



AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MEMBERS OF
THE ADVERTISING AGENCIES ASSOCIATION OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO:
ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR SELECTING
AN ADVERTISING AGENCY
IN TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

CONSIDERING

1. That the AAATT Members commit to act in such a way as will engender due respect for their product and professionalism, and the time, cost and effort they dedicate to these, in an environment of healthy competition between them.-
2. That the AAATT Members have long condemned processes for selecting an Advertising Agency which disrespect the value of their product and which, unnecessarily, consume substantial human and material resources on the part of said Agencies.-

In light of the foregoing, the AAATT Members record the ethical standards that, in their judgment, should govern the process for selecting an advertising Agency. They urge Advertisers, government ministries and Agencies, and generally all those involved in the business of communicating and advertising, to adhere to the guidelines set out hereafter:

STEP 1: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

If an Advertiser wishes to explore the options he has for selecting an advertising Agency, with the ultimate intention of choosing one with which to work, the Advertiser invites Agencies in which he is specifically interested to make a "credentials and background presentation" or Request for Information (RFI). Local and international best practice and experience indicates that the Advertiser should limit the credentials presentation process to no more than six Agencies, since previously the Advertiser should have determined the preferred profile of the Agency he wishes to hire.-

The content of the credentials and background presentation— although it varies from Agency to Agency—is premised on learning about the people and product of each Agency, and drawing up a shortlist. The Advertiser must not ask for, nor the presentation include, samples of, or concrete proposals for, work for a product or service of the current or prospective Advertiser.

STEP 2: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Only in those cases in which the choice of Advertising Agency objectively requires the submission of creative or strategic proposals, will Agencies be invited to participate in the next stage of selection, which for the purposes of these Ethical Standards will be termed "Request for Proposal (RFP)". –

Local and international best practice and experience, in the current state of the market, considers it unnecessary to require the participation of more than three Agencies in an RFP. The number can be increased to four if the incumbent Agency of the Advertiser also participates.

RFP PRINCIPLES

The AAATT Members consider that fair and healthy competition among the Agencies involved in a Tender requires compliance with the following principles:

- < Clarity of all the required information and the opportunity to request further information by the invited Agencies.
- < The requirements must be the same for all the participating Agencies in order to ensure fair and equitable evaluation in the selection process.
- < Information on which Agencies are participating in the Tender. In the event that the Advertiser decides to keep this confidential, he must undertake not to disclose the name of any of the Agencies invited to participate.
- < Setting the same deadline date for all the Agencies involved, by which the proposal must be submitted. If a presentation of the proposal is required, group them in the shortest possible time.
- < Determination of the date on which the Advertiser shall make its decision, which must be communicated to Agencies simultaneous with the RFP.

- < Reciprocal commitment of the Advertiser and the Agencies invited to tender to keep strictly confidential all information that is exchanged during the course of the RFP.
- < Advertiser's undertaking to respect the intellectual property of the proposals made by the contesting Agencies, and obligation of the Advertiser to refrain from using any part of the proposals or ideas put forward by those Agencies that have not been selected, unless an agreement has been made subsequently that will ensure proper remuneration for the use of the creative of the Agency in question. The Advertiser must also undertake to return to the participating Agencies all materials and information that they supplied, agreeing not to save a copy in any other format.
- < Agencies are aware that Advertisers may invite numerous Agencies to participate in an RFP, as there is no payment incurred on the Advertiser's side. This does not recognise the professionalism and effort of the Agencies, and results in substantial wasted effort. Agencies agree that a fee would mitigate such a circumstance. It is agreed that RFPs will therefore incur a fee as follows:
 - > For one-off projects or small creative RFPs, requests for media, marketing or digital strategies and planning: \$10,000. The supporting creative samples for such an RFP is no more than 10 pieces of work which comprise press layouts, radio or jingle to script stage, television to storyboard stage.
 - > For a substantial RFP for a large account and/or several products, which may require brand analysis and strategy, creative, templates, produced audio-visual work (animatics, jingles): the client will be charged based on a calculation of the average cost for each agency to participate in the tender. This average will be provided to the client as his fee for each agency's submission.
 - > Payments to competing Agencies are considered to be unequivocally just.

- > Payments will be made to the AAATT Corporate Secretary to reimburse each participating Agency.
- > The time-frame of the contract is irrelevant.
- > The fee represents a small part of the actual costs incurred in an RFP, and therefore must not be considered by the Advertiser as having compensated the Agency for the ideas and concepts presented in the RFP.

These ethical principles and standards have been established for Tenders for Advertising Agencies in which established Agencies in the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago participate. They are not established for Tenders involving established international Agencies that do not have representation or related companies locally.

Tenders where Agencies are invited to participate in the provision of advertising services locally as well as in other countries are governed by these principles and ethical standards, as the participants are established companies in the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, or are representative or related companies of international networks.

The AAATT Members place on record that any doubt or question of interpretation in relation to the present Ethical Standards shall be resolved by prevailing upon the *spirit* of the Standards over their *literal* interpretation. For the purposes of resolving any questions of interpretation, this function is delegated to the Executive Committee of the AAATT, either on its own initiative or at the request of a party.

The AAATT Members reaffirm that only the proper regard for the guidelines identified in this document will safeguard professional ethics and maintain healthy and fair competition among advertising Agencies. They therefore commit to inform the AAATT's Corporate Secretary in writing about the Tenders in which they are invited to participate.

AAATT Members affirm that they will be liable to Disciplinary proceedings if they make a presentation to a new, prospective client without charging the requisite fee.

SIGNED:

Agency

Head