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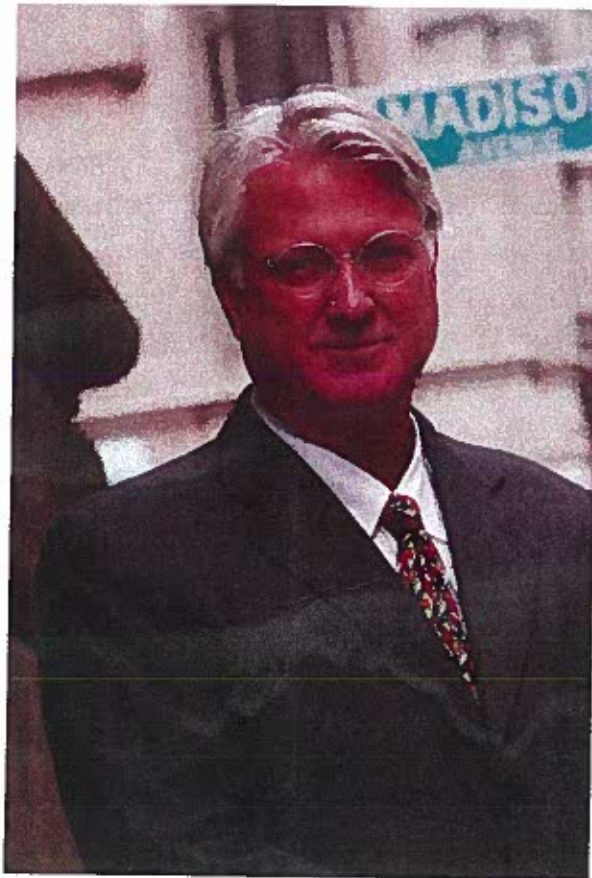
TRENDSETTERS

from the blackberry of deborah malone

This TRENDSETTERS newsbrief is intended to keep the international community informed by highlighting key marketing ideas and new trends from internationalists around the world.

If you have spotted a trend or given a recent presentation on a global issue, please tell us, and don't forget a photo of yourself!

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TRENDSETTER: Omnicom's Tim Love Discusses the Impact of Language in a Post-Digital World

Tim Love, Chairman of Omnicom's APIMA (Asia Pacific India Middle East & Africa) Region, regularly considers key cultural issues that ultimately affect how we market and advertise around the world. He recently turned his attention to language, or what he considers "our language impediment."

Love acknowledges that new communications technologies are creating a smaller world — one that is more transparent, interconnected and more interdependent. "The changeover from analog to digital information presents the advertising and marketing communications industry with great challenges, but also a tailor-made opportunity for better human understanding.

In the post-digital landscape marketers are facing, he suggests that we focus "on a technology more powerful and persuasive than digital. This technology touches more lives and has more impact on our socio-economic future than any other. This force is our oldest communication technology — Language."

With 7 billion people on the planet, and 5 billion now connected by mobile phone (50% of whom can connect to the web without a land line, desktop or laptop), he believes that the first media is now people.

"There has never been a better time to be in the advertising and marketing communications business, because it exists in the idea exchange between people. More than ever, effective marketing is as much about listening well, as talking. Strategic message creation alone is insufficient. We must be attentive to the ever constant stream of messages created by individuals."

Tim Love has certainly experienced how the first language a person learns hard-wires their mind. "This makes it critically important to know what language a person first learns and which language they process information in, to truly understand each other. It is like taking a British electrical plug with its distinctive three-pronged design and trying to plug it into a French or German wall socket. It doesn't work. You need an adaptor."

The marketing and advertising communications profession requires that we be an adaptor for understanding an ever more diverse range of people and cultures.

Tips for Improved Cultural Agility:

- **Treat language difference with more reverence.** Don't be afraid to ask individuals you are attempting to communicate with a) what language did they grow up speaking at home, and b) what language do they think in and/or which they count numbers in. We are finding even as a person learns different languages, they still count in the language they first learned.
- **Another tip for language versatility:** Always ask questions and invite dialogue, and build (two-way conversations, instead of a one-way missive). This changes the way agencies do our work. Instead of launching one big campaign at one go, this becomes a series of sequential, ever-interacting modules
- **Learn how to say hello, please, thank you in the language of your communications partner.** It will sharpen your mind (people who speak more than one language tend to have reduced onset of Alzheimer's and dementia). It will remind you of the gap in understanding which you need to respect in order to win friends and influence people.

In the stream of communications technology which is ever flowing, all information flows into and out from individuals, with an undertow of misinformation that has never been stronger. And, we all come to the stream with our own language impediment.

the internationalist

FOR ADVERTISING, MARKETING + MEDIA PROFESSIONALS

Created in January 2003 by Deborah Malone. The Internationalist was launched to connect the people and ideas in international advertising, marketing and media. Today The Internationalist is read in over 100 countries and has become a trusted source for international best practices. It is dedicated to the business needs and challenges of international marketing professionals as they participate in multinational branding and campaign building. The Internationalist is now IN PRINT, ONLINE and IN-PERSON — all to better serve the needs of this community.