

# **BELLWETHER** LEADERSHIP RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT



## **294 Advertiser, Agency, and Digital Media Company Perspectives On How To Work More Easily and Successfully Together**

An independent study conducted by, Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC  
on behalf of the ANA and AAAA (4A's) and many Digital Media Companies.

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### Preface & Overview

The actionable development suggestions for Advertisers (25), Agencies (25), and Digital Media Companies (20) contained in this Appendix are based on research responses to a study conducted independently by Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC, during January and February of 2009, with the cooperation of the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA), the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) and numerous Digital Media Companies. A total of 294 participants shared their thoughts for the research. Google sponsored the research, but played no role in conducting the research, producing the analysis, or creating the actionable development suggestions that follow.

This research project included several key elements:

- Online surveys completed by 146 AAAA members
- Online surveys completed by 122 ANA members
- Interviews conducted with 26 Advertising, Agency and Digital Media Company Senior Executives

### Qualitative research interview participants:

**Parker Barrile**, Founder & CEO, Predictify  
**Linda Boff**, Global Director, Marketing Communications, GE  
**Brad Brinegar**, CEO, McKinney  
**Adam Cahill**, SVP, General Manager, Carat  
**Wendy Clark**, SVP Integrated Marketing, Coca Cola  
**Jarvis Coffin**, CEO, Burst Media  
**Delitha Morrow Coles**, General Manager, GE Energy  
**Cammie Dunnaway**, CMO, Nintendo  
**Joe Erwin**, CEO, Erwin-Penland

**Kester Fielding**, Director of Global Marketing Sourcing, Diageo

**John Fitzgerald**, President, Mullen

**Kevin Holowicki**, Director of Media, CRM, Digital NA, GSK

**Jon Kaiser**, Co-President, Bay Interactive Group

**Calvin Lui**, CEO, Tumri

**Jay Mandel**, Internet Marketing Manager, CIT Group

**Chris Needham**, VP of Digital Marketing, Fidelity Investments

**Gokul Rajaram**, CEO, Chai Labs (Co-Creator of Google's AdSense Program)

**Matt Seiler**, WW CEO, Universal McCann

**John Sedlak**, SVP Sales & Marketing, Vibrant Media

**David Sklaver**, President, KSL Media

**Scott Sorokin**, Global Digital Leader, MindShare

**Matt Spiegel**, CEO, Omnicom Media Group-Digital

**Jim Stengel**, President/CEO, The Jim Stengel Company (Former Global Chief Marketing Officer, P&G)

**Steve Sullivan**, Former CMO, Liberty Mutual

**Won Yang**, Interactive Marketing Manager, [hpsshopping.com](http://hpsshopping.com), HP

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## Summary

**The results of the research point to the need for a concentration on four core themes in order to work more easily and successfully together: 1) Education, 2) Collaboration, 3) Measurement, and 4) Creativity.**

### Education

**Education = retooling (in a knowledge-driven world) = competitive advantage.**

Based on Bellwether Leadership Research & Development's research, Advertisers recognize the need for, and are open to, having people from their Agencies and Digital Media Companies educate them to become more digitally fluent and savvy.

### Collaboration

Bellwether's research suggests a surprising openness to people working more collaboratively with one another. The more easily and successfully people collaborate with one another, the easier it is for agencies to help their clients take full advantage of the range of available media options to reach their prospective customers with relevant messages in productive ways.

### Measurement

Bellwether's research suggests a widespread desire by both Advertisers and Agencies for the use of hard metrics to measure the success of digital marketing efforts.

Clear Return On Investment (ROI) and related metrics give agency creative people, strategic planners, and full-spectrum media planners clear targets. In this emerging Digital Era, another great advantage of establishing ROI metrics and/or other hard measures from the beginning is you can often use them to make real-time adjustments in your marketing effort to improve the ROI of your effort.

### Creativity

Relevant, strategically focused creativity is the most powerful thing an Agency or Digital Media Company can offer its client. Right *now*, many advertisers need creative, innovative solutions – better than the ones they have gotten so far if they are to survive, and eventually prosper again on a level to which they aspire. These Advertisers require solutions well beyond anything that got them into their present situation. Advertisers require (many of them desperately) a new level of creativity and innovation from their Agencies and Digital Media Companies.

One of the biggest professional challenges confronting Agencies and Advertisers is the need to embrace a broader view of creativity and the growing role in the creative development process of ‘creative’ people from differing backgrounds, i.e., digital media companies, social media – people who bring new perspectives to the creative mix who during the past 10 years have become an important part of the advertising development process. Advertisers challenge their Agencies to measure and control processes that many times feel less able be controlled. Often, Digital Media Companies working in partnership with Agencies can help restore at least a partial sense of control in many instances, while geometrically expanding the ability of traditional creative people to express themselves in new ways.

#### One research participant’s perspective:

##### **During the next 3 – 6 months, what are your biggest actionable challenges?**

How to do more with less. How to keep the highest levels of performances and customer deliverables on a leaner, tighter budget with fewer people.

##### **How will the economic uncertainty impact your activities in 2009, and beyond?**

Impacts us in both good and bad ways. Good ways: forces us to be more efficient. Bad ways: we might not be able to capitalize on new opportunities because don’t have the bandwidth/resources.

##### **In working with client/partners and supplier/partners, what opportunities do you see to work more productively together?**

Both sides need to be more empathetic of the challenges that the others face due to the economic environments, and have a spirit of partnership/cooperation/collaboration as much as possible. Both sides need each other to get through the economic uncertainty in fighting mettle.

**Gokul Rajaram, CEO of Chai Labs  
(Co-Creator of Google’s AdSense Program)**

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## Actionable Development Suggestions For Putting The Research Insights and Related Knowledge To Work

As part of Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC's commitment to Agencies, Advertisers and Digital Media Companies, in return for their support and cooperation, Bellwether developed the following actionable development suggestions about how Agencies, Advertisers and Digital Media Companies can work more easily and successfully with each other. The following suggestions are based on an analysis of the research findings from this study and consistent with other Bellwether studies involving Advertisers, Agencies and Digital Media Companies.

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### 25 Agency-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions Related To Education

#### Suggestion 1

**Tap into the intellectual property readily available at Digital Media Companies. Don't be bashful about asking for it.**

Bellwether Leadership Research & Development's research suggests many Digital Media Companies are now more open to educating Agencies and Advertisers, and have a growing willingness to provide access to wealth of experience and expertise to support Advertiser and Agency efforts to become more digitally fluent and savvy.

Agencies, either in collaboration with Digital Media Companies, or alone, should develop creative and innovative processes for educating their own professional staffs – Senior Executives in particular, clients, and suppliers. Senior executives at most companies get so busy 'doing' they struggle with the need to continually educate themselves as a means of staying current and competitively relevant. (Graphed out, as most senior executives move up the corporate ladder, their learning curves descend at about a 45-degree angle over a period of several years). Most executives know they need the education, but see it as overwhelming, intimidating and time-consuming without an instant payoff. With this in mind, Agencies and Digital Media Companies need to look for ways to make learning worthwhile, engaging, and productive for their senior executives who are managing multiple projects under stressful

conditions. Both Agencies and Digital Media Companies have good reasons to play the role of educators.

The best Agencies and Digital Media Companies feed people's curiosity; the best creative people, even the curmudgeons, often are uniquely well-suited because of their work, to also play the role of being really good educators.

Good educators at Agencies and Digital Media Companies should be encouraged, conscripted, or otherwise cajoled to help their colleagues, clients, and suppliers to develop new creative thinking and innovating abilities that include a better understanding of the internet, search, mobile, widgets, and social media. Being an educator is also a natural role for account managers to play. Also, it is a role agency business development people should be well-suited to performing as a way of demonstrating organizational expertise.

