

Marketing monitor

THE PRICE IS RIGHT?

Agency remuneration models are changing

Despite arctic conditions and student protests in central London over 100 of the UK marketing services industry's leading figures attended the launch of the 20th edition of Kingston Smith W1's unique survey into the financial health of the sector. Caroline Marshall, executive editor at Haymarket Business Media, started proceedings by laying out a few issues facing the sector around the central proposition of "The Price is Right".

Esther Carder, partner at Kingston Smith W1, gave delegates a summary of the key findings from the 2010 edition of this year's survey. With the results primarily covering the year to 31 December 2009, it was no great surprise to hear that, on the whole, they did not paint a very positive picture. In fact the news was pretty gloomy all round.

Only two of the six marketing services sectors surveyed showed any significant growth. Between all six disciplines there was just a combined 0.4% increase in income compared to a 12% increase in the previous year.



**...FOR MOST AGENCIES
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Disappointingly, although unsurprisingly, only two of the eight sectors improved their profit margins (Direct Marketing & Sales Promotion and Digital) and both of these were from record lows in the previous year.

Looking at the Top 50 independent marketing services groups, revenue growth was minimal increasing by just 0.4%, with over half of the groups reporting a decrease in their revenue. Employee numbers continued to rise with a resulting fall in the key, gross income per head, productivity metric. This fall in income and productivity hit profits hard across the Top 50, with aggregate profits falling by 12%. The average operating profit margin also fell from 10.2% to 8.9%, with only 16 achieving a margin above our 15% target. Esther explained that for most agencies cost-cutting programmes were completed by the end of 2009 and that this should lead to an increase in margins in 2010 despite the relentless downward pressure on fees being felt across the board.

The price is right? (cont)

Looking at the more recent interim results of quoted groups, most have recorded quarter-on-quarter growth in both revenue and margins throughout 2010 compared to 2009. However, Esther cautioned that on closer inspection this didn't restore levels back to those seen in 2008, despite all the positive headlines.

Mandy Merron, partner at Kingston Smith W1, then gave delegates an overview of the last 20 years of the survey reflecting the enormous change the sector has seen during the period. A look back at the Top 50 in 1991 showed that only three of the independent agencies at that time still remain in the Top 50 in 2010 – BBH, Golley Slater and Cogent Elliott.

Looking back over the last 20 years there were some recurring themes. In 1992, in the teeth of the recession, profits had fallen by almost 80% of their previous high. Whilst income then improved through to 1995, profits failed to respond as increasing staff costs consumed most of the growing income. By 1996, profits had recovered. However, in 1996 and 1997 there was a massive increase in staff costs per head. This was caused by lack of recruitment during the downturn, which meant the demand for good quality experienced staff totally outstripped supply, with an inevitable increase in the price.

By 1998, with the stockmarket buoyant, groups took advantage of high share prices to complete a record amount of M&A activity. Over half of the companies with profits of more than £750,000 in 1998 sold during the following year, with the multiples being paid increasing significantly.



The next decade started tragically with the 9/11 attacks in New York, although budgets had already been falling for at least three consecutive quarters by that stage. By 2002 revenue was static, however, there were enormous goodwill write-off arising from the acquisitions made in the previous five years at the top of the market.

Over the next couple of years, and despite SARS and the Iraq war, things began to recover. However, profits were again squeezed by staff costs increasing as a result of the post dot-com boom cutbacks. By 2006 and 2007, consolidation was top of the agenda again, but this time new-listed UK-based acquisitive groups and some larger privately owned groups joined the multinationals in the buying spree.

...PRICE IS WHAT YOU PAY, VALUE IS WHAT YOU GET...

Now that we are officially out of the most recent recession the question was posed as to “what lies ahead?” Mandy explained that the challenge will be to handle the growth that is likely to come over the next couple of years without letting staff costs spiral out of control. She also said that the top talent running the sector now is much more experienced than perhaps when coming out of the last couple of recessions and therefore the signs are more promising this time around.

Mark Lund, chief executive of the COI and founder of DLKW then talked about value vs price. After explaining the difference (that whilst price is what you pay, value is what you get), Mark proposed that value is surely the more important determinant and is what clients, including the COI, will be looking at going forward to determine agency remuneration.

There are moments when certain businesses just take off and can generate millions from an idea that started in marketing and simply stole the imagination of the company and customers. However, Mark posed the question “why do agencies not get more benefit for this?”. Agencies are fundamentally much smaller than the likes of big pharmaceutical companies that take big long term bets on capital investment and R&D. Agencies are designed to be run profitably with positive cash flow. They are ill equipped to take risks. For them, the risk reward equation, does not work because agencies don't (and indeed can't) risk their own money.



However, Mark suggested that payment by results (PBR) is a way of moving the model slightly towards a more inclusive, shared agenda. It offers some risk and reward without endangering small and somewhat fragile businesses. IPA effectiveness awards over 30 years, crucially show that the discipline involved in setting PBR objectives, quantifying and measuring effectively is the single most powerful correlative to success. As such Mark said that PBR should make us all better, although real practical issues remain with measurement, attribution, practicality and incentivisation.

