

The Direct and Hidden Costs of Pitching

Whitepaper 2024



Table of Contents

I. About this Whitepaper	5
II. The Direct and Hidden Costs of Pitching for Agencies	6
III. The Direct and Hidden Costs of Pitching for Brands	8
IV. About the Pitch Survey	10
V. Results of the Survey	11
1. Lead Generation Sources.....	11
2. Pitch Involvement.....	12
3. The Direct Cost of Pitching	14
4. Sustainability	16
5. Creative Proposals.....	17
6. Elements in Pitch Process.....	20
7. Crafting the Perfect Pitch.....	23
8. Navigating the Pitfalls of Pitching	25
9. Experience with Pitch Consultants.....	27
10. The Consultant's Value in the Pitch Process	28
VI. Evaluation, the Key to Sustainable Agency Relationships	29
Thank You	37
Annex 1: The Pitch Survey Questionnaire	38
Annex 2: Detailed results per Discipline	39
Advertising/Full Service agencies.....	39
Brand Activation/Event Marketing agencies	41
Brand Consultancy agencies.....	43
Content Marketing agencies	45
Digital Marketing agencies	47
PR & Influencer agencies.....	49
Annex 3: The COLLAB method	51

I. About this Whitepaper

Pitching for new clients has always been an indispensable evil.

On the one hand, a new Agency can't start without new Clients and when an existing agency loses a big account, it will want to replace the account by another one in order to keep its' talent on board and to maintain the level of service to its' other clients. On the other hand, Clients need to stay up to date on the quality and multitude of services Agencies have to offer.

Yet, everyone agrees we should encourage long-term Client/Agency relationships; that we should make pitches more sustainable; reduce talent drain and encourage a well balanced work/private equilibrium for both Clients and Agencies.

With this Whitepaper on the Direct and Hidden Costs of Pitching, the Association of Communication Companies, the United Brands Association and the matchmaking experts at PitchPoint, kick off of an awareness campaign that puts the focus on more sustainable pitches, underscoring a collective commitment to elevating pitch hygiene standards across the sector.



Johan Vandepoel
CEO ACC Belgium

II. The Direct and Hidden Costs of Pitching for Agencies



« The pitch process has become a ritual in our field, almost an art form in itself. It is a kind of dance between brands and communication agencies in search of the perfect match. But this dance is not without complexity. It is a process that unfolds over time, often tense and intense, where the stakes are high and the expectations even higher. »

Karen Corrigan
President ACC

The time and effort put into the pitch process are substantial, and the investment goes beyond the measurable. Both parties systematically underestimate the costs involved. Especially the hidden costs are often forgotten. Communication agencies face a complex challenge when it comes to pitching; they invest significantly in both direct costs and the less visible, yet substantial, hidden costs.

The Direct Costs of Pitching

The direct costs encompass the hours spent on brainstorming, concept development, meetings, and presentations, as well as out-of-pocket expenses, such as presentation materials, high-quality prints, and digital media. These direct costs have been estimated in this survey, which reveals that the costs in terms of time spent and out of pockets adds up to an astonishing 83% of the PBT of an average Advertising/FS agency!

Whereas these exuberant costs might be lower for agencies active in other disciplines, the survey reveals that they have to invest considerable amounts of time and out of pockets in numerous Ad Hoc pitches with a small margin over a short period of time. These projects could and should have been assigned on the basis of previous experiences with the agencies or mere credential presentations.

The Hidden Costs of Pitching

It is important to note that there are also indirect hidden costs, which are frequently overlooked. The indirect hidden costs include:

- **Free ideas:** *Communication agencies often propose their most innovative concepts and creative strategies in the hope of winning a pitch. This usually happens with limited financial*

compensation, meaning the valuable intellectual efforts put into the creative process are not recognised. Consistently giving away these ideas can deplete internal sources of innovation.

- **Shift of focus:** The intensive focus on acquiring a new client can come at the expense of time and attention given to existing clients. This can lead to a decline in service quality and a potential loss of customer loyalty and satisfaction. The delicate balance between pursuing new opportunities and nurturing existing relationships is essential for an agency's stability and reputation.

- **Motivation dip:** The emotional rollercoaster of pitching, with its highs and lows, can be exhausting for staff, especially if pitches do not result in new work. This demotivation can slip into all aspects of their work, affecting overall productivity and enthusiasm for other projects.

- **Reputation risk:** A series of lost pitches can damage an agency's image, raising questions about the competence and attractiveness of the agency both within the industry and with potential clients. This reputation risk can be difficult to recover from and can affect the agency's ability to attract new clients.

- **Creative inflation:** There is a risk that the constant need to pitch and provide 'free' creative proposals reduces the perceived value of creative services. Clients may come to expect that agencies are always willing to deliver work for free, undermining industry standards and the economic viability of creative services.

- **Trust breach:** Continually pitching without visible results can undermine the team's trust in the value process of their work. If teams begin to believe that their hard work and creative efforts are not appreciated or rewarded, this can negatively impact innovation and the willingness to take risks in future projects.

These costs highlight the need for communication agencies to adopt a balanced and strategic approach to the pitching process, and to find ways to manage and minimise these risks. Pitching is a complex balancing act. Communication agencies must make strategic decisions about which pitches are worth the investment.

The costs must be carefully weighed against the potential benefits of acquiring a new client. In most cases, it is more advantageous to invest in existing client/agency relationships rather than to break the relationship and start anew. This investment also leads to sustainable growth and a pleasant working environment in most cases.

III. The Direct and Hidden Costs of Pitching for Brands



« On average, an agency spends 412,000 € every year on trying to get new business, which is 9.7% of their average earnings. This means that out of every 100 € a current client pays their Agency, almost 10 € are used to try to win new clients. Therefore, it's important for everyone to carefully think before starting a new business competition. Brands should first check how they can optimize their relation with their current agency. If a new competition is really needed, they should follow good rules for running it, like the ones from UBA/ACC/UMA. »

Luc Suykens
CEO UBA

What does a pitch cost advertisers?

The financial and operational costs associated with advertising pitches are multifaceted, impacting advertisers in both direct and indirect ways. These expenditures are crucial to understand, as they can significantly affect a business's bottom line.

Direct costs:

The direct costs tied to pitches can fluctuate widely, influenced by the pitch's scope, the complexity of the marketing challenge at hand, and the selection procedure adopted for choosing the advertising agency. The direct costs include:

- **Hours:** Time is a precious commodity in business, and every hour worked on the pitch is not spent on other critical business activities. When multiple team members dedicate significant portions of their schedule over a prolonged period, the opportunity cost can be substantial. Many firms engage pitch consultants to guide them through the selection process. This can lead to a more efficient and effective selection.
- **Compensation for agencies:** A notable practice in the advertising industry is compensating agencies that participate in the pitch process but do not win the account. This compensation is acknowledgment of the time, effort, and resources expended in the pitch process. It's a gesture that aims to mitigate some of the direct costs incurred by the agencies. This practice underscores the industry's recognition of the value of creative and strategic thinking, even when it does not result in a business win.

Indirect hidden costs:

It is important to note that there are also indirect hidden costs, which are frequently overlooked.

The indirect hidden costs include:

- **Disrupted routines:** *When an organisation's resources are redirected to support a pitch, normal business routines can be disrupted. This can result in a domino effect where projects are delayed, and deadlines are missed.*
- **Missed opportunities:** *The focus required during a pitch process can create tunnel vision, where new opportunities and possibilities for growth are overlooked. We notice that in this pitch period, marketing and communication activities often stagnate.*
- **Introducing the agency to the brand:** *The new agency will need a 'settling-in period' after the pitch to truly understand and grasp the brand. They need to familiarise themselves with the brand, target groups, products, and market. Until they have fully absorbed this knowledge, it is difficult for them to deliver effective communication. During this learning phase, the agency may not operate at full efficiency. This can mean a temporary delay in rolling out new campaigns.*
- **Learning to work together again:** *The new agency needs to familiarise not only with the brand identity but also with the operational processes and systems of the advertiser, which takes time. Building a trust relationship and aligning expectations between the advertiser and the new agency can lead to longer approval cycles for communication material.*

So... no more pitching?

So, do we say goodbye to pitching? In a perfect world, relationships would last forever... but unfortunately, that's not realistic. We can sometimes skip pitching if we are more transparent and proactively work on our relationships. However, needs, markets, customers, and agencies all change. That means we sometimes need to look for new partnerships. It is crucial that we approach the pitch process effectively, efficiently, and with integrity. Pitch guides play a key role in this. They guarantee a streamlined, honest, and well-founded approach to realising the perfect match between advertiser and agency.

The solution? Invest in sustainable relationships!

A pitch is only justified if it really can't be otherwise. Hence the advice to invest in the relationships you have, instead of always chasing new ones. This applies to both parties. A sustainable bond between brand and communication agency, characterised by openness, trust, and a shared vision, yields more in the long term than the partner switch that pitches often are.

IV. About the Pitch Survey

This survey was initiated to gain a deeper insight into the dynamics, work intensity, and often overlooked expenses associated with pitching within the communications sector, encompassing both commercial and public tenders. The findings from this survey are the foundation of an educational initiative aimed at improving pitching practices and avoiding common pitfalls.

Conducted over January and February 2024, the survey reached out to all members of ACC, garnering a total of 62 responses from various segments of the industry:

- Advertising/Full Service agencies: 28 responses
- Brand Activation/Event Marketing agencies: 13 responses
- Brand Consultancy agencies: 6 responses
- Content Marketing agencies: 6 responses
- Digital Marketing agencies: 5 responses
- PR & Influencer agencies: 4 responses

The Survey highlights quantitative data as well as qualitative data; whenever relevant, we split up the findings per communication discipline.

V. Results of the Survey

1. Lead Generation Sources

How many leads did you get for new business through the different channels?

On average, every agency received 56 new business leads in 2023, varying from 25 leads for Content Marketing agencies to 36 for Advertising/Full Service agencies over 77 for Event Marketing & Brand Activation agencies up to 92 for Brand Consulting agencies.

Whereas for Advertising-, Content- and Event agencies, most of the new business opportunities came through pitches (respectively 39%, 34% and 33%), the PR, Brand Consulting and Digital agencies received most of their leads directly from prospects (respectively 58%, 55% and 39%). You can find the details per discipline in the annexe of this paper.

