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The Most Powerful Name in Corporate News

Full-Service Digital Agency



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CEOCFO: Mr. Maday, would you tell us the concept behind RDIA?

Mr. Maday: RDIA is a full-service digital agency which means we collaborate with brands to help develop their voice, create on-going engagement with their customers, and build memorable experiences that promote growth.

CEOCFO: Your website shows your core values as “Connect, Inspire, Deliver and Evolve.” Would you touch on how those come into play day to day?

Mr. Maday: Simply put, our core values represent the DNA of our organization. They clearly define how we select our team, service our clients, approach our work-product and interact as people. Today, the common framework for communication is constructed in digital and is continually evolving. Our core values serve as our North Star and define how we contribute to and uniquely exist within an ever-changing landscape.

CEOCFO: When might a company turn to you?

Mr. Maday: While we are accomplished in the “stuff” related to the building and supporting of a brand, we have had tremendous success launching start-ups and reinventing under-performing brands. In both instances, we’re able to break everything down to its most simplistic form and utilize our process to meticulously create something new. We help brands find their voice. I know that sounds basic, but in reality, it is probably one of the most complicated things to do. Often, organizations become surrounded by so much noise that they start to lose track of what they stand for as a brand. Through our process, we help brands to figure out who they are and how to resonate with an audience.

CEOCFO: What might you look at during that process that others do not realize should be in the mix?

Mr. Maday: Brands will often have an unrealistic view of themselves. They come to us with the brand they want to be and call for a visibility campaign around promises and services that they will never be able to support. So, if you build a campaign around that, all you’re doing is creating demand that a brand can’t fulfill. Our process helps to define the true competitive advantages of the brand, not the benefits that a brand aspires to have.

CEOCFO: When you are creating a campaign, how do you put together experience, trends and intuition but still keep personal opinions from overriding?

Mr. Maday: In reality, you can’t help but introduce your own personal experiences into a campaign – I’ve been doing this for 22 years. That’s not a bad thing. You have so many experiences that can be utilized that can positively influence a strategy, and that’s probably one of the reasons people use us. However, we always start with traditional research, no matter how familiar we are with an organization or an industry. We look at market trends, perform competitive analyses, and use primary and secondary research to get a good understanding of project success. Our intuition serves as the final validation and determines what the campaign is going to be.

It’s also important to remember that a successful campaign isn’t always about being 100 percent right initially – and no one ever is. It’s about being mostly right and setting up a framework to correct based on performance. This involves ongoing monitoring so our campaigns get better over time.

CEOCFO: It seems with many television ads you do not really know what the product is. You might remember the commercial but you have no idea what the actual product is even if the commercial was engaging. How do measure when people are going to remember the product?

Mr. Maday: If you were asking what the secret formula is to make a memorable campaign, I would say there’s no silver bullet. Factors that influence campaign success can vary based on the social climate, distractions, seasonality, and timing. The answer is, it takes structured and rigorous research to improve your chances of success.

To measure what was memorable, we heavily leverage social listening as a real-time, cost-effective measurement tool. We listen to the way and the frequency people talk about our campaign and monitor the overall impact for the brand.

CEOCFO: *I see a stellar list of clients on your website. Do you typically work on a project with a client soup to nuts?*

Mr. Maday: Yes, our preference is to be at the helm, the agency of record. As stated earlier, program success is dependent on upfront planning and strategy. The closer we are to that position, the better the results. However, since we can also develop the tactics on behalf of the brand, we can dream up amazing ideas and also bring them to life.

CEOCFO: *How do you provide flawless execution?*

Mr. Maday: It starts with how we evaluate a project and a brand. Understand what user's desire and setting goals that are realistic and aligned with the brand's strengths. Flawless execution starts way before the project work. It's in the little details and the way you can interpret direction for a brand. If you think about it, success is determined before a line of copy is written and long before the revolutionary mobile app is deployed.

"Technology is an enabler, not a panacea. Those who get too caught up in the technology part of it lose sight of long-term goals. If you focus too closely on the technology, you're developing towards obsolescence." - Matthew Maday

CEOCFO: *Speaking of technology, how do you stay ahead of the game?*

Mr. Maday: We employ so many smart people who are fundamentally ahead of the game already. They take real interest in our industry outside of the office, joining meetups, participating in hackathons, and going to conferences. It also helps that we are located in Chicago, which houses an interesting mix of industries and brands. This gives us room to focus on multiple industries and trends, providing us with a unique landscape perspective.

We are constantly talking to companies about launching new technologies or new products. In addition to our diverse workforce and mix of clients, we have to do a lot of research to support new concepts. Inherently, this allows us to understand what people want before they want it.

CEOCFO: *What have you learned as the company has grown and evolved?*

Mr. Maday: If you look at a lot of the cutting-edge apps and concepts, they are refinements of ideas launched in a primitive state decades ago. I remember watching a commercial last week and thinking, "We did this for Budweiser 18 years ago." The refreshing part of all this is that sound business strategies and ideas prevail. Technology is an enabler, not a panacea. Those who get too caught up in the technology part of it lose sight of long-term goals. If you focus too closely on the technology, you're developing towards obsolescence.

CEOCFO: *How is business these days?*

Mr. Maday: Business is excellent! We are in rapid growth mode, with a nice mix of projects and clients. You'll see some really cool stuff going live next month for DIRECTV. And, with our recent acquisition by RDI, we have been able to scale faster and play a more meaningful role for our clients. Sometimes it's hard to believe that this all started as a fun college project over 20 years ago.

CEOCFO: *Why choose RDI/A?*

Mr. Maday: I think the bigger question is, why not chose RDI/A? We've developed an effective process and refined it for over 20 years. Our process predictably and systematically leads to success. At times, I dream about being an artist, but in reality, this role makes me more of a scientist. We've had tremendous success helping brands find their voice and our process sets us apart.

We also have the innate ability to understand what resonates with consumers. We've developed unique algorithms that accurately identify and predict consumer behavior. You'll soon see some of these algorithms through a mobile app called Sports Bar Finder.

You should also choose us because of our team. We also have some of the best and brightest in the industry. Our team was handpicked and has exceptional talent with unlimited capabilities. Our work wins awards. Our creative stands apart. Our technology is leading edge.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine

For more information visit: www.rdia.com