Agencies and Digital Media Companies should continually look for and explore a variety of different ways to educate people, to accommodate different situations and learning styles.

### **Suggestion 2**

**Match the people you have playing educational roles with the audience members.**

Take the time to think about the personal chemistry between the educator and the audience. (The young person with multiple cosmetic facial piercings may be a world-class expert on a particular subject, but the person may not be the best choice to interact with Senior Executives in a conservative organization.)

### **Suggestion 3**

**Bridge the media gap. By bridging the traditional media / digital media divide (the bias that many people have in favor of traditional media or newer media) and the benefits should be a more integrated approach to how your organization uses commercially available media.**

Bellwether's research suggests making the transition from an older way of doing things to a newer way is harder for some people than others. It requires patience, flexibility, compassion, encouragement, and depending on the scope of the effort, a lot of inventiveness and effort on the part of the people who are helping others make the transition.

The more time traditional media people spend using newer media (internet, search, mobile, widgets, social media) the more comfortable they will become with it and the better they will become at devising more successful ways to integrate traditional media with new media.

## Agency-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions Related To Collaboration

### Suggestion 4

**Reach out relentlessly and express a willingness to work collaboratively with your Clients across all parts of their organizations, and with Digital Media Companies and other suppliers all the way up and down the supply chain.**

Make it abundantly clear to your Clients and Digital Media Company partners that you are committed to working more collaboratively with other ad hoc parts of groups that come together for finite periods of time to develop integrated marketing campaigns.

(You are almost always better off quickly finding out who you can work with, and who doesn't want to or won't, work with you. One of the most self-destructive things one can do is to wait for the 'slow no' that freezes you in place, and allows the person you are dealing with to gain an advantage in some way that you are not aware of, or isn't readily apparent.)

### Suggestion 5

**Resist the urge to emotionally pull back when you encounter opposition – look for ways to bridge differences with people who often have legitimate points of view.**

This is particularly true and important as it relates to working with people in new situations. It is human nature to emotionally pull back in situations as pressure intensifies (emotionally fleeing or fighting rarely improves the outcome). In difficult situations, make the effort to stay engaged (lean forward) in the process and look for ways to work through your differences.

### Suggestion 6

**Be a supportive partner and work with your Client at help to get everyone (Advertiser, Agency, Digital Media Companies and other relevant suppliers) sitting at the same table in the beginning, whenever you start planning a major project.**

Bellwether's research identifies several factors that make it harder for Advertisers, Agencies and Digital Media Companies to successfully implement integrated digital and traditional marketing programs. Advertisers and Agencies sometimes treat traditional advertising development (TV, radio, and print) and digital marketing as separate activities with different teams working on different timelines. In many advertiser/agency working relationships, they begin the creative development process focusing on traditional media channels first, and then the digital team is brought in to adapt a digital approach to marry up with the creative approach that has been developed in isolation by a traditional marketing team/agency.

One of the most important reasons for getting a larger number of people sitting around the proverbial table is that people across a growing range of marketing activities have potentially useful creative ideas.

### **Suggestion 7**

**For major projects, Advertisers, Agencies, Digital Media Companies and other suppliers are best served when roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are explicit, clear, well-understood, and adhered to by all – especially when multiple Agencies are involved.**

Ask your Client to designate a single project leader/decision-maker. Depending on work flows, the person best-suited to the task may not have the biggest job title – they may be a subject matter expert, or have unique experience that makes them particularly well-qualified to lead the project. Importantly, this individual needs to be empowered to make decisions and be readily available.

Equally important, get everyone working on the project on the same page by providing them with access to the work brief that everyone is to follow, to avoid multiple translations or interpretations of what the objective is.

### **Suggestion 8**

**Provide your Clients and Digital Media Companies with office space at your company.**

The closer you are to the people you work with, the easier it is to make decisions quickly. Also, it is easier to casually explore creative ideas and quickly go through the multiple generations of thought required to bring them to fruition, without having to put them on hold until the next time you see your counterparts.

### **Suggestion 9**

**Work collaboratively with Clients and suppliers to develop digital marketing efforts that scale up/down, or can be maintained at consistent levels throughout the year.**

The more practice your people have scaling up/down strategies and creative executions, the better they will be at it. Also, teaching your people to intelligently discuss the trade-offs (risks) associated with more/less orthodox creative executions will help make them more confident. Making people more knowledgeable about trade-offs will help them improve in sorting through alternatives in a way that leads to confident action and more effective campaigns.



### **Suggestion 10**

**Learn to speak the other person's language as part of the process of reaching across Client organizational silos – meet people more than halfway. Encourage cross-organizational cooperation by addressing people in other silos/parts of Client-organizations in a language they already understand – their own.**

Bellwether's research suggests that Advertisers wish their Agencies (and Digital Media Companies, too) would do a better job of learning about the Advertiser's business. These Advertisers can be frustrated by employee turnover and sales/business development people calling on them who have taken little or no time to learn about the Advertiser's business.

Bellwether's research suggests one of the most common obstacles to people working more collaboratively is what commonly is referred to as operating business silos – divisions inside an organization, usually with separate profit and loss responsibilities, and vertical reporting channels that tend to inhibit cross-organizational cooperation.

Agencies and Digital Media Companies are often regarded from an office-politics perspective as organizationally neutral and therefore uniquely well-suited to working across organizational silos. To make the 'reaching out' collaborative development processes go more easily, key Agency account and creative people should develop a working understanding of a client's:

- Operations
- IT
- CRM
- Finance
- Sales

Greater understanding and empathy for a Client's operating realities can also speed up the strategic planning and creative development process (better Scope Of Work agreements and better working briefs also support the development of better working relationships).

Agencies, Clients, and Digital Media Companies should develop an easily accessible *glossary of terms* to help people understand what your people are talking about when they digress into speaking in acronyms i.e., KPIs, CPCs, MMs, CPL, CPD, CPS, POVs, etc. Tower of Babel acronyms also serve as artificial barriers to more productive communication and can be interpreted as a sign of arrogance by people who don't speak the 'special' language. To avoid this, make an effort to reach across organizational silos and learn the 'local' language spoken by IT (information technology), Finance, CRM (customer relations management) people, and also be more inclusive with people from other parts of your organization.

### **Suggestion 11**

**Seek other peoples' points-of-view. Encourage candor.**

For reasons ranging from intimidation to arrogance, people often don't ask for other's opinions or points-of-view. It can be an expensive mistake. There are very few problems or challenges someone else hasn't dealt with before. Often one can benefit by seeking the other person out and asking what they learned from the experience. This is particularly important during the onboarding process – when an Agency or Digital Media Company is entering into a new working relationship with an Advertiser or supplier.

### **Suggestion 12**

**Seek regular feedback from your clients to understand how effective your integrated marketing efforts are in supporting their productivity and success. Conduct 360-degree employee-agency-advertiser-supplier reviews twice a year, so adjustments can be made as necessary.**

Survey your client's sales people to identify the strongest and weakest parts of the integrated communications chain; develop tactics for strengthening the weakest parts, fixing or getting rid of the ineffective parts, and improving the most effective ones.

### **Suggestion 13**

**Develop a 'Talent Exchange Program' with your Client(s) and Digital Media Company partner(s).**

The idea behind a 'Talent Exchange Program' is for an Advertiser, Agency, or Digital Media Company to spend time (usually several weeks or months) working on-site with each other to get a better first-hand understanding based on direct observation and hands-on involvement of your marketing counterpart's development processes and operating realities.

### **Suggestion 14**

**Keep agency client-specific professionals in the same roles for longer periods of time.**

Extend your client-specific job rotations to a minimum of 24 months to give people time to learn their job, and more time to do their job well. (To hold onto particularly valued employees, this may require providing them with access to educational and technological resources that make them feel like they are staying at the forefront of changes occurring

in the marketplace). Collaboration depends on what might be described as teamwork – it is more difficult to achieve if the people on the ‘team’ keep changing.

