

(LETTER TO CLIENT REQUESTING THAT A CREATIVE FIRM HANDLE EVERY ASPECT OF A PROJECT.)

Dear client:

These are times when every business is looking for ways to reduce costs. No wonder then that our clients sometimes consider making their own arrangements for some services we also provide—such as copywriting, photography, illustration, programming, printing, and web site maintenance.

Let us tell you why it is usually, although not always, better when we arrange for everything you require.

**Several pieces, one puzzle.** Our clients are a disparate group with a variety of needs, everything from ads, to literature, to web sites. Whatever their specific needs, though, they all have one thing in common: each of their projects involves several pieces that have to be scheduled, coordinated, tracked, and occasionally modified. The more we can arrange and control all this, the more efficiently everything progresses. This is important because our efficiency also gives you greater predictability.

**An organic process.** Unlike most other industries, the processes involved in producing creative products are unique each time around. They are also highly interdependent. Every activity and component is but one element of a larger effort that requires orchestration to maximize impact. Splitting apart components and activities often produces unintended consequences.

**More art than science.** And speaking of splitting off activities, doing this on a project's back end, the production phase, can be even more problematic. While dimensions and quantities are easily specified, defining production quality can be difficult or impossible. It is subjective, not objective; more art than science. Others are certainly capable of arranging for quality production services, but no one has a better insight into what will be required, and how to achieve it, than the individuals responsible for a project's front end. And that's usually us.

**We shop better.** Since it is rare for us to handle every aspect of every project inside, when outside services are needed the issue really comes down to who can get the best deal. Don't take offense here, but you'll usually come up short. It's not that we have more innate skill than you do. We've just been at it longer, and have more experience and contacts. Constant outside contracting keeps us up-to-date on who offers the most suitable talent, available capacity, and the right technology to get the job done right. And not incidentally, because of our volume, contacts, and shopping skills, any premium you'll pay over trying to make your own arrangements will be very small indeed.

**Single-point efficiency.** While we're on the subject of shopping, let's not forget the additional cost of time and paperwork. Interviewing and comparing capabilities and bids could possibly lead to a lower up-front price for some services. Far more likely, however, is that you'll find that shopping around produces little savings when the cost of your time is also factored in. Looking at multiple suppliers multiplies paperwork, and all the costs associated with it.

**Single-point accountability.** Because our standards for suppliers are so high, what we arrange for we can stand behind. It's tough to get on our list of trusted suppliers, and it's also easy to fall

off. So we're able to take full responsibility for everything we've arranged. The buck always stops with us. No discussion needed.

**Little more money, lots more value.** We're the first to admit that we can seldom compete when price is the main criteria. But we also know that looking only at the price of an activity that has to be creatively innovative and generate market impact is very short-sighted. What should be considered is value delivered. Think of it as cost divided by effectiveness. If you do, we think you'll agree that given all the above you'll usually get more bang for your buck by letting us arrange for all components of the projects we handle for you.

**What works best is best.** Finally, we would be remiss if we left you with the impression that having us handle every aspect of every project is always the way to go. It isn't. Occasionally, it makes more sense for you to make your own arrangements. When this is the case, we'll be sure to say so. We have no desire to talk you into something others could handle better. Looking out for our clients' best interests is how we've built a stable business and strong reputation. We're not about to jeopardize it for a little extra on your next project.

Sincerely,

Principal