



Public Relations

MEMO

To: Trone Public Relations

From: Monty Hagler

Date: February 15, 2006

Subject: Respected, Liked & Feared

Today marks my two year anniversary with Trone Public Relations. The move to this agency has been even better and more professionally rewarding than I hoped it would be. I say that even as we are in the first "down period" since we started gaining momentum in the spring of 2004. As I noted in my update memo last week, things are tight right now. We've lost clients and projects, and we're being extremely cautious with our resources.

There is no doubt that we will work through this tough period. We have too much overall momentum and solid new business prospects in the pipeline. But following my memo last week, I was questioned "What are we working for? What is the vision for Trone PR beyond getting a paycheck?"

It's a good question and one that I think we've tried to articulate at our retreats and staff meetings. But it is worth revisiting, particularly as we all pull together to work through the challenges we are facing right now.

At my first staff meeting when I joined Trone, the vision was clear: build an agency that could stand on its own two feet and provide employees the opportunity to advance, take on more responsibility and be rewarded for their contributions. That may sound simple, but two years ago Trone Public Relations was dependent upon Uniroyal for 50 percent of its revenue and integrated clients for the other 50 percent. We did not control our own fate.

In 2006, Uniroyal will be down to 20 percent of our revenue and integrated accounts will be 20 percent. We've created jobs, given people opportunities to grow professionally and make more money,



and we have a strong foundation that allows us to withstand tough times. I'm proud of that.

At our fall retreat, I laid out our vision for the next several years - continued growth so that we build an agency with the resources, reputation, visibility and talent to attract a broad spectrum of clients that are based in the Southeast. In many ways, it is a continuation of the mission we started in 2004.

What we have not addressed in great detail is if we want to be a particular kind of agency. That is, do we want to be a business-to-business agency, or consumer, healthcare, crisis or financial services agency? Or do we focus only on working with challenger brands or clients that market to moms with kids? Or do we take our strength in working with distributor networks (tire dealers, vets, golf course suppliers) and become the leading agency in that type of work?

I do not feel compelled to carve out a unique niche, but it's something that we will continue to discuss and debate (and everyone in this agency should feel free to throw their thoughts into the discussion.) But what I am compelled by is to create an agency that is respected, liked and feared. That is my core vision for Trone Public Relations.

We have all heard the saying: Good, Fast, Cheap; Pick any two. It is not so easy to simultaneously achieve these three things. The same could be said for creating an agency that is simultaneously respected, liked and feared by its clients, competitors, employees, and vendor partners. Yet that is what motivates and energizes me.

Respect and Like are easy to understand. We want to be an agency that makes our clients proud to say "we work with Trone Public Relations" and our employees say "I'm proud to work at Trone Public Relations." The "fear" part may seem a bit out of place, but it is very simple. Competitors should know that if they are in a pitch against us, they will not win. Competitors to our clients should know that their campaigns will not stack up to the campaigns that we will create. I know we can achieve that, but the key is to achieve that while at the same time being respected and liked for what we contribute to our profession, our employees and our community.

Trone Public Relations has changed a great deal in the past two years. To the folks who were here when I came (John Taylor, David French, Mary Leigh Wallace, Mary Kristine Aron, Amber McCafferty, Kirsten Habgood and Amy Utt), I want to say thank you for giving me a chance to be part of this team. And to everyone who has joined us since then (and I'm not writing all of your names!),



Public Relations

thank you for taking the chance on joining us to help build a
great agency.