

Good old-fashioned values and service deliver winning formula

 By Ann Nurock

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At last years' [Financial Mail Annual Ad Focus Awards](#), HDI Youth Marketeers were awarded the Partnership Award for their work with Pick n Pay.



Jason Levin

I sat down with HDI Youth Marketeers MD Jason Levin to understand the secrets of their success. He bundled his thoughts into a couple of baskets and unpacked them as follows:

Sharing the vision: We're pretty good at including the entire team in what we are about, and what we are trying to achieve for clients and for ourselves. We refresh the vision annually and ensure that all our staff are informed. We believe that a team that is excited about all pulling in the same direction makes a huge difference to delivering on client needs. And delivery, in our view, is the best way of entrenching strong relationships.

A built-in can do attitude: It's in our DNA to have a can-do attitude. We are a team that always innovates, solves, makes a plan, ploughs through and shines! HDI commits to creating amazing work for our clients and the team dedicates hours and energy to 'making it happen'. We are tireless and always go the extra mile, as the following example shows:

HDI opened a project office in Uganda on a six-week lead-time on client request, and four weeks in Ethiopia thereafter. Assisting a client, at 24 hours' notice, in pulling off a day of national importance where they had been let down by another service provider.

Promise made, promise kept: This is a mantra we have loaned from P&G, but it is non-negotiable at HDI. If you said you were going to do it, you have to do it, and employ all resources necessary and reasonable to make that happen.

Love people, love work, love life: We genuinely like or love almost every single one of our current and past clients. And we look to hire people who have the same attitude. This love for clients is evident in our long-term relationships: Procter & Gamble (17 years), Pick n Pay (13 years), Turner Broadcasting's Cartoon Network & Boomerang (11 years), Times Media (11 years).

Good old-fashioned delivery: We bring some unique differentiators, like accessing places others can't easily get to, or get into. But also helping and educating clients who are unfamiliar with this market/territory. Youth can be intimidating. And we try to spend time understanding our clients' businesses, so that our work aligns with what they are trying to do, and what youth need. Then go out and make it happen. We admire a hard work ethic. We believe deeply in metrics, and have strong measurement devices and programmes in place to make sure that what we are doing is working, that we are reaching the numbers we said we would reach, and quality is of an exceptional standard. This makes feedback sessions with clients much easier.

Radar score: We regularly monitor the health of our client relationships via the Radar survey. Our commitment to client love has resulted in an average total client score of 8.45 (a 17% over-index to the industry's (7.2)) in 2014/2015 and an 8.9 likelihood to recommend HDI to other marketers.

Seems that they have a formula that's pretty robust. As Levin concludes: "Part magic, part logic, led by lots of delivery and hard work."

For more on HDI Youth Marketeers, [click through](#) to their press office.

ABOUT ANN NUROCK

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