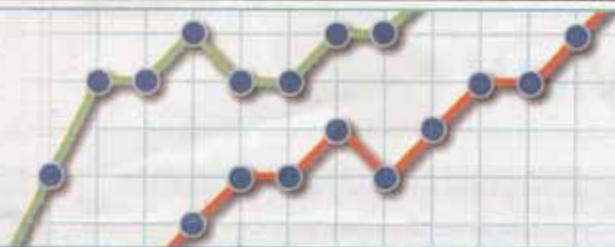


Business news



Company spreading a little creative chaos

by Caroline Bullock

WHILE they say you can't judge a book by its cover, there is no doubt that in these image-conscious times, first impressions count.

And in the corporate world, how a company is perceived by potential clients and business rivals is becoming an integral part of modern business.

Consequently the skills of design companies – the creative professionals responsible

for inventing and developing a brand are highly sought.

Chaos design in Guildford High Street is a case in point with often several projects on the go at once.

The company's six-strong creative team produces promotional literature, packaging, exhibitions, advertising and offers brand development and strategy for companies and organisations in sectors as diverse as finance, leisure, retail, education, media, government and retail.

From freshening up the image and reputation of a well-established firm to devising an entirely new brand for a fledgling enterprise, no two briefs are ever the same.

"Around 50% of our clients are local business which says a lot about this area and the number of national and international head offices based here as well as specialist companies," said Tina Lord from Chaos.

"It can be very competitive if you want a contract with a

large company and they'll invite a number of design agencies to pitch for it.

"In this business, you're only as good as the last thing you do but we've been able to build up a good back catalogue which speaks for itself."

Chaos has worked with a number of local businesses and organisations including Dorking-based Denbies Wine Estate, for which it designed the packaging for the bottles, Surrey Police and Brooklands Museum.

Chaos was also responsible for devising a brand for E'SPA, a spa-based beauty and skincare company based in Farnham whose products are supplied to premier hotels and retailers world-wide.

"We came up with E'SPA because it's memorable and a descriptive name," said Lord.

"We've applied the brand across packaging literature, website, and advertising to reflect both the qual-

ity and natural origins of the product. In addition we have established their online eCommerce site."

The product's distinctive glass bottles and marble-effect lids is a perfect example of how the right packaging can denote a product perfectly.

"The mineral lids positions E'SPA away from the more cosmetic brands on the market and is central to the brand," added Lord. A recent project was designing the invitations for the Pink Charity Party and auction, held at the Stoke Park in Guildford in aid of breast cancer charity. Walk the Walk. From an initial brief, the company's creative team will pool their efforts to channel an idea into a workable solution.

"Sometimes we get input from clients, but usually they just let us get on with it. But if we've listened properly to be brief then there shouldn't be any need for alterations."

Make time with Buy:time

A NEW time-saving service is coming to Woking, promising to de-stress the lives of busy professionals throughout the town.

Buy:time Surrey aims to offer a solution to time-strapped individuals by doing tasks as diverse as organising social events, finding a gardener, filling out tax returns, managing household correspondence and overseeing decorator and decluttering the house.

According to a recent nationwide survey 60% of women say there are not enough hours in the day to do everything they would like and 25% insist they have no time to exercise.

It also emerged that the average woman is prepared to spend £33.22 to "buy" just one extra hour.

A buy:time lifestyle manager will work with the client to fit any hours and all budgets.

"Stress levels aren't going down for many busy people especially working mums and those who have long daily commute hours," said head of the Woking office, Rebecca Pearce.

"I'm also a busy mum who has had to travel long-distances to work and therefore totally understand the issues involved and the help that's really needed."

"I'm confident that because of diversity of the service we offer clients there will be plenty of demand in Woking."

Those interested in using the service will not be charged a joining fee – whether you just need to buy one, hour for £35 or a few days, the company can help.

"It does not have to be for the more mundane things in life," said Pearce.

"It could be for booking overseas travel or with helping to organise a special weekend with

friends or family. Also, because of the versatility of buy:time, it makes a great gift for anyone keen to free-up that time in their lives and reduce stress."

For full details of all the services available, from finding a new home through to household organisation, visit the buy:time website at www.buy:time.co.uk.

Buy:time can also source local, trusted tradesmen, organise food preparation for social gatherings, carry out health and beauty treatments in your home, clean homes and even feed the pets.

It also provides full domestic secretary services including paperwork filing, taking messages, organising taxis, paying bills.

For full details of all the services that are offered by Buy:time visit the website on www.buy:time.co.uk or contact 0870 486 2624.

wordbox^W

Jane Newick, the managing director of Guildford-based PR consultant, The Word Box, looks at the key considerations when choosing a PR company



Choosing a PR company

SELECTING the right PR company is critical for any business, given the key role communications plays in promoting a company and its brands.

Producing a budget and written brief

Conflict of interest: Some clients are happy if the agency is working on competing accounts on the basis that the more specialist market knowledge the agency has, the better advice they will give.

Taxation matters

Stuart Collins summarises some of the accounting issues that can arise when converting a traditional partnership into a limited liability partnership (LLP)



Converting to a limited liability partnership