#### **Suggestion 15**

**Keep open channels of communications with your Client’s sales people. Ask them to stay in touch and identify the strongest and weakest parts of the integrated communications chain, and suggest ideas for strengthening the weakest parts, including your own agency system.**

Also, have your people with direct Client contact to develop client assessments as a means of identifying where the Agency can provide Clients with educational help, and identify gaps in the client’s operating system that may be limiting both Client and Agency revenues.

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### **Agency-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions** **Related To Measurement**

#### **Suggestion 16**

**In partnership with your Clients, build continuous ROI measurement processes into your management processes. Look for both specific and holistic ROI and other fact-based measures to evaluate marketing effectiveness.**

Measuring ROI is most achievable when it is a built-in part of the planning and development process. Successful measurement requires:

- Identifying types of data needed in order to develop ROI metrics, and other measures of effectiveness.
- Discerning where sought-after data elements may already exist.
- Determining the quality, accessibility and usability of existing sources of data through sales channels, Customer Relations Management, through internet channels including your websites, channel marketing partners, and through traditional media providers.
- Dedicating resources to actually gather and analyze the results using the agreed to metrics. This requires assigning a sufficient level of priority to get the work done.
- Identifying three or four candidates for pilot projects.

The best people to set up ROI and other fact-based measures and other useful metrics are those within your clients' organizations who are directly involved with financial management.

They have probably been involved with setting up the existing financial reporting systems, and are also most likely to know what available data already exist across the organization. Your clients' financial people should be capable of creating ROI measurement systems that aren't overly complicated or too constraining, and importantly, can establish realistic criteria for measuring ROI, or other useful metrics.

Bellwether's research strongly suggests that both Advertisers and Agencies are in favor of using clear metrics to evaluate the relative success of integrated marketing efforts. For Agencies, having clear metrics makes the strategic planning and creative development processes easier, and should, at least in some situations, spare the agency from being the victims of approval processes that are arbitrary and unjustified based on mutually agreed-to objectives.

### **Suggestion 17**

**Partner with your Clients to develop Agency incentives and scorecarding processes to encourage relevant creativity and innovation, drive collaboration, reward the development of ROI metrics or other quantifiable real-time measures of effectiveness, and incentivize the Agency to reach mutually agreed- to objectives.**

To align Advertiser and Agency objectives more closely, Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC, advocates that Advertisers budget Agency incentives, and that Agency financial incentives should be paid on a monthly basis. This should be done according to the mutually agreed-to scorecard based on the results of Agency performance, as a means of more closely aligning Agency performance and behavior with Client objectives. (This recognizes that for many Clients, devising a Client-Agency scorecard may require going through several transitional developmental steps.)

Since Agency Chief Financial Officers pay close attention to agency revenues and changes to the ways they are being compensated, and *very* influential, they should be involved in the earliest stages in the Advertiser-Agency discussion before contracts are negotiated, so the scope of work the Agency is promising to deliver is commonly understood inside the Agency and the Advertiser, and the Agency can be staffed to provide what the Client wants, and the Agency can make a profit.

Developing and using comprehensive scorecards and frequent reviews tied directly to Agency compensation can help the Advertiser and Agency develop good alignment as to how the Agency allocates resources to help a Client successfully achieve its marketing objectives.

Scorecards should include:

- ROI and other fact-based metrics ideally, and/or other quantifiable metrics as available or necessary. (Don't settle for anecdotal stories – the same ones that repeatedly get told over and over again.)
- How well the Agency collaborates across channels inside the Advertiser organization, with other Agencies (based on 360-degree reviews) and suppliers.
- Quality measures based on professional performance.

Agency incentives should be budgeted by the Advertiser and paid on a monthly basis ideally, or on a quarterly basis at the latest.

#### **Suggestion 18**

**In behalf of Clients, build continuous ROI and other fact-based measurement processes into your management processes. Look for both specific and holistic ROI measures to evaluate marketing effectiveness.**

Advertisers and their Agencies should develop ROI and fact-based measurement processes that can be used broadly enough across the organizations that they achieve common usage or adoption. The reason for using a holistic approach is with integrated marketing projects, five of seven different parts of the marketing effort may show a good return, and two parts may not. Without holistic measures, someone may point to one part of the project that didn't meet your objectives and declare the whole project a failure when that wasn't the case.

Additionally, being able to identify the elements that are most effective will help you identify opportunities for systematic improvement.

#### **Suggestion 19**

**If the Agency is bringing a new solution into production on behalf of its Client, to get a better ROI the Agency should also be able to identify what to take offline (take out of production), in order to anticipate and deal with how the missing elements will impact the overall plan.**

The Agency should be able to provide a general estimate of cost/benefit implications.

### **Suggestion 20**

**Develop case studies as a means of developing commonly shared measurement processes.**

Bellwether’s research suggests case studies are a well-received method for sharing knowledge, (and well-suited for business development purposes). Case studies can also serve as a benign form of peer pressure inside organizations and can be a powerful motivator in getting people to act. (Case studies can be very motivating at enabling people to overcome their fearfulness.)

Agencies should develop case studies including the following:

- Examples of successful collaboration across marketing silos inside Client organizations, and with suppliers.
- Histories of your Agency working in close partnership with Clients to improve the ROI of marketing programs.
- Case histories/examples of successful innovation, where you helped Clients do more with less.

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### **Agency-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions** **Related To Creative Development**

Based on what has been learned by Bellwether Leadership Research & Development’s during the past 15 year as it has conducted what might be described as *best practices* studies, the one thing Advertisers, Agencies, and Suppliers want more than anything else is a steady supply of good creative, workable ideas to choose from in order to grow their businesses.

### **Suggestion 21**

**Greater relevant creativity (a big idea) and media integration are two of the most powerful ways for Agencies to win new business and for Advertisers to stretch their marketing expenditures.**

Bellwether’s research suggests Agencies will be well-served embracing a broader view of creativity and the growing role in the *creative* development process of ‘creative’ people from differing backgrounds - digital media companies, social media – people who bring new perspectives to the creative mix, who during the past 10 years have become an important part of the marketing communication development process.

Agency ‘creative’ people have every reason to thrive in the changing environment if they embrace the changes. There may never have a time in modern advertising when the value and need for big creative ideas has been greater. However, very clearly, how great ideas are expressed is changing, and often taking different forms than in the past. And keeping up with the changes requires educating yourself to stay current with the changes occurring in how creativity and innovation manifest themselves in a more digitally-driven world.

#### One research participant’s perspective:

“Current times create remarkable challenges for marketers and also open tremendous opportunity for **innovation and reinvention**. Daunting challenges invite – in fact force – organizations to seek out-of-the-box approaches that fundamentally break the stagnation of traditional molds of thinking. These revolutionary thought processes are often fueled by the introduction of transformative technologies and innovations.

In today’s world, marketers are faced with a dizzying array of mechanisms to reach, influence and impact customers who are increasingly fragmented in terms of where, when and how they consume information. This fragmentation creates even faster paces of change in terms of mind set, preferences, and opinions. These overriding factors will force divisions within Advertisers and Agencies to work hand-in-hand more intimately than ever before, breaking down the walls that have traditionally separated the thought processes of strategy, creative, merchandising, and media planning and buying.

Another factor overlaying all of these issues is the increasing digitization of the world, impacting the way both consumers and businesses interact with each other, information and brands. The digital world is forcing a collision of the “art” and the “science” of marketing. Technology traditionally reserved for the engineers and geeks of the world will now impact all parts of the marketing process. Technology now powers the delivery and development of creative and user experiences. Technology now empowers greater measurability and tracking capabilities of not just media consumption, but also individual preferences and behaviors. Technology now enables massive customization and one-to-one marketing executions previously considered impossible.