Whilst some PBR schemes are poorly thought out and executed, there is an emerging consensus on how to turn this into an effective model. Take an industry-wide model of 80% cost and 20% profit. Whilst one couldn't expect to put at risk the amount of fees that agencies need to cover their costs (80%), most businesses seem prepared to risk 50% of their profit (i.e. 10% of their fee), provided there is a possibility to go above the original 100% fee. That said, a lot of PBR schemes fail because they do not address critical challenges of measurement, or allocation of credit across an integrated campaign.



PAYMENT BY RESULTS (PBR) IS A WAY OF MOVING THE MODEL SLIGHTLY TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE, SHARED AGENDA.

Sometimes it is because clients are not prepared to take the risk that a campaign does spectacularly well and they end up paying more than 100% of the fee - despite the overall economic effect overall being highly beneficial. Mark expects to see agencies and clients both putting their money where their mouth is without putting the actual businesses at risk or making the relationships too injurious.

Tina Fegent, a procurement specialist, expressed surprise that after so many years, many agencies do not have internal procurement experts nor use external specialists. She explained that many issues arise from agencies not knowing how to deal with client procurement properly. Procurement isn't really new anymore, but there is more of a need for it now, and it should be the role of procurement to be the commercial side of the client marketing department.

Whilst procurement is involved in increasing the formality of processes that are being put in place, especially at larger companies, there is still room to be creative in fee discussions. Bringing procurement staff into the agency to see what is happening will help them understand and build commercial relationships.



Tina was of the view that PBR can work. Whilst agencies do have to try and square the circle generating more value for less money they must be better at demonstrating this value to their clients. It is crucial for agencies to tighten the scope of work that is being done so that they can charge extra for clients (inevitably) going outside the scope of the work.

Agencies should also ensure that there are regular meetings with procurement staff and formal processes in place for reconciliation. Procurement departments are certainly more involved in marketing spend than they used to be. However, they also generally have a much better understanding of what they are buying. Agencies need to get trained in negotiation and plan ahead for it. Tina suggested having one person who deals with procurement, and thinking about how you structure this so that you can pick up on the latest trends (de-coupling, etc) and make sure that you are picking up on best practice from one client and applying that to your other clients.

Tina indicated that hourly rates are fine but agencies should be creative and think outside the box. Selling the idea for a flat fee and then earning a licence fee if the client wants to use the idea abroad is a good example of the concept and licence fee model.

The price is right? (cont)

Following on from this theme Paul Graham, founding partner at Anomaly, talked about how, regardless of size or the conversation, they never sell time. Paul said agencies should try and wean themselves off “the addictive drug” of time which incentivises using more people and taking longer; do clients really want that? He suggested that agencies were inherently in the business of ideas and have got themselves into this “rate card” place by accident, selling units of cost in a homogenised product across an industry that should be about ideas. Paul drew a parallel to A-Z street maps as an example of a business not knowing what it was selling, i.e. getting people to their destinations, not selling books! He suggested that if it had thought like this perhaps an A-Z maps app would have cornered the market before Google maps arrived.

Agency staff should be striving to achieve game-changing ideas for clients every time they come to work. All agency processes, incentives and conversations with clients should be designed to achieve that every time. Not selling on an hours basis allows other gains to be had and removes the restriction on your ability to make interesting investments into new ideas, and to generate new revenue streams for clients.

SOMETIMES THE PRICE CAN CHANGE WITHOUT THE PRODUCT CHANGING.



Taking the example of a market stall: the person buying is sizing up how much they need the product and the seller is judging how much the buyer can spend and how much they need the product. The price is them meeting in the middle. Sometimes the price can change without the product changing. Would you pay more for an umbrella bought when it is raining than when it is sunny?

Caroline Marshall rounded up proceedings by chairing a lively Q&A session. So what price is right? It was clear that agency remuneration models are changing and that it will be increasingly difficult to rely on traditional methods of revenue generation. Those agencies that can deliver and demonstrate value will surely be in pole position to reap the highest rewards.

The four key messages were as follows:

- Price is what purchasers are prepared to pay and what sellers are prepared to sell for.
- Expanding this to agency remuneration models, it is not a one size fits all and you can build in elements. Base retainer, project fees (based on type of media, amount of effort, type of people), revenue share, PBR, etc.
- Strive to take the “fence” down which will bring new people through the front door. If you are prepared to roll the dice together, this will bring in entrepreneurs and one-man bands, not just the big procurement-led organisations.
- If clients don’t like your ideas, take it to the next highest bidder. If you don’t think you are getting the right value, sell it somewhere else. Time is just the opportunity cost to sell it to somebody else.

Significant fall in income but agencies hold onto staff

Both income and productivity fall but overall agencies remain profitable

Productivity

Productivity has declined by 4% since the last edition of *Marketing Monitor*, with gross income per head of £102,000. This just exceeds our target of £100,000, with 26 of the agencies in the Top 50 achieving this which is a steady decrease since 2008. Whilst income decreased by 7%, agencies seem either reluctant or slow to respond with staff cuts. Overall, staff numbers decreased by 4.6%. However, 21 of the Top 50 agencies reported an increase in staff numbers.

With employee numbers remaining relatively high compared to the fall in gross income, average employment costs per head have remained constant since the last edition of *Marketing Monitor* at £61,200. This suggests that any staff reductions have been across all levels and pay rises have been rare. Overhead costs have reduced significantly to £29,400 per head. Falling productivity and static staff costs meant that operating profit per head decreased to £11,500 and continues to be below our target of £15,000 per head.

