

Is bigger always better? Why size doesn't matter when it comes to agencies

 By [Yaw Dwomoh](#)

14 Aug 2019

“ *"If size mattered, the elephant would be the king of the jungle." - Rickson Gracie* ”



Image credit: Robin Benzrihem on Unsplash.

Yes, in certain instances size **does** matter. Like Tweets, font, asteroids, golf clubs, slices of cake and shoes.

When it comes to choosing agencies, there has long been an argument about who better serves big brands. Whether it's big, traditional agencies or small, boutique set-ups – both have their advantages.



Don't discount the small agency for your big data needs

Stephanie Walters 1 Feb 2018



In recent years, a host of boutique brand storytelling, digital and experiential marketing agencies have come out on top. Their ability to offer refreshing, unique and unencumbered client experiences are helping them land some big fish.

It is often the top creative talent and visionaries who birth small agencies after a successful career at a big agency. Their knowledge of how big agencies pitch and work gives them an undeniable edge, but they mostly distinguish themselves through their 'otherness'.



What does the shuffling of the big guys mean for smaller agencies?

Andrew Macfarlane 20 Jul 2018



I think there's space for both.

The reasons bigger brands are choosing small agencies are as diverse as the wide-ranging needs of each brand. They could want a different creative direction, have a limited budget or need a change in relationship.



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Leigh Andrews 29 May 2019



I've narrowed it down to five main reasons:

Changes, pronto!

Small agencies can be more agile, so they make changes faster. Of course, I'm not talking about a complete 180° deviation on the concept.

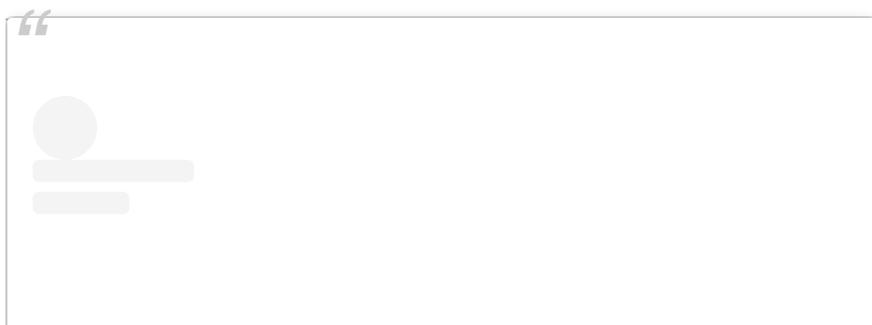
Sometimes business owners and CMOs change their mind halfway through a campaign and expect the agency to make changes without costing for a completely new concept.

When there are changes to tweak a concept or update a campaign with new market information, smaller agencies don't have to jump through as many hoops.

Another benefit is that the person on the other end of the line (or email) is most likely the one who will execute your changes which makes for a faster approach.

More bang for your marketing buck

I'm **not** talking about cheap. Smaller agencies are not necessarily cheap. **But** their costing is, at times, more transparent and straightforward and they don't have to carry the extra cost of massive building leases, staff contingent, utilities, departments that have nothing to do with your project.





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A post shared by Closed Sundays (@closed_sundays_retail) on Aug 8, 2019 at 7:46am PDT



When a smaller agency costs an item, you know that they are charging for their time, their core competency and according to their particular expertise. The strategic value-add to having the head of an agency directly involved in the project also cannot be ignored.

Two heads (or 30) are not always better than one

[Studies](#) into the inverse correlation between the size of a team and its productivity have shown that sometimes less is more. Bigger teams mean more places to hide and more procedures to follow to get sign-off.



The value of specialist services in your marketing mix

Danilo Acquisto 3 Apr 2019



Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos famously said if a team can't be fed by two pizzas, the team's too big. The same goes for meetings which can be huge time-wasters in big agencies.

There is no B team

If your project is not one of the highest-paying, big agencies may assign it to the 'B team'.

With a small agency, there is no backup. You get the same quality as any other high-paying client.

Less red tape, more relationship

I've already referenced the tricky and elaborate costing modules of big agencies. For changes to be made, discounts to given or for quick jobs, you need an agency that can jump to attention.



The final frontier of the independent agency

Danette Breitenbach 14 Aug 2017



With brands hurtling towards a digital future where they compete with not only local but thousands of global companies, using a smaller local agency with a proven track record may be exactly what you need to stand out in an analogous advertising crowd.

After all, if you're hunting for market share, you're better off with a lion than an elephant.

ABOUT YAW DWOMOH

Born in Ghana, Yaw Dwomoh is the Managing Director of Idea Hive, a specialist Brand Storytelling company based in Johannesburg that enables medium-to-large brands to craft their brand stories in a way that is authentic, connecting with customers in a way that captures their hearts and their purchasing power.

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