



CASE HISTORY

**USING NEUROSCIENCE
TO CRACK B2B'S CREATIVITY
CONFIDENCE CRISIS**

CASE HISTORY

**HOW SCIENTIFICALLY-PROVEN
CREATIVE CONCEPTS
REVOLUTIONISED
AN IT SERVICES COMPANY'S
ADVERTISING**

THE BATTLE TO STAND OUT:

ADDRESSING CREATIVE APATHY

Our client had been struggling to stand out in the saturated business process outsourcing and professional services market. They faced a number of challenges which commonly impact B2B brands:

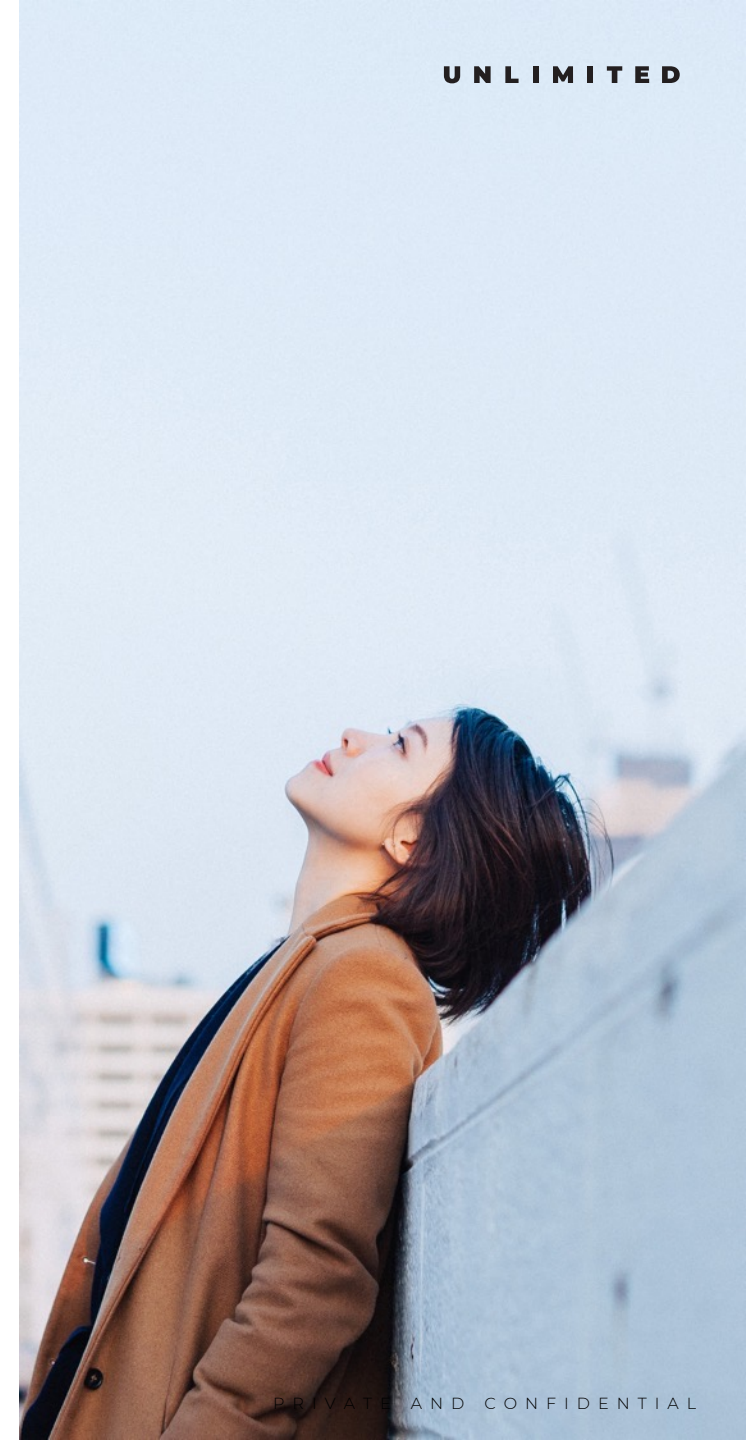
- Similar messaging and visuals to competitors
- Brand colour palette used a navy blue theme, much the same as a number of competitors
- Solution differentiation is very low, with its specialist competitors offering similar services and solutions
- A commoditised offer and poorly differentiated brand
- The client wanted to be seen as a strategic partner, but its market perception was as a service implementor
- The brand was pigeon-holed through its history as a network-based provider to major public organisations

A COMMON CONUNDRUM: **B2B BRANDS' CREATIVE INHIBITION**

Inspirational examples of B2B creative exist, but they are rare. Bold creative often runs counter-culture to B2B's historical 'play it safe' mindset:

Typical creative challenges we experience in B2B include:

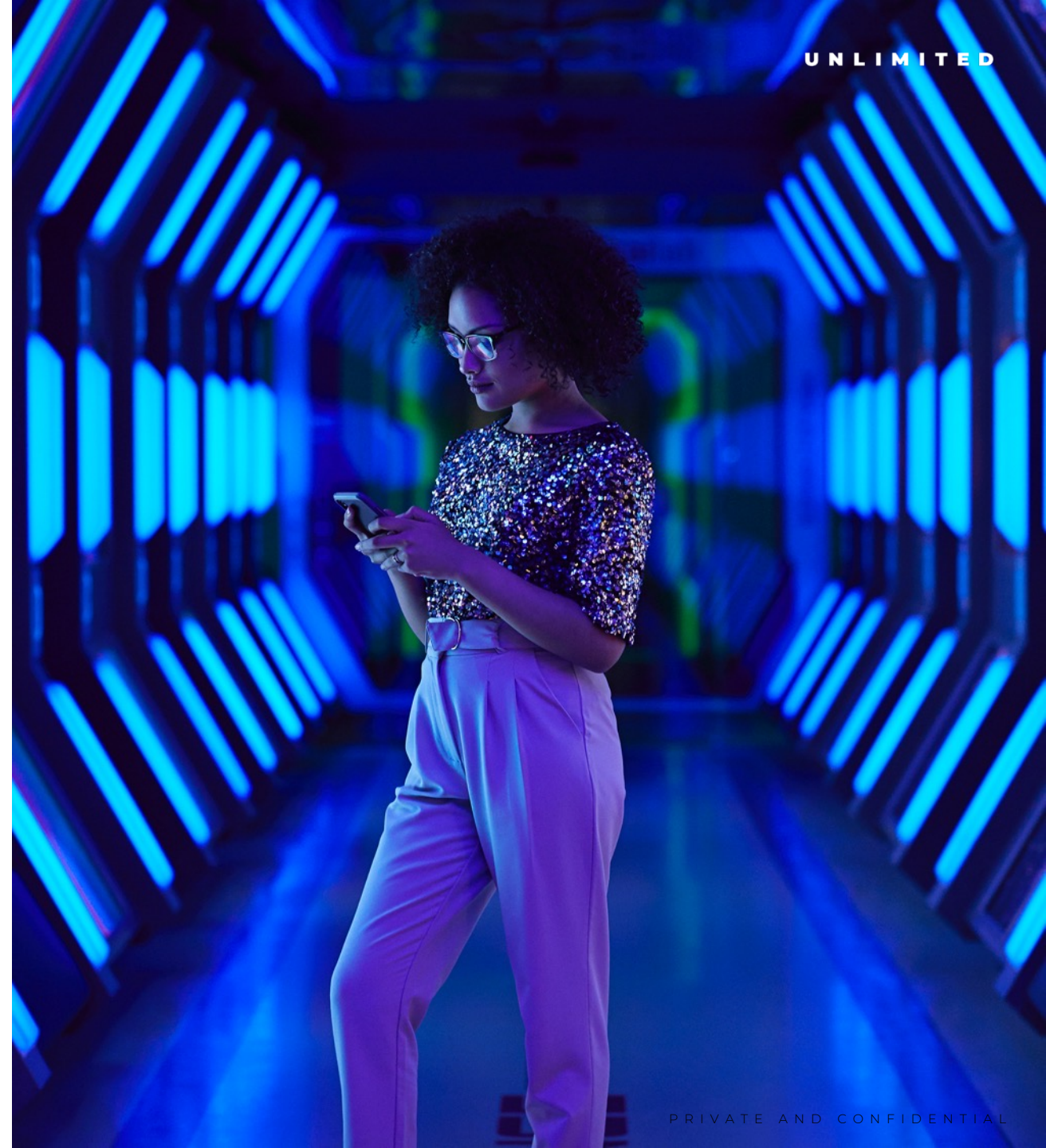
- Selling similar products or services to their competitors – failing to identify a unique value proposition or insight as a creative starter
- A history of making safe, comfortable choices, and falling back on the product or service
- Measurement focused on performance, with little on brand building as a way to accelerate performance
- Stakeholders can feel uncomfortable developing bold creative concepts as a departure from the status quo – the fear of having to persuade other stakeholders
- Confidence and exuberance in marketing can be misconstrued as uncommercial 'fluff', even within the marketing organisation



THE CHALLENGE: **BEYOND “NAVY BLUE”**

The BPO & professional services client briefed our B2B team with some big objectives in mind:

- “Gain cut through” against its competitors and stand out in a saturated market
- Raise awareness of its wrap-around consultancy services and technology expertise, which not enough people knew about
- Drive audience awareness around the recent repositioning of the brand



OUR APPROACH:

THREE VERY DIFFERENT CONCEPTS

We developed three creative routes: each of them “on brief”

FORGET NETWORKING

KEEPING UP WITH KEVIN

WELCOME TO YOUR NEXTWORK

Three great creatives – which to choose? We chose to look beyond subjective feedback, and test creative performance through our Human Understanding Lab team.

