

5 Minutes

Five minutes with Jose Alomajan, digital partner at Droga5. Words: Louise Lawton.



Images from Droga5's recent "Creating Futures" campaign for ASB. Top to bottom: A poster from the campaign by Lauren Marriott (more by her at cargocollective.com/ralphillustration); ASB's "Virtual Branch" on Facebook; ASB cash machine.

Louise Lawton How would you describe Droga5?

Jose Alomajan One of the most appealing aspects of joining Droga5 was to help build an ideas agency that truly reflects how brands are created in today's culture. We are constantly inspired by David Droga's philosophy of creating ideas that captivate, influence and build momentum over time. We believe that brands are built across every interaction a person has with a brand, so we are obsessed with how we can help clients innovate, improve and create New Zealand's best-loved experiences. Whether it's traditional communications, social or service design, our promise is to create ideas that will give our clients a greater share of the future.

LL What differentiates your firm from others?

JA Our aim is not to be different for the sake of being trendy; our aim is simply to be the best. To enable us get there we have a proprietary methodology that allows us to co-create the solution with clients. Gone are the days where an agency can take a brief, disappear for a couple of weeks and then present ideas with a big reveal. We had an amazing experience co-creating the new brand with ASB (all of ASB not just the marketing department) and certainly proved how powerful developing ideas with a client can be.

LL You kicked off in NZ with ASB's new campaign – did you

get the result you wanted?

JA For us this was more than a campaign. It was the reinvigoration of who ASB is as a business and a brand. "Creating Futures" is a promise ASB is making to New Zealand – it's a promise that guides every part of the business. This is just the start of the brand journey, but we can hand on heart say that we are thrilled with the initial results. ASB's 5,000 employees are now brimming with vision and confidence, its customers are engaging in new conversations in new ways, including social media, and the company has a new idea platform through which it can have more engaged customer conversations.

LL Do you think the local digital market will keep playing little brother to the rest of the world, or do you see a catch-up about to happen?

JA I'm not sure we are still playing little brother. Our budgets might be smaller, but that means we are forced to be more innovative. It's always interesting talking to people who have recently returned from overseas; I expect them to say our market is behind, but the reality is, we are relatively in the same space. For instance, ASB's Facebook "Virtual Branch" is a world first and a great example of leading in digital. As part of the brand relaunch we challenged ourselves to be customer-centric and do "un-banklike" things. For

example, we redesigned the home page of asb.co.nz to be based on what users wanted the most, like logging into internet banking, and also adding some brand charm through dynamic greetings and imagery. As for mobile, I'm sure one of these years will really be the year of the mobile – but how long have we been saying that! It's great to get inspiration from global best practice examples, but it's up to us to create ideas that make a difference.

LL What's the biggest digital challenge facing clients in 2011?

JA The biggest digital challenge is how to break down silos that have been created, so all digital activity is interlinked and heading towards the business strategy. Digital is more than a marketing strategy and can be quite fragmented across a business. Responsibility for corporate/e-commerce sites, social media and marketing campaign activity sit with different business units and, as a result, they don't always work together. This is a lost opportunity to have meaningful relationships with customers and to have a greater share of the future!

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