Those Advertisers and Agencies that succeed will run towards, not away, from these transformations and embrace the opportunity to leverage technology and innovation. But innovative new technologies alone will not define success. The winners must also demonstrate the courage to reinvent themselves by breaking down the traditional business models and modes of thought. They will close the chasms of communication and eliminate bifurcated motivations, forcing unified teams (even if across organizations) that work toward common goals and rewards. This will impact agency compensation models. And, this transformation will require deeper integration and open relationships with technology and media providers as partners, not vendors.

From direct experience, we are seeing these mindset changes within the ecosystem already from a variety of players. For instance, two of the largest online media giants – Google and Yahoo – have already begun to take more open approaches to market. One of the most cherished sets of data online has been the Google’s web page crawler and contextual classification – the set of data that fuels Google’s AdSense product. Recognizing the need to extend extreme consumer relevancy beyond search and text ads has now, Google is now sharing this information with external partners, including our company Tumri, to power greater display advertisements. Google now passes to the Tumri system in real time the same keyword cloud that Google’s engine creates to identify the subject of a web page to power AdSense – enabling Tumri dynamic, intelligent ad platform to generate extremely powerful display ads based upon what the Webpage is about or what the color scheme of the page is. Likewise, the world’s leading consumer portal, Yahoo, is also passing to Tumri key indicators to help drive relevancy and consumer impact for display advertising. Yahoo now passes key variables such as demographic and behavioral indicators to help Tumri’s system deliver more impactful visuals and messaging. And this new mindset extends to newer media and targeting platforms, not just the “big guys.” These types of partnerships have yielded incredible results – up to 500%+ improvements in performance.

These are just a few minor examples of quickly the world is changing. Great rewards await those who walk unafraid of the unknown, with a mindset oriented toward greater collaboration and with the courage to reinvent.”

**Calvin Lui, CEO, Tumri, Inc.**

### **Suggestion 22**

**Define ‘professionalism’ in the new operating environment.**

Bellwether’s research suggests Advertisers want the professional guidance of Agencies and Digital Media Companies to help them survive and prosper. Agencies and Digital Media Companies will be well-served by making the effort to learn how Advertisers define professionalism in the emerging Digital Era.

### **Suggestion 23**

**Agencies and Digital Media Companies should quietly anticipate and manage the ‘fear points’ that serve to paralyze clients in their efforts to act in a more appropriately aggressive manner.**

(Uncertainty causes people to self-check.) Many people can be managed through fear points with forethought. ROI metrics and other fact-based measures can help instill confidence.



Having case studies can help, too. Sometimes mindfully rehearsing people through the more robust planning and creative development processes is all that is required.

#### **Suggestion 24**

**Maintain an ‘open door’ policy for listening to new ideas. Set aside a specific time each week to hear new ideas, wherever they come from. (This still is the fun part of the business.)**

Intentionally or unintentionally, marketers develop “filters” that new or creative ideas and proposals must pass through. One example of this is that all digital media companies have to first vet an idea through an Advertiser’s Agency. Another is simply the hierarchy within an Advertiser’s marketing organization; i.e. all ideas must be vetted through the hierarchy and only those that make it through the filter get visibility at the top. Inevitably, filters keep potential breakthrough ideas from ever seeing the light of day. (Breakthrough ideas by their very nature look a little different or unusual.) When you have time set aside each week for listening to new ideas, make it clear that all parties from all levels of the organization they represent are welcome.

#### **Suggestion 25**

**Don’t be the “abominable no man” or people won’t bring you their best ideas. They will take them someplace else.**

*Marketing* is the intelligent and organized pursuit of revenue. Organizations ultimately prosper or fail based on their ability to bring additional revenue in the door. Often that depends on the ability to successfully bring new ideas in the form of services or products to market. Advertisers depend on their Agencies and Digital Media Companies to be part of that creative process.

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**For more information about this Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC, study, contact Kerry O’Connor (Project Leader) at +1 248 790 8000 or Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271.**

#### **About Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC**

Most of Bellwether Leadership Research & Development’s work is conducted with the objective of producing client-specific actionable development suggestions to support sales, marketing, advertising, and e-commerce activities. Current and past clients include: Google, Procter & Gamble, Toyota, Ford, Tumri, Intel, WPP, Omnicom, BBDO, Leo Burnett, McCann Worldgroup, and many others.

**Contacts:** Founder & Partner, Kerry O’Connor at +1 248 790 8000 [kerry@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:kerry@bellwethergroup.org)

Partner, Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271 [jim@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:jim@bellwethergroup.org)

**About Bellwether Digital Bridge, LLC**

(another part of the Bellwether Group)

Bellwether Digital Bridge provides value-added services supportive of your efforts to develop best-in-class marketing communications processes and outstanding customer experiences.

Bellwether Digital Bridge generally adds value in one or more of 3 ways:

1. Developing people and processes (education, training, encouraging knowledge sharing/collaboration).
2. Identifying actionable opportunities to meet business objectives by gaining increased customer-specific consideration, conversion, satisfaction, loyalty and sales through more effective use of digital communication resources.
3. Measuring the results (ROI) of your marketing investments.

**Contacts:**

Founder & Partner, Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271 [jim@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:jim@bellwethergroup.org)

Founder & Partner, Kerry O'Connor at +1 248 790 8000 [kerry@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:kerry@bellwethergroup.org)

or Visit: [www.bellwethergroup.org](http://www.bellwethergroup.org)

## 25 Advertiser-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions

As part of Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC's commitment to Agencies, Advertisers and Digital Media Companies, in return for their support and cooperation, Bellwether developed the following actionable development suggestions about how Advertisers, Agencies, and Digital Media Companies can work more easily and successfully together. The following suggestions are based on an analysis of the research findings from this study and consistent with other Bellwether studies involving Advertisers, Agencies and Digital Media Companies.

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### Advertiser Actionable Development Suggestions

#### Related To Education

##### Suggestion 1

**Tap into the intellectual property readily available at your Agencies and Digital Media Companies. Don't be bashful about asking for it.**

Bellwether Leadership Research & Development's research suggests Advertisers are open to having both their Agencies and Digital Media Companies assist with their organizational efforts to become more digitally fluent and savvy. Digital Media Companies such as Google, Yahoo, Microsoft, and many others have a wealth of experience and expertise they are ready and willing to share with you.

At the risk of losing momentum and becoming less competitive, Advertisers need to develop creative and innovative processes for educating their professional staffs – especially Senior Executives who get so busy 'doing' they struggle with the need to continually educate themselves as a means of staying current and competitively relevant. (Graphed out, as most Senior Executives move up the corporate ladder, their learning curves descend at about a 45-degree angle over a period of several years.) Most Senior Executives know they need the education, but see it as overwhelming, intimidating and time-consuming without an instant payoff. With this in mind, Advertisers should reach out to their Agencies and Digital Media Companies (and the ANA) and ask them to develop realistic ways to make learning worthwhile, engaging and productive for their Senior Executives who are managing multiple projects under stressful conditions.

### **Suggestion 2**

**Match the people playing educational roles with the audience members.**

Take the time to think about the personal chemistry between the educator and the audience. (The young person with multiple cosmetic facial piercings may be a world-class expert on a particular subject, but the person may not be the best choice to interact with Senior Executives in a conservative organization.)

### **Suggestion 3**

**Look for the most painless ways to transition your professional staff in a positive direction and encourage them to improve their skills or learn new ones. Make skill development an important part of employee annual reviews.**

Encourage employees to move beyond a 'hoping for the best' attitude and to give greater attention to improving or learning new skills. Even at a time when marketing budgets have been severely reduced, look for low cost ways to invest in your marketing employees' futures. If reductions in marketing program budgets result in reduced workload for your marketing employees, provide them with the time and resources and encourage them to learn new skills that will help your organization grow. Once a month, ask your employees to identify what they individually have learned during the past 30 days that will make them more valuable and productive in the future. This can include volunteering to be part of workgroups, sitting on planning committees, or taking (online) classes. Make a particular effort to identify people who are having the most difficulty and 'buddy them up' with someone, to help them make the transition as smoothly as possible.