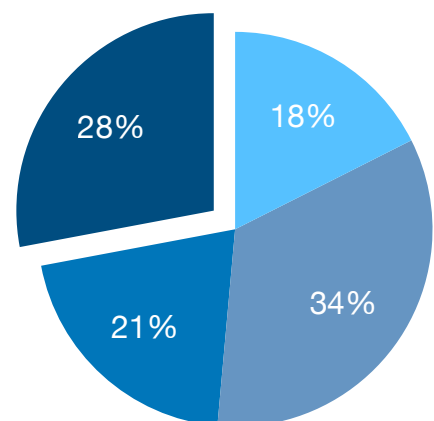
All respondents

AVERAGES (n=62)

- Self-initiated: 9,8
- Invited by prospect: 18,9
- Through network: 11,5
- Through pitch: 15,6

AVERAGE # LEADS: 55,8

- Self-initiated
- Invited by prospect
- Through network
- Through pitch



2. Pitch Involvement

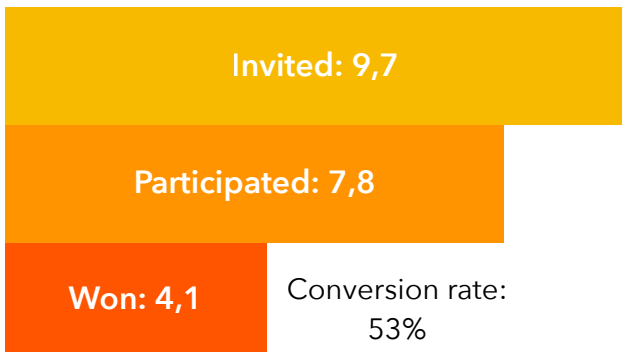
In how many pitches were you involved in 2023 in each category during the various stages?

As for pitches - in competition with other agencies - the average agency participated in 25,6 pitches: 11,1 for ad hoc projects; 7,8 for long term relationships and 6,6 for public tenders. While the conversion rates seem overrated in general; they are highest for the Ad Hoc projects (56%) and lowest for the Public Tenders (39%).

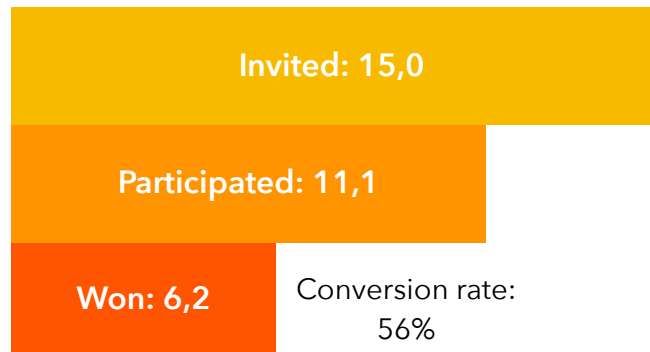
Advertising/FS agencies participate equally in pitches for Long-term relationships as in Public Tenders. 1 out of 4 of those LT pitches are managed by external consultants (who are not involved at all in the other disciplines, except for some Digital pitches). PR-, Brand Consultancy- and Event agencies are more often invited for Ad Hoc projects (respectively 70%, 67% and 49%) than for LT Partnerships or Public Tenders.

All respondents

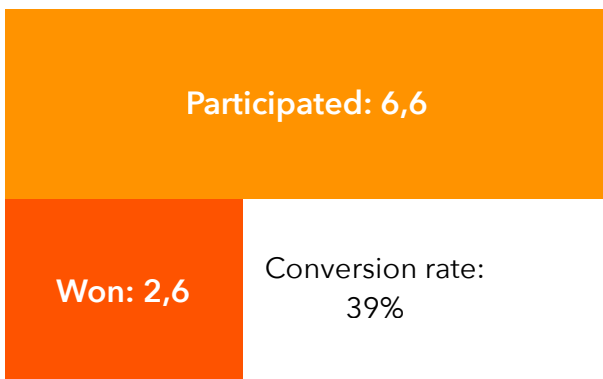
Long-term partnerships



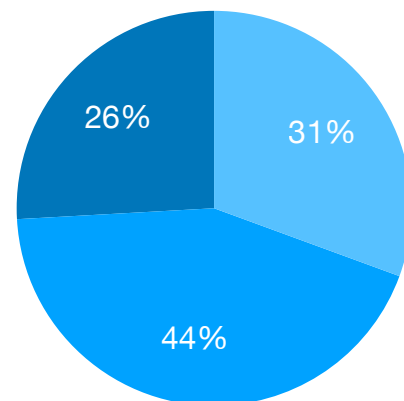
Ad-hoc projects



Public Tenders



● Partnerships ● Projects ● Tenders



TOTAL # pitches participated: 25,6

MANAGED BY CONSULTANTS

Long-term partnerships: 11,8%

Ad-hoc projects: 1,6%

Public tenders: 2,4%

3. The Direct Cost of Pitching

Of the pitches you've participated in, help us define the monetary impact of pitching on the creative sector.

Whereas for Event- and PR agencies, the average cost per pitch lies between 5 and 10K, the cost for an average LT Partnership pitch amounts to no less than 36K among the Advertising/FS agencies; based on a very moderate average hourly rate of €116/h. The average number of LT pitches that an Advertising/FS agency performs per year being 8,1; this implies an annual pitch cost of 292K. If we add the costs of ad hoc pitches and Public Tenders; each Advertising/FS agency spends 664K/year on pitching.

So, the 64 Advertising/FS ACC members spend a total of €42.5M per year on pitching! Whereas their overall PBT amounted to €51,1M (Source: ACC Profitability Survey 2023). In comparison with the global PBT of the 64 Advertising/FS members of ACC; **the total cost of pitching amounts to 83% of their PBT.**

These are the stunning facts for all disciplines:

Advertising/Full Service:

- Direct cost of pitching/agency: 664K versus Average PBT margin/agency: 799K = **83%**

Brand Activation/Event Marketing:

- Direct cost of pitching/agency: 179K versus Average PBT margin/agency: 310K = **58%**

Brand Consultancy:

- Direct cost of pitching/agency: 227 versus Average PBT margin/agency: 58K = **391%!**

Content Marketing agencies:

- Direct cost of pitching/agency: 118K versus Average PBT margin/agency: 192K = **61%**

Digital Marketing:

- Direct cost of pitching/agency: 159K versus Average PBT margin/agency: 492K = **32%**

PR & Influencer Marketing:

- Direct cost of pitching/agency: 199K versus Average PBT margin/agency: 476K = **42%**

All respondents

Long-term partnerships

7,8 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (175 hours * hourly rate 113€) + OOP 2.579€

Average long-term partnership pitch cost: 22.354€

Ad-hoc projects

11,1 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (77 hours * hourly rate 108€) + OOP 1.228€

Average ad-hoc project pitch cost: 9.544€

Public tenders

6,6 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (146 hours * hourly rate 126€) + OOP 1.601€

Average public tender pitch cost: 19.997€

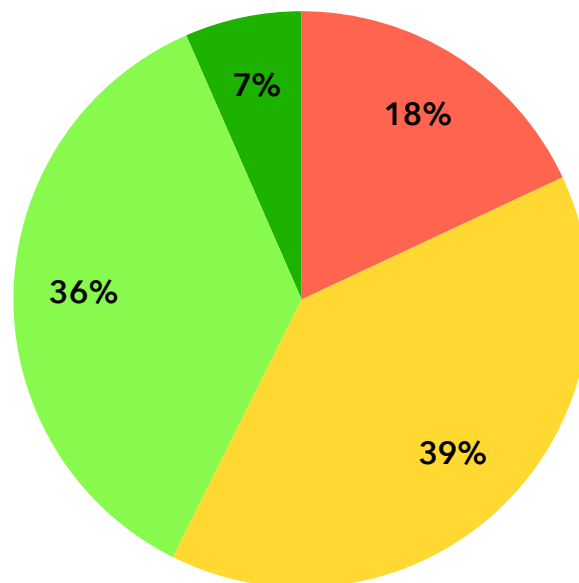
4. Sustainability

How often are you now asked for your sustainability policy and practices in response to a pitch brief?

In the modern business landscape, sustainability has transcended its role as a mere buzzword to become a critical component of pitch presentations when agencies propose their services to clients. This shift reflects a growing recognition of the importance of environmental and social responsibility in shaping brand perceptions and consumer behaviours.

Up to 43% of participating agencies claim that pitches always or often include a question regarding the agencies' sustainability policy and another 39% confirms this is being asked sometimes. Only 18% pretends never being asked for a sustainability policy.

● Never ● Sometimes ● Often ● Always



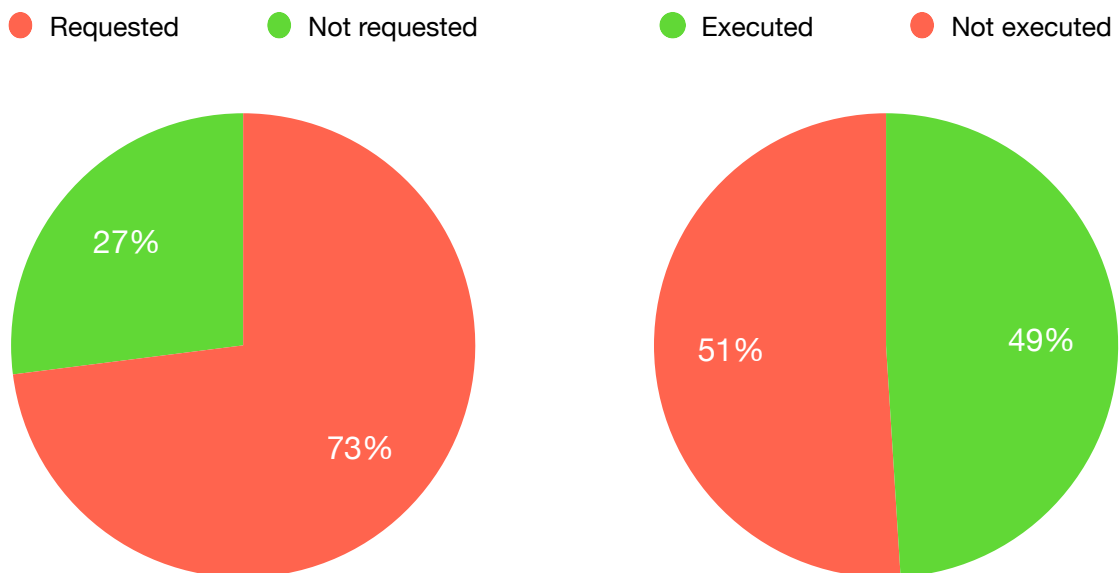
5. Creative Proposals

When thinking of the pitches you've won, what % of pitches asked for creative proposals; what % of creative proposals were executed as such?

Creative proposals stand as a cornerstone of the pitching process, being requested in a significant 73% of all pitches. This high demand underscores the critical importance clients place on creativity and innovation as they seek out agencies that can bring fresh ideas and perspectives to their brands.

However, the journey from pitch to project realisation reveals a notable discrepancy. Despite the high rate of creative proposal requests, these innovative concepts are brought to life and fully implemented in only 49% of cases where the pitch results in a successful win.

This gap highlights a complex dynamic between the initial request for creativity and the practical application or execution of these ideas post-pitch. Factors contributing to this scenario may include budgetary constraints, shifts in strategic direction, or evolving project requirements that lead to a reassessment of the proposed creative solutions.



Pitching without Creation: illusion or realistic?



Thought Leader Contribution
by Chris Van Roey
Partner PitchPoint

The pitch process is the golden opportunity for agencies to showcase their unique value proposition and creative capabilities. Traditionally, this has often involved presenting detailed creative proposals, a practice requested in 73% of pitches. However, with these proposals being executed only 49% of the time upon winning the pitch, it raises a question about the efficiency and necessity of including creation in the pitch process. This scenario leads us to explore a somewhat controversial yet increasingly relevant strategy: the pitch without creation.

