

Graham Deneys - An adjustment is underway. Can you feel it?



By [Graham Deneys](#)

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What do meerkats, rabbits and Phil Collins have in common?



Graham Deneys is the chief strategy officer at Dentsu Media Brands. Source: Supplied.

Shift in focus

They were all part of market-share-moving campaigns that had limited hard-core selling and were more brand-building in nature, where distinctive and memorable characters and assets ran over an extended period. Consistently.

The last decade has seen a shift in focus however from broader, long-term brand-building initiatives to a myriad of alternative, and often shorter-term, options that include, quite a few misleading conversion metrics and flawed attribution theories.

The plethora of options available to the modern marketer has even affected our confidence, as we flip-flop on creative and formats as often as we check our mobile devices.

We do, however, appear to be at a crossroads with many respected industry voices demonstrating that a substantial part of

the good stuff, the stuff that is proven to shift market share and ROI over the long term, has been largely ignored.

Recent work by Orlando Wood, author of both *Lemon* (How the Advertising Brain Turned Sour) and *Look Out*, illustrates the power, and long-term returns, associated with consistent and memorable campaigns being deployed consistently over time. Especially when infused with a healthy dose of humour and character.

The examples he uses to illustrate his point are a far cry from most of the multi-option, test-and learn elements that permeate today's advertising landscape.

[Fortunately](#), a redirection appears to be underway, and one must just look at Airbnb's about-turn in 2023.



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The solution however is not a knee-jerk shift from one to the other, as shorter-term, more direct communications have a key role to play in the communications mix.

But it's proven that without the warm embrace of a longer-term brand-building campaign, filled with emotion, these are that much weaker. In a brilliant *Marketing Week* article penned by Professor Mark Ritson, the logic is clear that they should both work together.

[This symbiosis](#) is further supported by Les Binet and Peter Field's acclaimed work - *The Long And The Short Of It*.

Rebalancing of effort

Ritson not only proves that long (brand) makes short (more reactionary) work harder but, spoiler alert, it doesn't appear to work the other way around.

2024 should therefore see an adjustment where there's a rebalancing of effort between brand and shorter-term performance tactics, a balance that will ensure they work seamlessly together to super-charge the market-share needle.

I hope that 2024 will be a year filled with memorable characters and campaigns that find their way into our homes and slowly, over time eventually our hearts.

And if you're still scratching your head wondering what Phil Collins has to do with any of it – please put your headphones on and enjoy.

ABOUT GRAHAM DENEYS

Graham Deneys is the chief strategy officer at Dentsu Media Brands.

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