

# Loyalty comes first – Always!



In the words of American motivational speaker, Zig Ziglar, "The foundation stones for a balanced success are honesty, character, integrity, faith, love and loyalty." I can proudly say that the basis of **THE NETWORK** Communication Group too has been built on these values by our strongest pillars, our people. As early as our origins in 1997 as AGA, I have seen immense loyalty ingrained in the people that have been and currently are part of the Network family. What pleases me most is that many who were with me when we commenced operations in the early days

continue to walk with me on this journey, regardless of the times, and this is why I ensure that their efforts and support are regularly encouraged and recognized. I am also delighted that even the ones who have graduated from this organization have taken **THE NETWORK's** traditions along with them and I always wish them well for the future.

At our recent end-of-year celebration it gave me immense pleasure in honoring the members of the organization who have truly shown their loyalty over the last 10 or more

years. These people have devoted so much of their lives to helping grow not only their careers but in establishing and growing our network as well.

In conclusion, a day at **THE NETWORK** is like a day with family; while the camaraderie is brilliant and the work ethic top-notch, the support and loyalty from each and every member flows mutually and it is these ingredients that have helped us attain every milestone that we have till date.

## Unity = Strength!



Henry Ford once remarked, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." How eloquently yet simply Henry Ford stated a thought that aptly describes the importance of teams in an organization. Wholeheartedly dedicated to this quote, we at THE NETWORK Communication Group consider Team-Building an integral part of our culture!

In line with this commitment, we regularly build on our integration and team spirit by hosting diverse activities and training sessions that put the individual into a team. Through these interactive, informative and fun endeavors, we ensure that members of THE NETWORK, bond and work together to achieve for the greater good of the organization. Team-building, a flawless technique of organizational development, in turn strengthens an employee's self-worth, sense of belonging, ability to work closely in teams, communication skills and many other similar characteristics that are vital for self-improvement.

At THE NETWORK Communication Group, the year 2014 kicked off with a diverse set of team-building activities. Embarking on a colorful battle, the team's first activity of Paintball was an excellent experience that blended fun, strategy and most of all unity! Following in the same vein, the upcoming Corporate Games too will witness the team join hands and be pitted against different organizations to tackle a host of sports! Moving from the fun aspect of team-building to the exciting and informative one, the other activity on the list gave the team an inside glimpse into the intriguing world of Twitter as they received an in-depth training by a Twitter expert on the working of the popular Social networking website, similar to a session previously carried out for Facebook.

Capping successful team-building events, I look forward to continuing on our path of integration and enthusiastically await other such opportunities to foster accord and boost team-spirit amongst the members of THE NETWORK Communication Group.

## THE NETWORK Communication Group lends its support to the 2014 MENA CRISTAL FESTIVAL

The 9th edition of the impressive MENA CRISTAL Festival recently took place in Beirut. Held between the 3rd and 6th of February, the festival witnessed immense support from **THE NETWORK** Communication Group.



A celebration of the most innovative communication strategies and digital trends, the event featured a host of talks and lectures by prominent people from renowned advertising and media agencies along with an exclusive awards ceremony that recognized the best work and talent of the region.



Matching the cordial ambiance of the festival, **THE NETWORK** too set up an interactive and dynamic booth for the 2nd consecutive year which featured a host of different activities. Centered around the Group's latest concept, "CANYTHING," the booth allowed visitors to challenge their creativity and imagination and use their novel thinking to complete tasks.



All in all marking a successful appearance at this year's MENA CRISTALS, the ambitious Group promised to return the following year on a larger scale than ever before.







## SUCCESSFUL START OF THE YEAR FOR THE AGENCY WITH 3 NEW WINS



The Pencell Beirut office kicked-off the year 2014 with 3 new wins. The office will now be managing the public relations affairs for the Hilton Beirut's 2 properties: Habtoor Grand and Metropolitan Palace; BLC Bank; and L'Oreal Luxe's luxury cosmetics and perfume brands: Giorgio Armani, Polo Ralph Lauren, Lancôme, Yves Saint Laurent and Kiehls.

These successful wins are largely due to the corporate philosophy at Pencell of going beyond the call of duty to enable clients to acquire maximum value exchange for their spend. Also contributing to its success is the agency's focus on keeping industry-specialized editors up-to-date on constructive client developments through a wide spectrum of communication techniques and channels to help them reach, inform, and persuade their readers.