Profitability

Operating profit margin has decreased again to 11.3% and whilst it follows our predictions in the last editions of *Marketing Monitor*, it is perhaps not as low as many had thought it could be. Staff costs as a percentage of gross income have increased to 59.9% as staff numbers remain relatively high. Our target is that staff costs absorb no more than 55% of income.

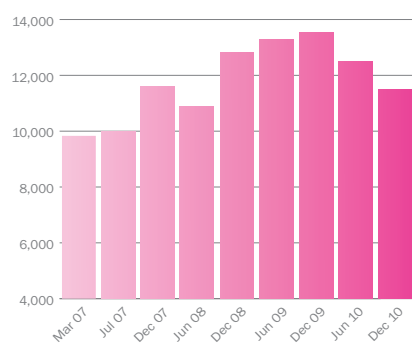
OPERATING PROFIT MARGIN HAS DECREASED AGAIN TO 11.3%... PERHAPS NOT AS LOW AS MANY HAD THOUGHT IT COULD BE.

As mentioned, non-staff costs, which account for 29% of gross income, have fallen significantly from the last edition of *Marketing Monitor*. This has helped to curb the decrease in the operating profit margin despite lower productivity and static staff costs. Agencies have managed to find significant cost savings, particularly in property.

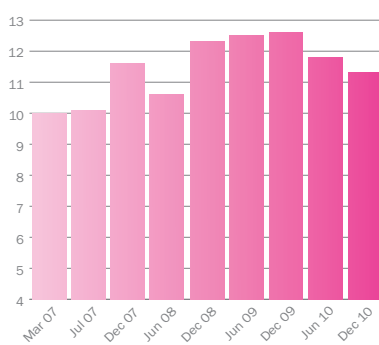
Conclusion

Most agencies continue to feel the effects of the recession, with increased pressure on income and productivity. Whilst productivity remains, on average, above our recommended benchmark of £100,000 per head, it has now decreased nearly 10% since 2009 and despite overheads falling to record lows, agencies will find it increasingly hard to improve margins if revenues remain static or decrease even further.

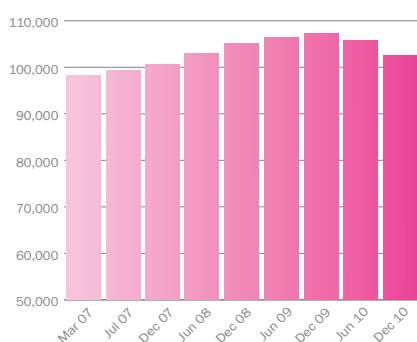
Operating profit per head (£)



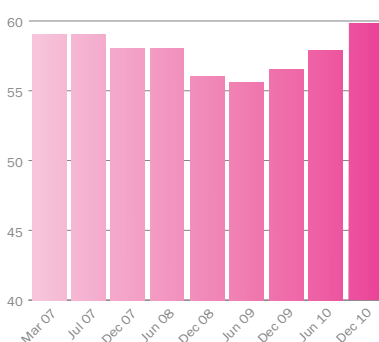
Operating profit: Gross income (%)



Gross income per head (£)



Employment costs: Gross income (%)



Operating profit margins fall to 14.3%

Over 75% of consultancies show a decrease in operating profit

Productivity

Gross income per head is an important measure of a company's productivity. This decreased to an average of £103,182 per head, but is still comfortably above our suggested minimum of £100,000. This has occurred as gross income across the Top 40 consultancies fell by 2.4%, but with minimal change in employee numbers.

PR CONSULTANCIES ARE WELL PLACED TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES THAT THE CLIMATE CONTINUES TO PRESENT.

A key measure of a company's performance is operating profit per head. This is a combination of both productivity and profitability and, not surprisingly, given the current climate, we have seen that the average operating profit per head has decreased to £14,750. This has arisen due to an increase in other overhead costs, such as goodwill amortisation and re-organisation costs, both of which are expected in troubled times. Employment costs per head decreased very slightly to £61,660. One might have expected this to fall due to the waves of pay cuts, freezes and redundancies that have hit the industry.

Profitability

The average operating margin for the Top 40 was 14.3%, down from 15.2%, the lowest since the December 2007 edition of *Marketing Monitor*. However, compared to other marketing services sectors, public relations comes out favourably.

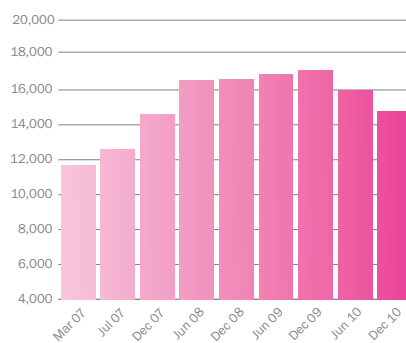
Employment costs, as with all marketing services companies, is the biggest single expense and controlling these is imperative to profitability. On average, staff costs consumed 59.8% of gross income. We recommend that employment costs comprise no more than 55% of a company's gross income.

