

Why we need creativity

 By [John Laurence](#)

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Have you ever wondered why you can't tickle yourself? A well-accepted theory holds that it's because you know what to expect. Your brain has limited capacity and can't process everything that is happening around you, so it filters out everything that it assumes will happen. So when you tickle yourself, you know what is going to occur and it's of no interest. When somebody else does it however, it usually arouses your attention.



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Your brain is effectively a machine that is most interested in changes in your environment - changes are important because they can signify that something is different and could represent an opportunity or a threat. Essentially, your brain is on the lookout for something novel in the environment and will direct your attention to that which is out of the ordinary.

Bringing something new into existence

Creativity in essence involves bringing something new into existence. It involves the generation of something novel, something which did not exist before. This is why we need creativity in business. If our brains ignore everything we expect, then marketing communication will be ignored.

The tricky part comes in building something which is not too novel - if our brains can't process something with ease then we tend to find it confusing and disbelief sets in. It has to be novel, yet simple or complex, yet familiar.

Adaption

What really ensures the future of the creative industry is a process called 'adaption'. Like when you step outside a nightclub and find yourself still yelling at people around you. Your brain has adapted to the louder volume and you have upped your voice to compensate.

Adaption is the brain mechanism that filters out constants so that you can concentrate on the things that have changed. We are constantly adapting to our environment - it's why the likes of Miley Cyrus and Lady Gaga have to continuously up the

ante in their outrageous behaviour. We get used to their last set of antics and no longer pay attention.

And so creative agencies are tasked with finding new ways of attracting people's attention to our marketing messages. It's a treadmill that will never stop, because novelty will always win the battle for our attention.

ABOUT JOHN LAURENCE

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