

# Duo to help the little guys

**SYDNEY:** Ad agencies are so focused on their clients' business that they often neglect their own. That's the theory behind a new consultancy formed to help agencies, both big and small, to grow their business.

Established in January by ex-Saatchi & Saatchi CEO William Leach and his wife, Sangeeta Leach, formerly director of strategic planning at George Patterson Partners, The Leach Partnership pitches its services as creative business building, assisting organisations with growth – including mergers and acquisitions.

Focusing most of their energy on owner-managed businesses that have been operating for less than five years, the duo has found strong demand for its services. "Other management consultants don't understand the creative chaos that exists in an agency," Sangeeta Leach said. "In our careers, we've always been just as passionate for the agency brands as the client's brand. It's a natural extension that we are now working with agency brands."

William Leach has spent a large portion of his 20-year-plus career with the Saatchi & Saatchi network, in his native UK, Hungary, South Africa and Australia. Among other roles, Sangeeta Leach has worked at Andersen Consulting in Nairobi, Saatchi & Saatchi South Africa, St Luke's, JWT, and most recently spent four years at George Patterson Partners before the WPP takeover.

It was their combined experience that convinced one of their clients, The Works Sydney, that it would benefit from The Leach Partnership's services, according to partner Kevin MacMillan.



Sangeeta and William Leach's combined experience makes them a formidable team.

The three-year-old agency, which has grown from two to 14 employees and three to 13 clients, turned to The Leach Partnership to ensure it is on track for sustainable growth. "You can't rest on your laurels," MacMillan said. "We're not reinventing ourselves – we're just looking at what we're doing and making sure we can get where we want to get, and make sure we're delivering what we set out to achieve."

Agencies that sign up for The Leach Partnership overhaul commit to a three-month process that includes what Leach has dubbed Business MAP – or Measurable Actionable Plan – where they assess business goals and emerge with a "to-do list". As part of another tool, called Rebuild, the agencies get to imagine they can start from scratch.

"In this case, they know where they want to be but can't get there from where they are," William Leach said. "So we pull their business apart and rebuild it

into the organisation they want. It might be as simple as refocusing their people. You analyse what you've got and allocate the resources to the appropriate areas to help you meet your goal."

The process can be applied to big multinational agencies, not just small players, Leach said. "With all the cuts going on in large agencies, the guys running those agencies are run off their feet just running the business – they don't have time to focus on planning for growth."

Mergers and acquisitions are also on the agenda for The Leach Partnership – an area William Leach worked in through his previous consultancy, Bag O' Spanners, before his move to Saatchi & Saatchi Sydney. "[Mergers] is a trend that is going to continue," he said. "For the big agency networks and local groups acting in a mature market, it is exceptionally difficult to get growth from organic means."

Andrea Sophocleous