- Through a B2B online panel group, we used behavioural science and neuroscience techniques to assess the strengths of the three concepts
- Implicit research techniques helped us to understand how the client's target audiences actually perceive the brand
- We further tested the creative concepts with established industry panels to understand the degree of emotional connection and rational positivity they felt

CREATIVE TESTING METHODOLOGY

We use behavioural science and neuroscience techniques to assess reactions to each of the creative concepts, from our B2B online panel:

200

C-suite and senior decision-makers in

500+

public organisations and

1000+

private seat businesses;

96%

of which were already familiar with the brand.

The online survey assessed attributes like believability, clarity and relevance of the three concepts to interrogate how the creative:

- Caught attention
- Stimulated emotions
- Drove actions

This insight helped the client to identify the strongest creative and elements it could adopt, leverage or revise in the future.

HOW NEUROSCIENCE DRIVES CREATIVE CHOICES

Neuroscience research shows the vast majority of human behaviour operates below their conscious awareness:

Buying habits are influenced by emotion, memory retrieval and perception beyond consumers' conscious awareness

Implicit research helps brands understand:



What truly drives consumer decision-making



What creative concepts communicate to audiences at a cognitive and emotional level



People's emotional responses to creative concepts

IMPLICIT RESEARCH: **A NEW APPROACH FOR B2B CREATIVITY**

Creativity is often seen as a magical process that brands fight to measure. But measuring the act only serves to downplay it.

Explicit research techniques, like focus groups and surveys, only offer basic insight. It can't capture consumers' full emotional and motivational influences. So brands need to move the needle to better assess how people feel about their creative.

New approaches, like implicit research strategies, allow us to truly measure how consumers' brains work, what they like and how they make complex decisions.

HOW IT WORKS:

IMPLICIT REACTION TIME TESTING

We use Implicit Reaction Time Testing, a technique that helps brands to understand what consumers really think of their creative concepts.

The approach offers science-based confidence that new creatives works and appeal to the target audience. We also use creative testing to set future expectations around creative performance.

How creative testing works:

- We develop a series of stimuli for each creative
- Our researchers ask pertinent questions relating to action, emotion and motivation
- We measure the speed of response to our questions: Faster response = stronger conviction
- We identify additional questions that probe whether consumers would:

⊕ Share the content on social media

⊕ Talk about the content when they click through

⊕ Talk about the content with their peers and their boss

- We score creative performance:

⊕ Fewer than 25% of ads achieve greater than 40% implicit agreement

⊕ A creative concept scoring 40% or higher, will be in the top 25% of all ads on performance.

WINNING CONCEPT:
**WELCOME
TO YOUR
NEXTWORK**

Two-thirds of respondents reported the ads improved their perception the client's brand. The winning concept was Welcome to your Nextwork, which:

- Made 70% of respondents feel "better" or "a lot better" about the brand
- Scored over 40% on 7 of the 9 judging criteria, including:

62% 'believable'

58% 'relevant to me'

56% 'easy to understand'

- Resonated particularly well with public sector respondents
- Best conveyed the brand's key campaign messages
- Best communicated the range of available network solutions
- Had an appealing design and use of terminology

NEUROSCIENCE UNLOCKS CREATIVE CONFIDENCE: **FROM NAVY BLUE TO TURQUOISE**

The scientific evidence proved that switching up from navy blue to turquoise would make a significant impact on the brand. Creative testing gave our client's brand team the ability to gain internal buy-in and launch an engaging 6-month campaign that included:



Hero videos
and social
snippet videos



LinkedIn
activity



Video
adverts



Partnership activity with
Automation Anywhere,
Blue Prism, Cisco,
Microsoft



Podcast
partnerships

The campaign helped our client to position itself as a strategic digital partner and consultancy. It also raised awareness of the innovative technology that makes it stand out from its competitors.

WHY USE TESTING?

TAKE A FRESHER APPROACH

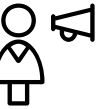
Most research processes help brands understand whether consumers agree or disagree with, or like or dislike a concept. Our approach take a deeper perspective providing:



Game-changing insight that goes beyond whether audiences 'agree' or 'disagree' with creative concepts



Explicit understanding of the strength of respondents' feelings



Insight into the level of passion consumers feel for a concept



Comprehension of consumer sentiment on complex topics



USING SCIENCE TO CRACK CREATIVITY

CALL TO ACTION:

YOUR BRAND NEEDS TO USE SCIENCE TO CRACK CREATIVITY

Implicit research techniques help you understand which concepts appeal to your audience and which messages or visuals they remember.



A scientific approach
to creativity:

1

Gives you confidence that you're going to market with a concept that's different, memorable and challenges the norm

2

Assures you that your concept will work as you already know it's what your audience want

3

Removes the risk of releasing something different, which you wouldn't previously have created, into the market

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