Focus on Strategy Over Execution

The primary advantage of omitting detailed creative work from a pitch is the shift in focus it brings. By emphasising strategic insight and understanding of the client's needs, agencies can demonstrate their ability to think critically about problems and devise effective solutions. This approach allows for a discussion that is less about the agency's ability to produce eye-catching creative work and more about their capacity to understand and address the client's business challenges. It's a conversation that prioritises strategic alignment and potential impact over visual or conceptual creativity.

Reducing Costs and Resources

Producing creative proposals is an expensive endeavour, both in terms of financial cost and the allocation of agency resources. These costs are not always recuperable, especially when considering the low execution rate of such proposals post-pitch win. By focusing on strategy rather than creation, agencies can significantly reduce the resources dedicated to speculative work, allowing them to allocate these resources more efficiently elsewhere. This reduction in pitch costs can also enable agencies to participate in more pitches, increasing their chances of winning new business.

Adaptability and Collaboration

A pitch devoid of specific creative executions opens the door for greater adaptability and collaboration with the client. It acknowledges that the best creative solutions are often developed through a collaborative process that takes into account the evolving nature of the client's market and needs. By presenting strategic frameworks and concepts rather than finalised creative work, agencies can demonstrate their willingness to work closely with clients to develop tailored, effective campaigns. This approach fosters a partnership mentality, positioning the agency as a flexible and responsive ally in the pursuit of business objectives.

Highlighting Creative Potential Without Overcommitting

Agencies are incubators of creativity, and the pitch process is an opportunity to showcase this. However, demonstrating creative potential does not necessarily require the presentation of complete campaigns or executions. Agencies can convey their creative strength and vision through mood boards, case studies, and conceptual discussions that illustrate their thinking and creative philosophy without delving into specific executions. This method highlights the agency's creative prowess while leaving room for the idea to evolve in partnership with the client.

While the allure of presenting dazzling creative proposals is undeniable, the strategic, cost-effective, and collaborative advantages of a pitch without creation are compelling. This approach does not diminish the importance of creativity in advertising; instead, it reframes the conversation to focus on the strategic alignment, adaptability, and the potential for a collaborative creative process. In an industry that is constantly evolving, the ability to demonstrate deep strategic understanding and a commitment to partnership may well be the most creative pitch of all.

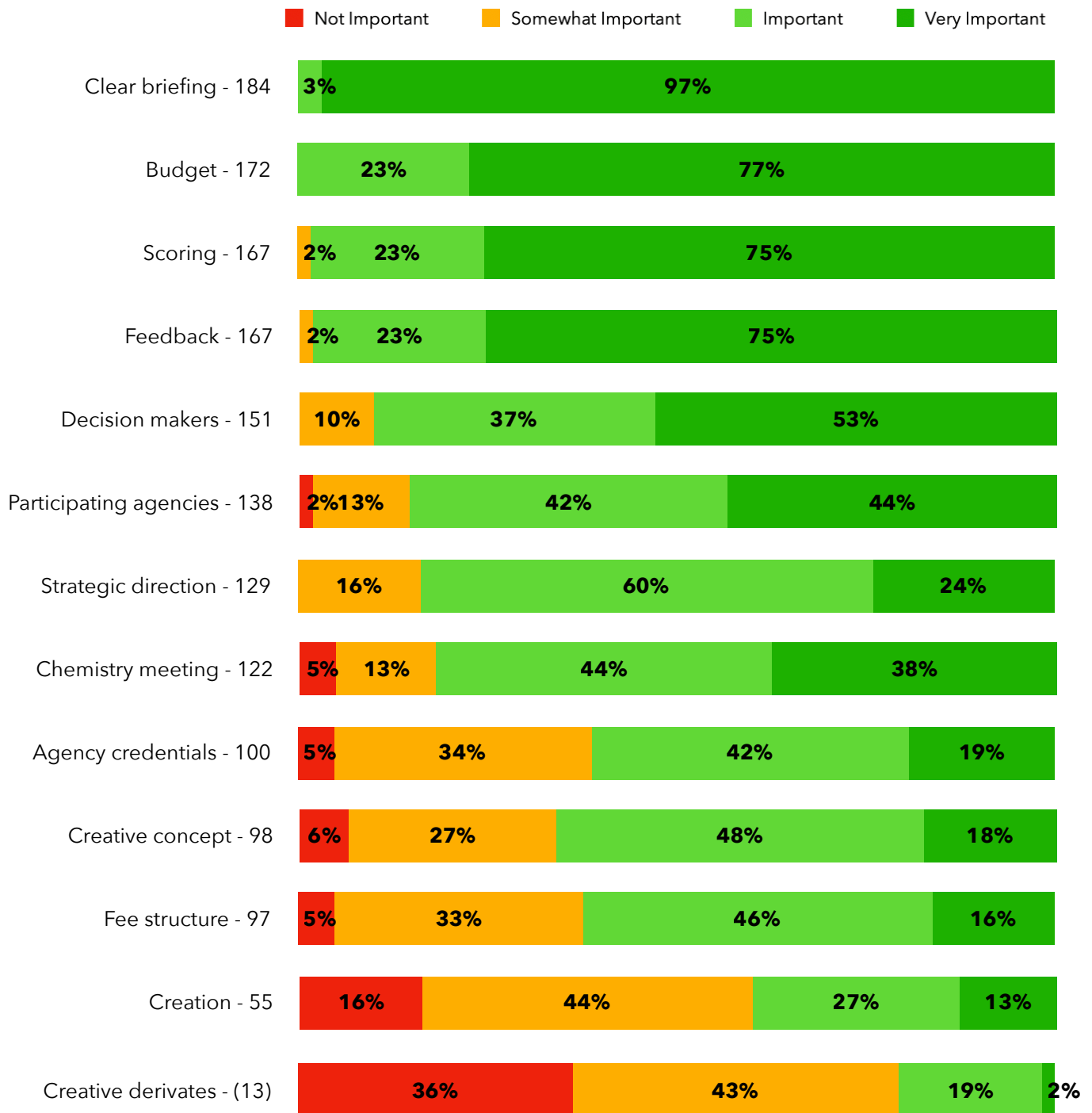
6. Elements in Pitch Process

Almost all agencies attach a great deal of importance to a clear briefing; a precise budget; specific scoring criteria, transparent feedback after the pitch and 9 of 10 agencies find it important to know who the decision makers in the pitch process are. Yet, only 54% of pitches provide clear briefings; only 29% reveal the budget; only 50% include the scoring criteria; only 21% give feedback after the pitch and only 15% specify the decision makers...

On the other side of the spectrum: agencies consider Creative concepts as the least important aspect of a pitch (60% not or somewhat important), whereas Creative concepts are exactly what is asked for most often (71% often or always).

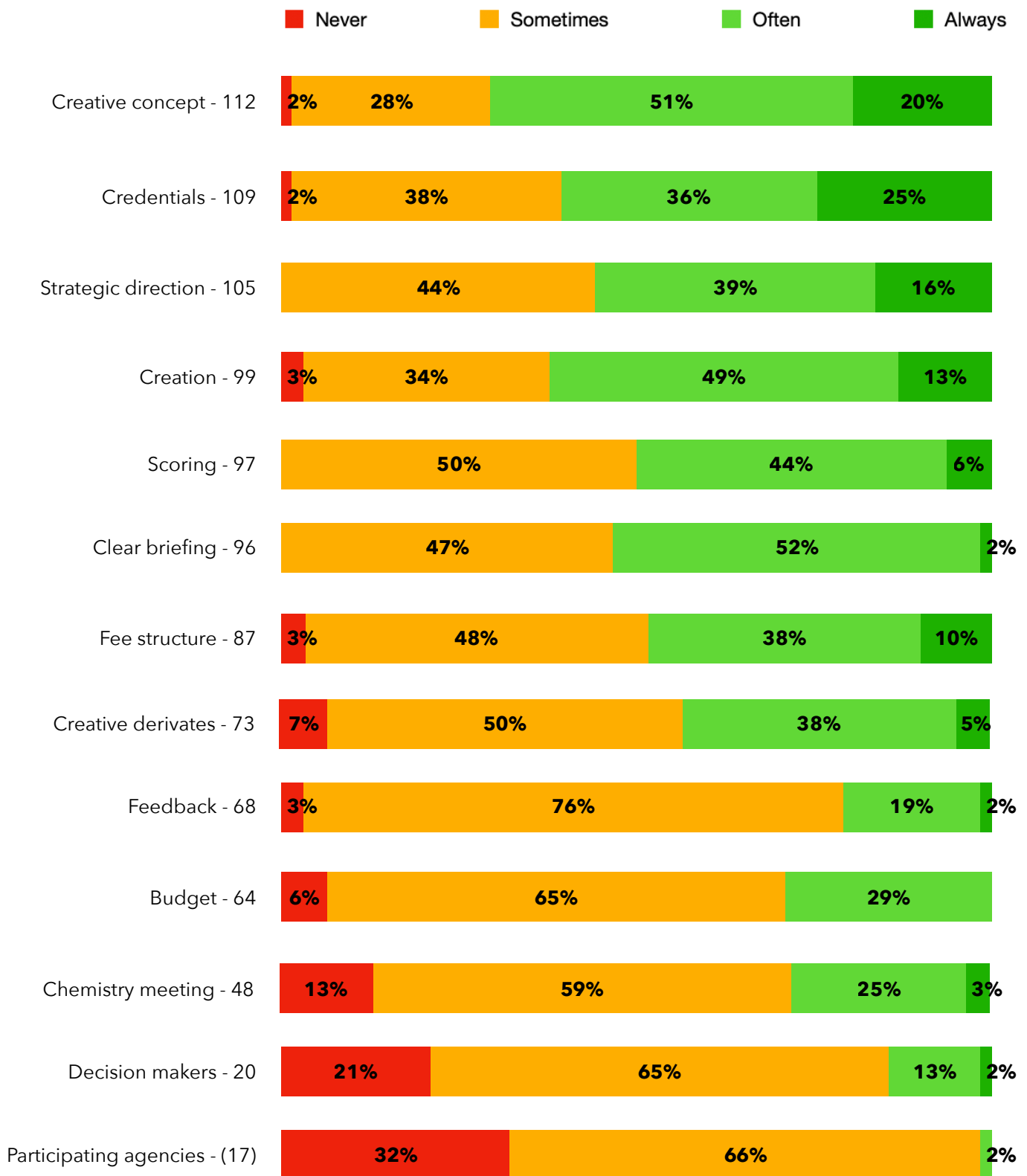
Importance

Which of the following elements of a pitch process are necessary or not. In other words, which demonstration of your skills helps you to respond in the best possible manner, and avoid extensive resources and cost.



Presence

How frequently the following elements of a pitch process are present or not.



7. Crafting the Perfect Pitch

What is needed for a POSITIVE pitch experience?

