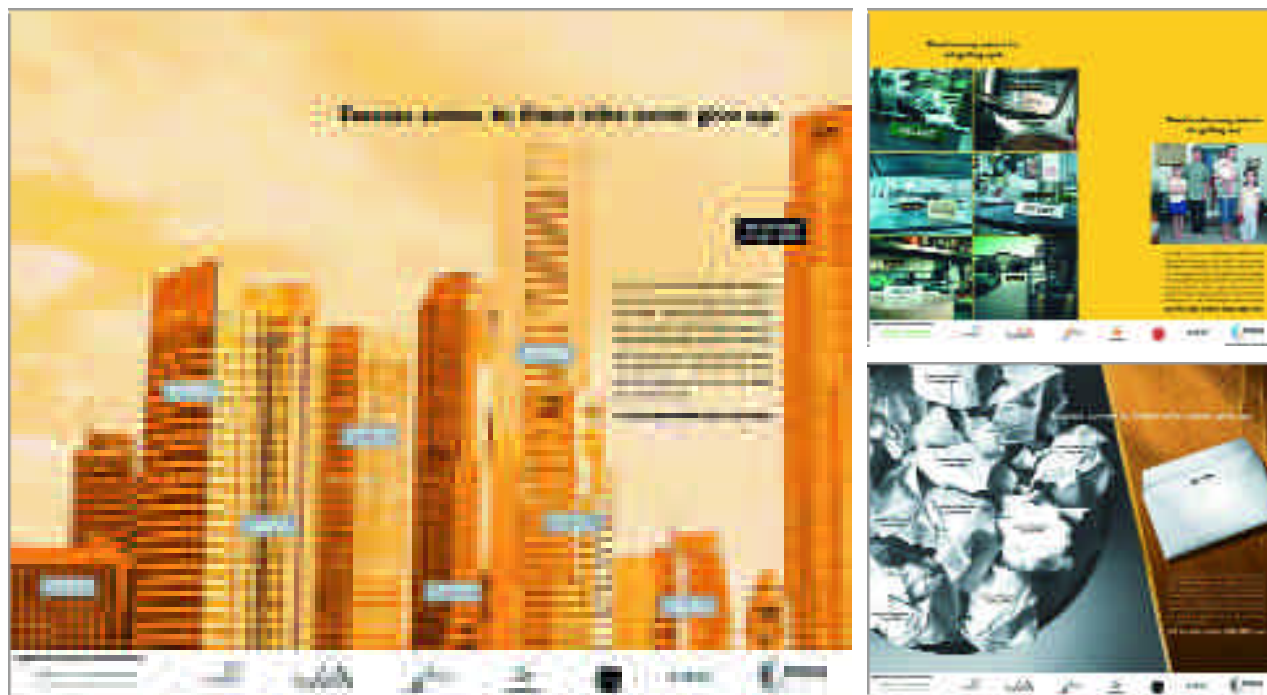


Seeking Out

DYR and Ministry

“Conviction is always more powerful than dogma. Both our client and the agency were keen to respect our target audience with a relevant dialogue”
 – Frederick



The print campaign produced by DYR for the Ministry of Manpower can be found in publications and on outdoor media such as bus stands



The late Frederick Wong, Vice President of Business Development, DYR

RETRENCHMENT has become a common word in the vocabulary of many Singaporeans these days. As more join the ranks of the unemployed, the general sentiment among those seeking jobs in Singapore is that it's hopeless.

But the Ministry of Manpower has collected data that shows that things are not entirely hopeless. Data suggests that determination and perseverance does pay off even in this tough economic time. In fact, the Ministry claims that three out of four retrenched workers in Singapore actually do successfully find work after a period of time.

Empowered with this knowledge, the Ministry of Manpower looked to Dentsu Young and Rubicam to develop a public service campaign to communicate this message and boost the morale of those who have suffered at the chopping block.

“The research commissioned by the Client generated some very interesting findings which differed from the initial brief, and led to our refining the strategy. The minute the new strategy was defined, the new creative

crystallised naturally,” said Frederick Wong, vice president of business development for DYR. “Our Client was immediately receptive to the seamless integration of the more focused strategy and the fresh creative.”

The strategy was to develop a campaign that would create an impact and a lasting impression on Singaporean job seekers and to encourage and inspire them to keep pounding the streets until they found the job that was right for them.

But research showed that those looking for work in Singapore were already committed to finding a job. As such, the commitment was made to talk to the people, rather than at them, to help build up their confidence and encourage them not to give up in spite of the adversities.

“Conviction is always more powerful than dogma. Both our client and the agency were keen to respect our target audience with a relevant dialogue,” Frederick explained. “To ensure this we focused on statistical facts that three out of four retrenched people have found re-employment and to reassure our target audience as well as concentrating on

Job Seekers

of Manpower campaign fights rising unemployment

by Kelvin Wee



The five TVCs touched the hearts of Singaporeans and gave those who were seeking jobs the encouragement needed to continue their job searches for the right positions

those instinctive qualities of determination and resolve with which our targets need to identify.”

With this in mind, the next step was to set up the team at DYR to handle the campaign. On the creative end, executive CD Patrick Low was given the task to write and direct the TVCs. Chua Li Hong was assigned to assist him with the Chinese versions and 2 Oceans was commissioned as the production house. The print campaign was given to copywriters Mathesan M. and Chua Li Ling and art director Low Eng Hong.

On the business end, account director Sengupta Sangram was responsible for developing the strategy and was assisted by account manager Gerald Tan and account executive Kea Sui Hong. Together, they set out to create five different 30-second TVCs and three print ads. These are supported by the use of outdoor media such as wholly painted busses and bus stand posters. Moreover, the campaign was developed in all four of Singapore’s national languages to insure that the message reaches everyone it needs to regardless of language.

“All the appropriate touch-points were included. In this case we required direct marketing, as well as mass media, such as TV, press, posters, and even busses,” Frederick said. “The beauty of the concept was that it was adaptable to these various media.”

The public response to the campaign has been very encouraging. In fact, the “Jobs Task Force” hotline received a 10-fold increase in the number of calls and there has been a 30% increase in the number of unemployed Singaporeans approaching “Career Link” for assistance.

“They were excited and proud and felt that the campaign did justice to their cause,” Frederick said about the Ministry’s reaction to the public response. “Their incoming job help-line call-volume quadrupled to 1,600 calls per day as soon as the campaign was launched. That speaks volumes!”

But Frederick was quick to attribute some of the success of the campaign to the co-operation and support that DYR got from representatives of the Ministry of Manpower.

“All successful campaigns depend upon a genuine partnership between client and

agency, and this was yet another good example of that synergy in practice,” he stated. “For us in the agency it was very reassuring to witness the client’s amazement at how effective advertising could be for their particular message as a fully integrated campaign is not something that they have done before.”

The nine-month long campaign was launched in late October and is still ongoing. The possibility of subsequent phases will depend on the analysis of the follow-through research.

Based on the response so far, Frederick said he is confident that the campaign will achieve its long-term goal:

“To support the Singapore economy and inspire our workforce by highlighting those essential elements of the Singapore spirit which each and every retrenched person has the power to realise.” 🙏

Editor’s Note: ADOI is sad to report that shortly following this interview, Frederick Wong was killed in an auto-accident while on vacation in Thailand. At 34, he spent the last 11 years striving for excellence in the industry. His presence will be sorely missed.