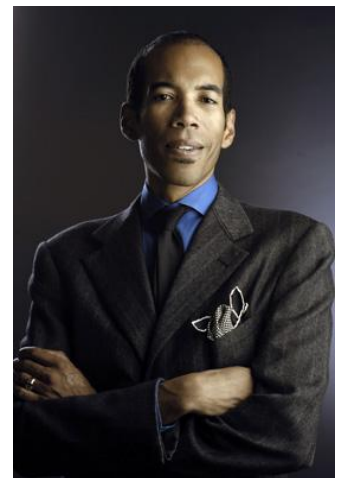


Proverb Ltd. Takes on the Goliaths

By Michael Chin
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When Proverb Ltd. took home two Hatch Awards (for B.Y.O.B. and Myers + Chang) at The Ad Club's annual advertising show, it was a benchmark for how far the boutique marketing agency has come since its inception in 2004.

"The lion's shares of the awards go to companies like, Arnold, Hill Holliday and Modernista! These are organizations that are 100 times, or 200 times, our size," said Daren Bascome, founder and director of Proverb. "It's not that we are just bringing more efficiency, it's that we are delivering a product at the same level or better."



There are qualities one would expect from a boutique agency: a personal touch, flexibility and an understanding of niche markets. And there are qualities one would expect from a big firm: competitive value, comprehensive services, diversity and general market sensibilities. With just nine employees, five of whom work part-time, Proverb has achieved all of these qualities.

Before founding Proverb, Bascome was a freelance graphic designer. Today, he and his partner, Christine Needham, are projecting \$720,000 in sales for the year, more than double their revenue from last year.

< Myers + Chang

For the trendy, diner-inspired, Asian restaurant in Boston's South end, Myers + Chang, Bascome wanted the design to be "bold yet sensitive." The comprehensive branding effort included logo design, print ads, restaurant décor, and an 80-foot dragon on Washington St.

"There's a tremendous amount of diversity in interests, experiences and background. You wind up with more ideas to draw from and there is a synergy that comes from it," Bascome explained. That synergy is one of the keys to Proverb being able to compete with the bigger companies. "By having different people in the room, we interpret the data differently. There are subtleties what we pick up on, to embrace the audience, that others might not get."

B.Y.O.B. >

Greenrock, a Bermuda-based, environmental advocacy group, sought out Proverb to create their Bring Your Own Bag/Bottle campaign. Bascome's goal was to create "visually arresting" campaign with a "sense of humor" that would encourage change without being "preachy."