### **Suggestion 4**

**Seek other peoples' points-of-view. Encourage candor.**

For reasons ranging from intimidation to arrogance, people often don't ask for other's opinions or points-of-view. It can be an expensive mistake. There are very few problems or challenges someone else hasn't dealt with before. Often one can benefit by seeking the other person out and asking what they learned from the experience.

### **Suggestion 5**

**Bridge the media gap in your organization's thinking. By bridging the traditional media / digital media divide (the bias that many people have in favor of traditional media or newer media) it should help you develop easier, more collaborative and productive working relationships inside your company.**

Making the transition from an older way of doing things to a newer way is harder for some people than others. It requires patience, flexibility, compassion, encouragement, and depending on the scope of the effort, a lot of inventiveness and effort on the part of the people who are helping others make the transition.

### **Suggestion 6**

**Learn to speak the *other person's* language – meet them more than halfway.  
Encourage digital fluency and understanding by addressing your colleagues in language they already understand – their own.**

CPMs, KPIs, CPC, CPS, POV – while the use of acronyms are useful as shortcuts in a world migrating to text messaging as a primary way of communicating, Tower of Babel acronyms also serve as artificial barriers to more productive communication and can be interpreted as a sign of arrogance by people who don't speak the 'special' language. To avoid this, make an effort to reach across organizational silos and learn the 'local' language spoken by IT (Information Technology), Finance, CRM (Customer Relations Management) people, and constantly look for productive ways to be more inclusive with people from other parts of your organization. Similarly, encourage your marketing employees to speak to their internal partners in "non-marketing speak."

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## **Advertiser-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions**

### **Related To Collaboration**

### **Suggestion 7**

**Reach out relentlessly and express a willingness to work collaboratively across the silos in your organization. Clearly convey that you expect your Agencies, Digital Media Companies, and your own marketing teams to work collaboratively with each other all the way up and down the supply chain.**

Make it abundantly clear to your Agencies and Digital Media Company suppliers that you are committed to becoming more digitally fluent and savvy across your organization, and a collaborative partner in your working relationships. Constantly ask them for suggestions about what your organization can do to improve.

### **Suggestion 8**

**Resist the urge to emotionally pull back when you encounter opposition – look for ways to bridge differences with people who often have legitimate points of view.**

This is particularly true and important as it relates to working across organizational silos.

### **Suggestion 9**

**Get everyone (Advertiser, Agency, Digital Media Company) sitting at the same table in the beginning, whenever you start planning for a major project.**

Several factors contribute to a lack of success in implementing fully integrated digital and traditional marketing programs. Advertisers sometimes treat traditional advertising development (TV, radio, and print) and digital marketing as separate activities - different teams working on different timelines. In many Advertiser/Agency working relationships, they begin the creative development process focusing on traditional media channels first, and then the Digital Team is brought in to adapt a digital approach to marry up with the creative approach that has been developed in a vacuum by a traditional Marketing Team/Agency.

The best way to develop holistic/fully integrated marketing campaigns is to get everyone sitting around the same table during the planning stage, to get the best ideas out in the open.

### **Suggestion 10**

**Make sure roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities are explicit, clear and well-understood and adhered to by all – especially when multiple Agencies are involved.**

Advertisers need to provide leadership by actually leading or designating a single Project Leader/Decision-Maker. Depending on work flows, the person best-suited to the task may not have the biggest job title – they may be a subject matter expert, or have unique experience that makes them particularly well-qualified to lead the project. Also, the person needs to be constantly available to provide leadership on integrated marketing projects, and fully empowered to make decisions.

Equally important, get everyone on the same page by providing them with access to the work brief that everyone is to follow.

### **Suggestion 11**

**Provide your Agencies and Digital Media Companies office space at your company.**

The closer you are, the easier it is to make decisions quickly, and minimize delays associated with rework associated with revising creative work. Also, it is easier to casually explore creative ideas and go through the multiple generations of thought required to explore an idea and bring it to life.

### **Suggestion 12**

**Work collaboratively with Agencies and Suppliers to develop digital marketing efforts that reallocate existing budgets, or can be scaled up or down quickly.**

The more practice your people have scaling up, down, and looking for constancy, the better they will be at it. Also, teaching your people to intelligently discuss the trade-offs (risks) associated with more/less orthodox creative executions will help make them more confident. Making them more knowledgeable about tradeoffs will help them improve in sorting through alternatives in a way that leads to confident action and more effective campaigns.

### **Suggestion 13**

**Seek regular feedback from your Sales People to understand how effective your integrated marketing efforts are in supporting their productivity and success.**

Survey your appropriate Sales, Operations and CRM people to identify the strongest and weakest parts of the marketing communication processes, and develop tactics for strengthening the weakest parts and leveraging and enhancing the most effective ones. Encourage them to share constructive feedback with you whenever they have it.

### **Suggestion 14**

**Conduct 360-degree Employee-Advertiser-Agency-Supplier reviews twice a year, so adjustments can be made as necessary.**

This can help bring good ideas to the surface, and identify inequities and roadblocks in the communication process, and also identify people who are ready for more responsibility and/or promotion inside your own organization.

### **Suggestion 15**

#### **Develop a ‘Talent Exchange Program’ with your major Agency and Digital Media Company Partners.**

The idea behind a ‘Talent Exchange Program’ is for Advertisers, Agencies, and Digital Media Companies to spend time (usually several weeks or months) working on-site with each other to get a better first-hand understanding based on direct observation and hands-on involvement of your marketing counterparts’ operating processes and realities. The benefit of doing this is it creates the basis for easier and more successful working relationships.

### **Suggestion 16**

#### **Keep marketing professionals in the same roles for longer periods of time.**

Extend your job rotations to a minimum of 24 months to give people time to learn their jobs, and more time to do their jobs well. (To hold onto particularly valued employees, this may require providing them with access to educational and technological resources that make them feel like they are staying in the forefront of changes in the marketplace). Successful collaboration depends on what might be described as *teamwork* – it is more difficult to achieve if the people on the ‘team’ keep changing.

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## **Advertiser-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions**

### **Related To Measurement**

#### **Suggestion 17**

#### **Build continuous ROI and other fact-based measurement systems into your marketing management processes. Look for both specific and holistic ROI measures to evaluate marketing effectiveness.**

Measuring ROI is most achievable when it is an integral part of the planning and development processes. Successful measurement requires:

- Identifying the types of data needed in order to develop ROI metrics or other (real-time) measurement data.
- Discerning where some of these data elements may already exist.



- Determining the quality, accessibility and usability of existing sources of data through sales channels, Customer Relations Management, through internet channels including your Websites, Channel Marketing Partners, and through traditional media providers.
- Dedicating resources and assigning a sufficient level of priority to get the work done.
- Identifying three or four pilot projects to get started.

### **Suggestion 18**

**The best people in your company to set up ROI measures are directly involved with financial management.**

These people have probably been involved with setting up the existing financial reporting systems or use them regularly, and are also most likely know what available data already exists across the organization. Finance people should be capable of creating ROI measurement systems that aren't overly complicated or too constraining, and importantly, can establish realistic criteria for measuring ROI.

### **Suggestion 19**

**Use Agency incentives and scorecarding processes to encourage collaboration and the development of ROI metrics or other suitable (real-time) measures.**

Develop monthly scorecards and frequent reviews, tied directly to Agency compensation, that can you get better alignment as to how your Agencies (and Digital Media Companies) allocate their resources to meet your specific marketing objectives.