The pitch process stands as a critical juncture where agencies and clients converge to explore potential collaborations. Yet, navigating this phase can often feel like traversing a minefield, fraught with uncertainties and high stakes. Drawing from this comprehensive survey, this article delves into the essentials of a positive pitch experience, articulating the collective voice of industry professionals who demand clarity, transparency, and fairness throughout the pitching journey.

The Keystone of Clarity

At the heart of a fruitful pitch lies the need for detailed information. Respondents emphasised the importance of understanding the nuances of contracts, especially in public tenders where obligations are asymmetrically distributed. A clear budget accompanied by definable KPIs and explicit goals was identified as non-negotiable, setting the stage for a pitch grounded in reality rather than ambiguity.

Transparent Processes and Expectations

Transparency emerged as a recurring theme, underscoring the necessity for openness regarding objectives, budgets, and the selection of participating agencies. The sentiment was clear: a maximum of 3 to 4 agencies should be invited, depending on the budget, to ensure a focused and manageable competition. Moreover, a minimum preparation time of three weeks was deemed essential, with a preference for 4 to 6 weeks for larger projects to foster the creation of realistic and compelling content.

Communication and Compensation: The Twin Pillars

Open and honest communication was championed as the backbone of a successful pitch. This includes a transparent dialogue about the budget, the rationale behind agency selection, and the provision of detailed feedback. Equally important is the call for fair compensation, acknowledging the efforts and resources invested by agencies in developing their pitches.

A Partnership Approach

The survey responses highlight the desire for a more collaborative and respectful approach to pitching. This encompasses a variety of facets:

- **Chemistry meetings:** Before diving into the specifics, a mutual understanding between the agency and client are pivotal. Such meetings should not only reveal the agency's credentials but also afford a glimpse into the client's expectations and ethos.
- **Live briefings:** A live, detailed briefing session is preferred over document-based communications, providing a platform for immediate clarifications and fostering a more personal connection.
- **Presentation opportunities:** Agencies crave the chance to present and elucidate their proposals directly, arguing against the impersonality of email submissions.

Setting the Scene for Success

Managing expectations from the outset is crucial. This involves a clear articulation of the pitch content, evaluation criteria, and the overarching vision of the campaign or marketing effort. Moreover, a structured and transparent decision-making process, coupled with timely feedback, is vital for maintaining the integrity and respectability of the pitch process.

Conclusion

The insights from the survey paint a picture of an industry yearning for a revolutionised pitch experience—one that is anchored in clarity, transparency, and mutual respect. The message is clear: the path to a successful partnership begins with a well-structured pitch process, where expectations are clear, communication is open, and the efforts of all parties are recognised and valued.

8. Navigating the Pitfalls of Pitching

What is the cause of a NEGATIVE pitch experience?

The pitch process, a cornerstone of the marketing and advertising industry, is covered with challenges that can negatively influence the experience for agencies and clients alike. Underneath, we've listed the critical factors that contribute to a negative pitch experience. This article seeks to dissect these factors, offering insights into avoiding common pitfalls and fostering a more effective and positive pitching environment.

Unrealistic Expectations and Lack of Clarity

One of the most significant sources of frustration for agencies is the **unrealistic set of expectations** by clients, often paired with a **lack of clarity** in briefings and objectives. Agencies complain about:

- Overly demanding pitching requirements that ask too much without clear direction.
- Vague or shifting project scopes that lead to misalignment between agency efforts and client expectations.
- The absence of clear, actionable feedback, leaving agencies in the dark about the strengths and weaknesses of their proposals.

The Transparency Dilemma

Transparency, or rather the lack thereof, plays a pivotal role in negative pitch experiences. Critical transparency issues include:

- Not disclosing budgets or being open about the selection process and criteria.
- Conducting "fake pitches" where the decision has already been made, yet the formality of gathering multiple proposals is observed.
- Failure to provide feedback or communicate post-pitch, which not only disrespects the agency's effort but also deprives them of learning opportunities.

Communication Breakdown

Effective communication is the lifeblood of any successful pitch. However, agencies frequently encounter:

- Clients not answering clarification questions clearly, if at all, sometimes responding with a defensive attitude.
- Changes in decision-makers or briefings throughout the pitch process, disrupting the flow and understanding between the agency and the client.
- A lack of personal interaction, such as face-to-face meetings or chemistry sessions, which are crucial for building trust and understanding.

The Competitive Brainteaser

While competition is inherent in the pitching process, an excessive number of participating agencies can dilute the quality of the interaction and skew the focus towards quantity over quality. Key issues include:

- Inviting too many agencies to pitch, sometimes up to 10, which not only overwhelms the client but also significantly reduces each agency's chances of a fair evaluation.
- The absence of a pre-selection or shortlisting process, leading to a crowded and unfocused competitive environment.

Procedural and Structural Flaws

The structural setup of pitches often leaves much to be desired, with agencies highlighting:

- Tight deadlines that compromise the quality of proposals.
- Extensive pitch tasks that are disproportionate to the project's scope or budget.
- The involvement of procurement-led pitches, which tend to prioritise cost over creativity and strategic alignment.

Conclusion

The insights from the survey underscore the need for a paradigm shift in how pitches are conducted. For a truly positive and productive pitch experience, both agencies and clients must strive for clarity, transparency, and respect throughout the process. By addressing the highlighted issues—setting realistic expectations, ensuring clear and open communication, managing the competitive landscape judiciously, and refining procedural aspects—both parties can work towards more meaningful collaborations that yield win-win outcomes. In doing so, we pave the way for a pitching process that not only respects the time and effort invested by agencies but also maximises the potential for clients to find the right partners for their needs.

9. Experience with Pitch Consultants

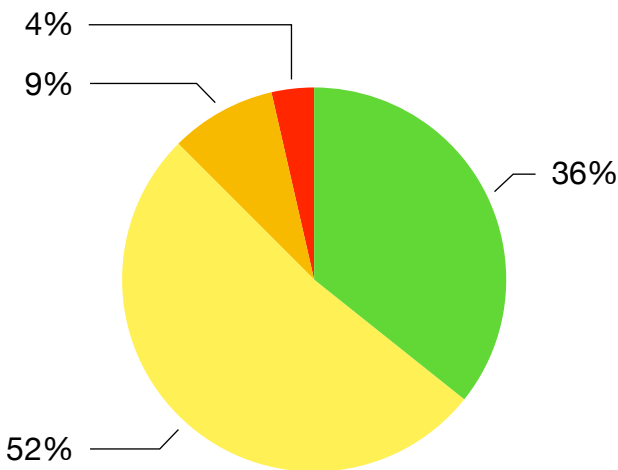
Rate your experience with pitches without/with pitch consultants

Whereas pitches managed directly by clients receive an average score of 6,4/10 and are only considered positive by 36% of respondents, pitches managed by PitchPoint receive an average score of 7,1/10 and are considered positive to very positive by 65% of respondents. This underlines the positive impact that a Pitch Consultant with a genuine understanding of the marcom eco-system and a thorough knowledge of the Positive Pitch process can have.

● Excellent
 ● Positive
 ● Fair
 ● Poor
 ● Very Poor

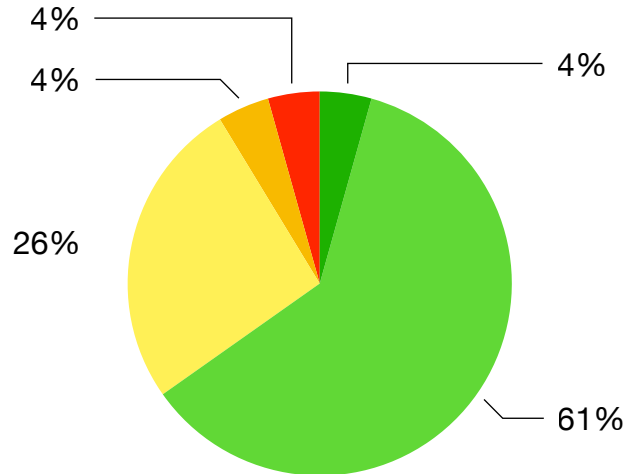
Pitches managed by client

Average score: 6,4



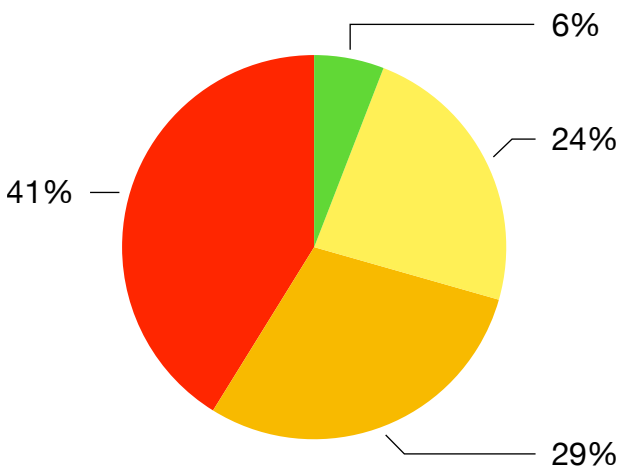
Pitches managed by PitchPoint

Average score: 7,1



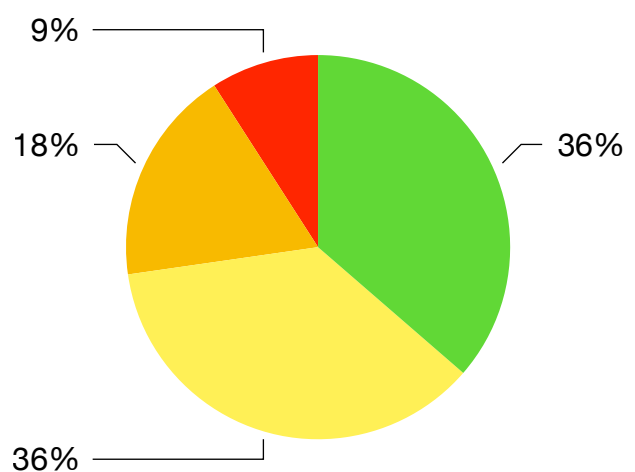
Pitches managed by Sortlist

Average score: 3,9



Pitches managed by other consultant

Average score: 6,0



10. The Consultant's Value in the Pitch Process

In case you participated in pitches managed by a consultant, what is the added value this pitch consultant had ?

In the competitive sphere of pitches, the role of a consultant transcends mere administration, becoming the cornerstone of success. The survey reveals that consultants are the guardians of the pitch process, adding integrity and fairness from start to finish through clear, impartial guidelines.

Navigating the Pitch Landscape

Consultants are at the forefront, ensuring the pitch process is equitable and transparent. Their expertise lies in crafting clear briefings, maintaining the integrity of the process, and ensuring all rules and expectations are well communicated.

Facilitating Clear Communication

A pitch's success heavily relies on mutual understanding. Consultants bridge the gap between clients and agencies, ensuring everyone is on the same page and addressing any knowledge gaps with essential information.

Strategising Agency Selection

Through a strategic lens, consultants refine the list of contenders, aligning agency capabilities with client needs to optimize the selection process.

