



I was planning to continue my mini-series about the categories of brands that we work with [Part 2: SMEs], but a chat with a new friend I met at my Singapore Design Festival talk gave me another idea.

## **How We Are Different**

She started our talk over coffee this week with a simple question: "Jörg, why do you think your clients want to work with you, when there are so many other choices? What makes you different?" For a moment, I was taken aback. Exactly the kind of question I would ask a client. But how to apply that to our little Asia-Pacific brand consultancy? Then I tried:

### **Experience**

It's actually quite hard for a client to choose a brand consultant, because - different from, say, an Ad agency where they at least see an idea - on the outset they have very little to go by, and the methodology is similar. So experience [what has this person worked on before, where has he/she worked, are there client references] and likability play a role. So work with us if our cases convince you and if you like us.



## **No Jargon**

Branding is not rocket science - don't believe anybody who wants to tell you otherwise. We all cook with water, and the circle [audit, positioning, touchpoint management, internal branding, communication, measurement] is more or less the same, even though others may have fancy names for it. We tell it as it is - honest and straight-forward. Maybe it's a German thing.

## **Nothing off the Shelf**

With our four offices and under a dozen people, we're clearly a boutique. Which means that we constantly need to punch above our weight by taking on the big boys. Our advantage: Everything is tailored, individually developed for each client. There are no "off-the-shelf"-solutions, but instead we listen first and recommend later. Quick [but not overnight] and with personal attention.

## **No Monkey Business**

In this small industry - just like in Life - it doesn't pay to cut corners. So when potential clients ask us to pretend we developed their existing positioning [so they can get Government funding], we answer with a smile and a 'No'. When they ask us to inflate the survey numbers to impress the CEO, we politely suggest to work with another consultancy. These days, all brands are well advised to be responsible, transparent and have integrity. It's not just the latest trend - it's also the right thing to do.

I was thinking about our recycling of paper and turning the aircon up a degree and considered adding 'green' to the list. But then I remembered our Nespresso coffee [amazing taste but quite wasteful, as Mr Bodum keeps pointing out] and decided that would not be 100% credible. Not yet.

To a designer who is attempting to carefully redesign our Corporate Identity, I sent a few words:

Modern. Unpretentious. Fun.

I guess that completes the picture.  
Have a great break and an even better 2010 everybody!

Jörg

(In case you were wondering whatever happened to "The Consultant": It ran on Korean TV last week, and we're working on a new season for 2010. Stay tuned!)