

1.5: Exercises

tie it all together

Now that you have read this chapter, you should be able to understand how a real advertising agency pitches a real client:

- You understand that [Unnamed Publisher](#) is an innovative, open source publishing company that has produced *Launch! Advertising and Promotion in Real Time*.
- You have been introduced to Shephardson, Stern and Kaminsky (SS+K), a creatively-driven strategic communication firm, and their future client msnbc.com, a well-known media brand in search of an identity.
- You are able to identify SS+K's distinctive communications approach called Asymmetric Communications.
- You are able to recognize the pitch process and the resulting request for proposal (RFP) SS+K used.
- You can recall that the objective of the SS+K pitch was to win the msnbc.com account.

use what you've learned

1. As you have read in the chapter, SS+K is a multifaceted organization that specializes in helping clients with their unique communication problems. Review the listing of SS+K personnel. Once you have completed this review, link to the SS+K Web site <http://www.ssk.com> for more information on the company.

Agency Statement: “With offices in New York, Boston, and Los Angeles, SS+K has become a magnet for refugees and misfits from the most potent pillars of American society: politics, creative, entertainment, and technology. We believe that when smart, talented people from different backgrounds sit down to solve a problem, the solutions are bigger, more unpredictable and more effective. We believe it is more important to understand your business issues, delve into consumer insights and work with you to find the best solution for the brand regardless of channel. At SS+K, we don’t care what media or discipline we use to solve a client’s problem; it’s about delivering the right message at the right time in the right medium.

Using the SS+K Web site (or other search engines), review the agency’s past work. Carefully *examine one* of the following campaigns that SS+K has created: the Lance Armstrong Foundation, Delta Airlines, Qwest Communications, UNICEF, or the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Based on your review, comment on how SS+K seems to have applied its Asymmetric Communications model to the selected client’s communication problems. Try, if possible, to pinpoint the **Asymmetric Idea** SS+K developed that seems to be the focal point of communications. What do you think of SS+K’s approach for the selected client?

2. SS+K has made a pitch to secure the communications business of msnbc.com. Beyond material supplied in the chapter, what do you really know about proposed client msnbc.com?

As you review the msnbc.com Web site, list three msnbc.com offerings that impress you. Additionally, cite any features that either don’t impress you or are missing from the Web site. Once you have completed this task, visit rival news service CNN at <http://www.cnn.com>. Again, list three services that impress you and cite any features that either don’t impress you or are missing from the CNN Web site. As you make your evaluations, remember to review only the Web sites of the two organizations and not their televised news broadcasts. How does msnbc.com stack up against its rival? How could SS+K use your evaluation to improve the msnbc.com Web site? Be specific in your comments. As we go forward in our discussion of SS+K’s communication and advertising strategy for msnbc.com, see how many of your suggestions are recognized and addressed.

digital natives

- Almost all teens have difficulties with acne. Acne is not only a health issue but a social one as well. If you ever had difficulties with acne, what would you have given to rid yourself of those unsightly blemishes? To examine a new solution to this age-old problem, visit the Zeno Web site at <http://www.myzeno.com>.

Zeno is, according to its Web site, “the new secret weapon in the war against pimples.” Consider the following facts as you explore how Zeno works. The Zeno device looks like a cell-phone. It is a hand-held battery-operated device that is designed with a tip that heats to a preset temperature. Once the tip is heated properly and applied to the skin, the blemish disappears

in a relatively short time. Much of the procedure is customized to the user and his or her skin type. The level of heat does not cause skin damage.

After exploring the Zeno Web site and learning about the application procedure and facts about the product, develop a brief “pitch” to present to the Zeno organization. The objective of your agency’s pitch will be to demonstrate the best method for introducing the Zeno product to college-age students. Consider the basic message to be delivered to this target market and the best way to transmit that message to them. What do you perceive to be the keys in reaching the college-age students in your target market? Discuss your pitch idea and conclusions with your peers.

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