Managing Expectations and Enhancing Feedback

A fair and transparent process is the consultants' USP: advocating for consistent briefings and valuable feedback for continuous improvement. One area for potential enhancement we identified is the provision of clear feedback to agencies, especially when not selected, to aid in learning and development.

Professionalizing the Pitch Process

With a consultant's guidance, the pitch process is professionally managed, ensuring clarity, effective communication, and a transparent decision-making framework.

The insights underscore the consultant's critical role in ensuring a fair, transparent, and professionally managed pitch process, laying the groundwork for a productive partnership between clients and agencies. While their behind-the-scenes work may not always be immediately apparent, their impact is significant, instilling a sense of fairness, enhancing communication, and ultimately contributing to the selection of the best-fit agency for the client's needs.

VI. Evaluation, the Key to Sustainable Agency Relationships

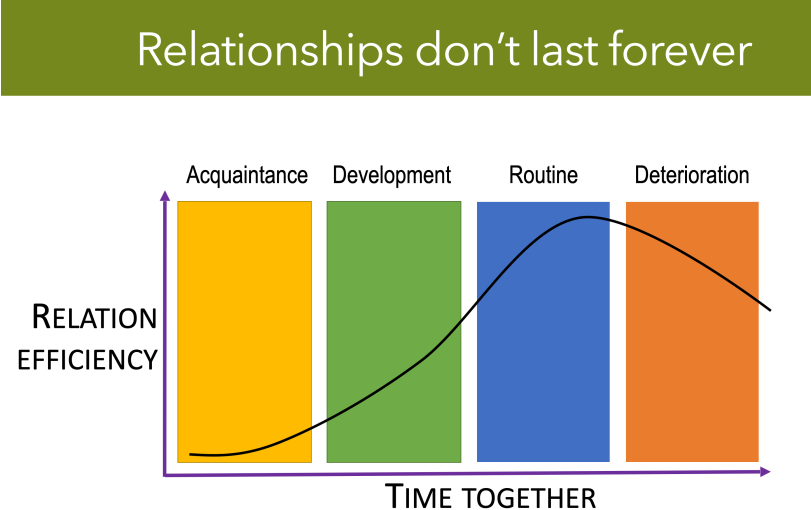
Successful organisations invest in sustainable relationships

Every successful organisation shares a crucial characteristic: they are proud owners of one or more powerful brands. These brands are not just logos or names; they act as the driving force behind their business success, setting them apart and leaving a lasting impression on the market. This recognition is not achieved overnight. The most robust and recognisable brands are the product of a long-term and fruitful collaboration between clients and their dedicated agencies.

This kind of collaboration goes beyond superficial transactions. It involves building a trust relationship, understanding the core values of an organisation, and consistently translating them into messages that resonate with the target audience. These deep and long-lasting partnerships take time to mature and form the backbone of brand loyalty. They especially stand out in a market that is constantly evolving and becoming more complicated and competitive. In this dynamic environment, it is the combination of vision, passion, and collaboration that ultimately makes the difference.

The lifecycle of a relationship

In the business world of branding and marketing, the relationship between an advertiser and a communication agency plays a central role. This bond forms the framework for successful campaigns, effective branding, and reaching the target audience. These relationships, like everything in business, are not static. They grow, change, evolve, and sometimes end. It is almost comparable to the lifecycle of a product. These cycles generally know four core phases: acquaintance, development, routine, and termination.



The **acquaintance phase** is that exciting period where everything is new and unknown. It all begins with the official moment of signing a contract. This phase is full of expectations, hopes, and energy. Both parties are - optimistic about what the future will bring them. However, there is also a significant degree of uncertainty. On one hand, there's a strong emotional bond starting to form, but on the other hand, there are operational challenges and unknowns that need to be addressed. An effective transfer from a possibly previous agency is crucial.

Then comes the **development phase**. This is where the real work begins. After the initial excitement of the acquaintance, the depth of the collaboration is now tested. Processes are defined, tasks are assigned, and strategies are put in place. For the agency, this is the time to truly show their expertise and value. They are eager to showcase their qualities and make their mark. For the advertiser, this is the period when they want to see their investment paying off. The haze of the honeymoon begins to clear and the reality of daily work emerges. It is a time of intensive collaboration, adjustment, and sometimes even revision of plans.

Next, we arrive at the **routine phase**. This is the point where both parties are fully in tune with each other. They have found their rhythm. The initial bumps of the development phase have been overcome, and there is a sense of stability. The agency now has a deep understanding of the advertiser's desires, needs, and expectations. There is a certain degree of predictability in their interactions. Processes are streamlined and work is done efficiently. The relationship is now at its strongest, with high productivity, strong emotional bonds, and mutual respect.

However, as in any relationship, there may come a time of **deterioration**. This is when the relationship has reached its peak and there are signs of decreased dynamics or interest. Perhaps the sense of novelty has worn off, or there are new challenges that cannot be tackled together. It may start with subtle signals such as reduced communication, creative differences, or a sense of dissatisfaction. If these signals are not addressed, they can lead to larger problems and ultimately the end of the collaboration.

It's important to note that, while this lifecycle is typical, every relationship is unique. The average duration of a relationship between an advertiser and an agency in Belgium is three years. This may seem short, especially considering the investments in time, money, and resources. It highlights the importance of maintaining the relationship, understanding which phase you are in, and proactively addressing problems before they escalate.

The synergy between an advertiser and their agency is invaluable. It's a partnership that, when well-cultivated and maintained, can lead to unparalleled success. Just like in any other relationship, however, it's important to remain vigilant, communicate, and collaborate to achieve joint goals. It's an ongoing dance of give and take, learning and adjusting, celebrating and overcoming.

Feedback and evaluation. Oxygen for a relationship.

Feedback is the lifeline of every professional relationship. It enables individuals and organisations to learn, grow, and adapt. While feedback is often informal and spontaneous, it should not necessarily be random. It's crucial not to just wait for negative comments to share, but rather to promote an ongoing dialogue. Studies emphasise that effective feedback should predominantly be positive - ideally a ratio of 70% positive to 30% constructive comments. This ensures that areas for improvement are seen in a positive context. It's essential that feedback is authentic. It should be given routinely, such as after every campaign, and must be two-way; asking for feedback is just as important as giving it.

Conversely, **evaluation** is more structured and formal. Despite its inherent importance, recent research shows that the regularity and systematics with which evaluations are conducted often lack. For example, although 93% of brands believe that a thorough evaluation of an agency is essential, 83% admit they do not conduct these thoroughly (source: WFA). These figures highlight a clear gap in the industry's best practices. Why are formal evaluations so important then? They initiate targeted conversations between brand and agency, scrutinising all facets of their collaboration. The goal is twofold: on one hand, to ensure good alignment between both parties, and on the other hand, to improve overall performance. These evaluations are not only motivating when the feedback is positive but can also, if done in a respectful manner, strengthen the relationship during more critical reviews.

It's also crucial to distinguish between a relationship evaluation and a **business review**. While a relationship evaluation looks forward, asking, "How can we improve our collaboration in the future?", a business review focuses on the past, evaluating the results achieved compared to pre-set goals. These reviews are also systematic and usually take place quarterly. In short, both feedback and evaluation form the cornerstones of a healthy, productive relationship between brands and agencies. In a rapidly evolving business environment, it's more necessary than ever to use these tools to strengthen collaboration and ensure mutual success.

8 recommendations for a successful relationship evaluation

Relationship evaluation plays a crucial role in the relationship process. A thoughtful assessment is not only essential for understanding the current state of affairs but also forms the foundation for future collaboration. Here are eight key factors that make a relationship evaluation successful and effective:

Transparency: Openness and clarity form the backbone of every evaluation. Communicate in advance about the process, the specific focus areas, and who will be involved. It's also important

to clearly define the objective of the evaluation. A transparent evaluation process fosters mutual trust and ensures that all parties are on the same wavelength.

Reciprocity: A successful evaluation is a two-way street. While the advertiser evaluates the agency, the agency should also provide feedback to the advertiser. This mutual assessment acknowledges that good collaboration is a shared responsibility. It enables both parties to learn and grow.

Breadth: To get a holistic view, it's essential to include all those involved in the evaluation. This means not just the main contacts such as the communication manager and the account director should be involved, but also other stakeholders on both sides. This ensures a thorough and widely supported evaluation.

Frequency: Constructive feedback should be an ongoing process. After each project, it's useful to provide feedback. Waiting for problems to arise is not productive. Moreover, it's valuable to conduct formal evaluations periodically, ideally on an annual basis, to measure progress.

Consistency: To effectively measure progress, consistency in the evaluation process is crucial. By applying the same methodology consistently, results become comparable, and growth or development can easily be identified. The use of recognised evaluation methods can also help with benchmarking within the industry.

Simplicity: While evaluations are important, they can sometimes be overlooked in favour of urgent tasks. Therefore, the evaluation process should be simple, straightforward, and accessible. A complicated process can lead to delays and reduced participation.

Objectivity: An effective evaluation is impartial and factual. While personal experiences and perceptions have value, it's essential to use specific examples and highlight both positive and negative points. This ensures a balanced evaluation that provides constructive feedback.

Future orientation: Although evaluations inherently look back, the focus should be on the future. The goal is not just to understand the current status but to develop a concrete action plan for the future. Learning from past experiences and implementing changes can help strengthen the relationship in the future.

In conclusion, relationship evaluations are not just a means to assess the current situation, but also form the foundation for future collaborations. By considering these eight key factors, organizations can gain valuable insights and build strong, sustainable relationships.

The three dimensions of a relationship.

From the extensive research conducted by PitchPoint, carried out among advertisers and agencies, it turns out that there are three essential dimensions that define the performance and sustainability of a relationship. These dimensions are: expertise, process, and attitude.



Expertise

The core of every fruitful business relationship lies in the expertise of the involved parties. This dimension focuses on assessing whether the agency and the advertiser possess the right competencies and skills. Expertise can be divided into five subdomains: competence, insight, strategy, creation, and ROI.

For advertisers, examples include:

- Learning from the agency is essential.
- The agency utilizes data and quantitative sources to make strategic choices.
- The agency fully understands the advertiser's business objectives.
- Strong creative concepts and ideas are delivered by the agency.
- The agency makes a significant contribution to the business and brand results of the advertiser.

On the agency's side:

- The client challenges the agency and keeps it sharp.
- The client shares all relevant information, making the agency better informed.
- Practical and applicable advice is provided by the client.
- There is room for innovative and creative work.
- The client offers insights into business results.

Process

Efficiency is at the heart of this dimension. It looks at how streamlined and productive the relationship is. The process domain consists of five aspects: project management, planning, staffing, collaboration, and implementation.

For the advertiser, this means:

- The agency involves relevant parties at crucial moments.
- Agreements are kept, in terms of timing and budget.
- Adequate staffing is deployed for tasks.
- Constructive collaboration with internal stakeholders is ensured.
- The agency's proposals align with the given briefing.

