

Readers struggle to spot the printers amidst the advertising clutter and debris

There were some interesting contrasts recently between printing firms and how they like to advertise.



By [Richard Clarke](#) 26 Aug 2003

The pages before the contents page in the latest edition of Brainstorm magazine were all devoted to printing and printing solutions.

First up is Nashua with a snazzy picture of a printer spewing pictures of a map into a basket. "Introducing the Nashua 3800 C colour printer. It prints 28 colour pages a minute and 38 black and white pages a minute, making it the fastest printer of its kind."

The last part of the copy is instructive as the printer market it seems is segmenting into smaller and smaller niche markets. A cynical reader might say something like, "It could be the only printer of its kind."

But the fun doesn't stop there as on the following page we have Oce South Africa with a young man holding a globe and staring into the distance. The copy reads, "The full spectrum of digital printing solutions... and the expertise to bring it all together."

In small print at the bottom of the page it says: "We're evolving with our market."

Following on from that we have OKI with a CD and the words, "If it's a colour printer you're after, there's only one way to react to what's on this CD: FAST."

The funny thing is that if you want your potential customer to react fast to your ad you have to get the message across quite speedily.

I spent at least 2 minutes fighting with the sticky tape after having to wrench the CD package away from the page it was stuck to and by that stage the only reason that I persevered was that I sensed a topic for my column.

I inserted the CD and sat back to watch what could possibly now make me move fast after all the delays at all I got was some comparative advertising.

I was forced to watch a showdown between the OKI C5300 versus the Hewlett Packard 2500N and the Minolta QMS Magicolour 2350 which reminded me of badly scripted wrestling on TV.

The criteria for this challenge were the time taken to spew out one page and then the time taken to spew out ten. Needless to say OKI are the kings on the block but just how many people would have bothered to go through this arduous procedure if they didn't have to do it.

There was far too much clutter and the sneaking suspicion that somebody dreamed this up while doodling around on PowerPoint.

The killer was the choice at the end between replay and quit. This is what leads to cyber rage.

Out of the three one ad was streamlined and focused. There was no clutter and the brand was being built ; the reader was reading the minimal copy.

The other two spent advertising money hawking specific products and that is a criminal waste of the budget. They may as well have made an infomercial.

ABOUT RICHARD CLARKE

Richard Clarke founded Just Ideas, an ideas factory and implementation unit. He specialises in spotting opportunities, building ideas and watching them fly. Richard is also a freelance writer.

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