Conclusion

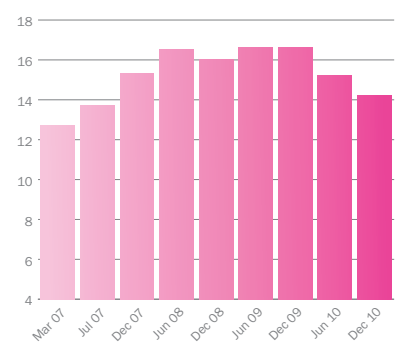
PR consultancies have posted a decline in both profitability and productivity; however, margins still remain respectable and higher than most other marketing services disciplines. Consultancies have also managed to keep their balance sheets healthy and strong. We anticipate continuing difficult trading conditions. However, PR consultancies are well placed to overcome the challenges that the climate continues to present and it is anticipated that they will fair better than many of the other marketing services disciplines, with fewer casualties.

On a brighter note, during tough times PR is seen as a critical asset in re-establishing trust in a business and is well placed to capitalise on the increasing shift from marketing spend on traditional advertising to more digital and social methods.

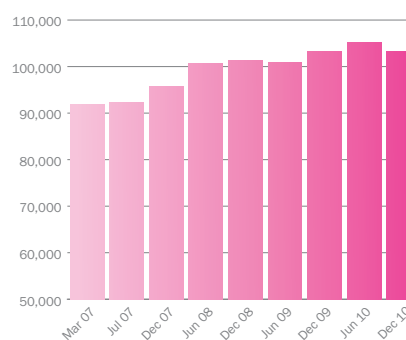
Operating profit per head (£)



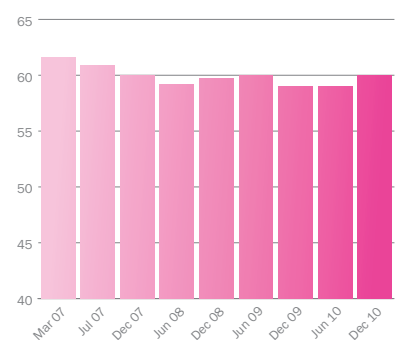
Operating profit: Gross income (%)



Gross income per head (£)



Employment costs: Gross income (%)



Operating profit margins plummet to their lowest since 2004 at 6.7%

Employment costs to gross income continues to increase

Productivity

Productivity, measured by gross income per head, was £91,047. This compares with £93,249 in the previous edition and is a decrease of 2.4%. This reduction is due to the effects of the economic downturn and has been caused by the reduction in gross income being much higher than the reduction in staff numbers.

Operating profit per head for this edition of *Marketing Monitor* has decreased significantly to £6,088 per head, down from £10,731. This is well below our target of at least £20,000 per head and is the lowest it has ever been.

The average employment cost per head for the **Top 30** has remained fairly constant at £55,629.

Profitability

Profitability, as measured by operating profit margin, plummets to its lowest- ever recorded in *Marketing Monitor* at 6.7%, down from 11.4% in the last edition. The key ratio of staff costs to gross income has increased to 61.1%, way above our target of 55% and at an 18-month high. Consultancies must ensure that this does not creep up any higher otherwise margins will be further eroded.

A well-run agency should be able to generate operating profits of at least 15% of gross income and, ideally, 20%.

Conclusion

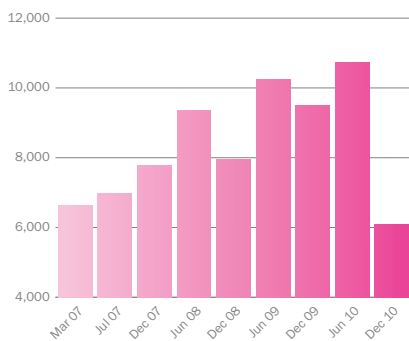
As expected, designers have seen a large decrease in operating profit margins as the full force of the economic downturn filtered through to filed accounts. Worryingly, the ratio of employment costs to gross income increased and implies that companies are not keeping tight controls on employment expenses.

The design industry has historically been one of the first to suffer in a downturn and the challenge for businesses in the next twelve months will be to maintain their levels of profitability.

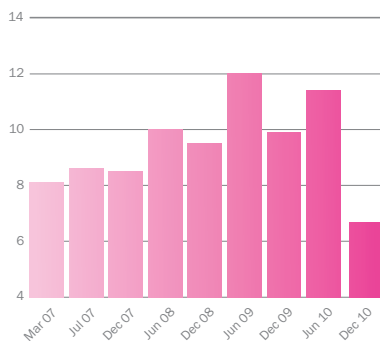
Results for the next edition of *Marketing Monitor* will be interesting as 2010 was still slow, although an improvement for many from the bottom of the recession in 2009. Design businesses that have used this period to sharpen their market offer and restructure costs in line with income are likely to feel the benefit of any upturn first.

THE DESIGN INDUSTRY HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN ONE OF THE FIRST TO SUFFER IN A DOWNTURN...

