low level	project	divisional	executive
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.4 Hierarchical level of client contact involved in project decisions...

1	2	3	4
low level	project	divisional	executive
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.5 Hierarchical level of client contact at the final presentations...

1	2	3	4
low level	project	divisional	executive
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.6 Relevance of contact's corporate hierarchical level to the finished project's overall quality.

1	2
not relevant	relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.7 Relevance of contact's corporate hierarchical level to the finished project's overall effectiveness.

1	2
not relevant	relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3 Attributes

3.1 Rank the level of importance of the following project attributes as you perceive the priorities of your clients.

		1	2	3	4	5
		none	low	average	high	critical
3.1.1	Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.2	Concept	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.3	Differentiation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.4	Quality of Imagery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.5	Quality of text	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.6	Expedited Turnaround	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.7	Visual Message Clarity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.8	Verbal Message Clarity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.9	Accurate Targeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.10	Relevant to Project Intent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.11	Aligns with Strategic Goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.12	Online Integration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2 Rank the level of importance of the following project attributes from the vantage point of the priorities within your own company.

		1	2	3	4	5
		none	low	average	high	critical
3.2.1	Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.2	Concept	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.3	Creative Control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.4	Quality of Imagery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.5	Quality of text	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.6	Turnaround Time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.7	Client Retention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.8	Quality of Execution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.9	Meets Client Need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2.10	Improves Portfolio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3 In your judgment, please estimate the extent to which smaller promotional budgets have affected the following elements influencing quality in a communications project.

		1	2	3	4	5
		none	small	average	large	critical
3.3.1	Graphic Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3.2	Copy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3.3	Illustration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3.4	Photography	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3.5	Printing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3.6	Paper Choice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3.7	Concept	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3.8	Originality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.4 In your judgment, please estimate the extent to which smaller promotional budgets have affected the following aspects influencing the effectiveness of a communications project.

		1	2	3	4	5
		none	small	average	large	critical
3.4.1	Differentiation of Brand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4.2	Clarity of Message	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4.3	Expedience of Solution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4.4	Power of Visual Images	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4.5	Connection With Audience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4.6	Creativity of Approach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4.7	Appropriate to Venue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 Creative Choices

In this section, please specify your judgment regarding the use of existing photographic stock images versus the creation of new project-specific photographic images relative to cost, message delivery, & connection with the audience.

4.1 Please rate your perception of the average client’s degree of visual literacy. Visual literacy refers to the level of awareness, knowledge, and impact of the visual arts as they relate to promotional strategy.

1	2	4
low	somewhat	high
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.2 How pertinent is the client’s degree of visual literacy when determining image options?

1	2	4
not	somewhat	highly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.3 When conceiving a project solution, how often do you select from these photographic options

		1	2	3	4
		rarely	occasionally	often	always
4.3.1	No Image Use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3.2	Use Stock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3.3	Client Supplied Imagery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3.4	Shoot In-House	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3.5	Contract New Photography	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.4 When conceiving a project solution, which is your preferred photographic option? (Choose one).

		choices
4.4.1	No Preference	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4.2	Buy Stock Images	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4.3	Client Supplies Images	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4.4	Shoot In-House	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4.5	Contract New Photography	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.5 To what extent is your choice determined by the project budget?

1	2	3	4
never	occasionally	often	always
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.6 To what extent do you think this choice affects the clarity of message transmission?

1	2	3	4
no effect	small	strong	critical
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5 Personal Responses

This section focuses on your reactions to any changes you may have observed in communication mediums from the viewpoint of a consumer, rather than as a producer. The next few questions are aimed at understanding how you personally experience and react to current communications media.

5.1 In your personal experience have you observed any change in the quality of media communications over the past 3 years.

1	2
no	yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.2 When considered on the whole, do you think these changes have raised the level of quality, or degraded the level of quality in media communications efforts?

1	2
lowered	raised
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.3 In your personal experience have you observed any change in the effectiveness of media communications over the past 3 years?

1	2
no	yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.4 When considered on the whole, do you think these changes have enhanced the ability to communicate a message effectively, or impaired that ability?

1	2
weakened	strengthened
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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