On the agency's side:

- The client has an efficient structure for meetings and internal collaboration.
- Timely involvement of the agency in planning and process is guaranteed.
- The client is always available for consultation.
- The validation process is smooth and effective.
- The client's briefing is clear and concrete.

Attitude

This dimension deals with the more intuitive, "soft" side of the relationship. It looks at the chemistry between both parties and whether there are common values. Aspects such as transparency, engagement, trust, leadership, and agility come to the fore.

For the advertiser, this means:

- Conflicts are proactively and transparently addressed by the agency.
- The agency places great value on engagement and sees it as crucial for business success.
- There is a focus on mutual trust and open discussions.
- The agency can influence and bring about change.
- The agency's flexibility and agility are noticeable.

On the agency's side:

- Honest feedback is provided constructively by the client.
- A high level of engagement is evident.
- There is mutual partnership and open communication.
- The client considers the agency as an integral partner.
- The client's agility and flexibility are clearly visible.

Each dimension can be evaluated both qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitative data provide direct insights and enable comparisons. Qualitative data, on the other hand, offer deeper insight and context, making the figures more understandable. Together, they give a complete picture of the quality of the relationship.

Time for an Action Plan

A relationship evaluation is not just a reflection on the past but primarily a look towards the future. The primary goal is twofold: to identify the strengths of the relationship that we want to nurture and retain, and to establish areas where improvement is needed. This evaluation is conducted in an atmosphere of openness and transparency, with both parties actively involved. Based on this, an action plan is developed.

For each action item within this plan, we pose a series of crucial questions:

- **Sponsor:** Who will take the lead and be responsible for this specific point?
- **Priority:** How crucial is this action item in the broader context?
- **Action:** What specific steps must we take to achieve results?
- **Barriers:** What is currently in our way and must be stopped to achieve success?
- **Measurement:** How will we measure progress? What indicators signify success?
- **Timing:** How will this be implemented, and when should specific milestones be reached?

This structured action plan serves as a roadmap to continually refine and improve the relationship. It's essential that we regularly review this plan and monitor progress. If this process is carried out carefully and with dedication, its fruits will be clearly visible in each successive evaluation round. As a result, both parties will benefit and grow.

Available Tools

This document provides you a methodology to conduct an effective evaluation with your agency. PitchPoint has introduced the automated tool COLLAB, which seamlessly guides the evaluation process, from online surveys to standardised reports. The COLLAB tool has now gained a firm foothold in the Belgian market, making comparison data available. This allows you to systematically track your own progress and set it against market averages. In Annex 3, you will find more information about PitchPoint's COLLAB tool.

Thank You

We extend our gratitude to all 62 agencies that contributed their valuable insights and time to our research. Their participation has been instrumental in enriching the survey with a diverse range of perspectives and experiences. It is through their willingness to engage and share knowledge that we are able to drive forward with meaningful analysis and develop understanding that can benefit the industry as a whole. We sincerely thank them for their collaborative spirit and for the vital role they've played in this endeavour.

Act Events - AdSomeNoise - AIR - Akkanto - Altavia.act - Amphion - At-thetable - BeContent - Bold and Pepper - Bonka Circus - Boondoggle/Havas - Boson Content - Bridgeneers - Bubka - Cecoforma - CityCubes - Conrad Consulting - d-Side - Dallas Antwerp - Darwin BBDO - DDG Smart Marketing - DDMC Event Design - Dexville - Done by Friday - Duval Branding - DVLR DDB - Event Masters - FamousGrey - Fightclub - Happiness - Hinch - Hotel Hungaria - Hungry Minds - Indiandribble - JaJa - KAN Design - LDV United - Magelaan - Minale Design Strategy - MOQO-mortierbrigade - Native Nation - New Balls Please - Ogilvy Social.Lab - Publicis Groupe - RCA - Ribbon - Serviceplan Group Belux - SKINN branding agency - Springbok - TBWA - Team First - The Crew - The Fat Lady - The Other Agency - The Right Move - To The Point Events - VML - Walkie Talkie - Wasserman Benelux - WeWantMore

We also thank our structural partners, the United Brands Association and PitchPoint, who share the same belief as ACC that the entire marcom eco-system will benefit from the learnings from this Whitepaper; ultimately leading to an upgrade of agencies' added value; a more sustainable approach of pitching; a drastically reduced talent drain and a more balanced work/private experience for the thousands of talents working in the creative industry.



Petra De Roos
MD ACC Belgium

Annex 1: The Pitch Survey Questionnaire

1. How many leads did you get for new business in 2023 through the different channels?
2. In how many pitches were you involved in 2023 in each category during the various stages?
3. Of the pitches you've participated in, help us define the monetary impact of pitching on the creative sector.
4. How often are you now asked for your sustainability policy and practices in response to a pitch brief?
5. When thinking of the pitches you've won, what % of pitches asked for creative proposals; what % of creative proposals were executed as such?
6. a. Which of the following elements of a pitch process are necessary or not. In other words, which demonstration of your skills helps you to respond in the best possible manner, and avoid extensive resources and cost.
b. How frequently the following elements of a pitch process are present or not.
7. What is needed for a POSITIVE pitch experience?
8. What is the cause of a NEGATIVE pitch experience?
9. Rate your experience with pitches without/with pitch consultants
10. In case you participated in pitches managed by a consultant, what is the added value this pitch consultant had ?

Annex 2: Detailed results per Discipline

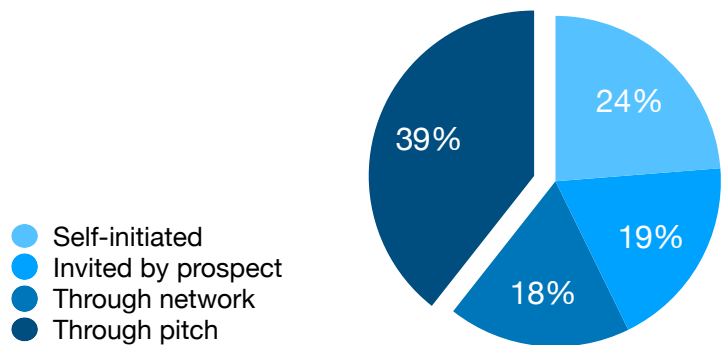
Advertising/Full Service agencies

Lead Generation Sources

AVERAGES (n=28)

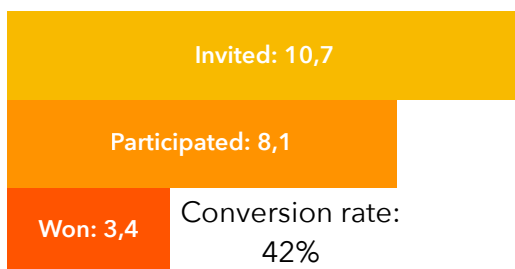
- Self-initiated: 8,5
- Invited by prospect: 6,8
- Through network: 6,4
- Through pitch: 14,1

TOTAL # LEADS: 35,8

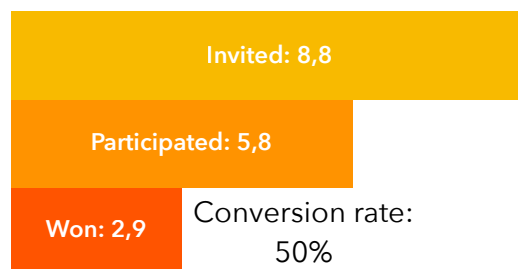


Pitch Involvement

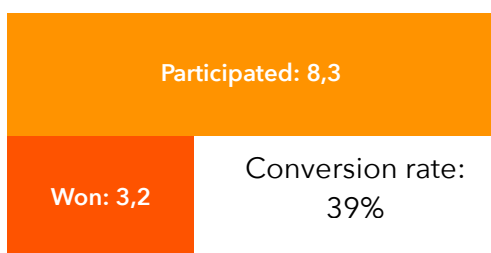
Long-term partnerships



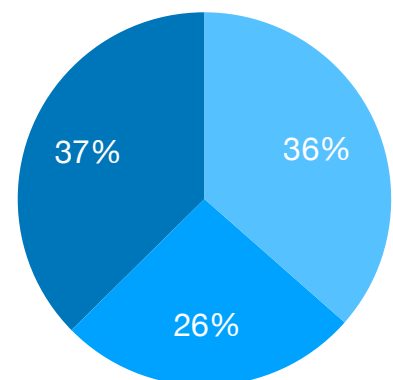
Ad-hoc projects



Public Tenders



- Partnerships
- Projects
- Tenders



TOTAL # pitches participated: 22,2

MANAGED BY CONSULTANTS

Long-term partnerships: 23,0%

Ad-hoc projects: 3,1%

Public tenders: 3,9%

The Direct Cost of Pitching

Long-term partnerships

8,1 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (282 hours * hourly rate 116€) + OOP 3.694€

Average long-term partnership pitch cost: 36.406€

Ad-hoc projects

5,8 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (110 hours * hourly rate 115€) + OOP 1.513€

Average ad-hoc project pitch cost: 14.163€

Public tenders

8,3 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (215 hours * hourly rate 149€) + OOP 2.527€

Average public tender pitch cost: 34.562€

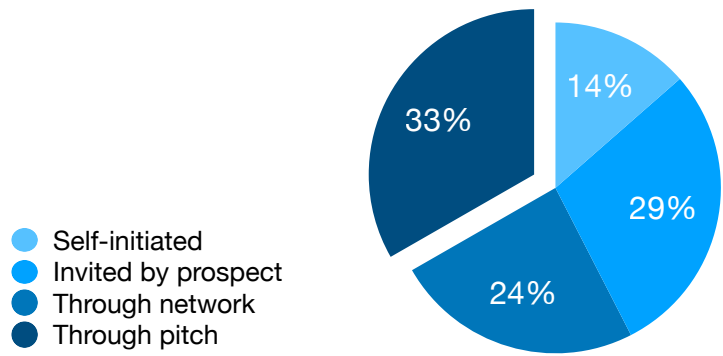
Brand Activation/Event Marketing agencies

Lead Generation Sources

AVERAGES (n=13)

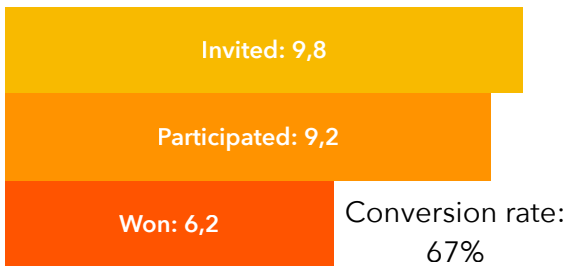
- Self-initiated: 10,5
- Invited by prospect: 22,4
- Through network: 18,8
- Through pitch: 25,8