Agency Chief Financial Officers pay close attention to agency revenues and changes to the ways they are being compensated. Seek their input. Get them involved.

Scorecards should include:

- Fact-based metrics ideally, and other quantifiable measurements as available. (Don't settle for anecdotal stories – the same ones that repeatedly get told over and over again.)
- How well the Agency collaborates across channels inside the Advertiser's Organization, with other Agencies (based on 360-degree reviews), and with other Suppliers. Encourage candor and make it clear from the onset

that you expect your Agencies and Suppliers to cooperate with each other, and that you expect more than malicious obedience.

- The quality of Agency efforts.
- The Agency's initiative in building solid ROI metrics and other (real-time) measures into every major assignment they are given.

Agency incentives should be budgeted, paid on a monthly basis, ideally, and on a quarterly basis at the latest.

### **Suggestion 20**

**Build evergreen ROI and other fact-based measurement processes into your management system. Look for both specific and holistic ROI measures to evaluate marketing effectiveness.**

Advertisers and their Agencies should develop ROI metrics and related measurement processes that can be used broadly enough across the organizations that they achieve common usage or adoption. The reason for using a holistic approach is, for example, with an integrated marketing project, five of seven different parts of the particular marketing effort may show a good return. But if you can't effectively sort out what does work, someone may point at one part of the project that didn't meet your objectives and declare the whole project a failure, when that wasn't the case.

Additionally, knowing which elements are most effective provides a basis for incremental and systematic process improvement.

### **Suggestion 21**

**If you are bringing a new communications solution online (into production) to get a better ROI, or gain a tactical advantage, your people should also be able to identify what to take offline (take out of production), in order to anticipate and deal with how the missing elements will impact the overall plan.**

Team members should be able to provide a general estimate of cost/benefit implications. Bellwether's research suggests that at least some digital media executions produce a better measurable ROI than comparable traditional alternatives, which in turn creates the likelihood of reallocating part of an existing budget to where it will generate a better ROI. Put another way: 'If you are bringing something online, what are you taking offline?'

### **Suggestion 22**

**Case studies can be very motivating at enabling people to overcome their fearfulness (also, peer pressure can be a powerful motivator).**

Advertisers should develop case studies that include:

- Examples of successful collaboration across marketing silos inside the company.
- Examples of successful collaboration across the organization and multiple external Agencies and/or Digital Media Companies.
- Case histories/examples of successful innovation, where the teams did more with less.

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## **Advertiser-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions** **Related To Creative Development**

Based on what has been learned by Bellwether Leadership Research & Development during the past 15 year as it has conducted what might be described as *best practices* studies, the one thing Advertisers, Agencies, and Suppliers want more than anything else is a steady supply of good creative, workable ideas to choose from in order to grow their businesses.

### **Suggestion 23**

**Greater relevant creativity (a big idea) and flawless media integration are two of the most powerful ways for Advertisers to stretch their marketing expenditures.**

One of the biggest challenges confronting Advertisers, Agencies, and Digital Media Companies is the need to embrace a broader view of creativity and the growing role in the creative development process of 'creative' people from differing backgrounds, i.e., Digital Media Companies, Social Media – people that bring new perspectives to the creative mix who in a short time have become an important part of the advertising development process.

One research participant's perspective:

“Current times create remarkable challenges for marketers and also open tremendous opportunity for *innovation and reinvention*. Daunting challenges invite – in fact force – organizations to seek out-of-the-box approaches that fundamentally break the stagnation of traditional molds of thinking. These revolutionary thought processes are often fueled by the introduction of transformative technologies and innovations.

In today's world, marketers are faced with a dizzying array of mechanisms to reach, influence and impact customers who are increasingly fragmented in terms of where, when and how they consume information. This fragmentation creates even faster paces of change in terms of mind set, preferences, and opinions. These overriding factors will force divisions within Advertisers and Agencies to work hand-in-hand more intimately than ever before, breaking down the walls that have traditionally separated the thought processes of strategy, creative, merchandising, and media planning and buying.

Another factor overlaying all of these issues is the increasing digitization of the world, impacting the way both consumers and businesses interact with each other, information and brands. The digital world is forcing a collision of the "art" and the "science" of marketing. Technology traditionally reserved for the engineers and geeks of the world will now impact all parts of the marketing process. Technology now powers the delivery and development of creative and user experiences. Technology now empowers greater measurability and tracking capabilities of not just media consumption, but also individual preferences and behaviors. Technology now enables massive customization and one-to-one marketing executions previously considered impossible.

Those Advertisers and Agencies that succeed will run towards, not away, from these transformations and embrace the opportunity to leverage technology and innovation. But innovative new technologies alone will not define success. The winners must also demonstrate the courage to reinvent themselves by breaking down the traditional business models and modes of thought. They will close the chasms of communication and eliminate bifurcated motivations, forcing unified teams (even if across organizations) that work toward common goals and rewards. This will impact agency compensation models. And, this transformation will require deeper integration and open relationships with technology and media providers as partners, not vendors.

From direct experience, we are seeing these mindset changes within the ecosystem already from a variety of players. For instance, two of the largest online media giants – Google and Yahoo – have already begun to take more open approaches to market. One of the most cherished sets of data online has been the Google's web page crawler and contextual classification – the set of data that fuels Google's AdSense product. Recognizing the need to extend extreme consumer relevancy beyond search and text ads has now, Google is now sharing this information with external partners, including our company Tumri, to power greater display advertisements. Google now passes to the Tumri system in real time the same keyword cloud that Google's engine creates to identify the subject of a web page to power AdSense – enabling Tumri dynamic, intelligent ad platform to generate extremely powerful display ads based upon what the Webpage is about or what the color scheme of the page is. Likewise, the world's leading consumer portal, Yahoo, is also passing to Tumri key indicators to help drive relevancy and consumer impact for display advertising. Yahoo now passes key variables such as demographic and behavioral indicators to help Tumri's system deliver more impactful visuals and messaging. And this new mindset extends to newer media and targeting platforms,

not just the “big guys.” These types of partnerships have yielded incredible results – up to 500%+ improvements in performance.

These are just a few minor examples of quickly the world is changing. Great rewards await those who walk unafraid of the unknown, with a mindset oriented towards greater collaboration and with the courage to reinvent.”

**Calvin Lui, CEO, Tumri, Inc.**

#### **Suggestion 24**

**Maintain an ‘open door’ policy for listening to new ideas. Set aside a specific time each week to hear new ideas, wherever they come from.**

Intentionally or unintentionally, marketers develop “filters” that ideas and proposals must pass through. One example of this is that all Digital Media Companies have to first vet an idea through an Advertiser’s traditional Agency Of Record (AOR). Another is the hierarchy within an Advertiser’s Marketing Organization; i.e., all ideas must be vetted through the hierarchy and only those that make it through the filter get visibility at the top. Inevitably, these filters keep some potential breakthrough ideas from ever seeing the light of day, i.e., “That idea would never work here,” or “I know what my boss likes,” and the Advertiser’s view of the world inevitably becomes smaller and smaller. Breakthrough ideas by their very nature look unusual. When you have time set aside each week for listening to new ideas, make it clear that people from all levels of the organization they represent are welcome.

#### **Suggestion 25**

**Don’t be the “abominable no man” or people won’t bring you their best ideas. They will take them someplace else.**

*Marketing* is the intelligent and organized pursuit of revenue. Organizations ultimately prosper or fail based on their ability to bring additional revenue in the door. Often that depends on the ability to successfully bring new ideas in the form of services or products to market.

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**For more information about this Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC, study, contact Kerry O’Connor (Project Leader) at +1 248 790 8000 or Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271.**

#### **About Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC**

Most of Bellwether Leadership Research & Development’s work is conducted with the objective of producing client-specific actionable development suggestions to support sales, marketing, advertising,

and e-commerce activities. Current and past clients include: Google, Procter & Gamble, Toyota, Ford, Tumri, Intel, WPP, Omnicom, BBDO, Leo Burnett, McCann Worldgroup, and many others.