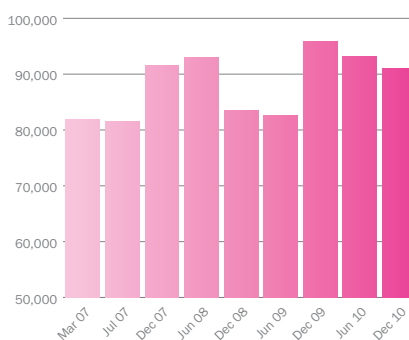
Operating profit per head (£)



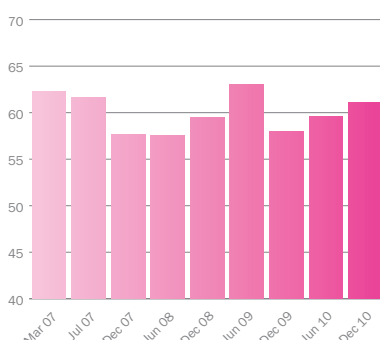
Operating profit: Gross income (%)



Gross income per head (£)



Employment costs: Gross income (%)



Media buyers continue to outperform marketing services industry

Sector experiences further fall in productivity but remains ahead of the benchmark

Productivity

The sector has seen another fall in productivity. Gross income per head has decreased by £3,000 to £107,000 but is still in excess of the Kingston Smith W1 benchmark of £100,000. The statistics are heavily influenced by the results of Aegis Media Limited which accounts for over 20% of the gross income of the Top 30 agencies. Aegis Media's gross income per head was a disappointing £93,000 compared to the sector average. The remaining 29 agencies' gross income per head remained constant at £112,000 which demonstrates the influence of Aegis Media on the sector averages.

Profitability

Gross income across the Top 30 increased, although this was coupled with a 10% increase in staff costs and has predictably led to decreased profitability. The operating profit margin has therefore decreased to 18% from 18.6% since the last issue of *Marketing Monitor*, however, the figure is still in excess of our lower target level of at least 15%. The operating profit margin excluding Aegis Media has decreased from 19.1% to 18.3%. Once again, media buyers have reported the highest operating profit margin of all of the marketing services disciplines despite the overall decrease.

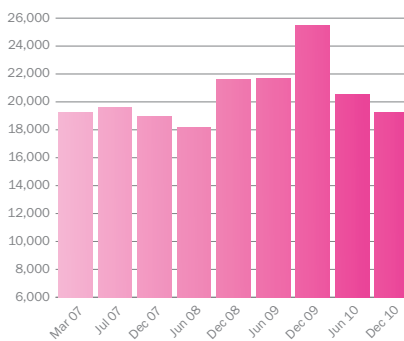
Employment costs now account for 52% of gross income. This is still below our recommended maximum of 55% and continues to be the best of all the marketing services disciplines.

Conclusion

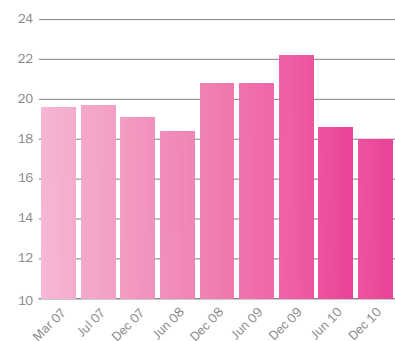
Media buyers have always had a commercial edge when it comes to finding ways to make money in tough times, and this recession has proven no different. The statistics paint a very encouraging picture for most media buyers, who, despite considerable market turmoil, have generally negotiated the recession very well. Media buyers continue to outperform the rest of the marketing services industry.

MEDIA BUYERS... HAVE GENERALLY NEGOTIATED THE RECESSION VERY WELL.

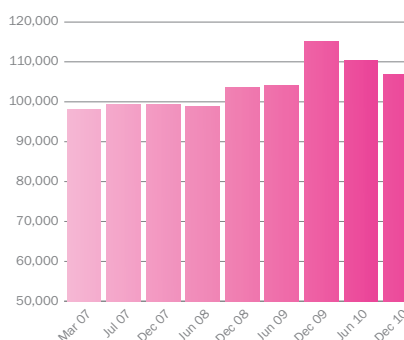
Operating profit per head (£)



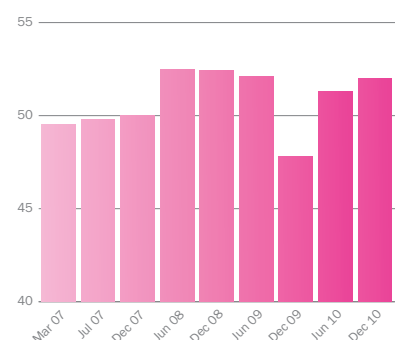
Operating profit: Gross income (%)



Gross income per head (£)



Employment costs: Gross income (%)



Productivity and profitability fall and still lag behind other disciplines

Productivity remains improved from all-time lows seen in 2009

Productivity

The total level of gross profit generated by the Top 40 DMSP agencies has fallen 0.1% since the last edition of *Marketing Monitor*. However, there has also been a fall in staff numbers, which has led to gross income per head being generated remaining static at £86,080. This remains well below both our £100,000 target and the income generated per head in other marketing sectors.

Employment costs per head have actually risen by 1.6% to £53,090 since the last edition of *Marketing Monitor*, which is slightly surprising given that most of the accounts in the sample cover the year to 31 December 2009 when the sector was experiencing pay cuts and freezes.

As a result of this, employment costs now consume 62% of gross income, which is up from the previously reported 61% and remains at its highest level for some years - considerably higher than our suggested target of 55%. If the sector as a whole is to return to generating reasonable levels of profit, it is essential that this ratio moves back towards this target.