AVERAGE # LEADS: 77,5

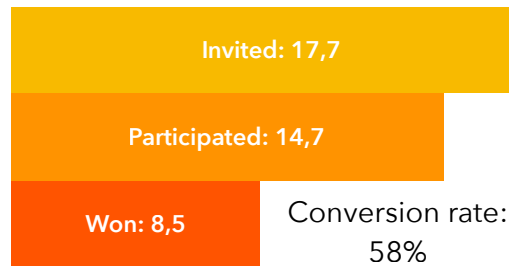


Pitch Involvement

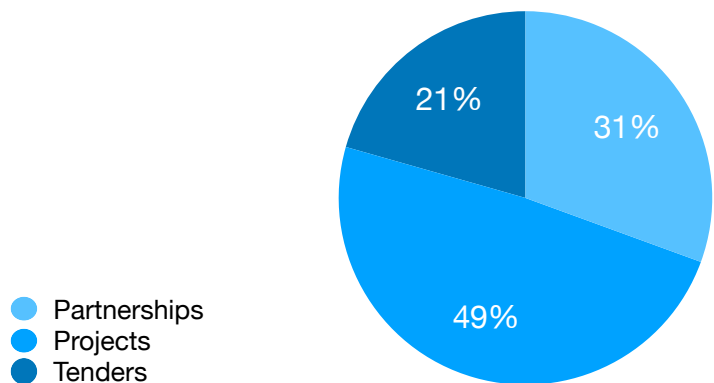
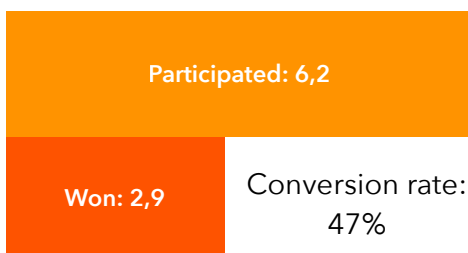
Long-term partnerships



Ad-hoc projects



Public Tenders



TOTAL # pitches participated: 30,1

MANAGED BY CONSULTANTS

Long-term partnerships: 0 %

Ad-hoc projects: 1,0%%

Public tenders: 0 %

The Direct Cost of Pitching

Long-term partnerships

9,2 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (57 hours * hourly rate 79€) + OOP 2.805€

Average long-term partnership pitch cost: 7.308€

Ad-hoc projects

14,7 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (43 hours * hourly rate 74€) + OOP 1.753€

Average ad-hoc project pitch cost: 4.945€

Public tenders

6,2 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (66 hours * hourly rate 70€) + OOP 1.700€

Average public tender pitch cost: 6.320€

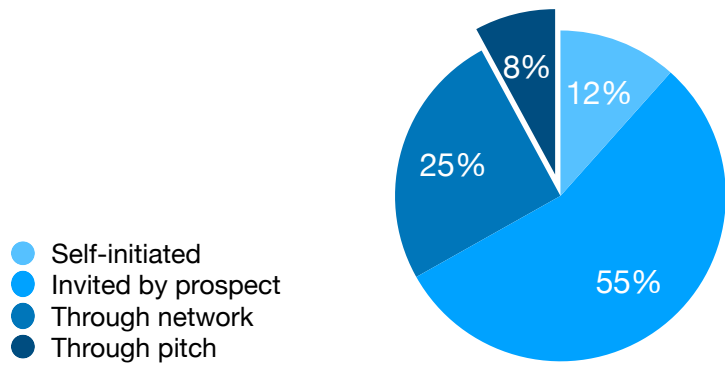
Brand Consultancy agencies

Lead Generation Sources

AVERAGES (n=6)

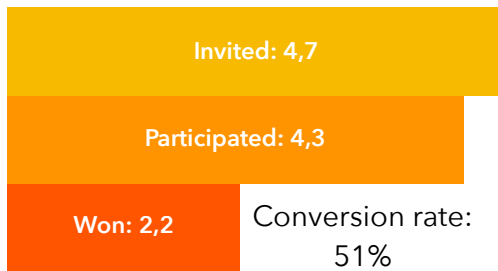
- Self-initiated: 10,7
- Invited by prospect: 51
- Through network: 23,3
- Through pitch: 7,3

AVERAGE # LEADS: 92,3

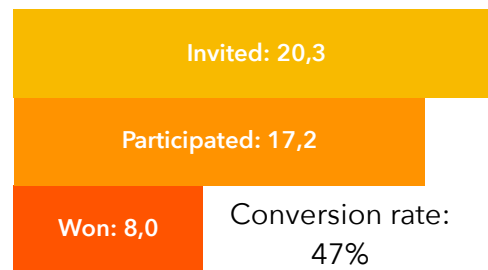


Pitch Involvement

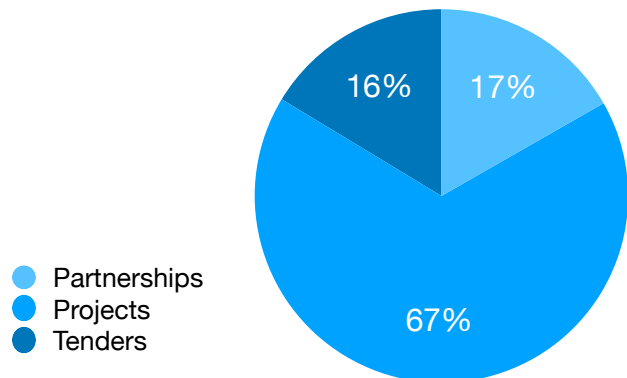
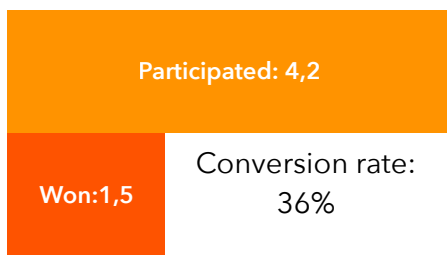
Long-term partnerships



Ad-hoc projects



Public Tenders



TOTAL # pitches participated: 25,7

MANAGED BY CONSULTANTS

Long-term partnerships: 0%

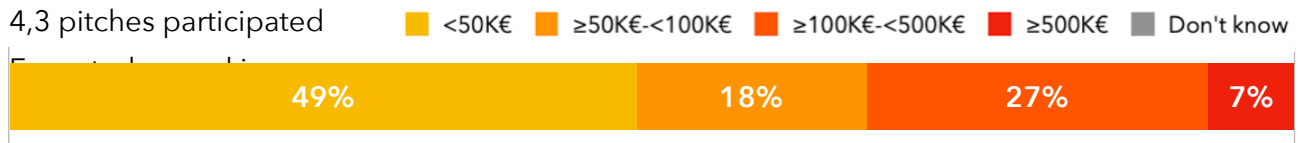
Ad-hoc projects: 0%

Public tenders: 0%

The Direct Cost of Pitching

Long-term partnerships

4,3 pitches participated



Average investment: (98 hours * hourly rate 155€) + OOP 0€

Average long-term partnership pitch cost: 15.190€

Ad-hoc projects

17,2 pitches participated

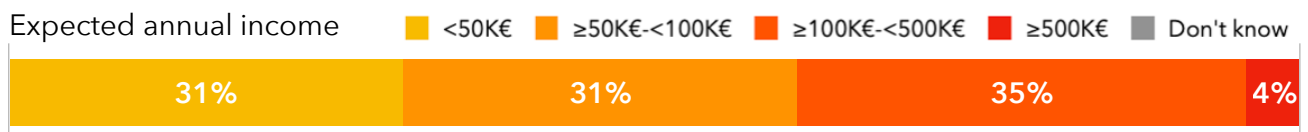


Average investment: (48 hours * hourly rate 137€) + OOP 0€

Average ad-hoc project pitch cost: 6.576€

Public tenders

4,2 pitches participated



Average investment: (90 hours * hourly rate 129€) + OOP 0€

Average public tender pitch cost: 11.610€

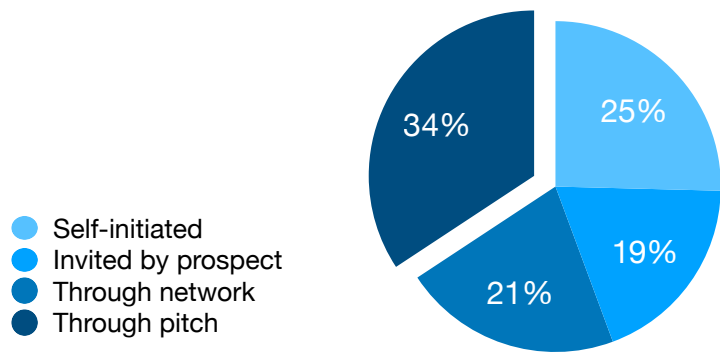
Content Marketing agencies

Lead Generation Sources

AVERAGES (n=6)

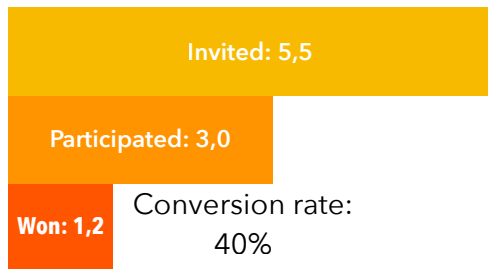
- Self-initiated: 6,3
- Invited by prospect: 4,7
- Through network: 5,3
- Through pitch: 8,5

AVERAGE # LEADS: 24,8

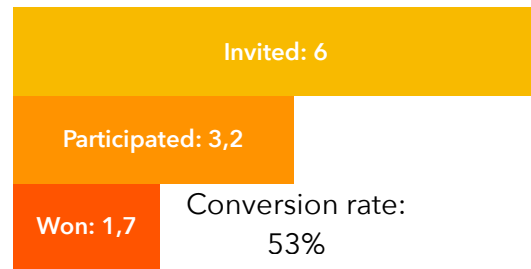


Pitch Involvement

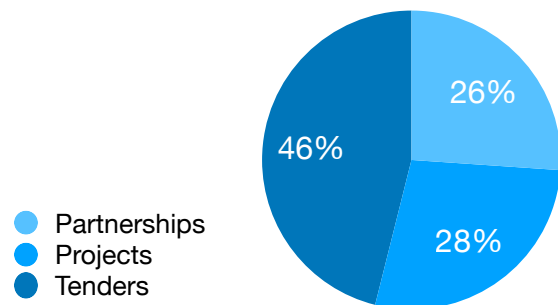
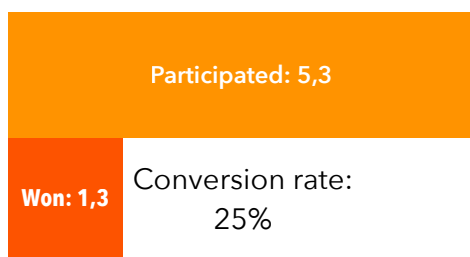
Long-term partnerships



Ad-hoc projects



Public Tenders



TOTAL # pitches participated: 11,5

MANAGED BY CONSULTANTS

Long-term partnerships:0%

Ad-hoc projects:5,3%

Public tenders:0%

The Direct Cost of Pitching

Long-term partnerships

3,0 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



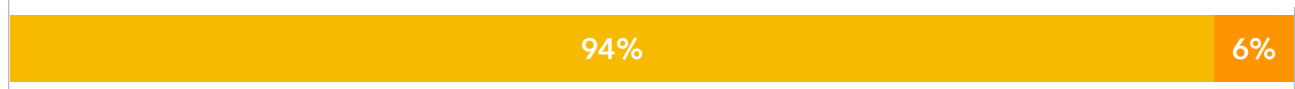
Average investment: (105 hours * hourly rate 110€) + OOP 300€

