Triad Triumphs

Thirteen years ago, two university batch mates had a passion to do something meaningful and different. Combining strengths, they formed an advertising agency with a local flavour- Triad.

Dilith Jayaweera, Joint Managing Director, Triad.

Varuni Amunugama, Joint Managing Director, Triad

Now all their hard work has paid off. The agency created the biggest sensation in the local advertising industry by winning the highest accolade of the night – 'The Best of Show' award along with 21 other awards. "We are thrilled. We were not expecting a 'Best of Show'. We competed on par with everybody. The judges told us that winning a gold is on par with the best in the world," Varuni Amunugama, joint Managing Director, Triad said. "Our motto is 'Sri Lanka Can' and we proved that when we won the award."

What makes the achievement stand out is the fact that Triad is a 100'7r Sri Lankan advertising agency, and most of its entries were in Sinhala. "Because of that we were a little concerned in case the judges could not understand the language and the cultural nuances. Yet the fact that they selected our creative, which was based on local insights, is amazing," Amunugama said.

The Chillies have encouraged us to take our creatives to an international level to get global recognition and also to show that you don't need to be multinational to be successful.

The creative concept of the Lotus Footprints for the Rainco brand was hailed by the internationally acclaimed judging panel as both innovative and original.

Speaking on what was behind the making of the award winning entry, Dilith Jayaweera, Joint Managing Director, Triad, said that it was done for Vesak. "It was an innovative concept – the mere fact that when you turn an umbrella the other way it resembles a lotus– that was why it was created. It also a symbolic of the seven lotus footprints of Prince Siddhartha. Initially we did a newspaper ad with the concept. We advised the client by saying that it was a good idea to extend to ambient and to have lanterns like this during Vesak. The client fabricated the umbrellas in pink to those seven different sizes and we used them as Vesak lanterns."

Triad sees this achievement as a stepping stone to something greater. "The Chillies have encouraged us to take our creative to an international level to get global recognition and also to show that you don't need to be multinational to be successful. We can be Sri Lankan and also be the best. Our achievement has opened the doors to other local agencies. They are really happy that we showed them the way," said Jayaweera.

"We want to carry that internationally and show the people in Sri Lanka that we are truly Sri Lankan and we are flying the flag in other parts of the world. that is our niche," said Amunugama.

When asked what makes Triad stand out from other advertising agencies in Sri Lanka, Amunugama stated that most creative of multinational brands are adaptations of different languages. Triad, however, has the unique ability of being in touch with local insight.

In terms of raising the standards of the advertising industry in Sri Lanka, Jayaweera said, “Whatever you do – whether its international or local – you have to be mindful of it. There is no point in being hopelessly global. We never had a political slogan. We know that if country you need to build a strong local brand. To do so you need to have strong local communications. As a result we were very focused on that when we started the company. Varuni and I did not invest a cent when we started out 14 years ago. We never wanted to go into international tie up. Said Amunugama.

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“Our company is driven by the fact that we have a dream. One such dream we have already achieved – we wanted to be number one. This is a byproduct of our service. We don’t work to win awards – we work towards building brands.”