

what next?

GLOBALIZING IDEAS

From Mumbai to San Juan, OpenAd proves ideas really can come from anywhere

◀ By Annette Bourdeau ▶

Want access to over 9,000 creatives in 122 different countries? Thinking the concept was worth a shot, P&G recently tested Slovenia-based OpenAd, which describes itself as "the world's biggest creative department," for its Gillette business in Puerto Rico.

The web-based community at openad.net enables marketers to browse the work of thousands of creatives across the globe. They

"The ideas must be in addition to, not in place of, working with the creative talent at our agencies," she says. "The tool doesn't offer the strategic guidance, account management or executional capabilities that are key to an idea being successful in the marketplace."

Jones says P&G has been testing OpenAd on other brands, too, but declines to speculate about future use of the tool.



can buy existing concepts and designs from the site's gallery or solicit pitches. Co-founder Katarina Skoberne says calls for pitches never attract fewer than 20 responses, and go all the way up to 850.

"We saw OpenAd as another way to stimulate and broaden our own thinking," says Tami Jones, spokesperson for Cincinnati-based P&G. "We wanted to have first-hand experience with what we had only heard about from our agencies as well as other clients who are using OpenAd."

The Gillette brief for its Fusion razor landed hundreds of responses from over 21 countries. Latin America is home to 20% of OpenAd's creatives, while 15% are in Asia, 32% in Europe, 20% in the U.K., 6% in the U.S. and Canada, 4% in Australia and 3% in the Middle East and Africa. The winning concept, "She knows the difference," came from Live 1 Entertainment in Mumbai, India. P&G paid \$1,000 U.S. for the idea, but its agencies need not worry, says Jones.

Past work from the site has paid off for both brands and creators: the website g8rally.com for London, U.K.-based humanitarian group Make Poverty History won a Cyber Lion at Cannes in 2006, when OpenAd was still in its testing stage. The winning pitch came from two creatives at London-based Agency Republic, who got permission from their employer before responding. Later, New York-based UNICEF saw the site and retained Agency Republic to work on a global initiative.

Creatives can join OpenAd for free, while marketers can access it for a fee starting at \$3,000. Skoberne says remuneration is still a tricky issue. Currently, marketers are asked to specify what they're willing to pay for winning pitches; when they don't, creatives can include their asking prices when they respond.

OpenAd has offices in eight countries, and plans to set up a North American base in the States in the very near future. ■