



THE APP/RENTICE: SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

INTRODUCTION

School of Communication Arts 2.0 is the advertising industry's school for aspiring creatives. Later in this document, there is an article from the trade magazine Campaign, which explains what makes our school so unique. Winning a scholarship at our school is a fast track to a career in advertising, and there are two scholarships (each worth £13,000) up for grabs.

CONTEXT

More than 3 billion apps have been downloaded from the iTunes App Store. Tens of thousand of people are making a very good living by creating new mobile apps. Three years ago, the number of people making a living from mobile apps would just about fill a phone shop. The launch of the iPhone and App Store changed everything.

General consensus is that this is just the beginning. Analysts predict exponential growth in mobile apps. Advertising agencies are being asked to create mobile applications for their clients. Students can research examples of these by searching for 'Branded Utility' online.

This scholarship competition is open to anyone between the ages of 16 and 18 on January 1st 2010. Marketers describe this group as belonging to the "mobile generation" because they are the first generation to have been born into a world with mobile phones. Quite simply, they understand mobile better than any other generation.

THE BRIEF

The APP/RENTICE is a competition designed to help us find raw creative talent. We are looking for an original idea, explained well.

Come up with an idea for a mobile app and explain it to us. That's it!

It can be a new type of game, or something useful (we call these utilities).

We don't expect anyone to submit a built mobile application. We want to find people with vision and the ability to communicate their vision.

SOME HELPFUL HINTS

There are an infinite number of ideas waiting to be discovered. Solving a brief like this requires some focus and structure. Follow the steps outlined below for a better chance of winning this competition:

1. First decide whether you want to create a new game or a utility.
2. Spend some time looking at games or utilities on the iTunes App Store and other online retailers.
3. Whilst looking through them, keep a pad of paper nearby. This is your 'Wouldn't it be cool...' pad. Carry this pad around with you for a few days. You should aim for 50 'Wouldn't it be cool' statements.

EXAMPLES OF 'WOULDN'T IT BE COOL STATEMENTS'

- Wouldn't it be cool if there was a game where you used your camera phone to 'shoot' your friends and it turned them into zombies.
- Wouldn't it be cool if there was an app that showed which local businesses are hiring staff and giving work placements.

4. Come up with as many as possible and make them as different as possible so that you get variety of ideas. Don't start evaluating them yet!
5. Go through your list of cool statements, crossing them off if you think there is already a similar app.
6. From the statements that are left, choose your favourite two or three ideas. Note – this is the first time that you should evaluate your statements.
7. For each of your remaining statements, start asking yourself some 'open' questions. Open questions usually start with How, What, Where, When, Which, Who and Why.
8. The more thought you put into these questions, the more insightful your answers will be.

EXAMPLES OF OPEN QUESTIONS

- How do you earn points?
- Who is this aimed at?
- What makes it addictive?
- How would granny describe it?

9. You don't need to build the app, you just need to describe it so well that we completely understand what you are thinking.
10. Use words, photos, graphs, sketches, etc. to explain your idea. There is a sample submission available for download online, so that you can see what we are looking for.

RULES OF ENTRY

- You must be between 16 and 18 years old on 1st January 2010.
- You must submit your entry online at www.SchoolCommunicationArts.com/app
- Your entry should be submitted either as a PDF, Word or PowerPoint document. No other formats will be accepted.
- Your entry should include; (i) Your Name, (ii) Contact details, (iii) Date of birth, (iv) Name of school.
- Your entry must be submitted before 30th April 2010.

MORE INFORMATION

- A sample submission is available for download online at www.SchoolCommunicationArts.com/app
- A scholarship competition for over-18s is launching soon. Check the website for more information.

Marc Lewis, currently planning the rebirth of a once famous advertising school, has no hesitation naming the two figures who influenced him most profoundly.

One was the late John Gillard, the often eccentric but always passionate principal of the School of Communication Arts – dubbed the UK's "creative university" – that Lewis is now set to resurrect in a new guise. Lewis, 36, a former Gillard pupil, admits: "I was a total failure at school. John taught me to believe in myself because he believed in me."

His mentor's faith seems to have been justified. Lewis went on to become a digital entrepreneur, eventually selling one of his dot-com ventures to Chime Communications' Lord Bell for £20 million.

And it was Gillard, Lewis' first professional hero, who introduced him to his second. "On my second day, John loaned me a book – *Future Shock* by Alvin Toffler," Lewis recalls. "It not only helped me understand that the pace of change is getting faster but to understand where that change is going."

Among the school's alumni are Sir John Hegarty, Graham Fink, Larry Barker and Tiger Savage, and a less well-known creative called Julian Vizard who, while completing a brief to design the Tory Party logo (pictured), had his entry selected by the party.