Profitability

The average operating profit margin reported has fallen to 8.5% since the last edition of *Monitor*. This is disappointing and although it remains an improvement on the 7.7% recorded a year ago, it is significantly worse than most of the other marketing services disciplines. Operating profit per head, the key measure of profitability and productivity combined, has also fallen marginally to £7,346, although this again remains higher than the record low of summer 2009. This ratio is also less than half our target of £15,000 and is well below the historic average.

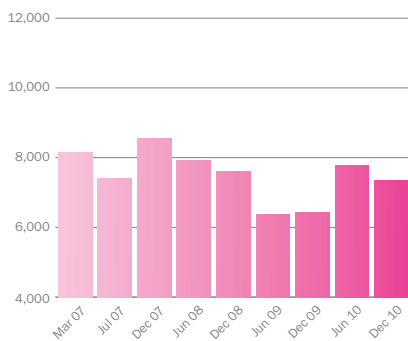
Conclusion

The results show a sector that has remained broadly flat since posting the worst results since 1993. With 2009 results now fully reported and 2010 expected to report better news for many agencies, we look forward to average margins improving in subsequent issues of *Marketing Monitor*.

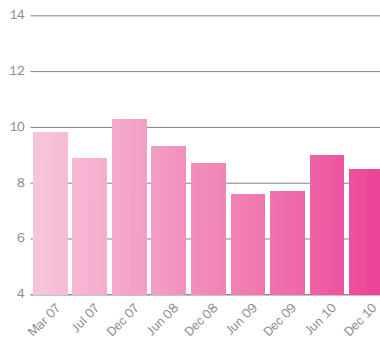
DMSP AGENCIES ARE WELL PLACED TO CAPITALISE ON THE CONTINUED GROWTH IN DIGITAL SPEND...

DMSP agencies are well placed to capitalise on the continued growth in digital spend and must make sure they make the most of this opportunity. At the same time, they need to find more profitable ways of servicing this work and avoid any margin erosion that some digital work brings.

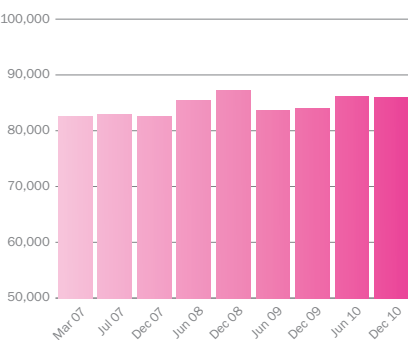
Operating profit per head (£)



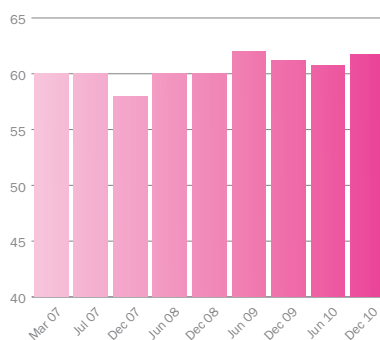
Operating profit: Gross income (%)



Gross income per head (£)



Employment costs: Gross income (%)



Income continues to grow across digital agencies

Productivity and profitability rise, despite the recession

Productivity

Gross income per head, a key indicator of productivity, has increased from £67,999 to £73,327, a rise of nearly 8%. Although a very welcome improvement, digital remains the least productive of the disciplines monitored and is some way short of our minimum benchmark of £80,000 per head.

Staff numbers have increased across the sector by nearly 3% and 20 companies reported an increase in headcount- not unexpected as agencies need more staff to service the higher level of activity.

Operating profit per head, a combination of both productivity and profitability, improved by nearly 40% to £5,531 from £3,952, built on the back of increased productivity, combined with controlled overheads.

Employment costs per head have actually decreased in the current *Marketing Monitor* to £45,383 from £46,640 as expected during a time of pay cuts and freezes.

Profitability

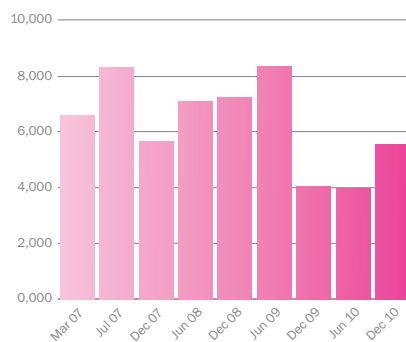
Operating profit margins have improved significantly since the last issue of *Marketing Monitor*, up from 5.8% to 7.5%, no mean feat in the middle of a recession and thus it is no surprise digital is the only discipline showing an improvement in this ratio. The key ratio of employment costs to gross income has also improved, down to just 61.9% from 68.5%. Although we believe agencies should aim to contain staff costs to no more than 55% of gross income, this result shows digital businesses are getting better at controlling their staff costs, and the increase in staff costs has been outstripped by a much bigger increase in fees.

Conclusion

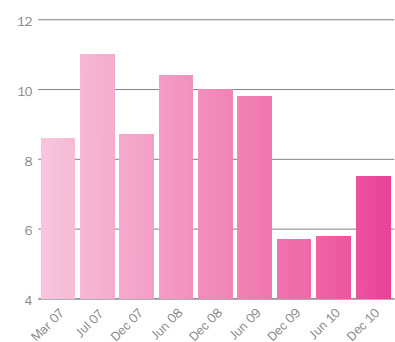
Appetite for digital work continues to grow, despite difficult market conditions. As a result, both productivity and profitability have increased since the last issue of *Marketing Monitor*, so digital agencies should be pleased with what they have achieved. However, digital margins remain the lowest among the disciplines monitored here, and with more economic uncertainty ahead, agencies still have more work to do in order to get closer to the margins achieved by the more traditional marketing agencies. As well as getting clients to understand the value of digital, agencies must make sure briefs are detailed and clearly defined enough to cater for changes in scope of work and unforeseen overruns.

