

# How to build a better agency for a sustainable future

2021 has seen diverse circumstances leading to a variety of developments and changes within the agency business space. Certain companies have seen exponential growth and launched new offerings to meet client demand, while others have folded due to the shear strain of the last 20 months.



Jerome Cohen, CEO of Offlimit Communications (OLC)

As much as some agencies have been flourishing this year, many still face a challenge, in particular - how do you build a better agency that ensures client fulfilment, employee confidence and secures business output?

Offlimit Communications (OLC) is a business that has adjusted to the many challenges that come with keeping itself relevant over the past 16 years, which is a strategy that led to the agency bagging an MEA award for the best Through-the-Line Agency in 2020 and 2021 as well as the 2021 Prism Award.

## **Creative talent**

As an agency owner with over two decades of experience working in marketing, Jerome Cohen, OLC CEO, believes that in a world that requires effortless pivoting to ensure a company's adaptive and agile personality, creative talent is undoubtedly at the top of the list.

Talent and creativity can often be at the forefront of what makes an agency a thriving entity; however, not many businesses consider having creative talent as the heartbeat of success. It is a competitive advantage that makes client relationships

grow, campaigns deliver to their respective ROI, and small to large scale activations or events succeed.

Having a brilliant combination of a staff complement that is creative and talented is not where the buck stops. Creative talent inexplicably extends itself to a client base like the one OLC thrives under, such as Tiger Brands, Nestle, Coca Cola company, Pernod Ricard (to name a few..)

"An agency and client merger of creative talents allows us to work with our clients to adopt brand-specific approaches that help us connect emotional, functional, and transactional marketing messages," expresses Cohen.

In addition to creative talent, the digital landscape is where a business can see the potential for future expansion. "E-commerce and m-commerce are key growth areas that can take agencies to the next level," Cohen.

"We are always on the lookout for tactics that can lead us to additional revenue for all stakeholders involved and will often advise brands to adopt a digital-first approach to campaign executions."

Knowing first-hand what it takes to efficiently and effectively scale an agency business is not a skill Cohen takes lightly to acquire.

Staffing is always a concern for the fast-paced agency environment, one that Cohen doesn't take lightly. "I take the business of nurturing creative talent seriously. They are the backbone to our business and bring not only their skills to the table but their passion for serving," he concludes.

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