Average long-term partnership pitch cost: 11.850€

Ad-hoc projects

3,2 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (45 hours * hourly rate 100€) + OOP 0€

Average ad-hoc project pitch cost: 4.365€

Public tenders

5,3 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (129 hours * hourly rate 103€) + OOP 0€

Average public tender pitch cost: 13.287€

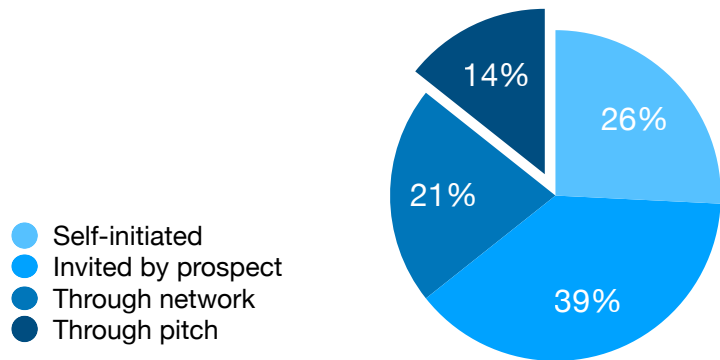
Digital Marketing agencies

Lead Generation Sources

AVERAGES (n=5)

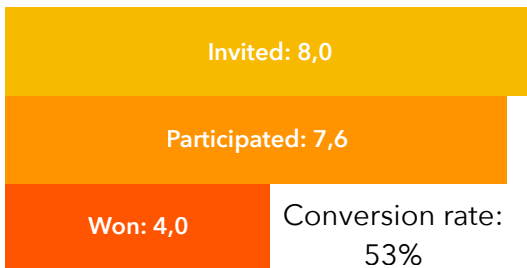
- Self-initiated: 19,8
- Invited by prospect: 29,6
- Through network: 16,4
- Through pitch: 11,0

AVERAGE # LEADS: 76,8

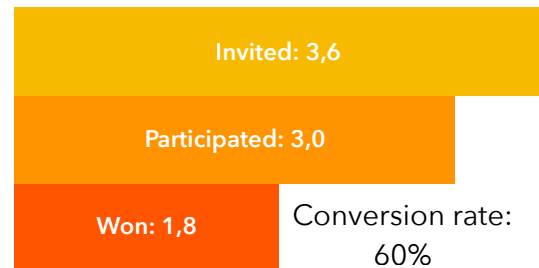


Pitch Involvement

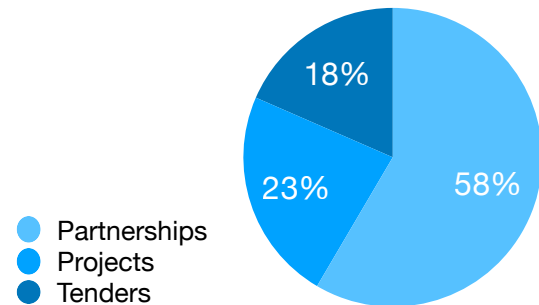
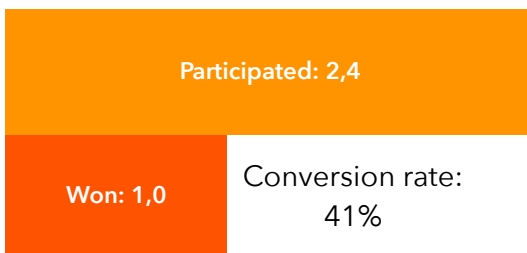
Long-term partnerships



Ad-hoc projects



Public Tenders



TOTAL # pitches participated: 13

MANAGED BY CONSULTANTS

- Long-term partnerships: 7,9%
- Ad-hoc projects: 13,3%
- Public tenders: 8,3%

The Direct Cost of Pitching

Long-term partnerships

7,6 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (102 hours * hourly rate 113€) + OOP 1.900€

Average long-term partnership pitch cost: 13.426€

Ad-hoc projects

3,0 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (83 hours * hourly rate 116€) + OOP 1.450€

Average ad-hoc project pitch cost: 11.078€

Public tenders

2,4 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (81 hours * hourly rate 113€) + OOP 625€

Average public tender pitch cost: 9.778€

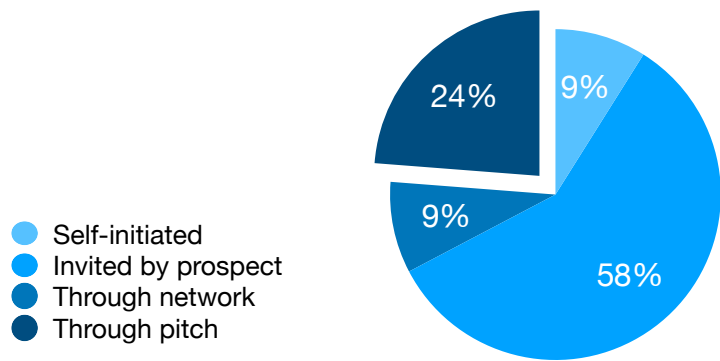
PR & Influencer agencies

Lead Generation Sources

AVERAGES (n=4)

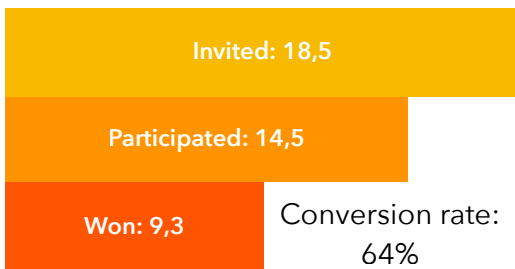
- Self-initiated: 8,0
- Invited by prospect: 52,3
- Through network: 8,0
- Through pitch: 21,3

AVERAGE # LEADS: 89,5

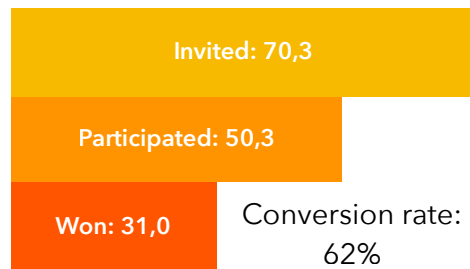


Pitch Involvement

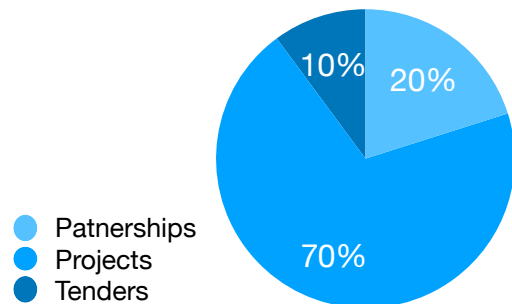
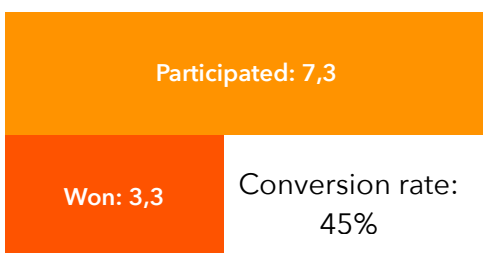
Long-term partnerships



Ad-hoc projects



Public Tenders



TOTAL # pitches participated: 72,1

MANAGED BY CONSULTANTS

- Long-term partnerships: 3,4%
- Ad-hoc projects: 0,5%
- Public tenders: 0%

The Direct Cost of Pitching

Long-term partnerships

14,5 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (31 hours * hourly rate 143€) + OOP 713€

Average long-term partnership pitch cost: 5.146€

Ad-hoc projects

50,3 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (13 hours * hourly rate 138€) + OOP 0€

Average ad-hoc project pitch cost: 1.794€

Public tenders

7,3 pitches participated

Expected annual income ■ <50K€ ■ ≥50K€-<100K€ ■ ≥100K€-<500K€ ■ ≥500K€ ■ Don't know



Average investment: (33 hours * hourly rate 138€) + OOP 250€

Average public tender pitch cost: 4.804€

Annex 3: The COLLAB method

Superior teamwork results in higher-quality work



Brands and their agencies should consistently, transparently, and honestly assess each other. Mutual trust, respect, and comprehension of each other's hurdles amplify their combined outcomes. Studies verify that superior teamwork results in higher-quality work. For enhanced collaboration, periodic evaluations are pivotal. Such assessments encourage productive dialogue and inspire both teams. The COLLAB method is a uniform assessment instrument for brands and their agencies, crafted by PitchPoint bv. In collaboration with sector associations UBA and ACC, PitchPoint aims to standardize processes to establish trustworthy Belgian benchmarks.

About the methodology

The COLLAB approach involves a survey where both advertisers and agencies assess one another openly. This is termed a 180° review. When paired with self-assessment, it's known as a 360° survey. Drawing from PitchPoint's extensive experience in brand-agency relationships since 2008 and recent studies with both brands and agencies, the COLLAB method scores the relationship on three core aspects of collaboration: **expertise**, **process**, and **attitude**. For each dimension, 10 standardized questions are posed. Evaluation results are then shared with the relevant parties. This data is also employed (in an anonymized and aggregated manner) to establish national benchmarks.



Workshop to optimize the relationship with an action plan (optional)



In the assessment process, understanding the context and drawing accurate interpretations are crucial. Hence, upon request, PitchPoint can undertake a more comprehensive analysis that culminates in tangible solutions and enhancements. The primary strengths and pivotal areas for advancement will be pinpointed. In a workshop, these insights are elaborated upon, and a definitive action plan to foster change is settled upon. This approach further fortifies and refines the bond between the brand and the agency.

Contact PitchPoint for more info on COLLAB. Mia Venken - mob: 0477-445-104 - mail: mia@pitchpoint.be



The purpose of the Association of Communication Companies is to unite all communication Agencies in their individual interests and their collective ambitions. Our mission is to upgrade, promote and defend the added value of our 200+ members towards (future) employees, clients, authorities, press and public.

www.acc.be



PitchPoint helps to optimise relationships between advertisers and brands. Their in-depth and first-hand experience on both sides of the equation, gives them the perfect vantage point to offer a neutral and transparent point of view. This enables them to create an effective blueprint for all future engagements between brands and agencies. They offer, amongst others, consulting in Agency selection, in building Agency ecosystems, in Agency remuneration, in Evaluation of collaborations and in building efficient Governance models at both sides.

www.pitchpoint.be



Taking brands further

UBA stands for United Brands Association and is the Belgian advertisers' association made by and for brands. Representing the interests of brand builders, UBA's mission is to create a creative, innovative and dynamic eco-system, providing space for ambitious brands to grow sustainably. The UBA community counts 384 companies, representing 1050 brands and 8000 brand builders.

www.ubabelgium.be