"With these wins we are paving the way for even greater achievements throughout the year", said Nadine Kalache Maalouf, General Manager. "This success hasn't come by chance - it is the direct result of thorough planning to innovate in creativity and dare the conventional to bring out-of-the-box solutions to our clients", she continued.

Adding to its already well-founded expertise in luxury, fashion, beauty care, corporate communication and technology, Pencell PR and Events is now adding business and hospitality to its portfolio. With these new wins Pencell is progressing as one of the leading agencies in the country and the region, known for its creative and unconventional approaches. This is definitely a great way to kick-start the year with many exciting projects to come.

“Ahwak...I do!”



Pencell Beirut was approached by design house Stro-berry d-zines to come up with an outside the box PR stunt for its client Ahwak Restaurant. Pencell team came up with the idea of having an unconventional wedding proposal during Valentine's celebrations and have the woman propose in public and not the other way around. The proposal was real, as the guy had no idea about the whole stunt. A parade was hired to play the song Ahwak across the terrace of the mall reaching the restaurant where the guy was sitting at and to his surprise his girlfriend appeared behind the musicians, got down on one knee, and proposed!

A table representing the agency was sitting across from them for the purpose of initiating mobile video coverage, which other people joined at. The mobile coverage was collected, and Pencell Beirut team moved to sharing the photos and videos on social media inviting people to view, share, and engage with this video.

The video spread very quickly on all the social media platforms and reached so far more than 7000 views! The stunt was picked by several websites and blogs. Several radio stations talked about the proposal and the bride was interviewed during a morning radio show. Articles are being developed in few magazines shedding the light on the fact that people are still celebrating love despite the turmoil and political unrest in Lebanon and considering it as a call for equality between men and women.

## Zenith and Rivoli Group transport Dubai back in time with legendary timepieces exhibition

ZENITH watches recently held an exhibition of Legendary timepieces in collaboration with the Rivoli Group. Hosted at the R Lounge in The H Hotel, visitors of the exhibition had the chance to learn the history of vintage pieces whilst discovering the inspiration behind Zenith's latest collections.

The Legendary Timepieces Exhibition is a worldwide tour that is making its way around several countries including Japan, the US, and now Dubai to display magnificent pieces of history. 15 vintage Zenith watches were displayed from every decade between the 1920's to the 1970's highlighting the brand's uninterrupted history of producing quality timepieces.

Speaking out on the occasion, Zenith's Regional Brand Director, Mr. Georges Bechara said, "It has been a great pleasure to host this exhibition! It really gave us a platform to show guests how we use vintage pieces to create modern art whilst striving to give quality. We do this all without ever forgetting our roots or how far we have come to get to where we are today."



ZENITH  
SWISS WATCH MANUFACTURER  
SINCE 1890



## Clients shine at the SIHH 2014

Touted as one of the most premium watchmaking exhibitions in the world, the 24th edition of the annual Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie (SIHH) was recently held between the 20th and 24th of January. As always, Pencil PR & Events boasted of a great involvement in the prominent exhibition through our four valued partners, namely IWC Schaffhausen, Baume et Mercier, Vacheron Constantin and Piaget, who launched collections and disclosed exquisite and progressive novelties which were viewed by a select gathering of visitors before being unveiled in front of the world.



## Essie adds a lively and colourful touch to our fashion portfolio

Pencil PR and events Dubai recently had much to celebrate as the ambitious team added popular nail varnish brand, Essie, to its diverse portfolio of clients. A part of beauty giant L'Oreal Group, the playful and trendy Essie pairs the strongest standards with an emotional connection with women thereby allowing its audience a way to express themselves with unique colours and tremendously creative nail polish names.

With the acquiring of the dynamic Essie, Pencil PR & Events adds a further touch of fashion and colour to its sparkling portfolio! Congratulations to the Pencil team.





## Longines lends its touch of elegance to the 2014 Equestrian racing season in the GCC



Esteemed Swiss watchmaker, Longines, kicks off yet another exciting season of equestrian racing in the GCC as the official timekeeper for a host of equestrian events such as the Dubai World Cup Carnival, Al

Ain's President Cup, Qatar's Emiri Race and others. Swiftly making its way to the Dubai World Cup, aka, the World's richest race, the luxury watchmaker also lends its support as sponsor to the diversity of races that make up the exhilarating equestrian carnival.