...DIGITAL'S MARGINS REMAIN THE LOWEST AMONG THE DISCIPLINES MONITORED...

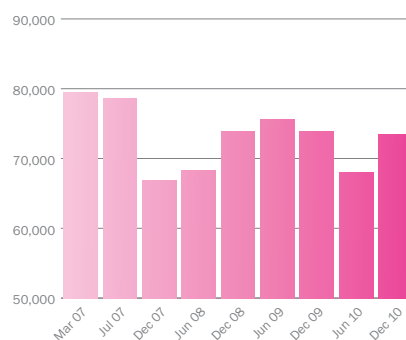
Operating profit per head (£)



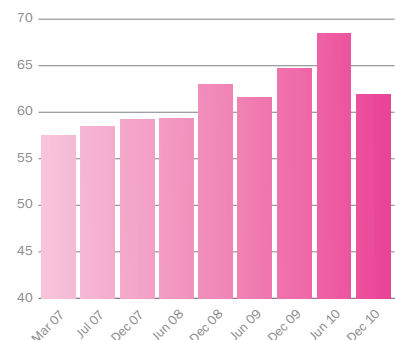
Operating profit: Gross income (%)



Gross income per head (£)



Employment costs: Gross income (%)



Share prices continue to recover

The Marketing Services Share Price Index graph follows the share prices of marketing services groups that are listed on either the London Stock Exchange or on the Alternative Investment Market. We have then tracked this against the FTSE index of 100 leading shares since 1 January 2007.

The clear link between the marketing services groups and the FTSE 100 companies continued throughout 2010. The marketing services groups' share prices initially reacted more severely to the economic downturn, with a steeper decline towards the end of 2008, and it was hoped that they would see a sharper recovery. However, although both the FTSE and the marketing services groups' share prices have picked up significantly in the second half of 2009 and throughout 2010, it was the FTSE 100 that saw a better overall performance during this period.

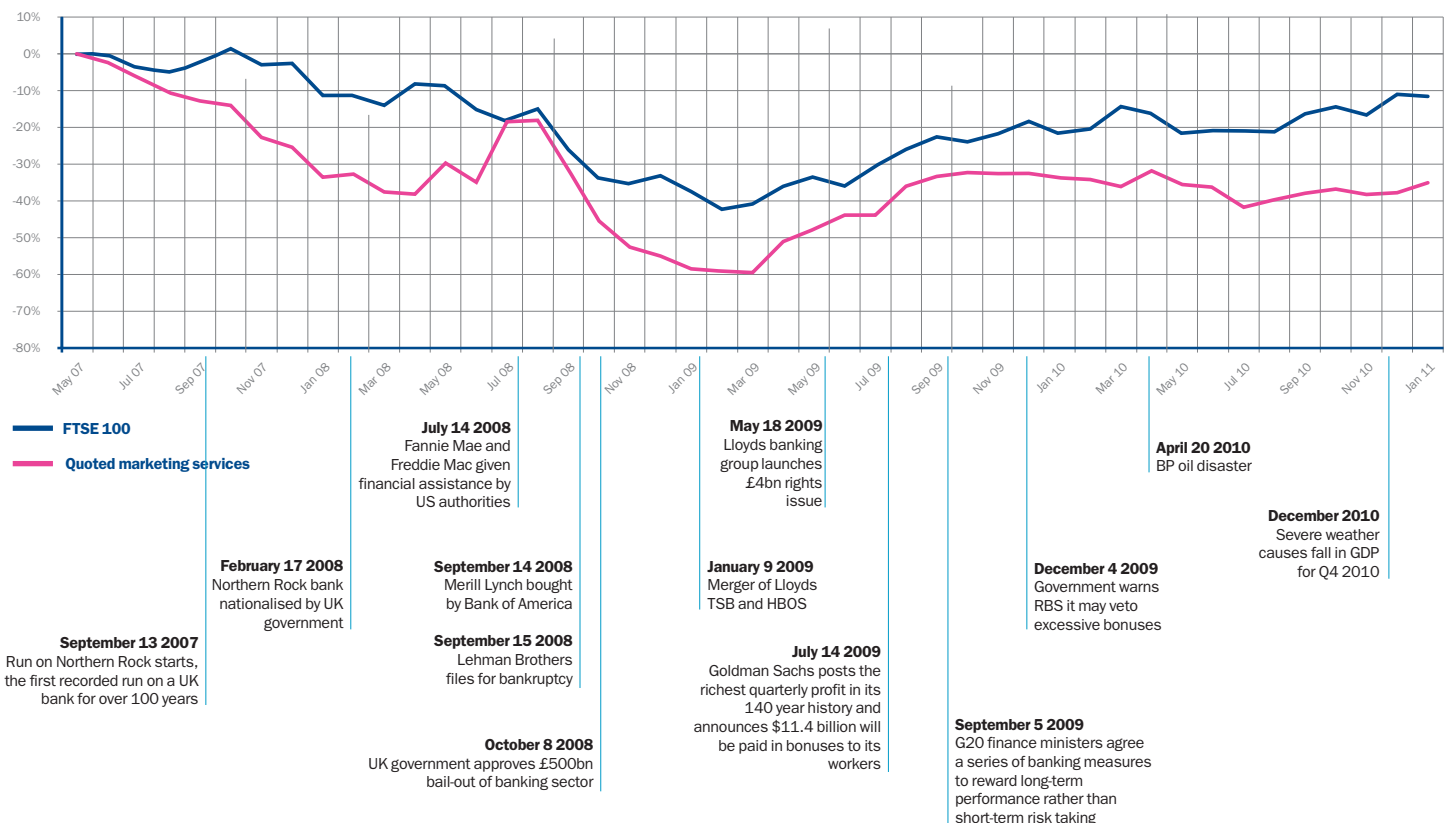
Looking in detail at what has happened to individual share prices, we can see that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' explanation. WPP, by far the largest marketing services group in the UK, has seen its share price rebound back up to 95% of its peak price in June 2007 versus a 22% fall in the FTSE 100 over the same period. Five other groups (Aegis, Chime, Next Fifteen, Motivcom and BrainJuicer) have also outperformed the FTSE over that period, with Chime almost trebling its share price.

