

douglas gruehl

Legato takes its message around the world,
A technology company that is part of the “next wave”

Legato is not exactly a household name in its home country much less elsewhere. Nor does it aspire to become part of dinner table conversations around the world.

But the Silicon Valley company whose software backs up and protects data contained and stored throughout an enterprise, in systems and various devices, would like to be better known within the general business community—and on the global playing field. And it’s the kind of company that is expected to comprise the next wave of advertisers in the technology field as they take their messages to the international marketplace.

When Douglas Gruehl, senior director of worldwide communications, joined Legato some three years ago, he knew the global advertising arena was in the cards, but with tight budgets, the technology meltdown, and other challenges, he knew the right thing was to take it slow. By this past fall, he was ready to make a first foray outside the U.S. with the same series of ads Legato had been running in the U.S. The timing was auspicious because Legato was in the final stages of being purchased by another technology company, EMC².

By year-end, the list of publications running outside the U.S. included *Business Week*, *Financial Times*, *Handelsblatt*, *International Herald Tribune*, *Les Echos*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

After a holiday break, the ads are starting to appear again in January, and depending on readership results, the schedule may change. Although Gruehl says he doesn’t have any formal data yet, anecdotal information is saying the advertising is a resounding success.

The campaign by JWT Technology uses a clean layout and makes the name of the company the most prominent element in the ad to get the name “out there.” The same creative is used in every market—translated into French and German when appropriate—after consensus on creative by a worldwide team from Legato.

“The creative must be able to play worldwide,” Gruehl says. “If we take any other approach, we would be diluting our visual brand and that is a road fraught with all sorts of disconnects and lack of clarity. We truly believe that you have to have a common denominator of one brand, one visual, one message worldwide, a solid base that absolutely everyone regardless of country can leverage. Different versions—as nice as they are at times—when you step back from a strategic or visionary standpoint, it truly does not serve you as well or provide you with as clear an ROI as you can achieve if you do take the approach we do.”

Gruehl also says he gained extra mileage by integrating the visuals with the same message into trade show signage and direct marketing pieces.

Legato’s marketing and advertising professionals within countries also determine which publications, local or pan regional, will give them the most impact for the money invested.

“We start with four publications in each region or country and have a formal discussion, title by title, balanced against where we have good editorial relationships, what is the reality of the coverage of our market space [and other factors],” Gruehl says.

He notes that it’s a very methodical vetting and elimination process, ending up with the choice of a daily, weekly, or a monthly. The review process takes place at least once a quarter. And it’s not taken lightly, he says.

In fact, Gruehl is adamant: “I’m very passionate about the discipline.” ●

Legato ads have the same look, feel, and copy everywhere, whether they are in English, French, or German.