The demise of the School of Communication Arts in 1995 has gnawed at the industry's conscience. It was sad enough that Gillard had to step down because of the Parkinson's disease that was to kill him five years later. Worse was the lack of a collective will to keep it going.

Gillard closed the school's doors an exhausted and embittered man. "My friends in other countries find it inconceivable that Britain, which leads the world in advertising creativity, can't find the money needed to carry on the school's work," he declared. Hegarty branded the industry's lack of support "scandalous".

Until now. With the IPA's support and the backing of Gillard's widow, Rosalind, Lewis has devoted the past three years to preparing a revival plan that will culminate in the school reopening in London next September, with a Manchester outpost planned for a later date.

The big criticism of Gillard's school was that it catered mainly for a well-heeled social elite. "There was one black student in my class," Lewis remembers. "And he was a rich kid."

It wasn't what its founder wanted but bankers demanded his students should have a good set of A levels or a degree as a condition of funding it. With fees of around £10,000 a year, would-be students either had to make huge financial sacrifices or be born to well-off parents.

There were a handful of subsidised places – and Lewis bagged one of them. He was the last person to win a *Guardian* scholarship to the school before it closed. But he confesses: "It's always bugged me."

Why? "Because *The Guardian* has always represented all the white-middle-class values that most



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Relaunching the creative university

The reborn School of Communication Arts has a champion in a digital entrepreneur. By John Tylee

people working in adland stand for. It's not representative of the new kind of person the industry needs to attract. An estimated 4 per cent of the industry workforce come from minority groups and I reckon that figure drops to 1 per cent in creative departments. How can agencies possibly have empathy with their constituents?"

It's against this background that he has devised a business model to challenge the status quo. His aim is to establish a college whose intake isn't only diverse but one where the industry helps guide what's taught and has a stake in its success. The intention is that students will be taught in an environment that replicates agencies as closely as possible and will work on live briefs during the 18 months that they're under instruction.

The college's proposed structure is built on the premise that today's tyro creatives need better preparation for the rapidly evolving communications environment and that the best of them may need help going straight into businesses of their own. There's even a longer-term intention to have the school double as a recruitment agency.

Lewis makes no bones about his distaste for industry headhunters. "They're modern-day whores," he claims. "They treat every job as just another trick and most employers believe they under-deliver. We

Notable alumni



John Hegarty
worldwide
creative director,
Bartle Bogle
Hegarty

"It's said you can't keep a great idea down. The resurrection of the School of Communication Arts is proof of that belief. The loss of talent in our industry with its closure is all too evident. Thankfully, that will now be put right."



Graham Fink
executive creative
director,
M&C Saatchi

"If you get a great brief, you stand a better chance of doing great work. If you get great teachers, chances are you'll get great students. That's why the School of Communication Arts is important. Simple."

think we could save the average agency between £120,000 and £150,000 in recruitment fees."

It's an ambitious plan – and some might argue a fanciful one – although the presence of Chime's Lord Bell, Rory Sutherland, the IPA president, and Seb Bishop, the Steak Media chairman, on the governing board underlines Lewis' seriousness.

The key, of course, is whether funding can be found to realise Lewis' aim to have ten of the school's first 50 students on scholarships, rising to 25 by the end of three years. There's the possibility of government and European Union backing but also raising cash from allowing agencies to draw on the school's talent pool which will include students past and present and, in some cases, their mentors. To do this, they'll become "friends", paying anything between £750 to £5,000 a year for the privilege.

The college will begin marketing itself to potential fee-paying students in March. All candidates will have to tackle a brief (although not necessarily an ad brief), take the IPA's online Diagonal Thinking test and successfully get through an interview by the governing body.

It has also launched the country's first curriculum, which is a national diploma level four, written by em-

ployers and not academics. It also uses Wiki technology so that it can be updated to emulate the fast pace of change affecting the industry.

But perhaps the most intriguing part of the plan is for the school to evolve a new creative discipline in addition to the copywriter and art director – the "ideapreneur". The

term was first coined by the writer and management guru Peter Drucker. Lewis has borrowed it to describe people who improve efficiencies in communication and he hopes that both the school and its agency "friends" can piggyback on those showing the most potential for success by getting them in front of venture capitalists, teaming them with MBA graduates, and taking a stake in their start-ups.

"Thirty such businesses will probably 'bomb' and 15 might just pootle along," Lewis explains. "But there's a chance one or two will be the next Google. And we only need one for this bet to pay off."

It's all a far cry from the approach of the computer-hating Gillard. What would he have thought about how his legacy is being evolved? "He'd be a bit bemused," Lewis admits. "But he'd also be chuckling that it's technology that will future-proof the creative sector."