By contrast, seven listed groups have seen their share price remain at less than 25% of their respective values from June 2007, with WFC shares at less than 10% of their June 2007 value. Whilst it seems clear that the market may be nervous of marketing services groups generally, share prices have started to improve more widely and the improvement that was led by the very largest groups now appears to be slowly filtering down, to the smaller listed groups.

The increased UK M&A activity in the marketing services sector that started towards the second half of 2010 continues and we expect to see a huge increase in M&A activity throughout the rest of this year and into 2012. This has of course been helped by the recovery of share prices and the ability of the listed groups to raise funds. It is also a general indication of increased confidence in the sector.

KINGSTON SMITH W1 CORPORATE FINANCE HAS RECENTLY LAUNCHED ITS MARKETING AND MEDIA SPECIALIST CORPORATE FINANCE ADVISORY PRACTICE AND HAS ALREADY SEEN A HIGH LEVEL OF M&A ACTIVITY.

Kingston Smith W1 Marketing Services Share Price Index vs FTSE 100



About us

Kingston Smith W1 is based in London's West End, and the seven partners specialise in advising creative, communications and consulting businesses on all aspects of finance, audit, accountancy and tax. Kingston Smith W1 is a specialist division of Kingston Smith LLP, one of the UK's top 20 audit and accounting firms.

Many of our clients are advertising, digital and other marketing services agencies but we also work with many TV and commercial production companies, consulting firms, live entertainment and music agencies. Our clients range from sizeable independents and multi-nationals, to start-ups, which we have advised on a range of financial and business issues.

The businesses we work with have similar sets of challenges and opportunities, and with people being their key asset, employee incentive schemes and succession planning are just a few of the areas where Kingston Smith W1 regularly gives tailored advice. Other issues such as recruitment, HR and remuneration are also very important. As part of Kingston Smith we can provide recruitment services through Balanced People, HR consultancy through HR Insight, and employee benefits advice through Blacktower Financial Advisers (authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA)).

Kingston Smith W1 also regularly advises in many other specialist areas such as business valuations, profit improvement reviews, business planning, due diligence on acquisitions, fundraising, grooming for sale and pre-sale tax planning. Through the data we collate in our annual survey 'Financial Performance of Marketing Services Companies', we are also able to give invaluable benchmarking advice on numerous key performance indicators. By working with businesses with similar challenges, we can understand our clients better and are able to advise on a wide range of financial and non-financial business issues to a greater depth.



Please take a look at our blog 'INSIGHT' at www.kingston-smithw1.co.uk we have several new and exciting articles that will spark innovation and thought leadership....

If you should have any queries please contact either Rebecca Stones on 0207 306 5687 and rstones@kingston-smithw1.co.uk or Antonia Munro on 0207 566 3573 and amunro@kingston-smith.co.uk

Contact us

If you would like to discuss any of the matters arising in this edition or how we can help you, please contact one of the Kingston Smith W1 partners by email or on 020 7304 4646.

Kingston Smith W1
141 Wardour Street
London
W1F 0UT

T 020 7304 4646

More information about Kingston Smith W1 and our services can be found at:
www.kingston-smithw1.co.uk

Amanda Merron, Partner
amerron@kingston-smithw1.co.uk

Cliff Ireton, Partner
cireton@kingston-smithw1.co.uk

David Childs, Partner
dchilds@kingston-smithw1.co.uk

Esther Carder, Partner
ecarder@kingston-smithw1.co.uk

Graham Tyler, Partner
gtyler@kingston-smithw1.co.uk

Ian Graham, Partner
igraham@kingston-smithw1.co.uk

Richard Heap, Partner
rheap@kingston-smithw1.co.uk



Marketing Monitor is available from Kingston Smith W1, 141 Wardour Street, London W1F 0UT Telephone 020 7304 4646, Fax 020 7304 4647, email ks@kingston-smithw1.co.uk

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