

The Framework for Consistently Creating Great Ideas

Frameworks first, ideas second — why the framework for your idea is more important than the idea itself, and how to find right ideas instead of just good ideas.

Right Ideas > Good Ideas

Whenever we're searching for a creative answer to a business problem, we begin with a simple rubric: Right Ideas are better than Good Ideas.

Everybody likes good ideas. Everybody has good ideas. Everybody usually recognizes good ideas. But the definition of 'good' is a bit wishy-washy. A bit ephemeral. A bit hand-wavy.

Why? Because a 'good' idea is usually something that we, the idea-maker-uppers, think is clever or interesting or new. That is, good ideas flatter the idea-haver. But you're not trying to flatter the idea-haver. You're trying to flatter the problem-holder.

So you're not looking for a good idea. You're looking for a right idea — an idea that appropriately and elegantly solves a problem for the client and the client's audience. That should tell you that the framework for your idea is more important than the idea itself.

The Framework for the Right Idea

Every client engagement is different. Every problem has its own peculiarities. Regardless, we can use a similar approach to generating ideas. That, after all, is how you scale creative solutions. You ask the same questions to find different answers.

Emotional Questions — Can the idea do more to:

- Tap into the thoughts, hopes, and dreams of the entire target audience and make them feel understood?
- Present the best reason to get excited about the brand/product?
- Tap into the broader cultural zeitgeist in a fresh, interesting way?

Rational Questions — Can the idea do more to:

- Stand out in the product category? In the broader media context?
- Make most cost-effective use of the client's marketing dollars?
- Faithfully represent our strategy and reach our goal?
- What are the risks or dependencies associated with the idea?

When you're resolving or playing with the tension between emotional and rational, it can feel like you're flip flopping. But that discussion is really about tuning the dials on the quality of the idea. On embiggening the idea from good to right. So that the idea works for the client and the client's audience. Not just for you.