**Contacts:** Founder & Partner, Kerry O'Connor at +1 248 790 8000 [kerry@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:kerry@bellwethergroup.org)

Partner, Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271 [jim@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:jim@bellwethergroup.org)

**or Visit:** [www.bellwetherleadership.org](http://www.bellwetherleadership.org)

### **About Bellwether Digital Bridge, LLC**

(another part of the Bellwether Group)

Bellwether Digital Bridge provides value-added services supportive of your efforts to develop best-in-class marketing communications processes and outstanding customer experiences.

Bellwether Digital Bridge generally adds value in one or more of 3 ways:

1. Developing people and processes (education, training, encouraging knowledge sharing/collaboration).
2. Identifying actionable opportunities to meet business objectives by gaining increased customer-specific consideration, conversion, satisfaction, loyalty and sales through more effective use of digital communication resources.
3. Measuring the results (ROI) of your marketing investments.

### **Contacts:**

Founder & Partner, Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271 [jim@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:jim@bellwethergroup.org)

Founder & Partner, Kerry O'Connor at +1 248 790 8000 [kerry@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:kerry@bellwethergroup.org)

**or Visit:** [www.bellwethergroup.org](http://www.bellwethergroup.org)

## 20 Digital Media Company-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions

Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC has developed 20 actionable development suggestions for how Digital Media Companies can work more easily and successfully with Advertisers and Agencies. The suggestions are based on findings from the quantitative and qualitative research conducted for this study by Bellwether during January and February of 2009 and are consistent with other Bellwether studies involving Advertisers, Agencies and Digital Media Companies.

### Digital Media Company-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions Related To [Education](#)

#### Suggestion 1

**Many Agencies and Advertisers provide regular education and training for their professional staff people in the form of quarterly or semi annual gatherings. Digital Media Companies should ask to be put on the agenda and included as a presenter when meetings occur.**

These gatherings can be good business development and networking opportunities and also great sources of feedback.

#### Suggestion 2

**A Digital Media Company needs at least one really good *Educator* as part of its staff, or someone who can play that role it can draw upon from outside the organization.**

The Educator should work hand-in-hand with the Digital Media Company's sales people, Advertisers, Agencies and suppliers to help them understand how the Digital Media Company's technology works in ways that are relevant to their interests. The Digital Media Company Educator needs to devise a variety of different ways to accommodate different situations and learning styles. The Educator should educate the Digital Media Company's sales people to also be comfortable playing the role of educator. (At the same time, you should be mindful to recognize Advertiser and Agency window-shoppers, and part company with them as soon as possible.)

### **Suggestion 3**

**Match the people you have playing educational roles with the audience members.**

Take the time to think about the personal chemistry between the Educator and the audience. (The young person with multiple cosmetic facial piercings may be a world class expert on a particular subject, but the person may not be the best choice to interact with Senior Executives in a conservative organization.)

### **Suggestion 4**

**Tap into the intellectual property readily available at other Digital Media Companies such as a Google and Yahoo. Don't be bashful about asking for it.**

A willing spirit of knowledge-sharing is essential for customer education efforts to be fully successful. In the best situations, this means the knowledge-sharing is going both ways, so the net result is a value-added experience for everyone. The Digital Media Company is educating the Agency and Advertiser – providing them with a useful way to think about the world (inclusive of the Digital Media Company's technology), and the Agency and Advertiser in turn are educating the Digital Media Company about how the Digital Media Company may be able to fit into their worlds.

### **Suggestion 5**

**Educate newbies (newly hired people) at Advertisers and Agencies and suppliers – spend extra time helping them find the on-ramp to using the Digital Media Company's products, services and methodologies.**

The Advertising World of the last century, until the emerging Digital Era, was essentially a mentoring/guild system where knowledge was shared one-to-one and passed down – that mentoring/guild system has been obliterated by the need to operate in a leaner manner. Newbies on both the Advertiser and Agency sides languish from neglect in many, many cases. Educating the newbies about how to use a Digital Media Company's technology and to its way of thinking represents a major opportunity for many Digital Media Companies. This is a variation of Apple's decades-old strategy of appealing to the educational markets. As newbies mature, gain increasing decision-making authority, move into senior leadership positions, and sometimes move to other companies to continue up the corporate ladder, they will take their knowledge with them and can serve as both customers and evangelists for the Digital Media Company.



### Suggestion 6

**Help everyone – Advertisers, Agencies, other Suppliers understand the terms, expressions, acronyms commonly used by in the Digital Media industry by providing easy access to a glossary of terms on various appropriate Digital Media Company sites and other locations.**

CPMs, KPIs, CPC, CPS, POV – while the use of acronyms are useful as shortcuts in a world migrating to text messaging as a primary way of communicating, Tower of Babel acronyms also serve as artificial barriers to more productive communication and can be interpreted as a sign of arrogance by people who don't speak the 'special' language.

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## Digital Media Company-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions Related To **Collaboration**

### Suggestion 7

**Reach out relentlessly and express a willingness to work collaboratively with Advertisers and Agencies across all parts of their organizations, and other suppliers all the way up and down the supply chain.**

Make it abundantly clear to Advertisers and Agencies and other Digital Media Company partners that you are committed to working more collaboratively with other ad hoc members of groups that come together for finite periods of time to develop integrated marketing campaigns. Whenever possible, remain organizationally neutral.

### Suggestion 8

**Resist the urge to emotionally pull back when you encounter opposition – look for ways to bridge differences with people who often have legitimate points of view.**

This is particular important as it relates to working with people in new situations.

### Suggestion 9

**Define professionalism in the new operating environment.**

Bellwether's research suggests Advertisers want the professional guidance of both Digital Media Companies and Agencies to help them survive and prosper. Make sure your sales people understand how their clients personally evaluate them as professionals.

### **Suggestion 10**

**Have one person/unified sales team call on the same client, their agency and other suppliers.**

Advertisers and Agencies find it very frustrating when they have multiple sales people calling on them from the Digital Media Company and feel like they are hearing inconsistent messages and being left out of the communications loop.

### **Suggestion 11**

**Ask to be included by Advertisers and Agencies at the planning stage of major integrated marketing projects when you have a reasonable certainty of involvement.**

Your presence can be a major source of help to Advertisers and Agency planners and creative people during the development stage, and after being part of the process several times, you may be included as a regular part of the early stage development process.

### **Suggestion 12**

**Learn to speak the other person's language as part of the process of reaching across organizational silos – meet them more than half-way. Encourage cross-organizational cooperation by addressing your clients in language they already understand – their own.**

Bellwether's research suggests that Advertisers wish Digital Media Companies and Agencies would do a better job of learning about the Advertiser's business.

### **Suggestion 13**

**Seek other peoples' points-of-view. Encourage candor.**

For reasons ranging from intimidation to arrogance, people don't ask for other peoples' opinions or points-of-view. It can be an expensive mistake. There are very few problems or challenges someone else hasn't had to deal with before. Often one can benefit by seeking the other person out and asking what they learned from the experience.

### **Suggestion 14**

**Seek regular feedback from your Advertiser and Agency clients to understand how effective your efforts are in supporting their productivity and success. Conduct 360-degree Digital**

**Media Company employee-Agency-Advertiser-supplier reviews twice a year, so adjustments can be made as necessary.**

Be open to feedback as a rich source of insight about what you can do to improve. Make a conscious effort to avoid taking criticism personally.

#### **Suggestion 15**

**Develop a Talent Exchange Program with your Agency and Advertiser partners.**

The idea behind a Talent Exchange Program is for Advertisers, Agencies and Digital Media Companies to spend time (usually several weeks or months) working on-site with each other to get a better first hand understanding based on direct observation and hands-on involvement of your marketing counterparts' operating realities. Seek to have your employees permanently on-site when justified.

