

# business as (un)usual

Today's volatile business environment signals the need for more than a worldwide overhaul of the way we conduct corporate practices. It's time to go beyond putting new measures and safeguards into place; we must redefine the very nature of global business itself. From "glocalizing" worldwide campaigns to aiding grassroots initiatives, it's no longer business as usual.

Strategic thinking, which has long served as business' cornerstone, is simply not enough any longer, no matter how brilliant. Strategic thinking alone won't accomplish what many clients are asking their partners to do: revolutionize their industries and create iconic global campaigns.

Even the majority of CEOs are not paid to be creative. They are paid to deliver the highest bottom-line results with the least risk, often through a linear process: Start with A, which leads to B, which leads to C. It's linear thinking, and it stands between you and great creative thinking.

To get to that creative thinking, we need to make what I call "The Leap," or the idea that enables you to start at point A, move to B, and then leap all the way to M...or beyond.

So who makes "The Leap"?

The creative people of advertising. Favoritism, yes, but based in fact. Creative advertising thinkers are not just well-equipped to think about business in creative ways, they are the best equipped. Whether they are advertising agencies, direct marketers, PR firms, Internet companies, promotion companies, or interactive companies, creative communications companies are filled with people who are paid to think creatively and to make leaps on a daily basis.

Creative ideas are something on which we pride ourselves at Euro RSCG Worldwide. They are based on that non-linear "Leap," combining creativity and strategy in new ways, resulting in breakthrough solutions and industry firsts.

We should not be asking how we can formulate an advertising campaign, but instead, "How do we,

“ Strategic thinking is simply not enough any longer, no matter how brilliant. ”

clients and agencies together, define a creative idea?"

The best way to answer this is to take a look at some practical applications of creative ideas around the world that have not only transformed businesses but also helped to create and/or reinvigorate influential, global brands:

➤ The first client I ever had in advertising (at an agency called Scali McCabe Sloves), was among a small group of CEOs who plowed ahead and made creative leaps on their own. The client was Frank Perdue, and his idea was to take a commodity—chicken—and brand it. This seemingly simple idea revolutionized the poultry industry and served as a source of brand inspiration for many future business leaders.

Perdue passionately believed that his chickens were of higher quality than others, and for that reason he felt he was entitled to charge a bit more. By convincing consumers that they should now pay attention to the brand, Perdue took a monumental creative leap.

➤ Euro RSCG Worldwide has been Intel's global agency since 1996, and our partnership has been the essential ingredient when aiming for great creative thinking and a high intensity of trust at every level. If senior management at Intel didn't embrace creative ideas, none of their wildly successful breakthroughs like the "Bunny People" commercials or the "Intel Inside"



B Y B O B S C H M E T T E R E R

logo would have been created.

We also applied this same kind of creative thinking with Intel in China, where our priority was to raise awareness of computers. So our agency in China created a complementary campaign that educated the consumer about a processor and its importance. Because of China's size and scope, we turned to a nontraditional and decidedly low-tech means of building brand awareness: the bicycle. By manufacturing bike reflectors with the "Intel Inside" logo on the front, and information on the back, we educated consumers as well as created free advertising for Intel.

> When our Paris office, BETC Euro RSCG, was asked to work with the Paris subway system, it was the agency that took a risk and said that advertising was not the solution to the problem. RATP—Regie Autonome des Transport Parisiens—was facing a serious problem. Many riders complained that the metro was smelly, noisy, dirty, and generally unsafe. We soon realized the situation could not be reversed with advertising alone. Team members asked themselves the question: What business is RATP really in?

They realized that RATP should be in the larger business of providing services to customers who just happened to be extremely mobile. The leadership at RATP was open to creative thinking, and embraced the idea that what the metro really needed was a business transformation. Changing the Paris underground from a transportation company into a provider of mobile services required a complete shift in business strategy, a new competitive positioning, a new business model, and a long-term commitment. The collaboration began in 1995 and is still in place, all because RATP made "The Leap."

> A final example shows what can happen when we make consumers fully vested participants in the brand itself. In Argentina, Billiken is a well-known candy brand...that needed a makeover. It was the candy that mommy and daddy ate when they were children. Billiken needed more than just an ad campaign—the brand needed to be relaunched entirely. So we turned to the obvious partner: children. Because who better to create candy than the children who will eat it themselves?

We invited children to actively participate in the design and creation of Billiken's candy.



# Inventá tu golosina.

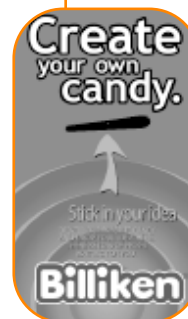
- Ahora con Billiken los chicos podrán diseñar la golosina que más les gusta, eligiremos entre 2 y 10 golosinas y Billiken las va a fabricar.
- Esta campaña comienza el 25/06 y finaliza el 31/11, contaremos con 7 comerciales que se emitirán en Cartoon Network, Fox Kids y Magic Kids.
- Además en [www.billikenclub.com](http://www.billikenclub.com) podés jugar, ir al kiosco, darle de comer a Billikito, hacerlo jugar en su cuarto y chatear. También te podés hacer socio del club Billiken y recibir fabulosos premios y descuentos.

Participá del sueño.  
Golosinas pensadas por vos y fabricadas por BILLIKEN.

## Billiken



“ We should not be asking how we can formulate an advertising campaign, but instead, ‘How do we, clients and agencies together, define a creative idea?’ ”



For this, we built an online workshop where children (potential “candyologists”) could submit their candy ideas, forged alliances with schools, and undertook a massive promotional campaign that included print, direct mail, and television.

There's a famous commercial in which someone eating chocolate bumps into someone eating peanut

butter, thereby creating a new product that's a hybrid of both. Creative ideas are born out of the same principle: creativity blending into business strategy and business strategy absorbing creativity, forging a new way of developing brands and transforming businesses. They make that essential, nonlinear leap.

These examples in totally different categories—and many others—point the way to a new kind of creativity and a new breed of business. In today's changeable business environment, the individuals and companies poised for this success will embrace intelligent research and analysis with unconditional creative passion.

Try it out yourselves. ●

*Bob Schmetterer is chairman and CEO of Euro RSCG Worldwide and the author of “Leap: A Revolution in Creative Business Strategy,” published by John Wiley & Sons.*