An amazing competition that draws some of the most impressive names from the equestrian arena, Longines has already lent its support to intriguing competitions such as the 'His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Endurance Cup, Dubai Showjumping Championship, Longines Six-Card Race, President Cup and the Emiri Race in Qatar.' True tests of precision, talent and accuracy, the GCC's equestrian scene finds the flawless and most elegant partner in the regal Longines as the brand continues to strengthen its commitment to the equestrian arena by lending its characteristic elegance to the graceful sport.



## TEAMBUILDING session



**THE NETWORK's** digital arm, Wetpaint, recently hosted a new edition of its Social Media Sessions. The hot topic for this round was Twitter. George Skaff and Lisa Szatsznajder from Connect Ads, Twitter's official representative in the Middle East, took the agency through a informative and engaging workshop on the platform and through case studies of how brands are using Twitter in innovative and effective ways to reach the modern-cum-digital consumer.

Checked email, Facebook, Twitter,  
and Pinterest.  
Ready to start my day.

Oh look, it's  
lunch time.



someecards  
user card

## Beware! *This could get very messy.*

THE NETWORK has a few bandits running loose. The first teambuilding activity of the year saw the team break friendships, turn on alliances and hand out bruises to anyone who crossed their paths. Held at the Jebel Ali Paintball Range two teams, **Abou 3adal** and **#lak**, as well as a host of supporters spent a fun morning blasting one another with paint pellets. While it was the perfect situation to take revenge on nasty/mean/weird colleagues we're happy to report that there were no casualties, just a few sore legs and pulled muscles for a few days thereafter.





## Could the Oscars be the new Superbowl?

For years now ad agencies and marketing managers have been going gaga over the Superbowl. Considered as the highest platform, with supposedly the largest audience, to launch new ad campaigns and multi-million dollar 'Ad films' booking a Superbowl spot is firstly, not easy and secondly, extremely expensive.

Could the Superbowl now have advertising space competition? And that too from Hollywood?

At 3 million retweets, and counting, the now infamous selfie by Oscars host Ellen DeGeneres and her troupe of A-list friends and Oscars winners, namely Brangelina, Kevin Spacey, J. Law, Meryl Streep, Julia Roberts, Lupita Nyong'o and Jared Leto, is being billed as Samsung's most prolific mobile launch to date.

Samsung allegedly spent a cool \$20 million on the Academy Awards broadcast but they got more promotional mileage from Ellen and her



white Galaxy Note 3 during the show itself. With digital TV allowing viewers to skip through ads the need for brands to reach the audience in new and organic ways is even more essential. The brand name was never mentioned but everyone noted that the selfie was taken by a Galaxy Note 3.

The success that Samsung has received, minus Ellen's backstage faux pas, definitely means that next year's Academy Awards sponsorships and

product placement deals will be in huge demand and for high prices too. Copywriters, here's that chance you've been waiting for to "be" at the Oscars.

While we wait with bated breath for next year's even-better-than-Ellen stunt, all I can say is that I also wish Bradley's arms were longer – I want to see Jared's entire face and not just one sexy eye and a bit of hair.

## Critics don't make mistakes because they don't make anything.

*Critics are like eunuchs in a harem; they know how it's done, they've seen it done every day, but they're unable to do it themselves.*

- Brendan Behan

Mistakes. Lately, many people are asking about mistakes.

It's funny how this happens. As the world becomes obsessed with data and certainty we all start to crave madness and surprises. Contradiction makes the world go round. The only thing we love more than patterns is breaking them. Critics understand patterns. Creatives understand how to break them.

You will see this over and over in art, science, music, in fact, anywhere you have to get your hands dirty and take a risk. This is where you find the space for random events and combinations to create something new. From the many attempts to create a light bulb, Fijians playing rugby, Bobby Fischer playing chess or the work of Marcel Duchamp or Basquiat you see the flow of working with what is there. Not what should be there but what is right in front of you.

The problem is that it is a messy business and sometimes it doesn't work. Most people don't want creativity they want the result of creativity.



This is why a critic is so dangerous. He works with what he thinks should be there. He cuts off the oxygen and kills potential. So, what you get is an acceptable answer but not a new one.

Inside an agency this is very dangerous. People have entire careers built on being averagely right rather than imaginatively interesting. It is a strong defensible position that can kill the creative space because it creates fear. And fear and true creativity don't mix.

You will not do what is inside you. You will do what is outside of you. This is the end.

Right now, many believe the answers are out there, somewhere. They are not. The great answers are still inside us.

And they often begin with great mistakes. Go make one.