Evaluate how a Digital Media Company Talent Exchange Program with Advertisers and Agencies could help your company develop embedded relationships and a "play book" of best practices.

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### **Digital Media Company-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions** **Related To [Measurement](#)**

#### **Suggestion 16**

**Advertisers want to move further into the digital space, but are looking for solid proof of effectiveness and ROI.**

Seek to develop a robust portfolio of case studies that can serve as proof that Advertisers are experiencing a good ROI using what you have to offer. Ideally, your case studies should include:

- Examples of successful collaboration across marketing silos inside Advertisers, Agencies and Suppliers.
- Histories of your company working in close partnership with Advertisers or Agencies to improve the ROI of marketing programs.
- Case histories/examples of successful innovation, where your company helped Agencies and Advertisers do more with less.

Case studies can serve as a benign form of peer pressure inside organizations and can be a powerful motivator to get people to act. (Case studies can be very motivating at enabling people to overcome their fearfulness.) The Digital Media Company should talk with

Advertisers, Agencies and channel marketing partners about what case studies it would like to put together in cooperation with others.

#### **Suggestion 17**

**If you are helping an Advertiser or Agency bring a new solution on-line (into production) to get a better ROI, your sales people/consultants should also be able to identify what to take offline (take out of production), in order to anticipate and deal with how the missing elements will impact the Advertiser's overall effort.**

This should be a by-product of a cost/benefit analysis.

#### **Suggestion 18**

**Conduct post-mortem reviews using neutral ombudsmen-type people to learn why Advertisers or Agencies fire your company or choose to work with other suppliers instead your company.**

When clients leave, always have someone follow-up to find out the *real* reason why.

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### **Digital Media Company-Specific Actionable Development Suggestions** **Related To Creative Development**

The thing advertisers, agencies and suppliers want more than anything else is a steady supply of good creative, workable ideas to choose from, to grow their businesses.

#### **Suggestion 19**

**Greater relevant creativity (a big idea) and flawless media integration are two of the most powerful ways for Advertisers to stretch their marketing expenditures.**

Digital Media Companies constantly need to look for new ways to help Advertisers, Agencies and other Digital Media Companies think about Creativity in applied ways. What may be obvious to the Digital Media Company may not be obvious at all to an Agency or Advertiser. Digital Media Companies many times need to make an extra effort (and not be easily discouraged) by the need to demonstrate the benefit of what they have to offer in a variety creative ways.

### Suggestion 20

**Digital Media Companies should quietly anticipate and manage the ‘fear points’ that serve to paralyze clients in their efforts to act in a more appropriately aggressive manner.**

(Uncertainty causes people to self-check.) Many people can be managed through fear points with forethought. ROI metrics and other fact-based measures can help instill confidence. Having case studies can help, too. Sometimes mindfully rehearsing people through the more robust planning and creative development processes is all that is required.

One research participant’s perspective:

Current times create remarkable challenges for marketers and also open tremendous opportunity for *innovation and reinvention*. Daunting challenges invite – in fact force – organizations to seek out-of-the-box approaches that fundamentally break the stagnation of traditional molds of thinking. These revolutionary thought processes are often fueled by the introduction of transformative technologies and innovations.

In today’s world, marketers are faced with a dizzying array of mechanisms to reach, influence and impact customers who are increasingly fragmented in terms of where, when and how they consume information. This fragmentation creates even faster paces of change in terms of mind set, preferences, and opinions. These overriding factors will force divisions within advertisers and agencies to work hand-in-hand more intimately than ever before, breaking down the walls that have traditionally separated the thought processes of strategy, creative, merchandising, and media planning and buying.

Another factor overlaying all of these issues is the increasing digitization of the world, impacting the way both consumers and businesses interact with each other, information and brands. The digital world is forcing a collision of the “art” and the “science” of marketing. Technology traditionally reserved for the engineers and geeks of the world will now impact all parts of the marketing process. Technology now powers the delivery and development of creative and user experiences. Technology now empowers greater measurability and tracking capabilities of not just media consumption, but also individual preferences and behaviors. Technology now enables massive customization and 1-to1 marketing executions previously considered impossible.

Those marketers and agencies that succeed will run towards, not away, from these transformations and embrace the opportunity to leverage technology and innovation. But innovative new technologies alone will not define success. The winners must also demonstrate the courage to reinvent themselves by breaking down the traditional business models and modes of thought. They will close the chasms of communication and eliminate bifurcated motivations, forcing unified teams (even if across organizations) that work toward common goals and rewards. This will impact agency compensation models. And, this

transformation will require deeper integration and open relationships with technology and media providers as partners, not vendors.

From direct experience, we are seeing these mindset changes within the ecosystem already from a variety of players. For instance, two of the largest online media giants – Google and Yahoo – have already begun to take more open approaches to market. One of the most cherished sets of data online has been the Google’s web page crawler and contextual classification – the set of data that fuels Google’s AdSense product. Recognizing the need to extend extreme consumer relevancy beyond search and text ads has now, Google is now sharing this information with external partners, including our company Tumri, to power greater display advertisements. Google now passes to the Tumri system in real time the same keyword cloud that Google’s engine creates to identify the subject of a web page to power AdSense – enabling Tumri dynamic, intelligent ad platform to generate extremely powerful display ads based upon what the web page is about or what the color scheme of the page is. Likewise, the world’s leading consumer portal, Yahoo, is also passing to Tumri key indicators to help drive relevancy and consumer impact for display advertising. Yahoo now passes key variables such as demographic and behavioral indicators to help Tumri’s system deliver more impactful visuals and messaging. And this new mindset extends to newer media and targeting platforms, not just the “big guys.” These types of partnerships have yielded incredible results – up to 500%+ improvements in performance.

These are just a few minor examples of quickly the world is changing. Great rewards await those who walk unafraid of the unknown, with a mindset oriented towards greater collaboration and with the courage to reinvent.

**Calvin Lui, CEO, Tumri, Inc.**

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**For more information about this Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC, study, contact Kerry O’Connor (Project Leader) at +1 248 790 8000 or Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271.**

### **About Bellwether Leadership Research & Development, LLC**

Most of Bellwether Leadership Research & Development’s work is conducted with the objective of producing client-specific actionable development suggestions to support sales, marketing, advertising, and e-commerce activities. Current and past clients include: Google, Procter & Gamble, Toyota, Ford, Tumri, Intel, WPP, Omnicom, BBDO, Leo Burnett, McCann Worldgroup, and many others.

**Contacts:** Founder & Partner, Kerry O’Connor at +1 248 790 8000 [kerry@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:kerry@bellwethergroup.org)

Partner, Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271 [jim@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:jim@bellwethergroup.org)

**or Visit:** [www.bellwetherleadership.org](http://www.bellwetherleadership.org)

**About Bellwether Digital Bridge, LLC** (another part of the Bellwether Group)

Bellwether Digital Bridge provides value-added services supportive of your efforts to develop best-in-class marketing communications processes and outstanding customer experiences.

Bellwether Digital Bridge generally adds value in one or more of 3 ways:

1. Developing people and processes (education, training, encouraging knowledge sharing/collaboration).
2. Identifying actionable opportunities to meet business objectives by gaining increased customer-specific consideration, conversion, satisfaction, loyalty and sales through more effective use of digital communication resources.
3. Measuring the results (ROI) of your marketing investments.

**Contacts:**

Founder & Partner, Jim Garrity at +1 704 904 8271 [jim@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:jim@bellwethergroup.org)

Founder & Partner, Kerry O'Connor at +1 248 790 8000 [kerry@bellwethergroup.org](mailto:kerry@bellwethergroup.org)

or Visit: [www.bellwethergroup.org](http://www.bellwethergroup.org)