

What's the appeal of a small agency?

By  Sylvia Schutte

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While large agencies provide their clients with a sense of security, breadth of structure, services and perceived status, there is the question of whether businesses are increasingly turning to smaller agencies to assist with their marketing, digital, advertising and PR activities.



Source: www.pexels.com

Across our international network of agencies, Amin Worldwide, agency owners are noticing that smaller, full-service agencies are becoming the first choice for clients who don't want to get lost in a large agency (and have to pay large agency fees) or who want to achieve more with their agency-partner but on a smaller marketing budget.

When a client leaves their agency, it tends to be because they're unhappy about price or value, they're dissatisfied with the creative, or they're frustrated with project or account management. Conversely, these areas are where good, smaller, full-service agencies shine.

Here are five reasons why smaller agencies are more appealing to marketers:

1. Resources

One thing that many marketers don't consider when selecting a large agency, is the team they'll work with. There's no assurance that it's the seasoned, senior individuals you'll be assigned, and it's more than likely that the team will include resources that are at a junior level. This could change if your budget is big enough, and you come with the promise of future business.

For smaller agencies, we are focused on our reputations and the outcomes of each project. This is why we make you our biggest priority, and why it's in our best interest to assign our most talented people to help you reach your objectives.

Reputation is key, and it's established slowly – one happy client at a time. For this reason, we carefully manage the relationship and any work that gets delivered. When it comes to our clients, it's a guarantee that our senior team takes an active role, whether that be in the account management, campaign management or quality assurance of each project.

In addition, team members with specialised skill sets will get assigned to the project, to ensure its success. So, it's not unusual to have a team with several senior executives actively managing and reporting on various elements within a campaign.

2. Structure

Large agencies often have organisational layers, from an account executive up to a director, and at various points in a project anyone can be involved. They also have up to 30% annual employee turnover rates, so people on projects tend to change. The primary point of contact is usually the account executive, responsible for engaging with the client and then handing down any messages or directions. Like a broken telephone, this often results in a diluted message when it gets to the creative and digital teams.

Compare this to a smaller creative agency, where it's more likely that the client will communicate directly with the person who works with both the creative and digital teams. Frequently, we see how our clients get involved and then end up playing a fundamental role in developing ideas that are successful for their brands. Working in this way is far more personal and effective, and benefits both parties.

3. Agility

Structures, methods and policies are essential in helping larger agencies operate, but on the flip side, these can make it a slow and costly process when change is needed. Rapid decisions can fall by the wayside while all role players in the agency are consulted or considered.

As a smaller agency with a lean structure and less formality, we are more agile and can react faster to changes. This also enables us to adapt to the working styles and budgets of each client. In the event that a client adjusts the scope or budget, an agile agency can quickly change tact or adapt their resources to accommodate the client's needs.

By working closely with our clients, we are able to strategise and then rapidly execute on specific tactics or creative, based on campaign outcomes and trends.

4. Types of services

Large agencies may be inflexible when it comes to the types of services they offer, or they need to get an external team involved to complete the project. They also have larger bills to pay and might therefore push solutions that are more profitable to them.

In comparison, a smaller agency can add immense value by immersing themselves deeper into the project and providing speciality work. This could include strategic work that produces results in areas that the client wants to specifically focus on and by outlining how clients can measure success.

5. Value

How does a company measure an agency's value? Is it team size? Is it results produced? While many different facets can come into play, ultimately, value is created when an agency has positively impacted your bottom line or saved you marketing costs.

As a smaller agency, we are focused on helping our clients succeed – because their success is our success. We measure everything that we do and report back with the bigger business objectives in mind. We work with our clients to understand, analyse and respond to marketing insights and to constantly improve our work, based on this understanding.

For our team, it's personal. It's about helping our clients succeed by coming up with creative solutions and building life-long client relationships.

ABOUT SYLVIA SCHUTTE

Sylvia Schutte is the MD of Stratitude, a full-service marketing agency that provides strategic and creative solutions focussed on making an impact on their clients' brands and their bottomlines.

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