

R.I.P. - Why great ideas die

 By [Hilton Rose](#)

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Too single-minded. Too funny. Too controversial. Too different. Too expensive. Too hard.



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There's no end to reasons why good ideas end in the conceptual scrapyard in the sky. The clients may be creative, they may be keen, they may even have approved the idea - but, by the time that the audience gets to see it, more often than not, it is so watered down that it is unrecognisable from the brand agency's original idea which everyone was so enamoured with.

Why?

The truth is that great advertising doesn't only require a great team of brand developers. It also needs a great client. Amazing ideas which can make a product or service succeed are all well and good but unless the client remains committed to its execution, every step of the way, the end result can be worse than having no idea at all.

One of the challenges to keeping a new idea alive is that, by its nature, that idea is different. And different isn't always comfortable. It represents the unknown. But that's why a good agency will have designed that idea to land smack in the middle of its desired target market. As Bill Cosby said, "I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody." So yes, the idea may be risky or controversial, but if it resonates with your core market, the job is done.

Pfffffft!

Another (in)famous idea killer is budget. Agencies understand times are tight but clients should also realise that cutting marketing costs is precisely the wrong thing to do in such times. If an idea is on-brand and an objective is quantified, realistic budgets cannot be reduced, without the idea running out of steam before it makes it to the consumer.

Then there's implementation by committee. Imagine a concept is made out of play dough. Short of having a Steve Jobs-like visionary gingerly shepherding the idea to market, if the concept is handled by too many people, it will end up formless, shapeless and meaning not much to anybody instead of a lot to a few.

It's our passion to see great ideas come to life, not for own sakes, but for the sakes of our clients, their brand, products and services. To realise a concept's full potential, to make a difference in market, ideas must be owned. Again, not by the agency. By the client.

By creative individuals in the client's marketing departments. We need these people to nurture their idea, to coax from its glorious life, and resist the urge to twist into something amorphous.

Be bold, clients. Be resolute. Stand by your budgets. Stand by ideas. Protect the ones you love. Own them.

They are yours, after all. Because if you won't fight for them, who will?

ABOUT HILTON ROSE

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