

USA's Second Oldest Agency The Gate Marks 150th Anniversary with Apology Tour

Creative

Tongue-in-cheek campaign says sorry to old clients for imaginary firing scenarios...



The Gate, the second oldest advertising agency in North America, is celebrating 150 years in business through a tongue-in-cheek advertising campaign apologising to former clients.

Founded in 1872 by Albert Frank, The Gate is currently the second-oldest ad agency still in existence, behind only J. Walter Thompson (now Wunderman Thompson). It was initially named Mandel and Frank and based on 152 Broadway, going through a series of name and location changes before being rebranded as The Gate Worldwide in 2005.

The existing New York agency, which is now part of the global creative and tech group MSQ, is based at 71 Fifth Avenue, with further sister offices in San Francisco, London and Edinburgh. Current clients include State Street Global Advisors, Nasdaq, BHP, Crowdstreet and National Grid.

To help mark such a landmark occasion, The Gate decided it would dig through the archives and identify some of the many, many clients it had worked with in its 150 years. And make a public apology to those it had parted ways with on dubious terms, in the hope of making amends.

The apologies, made to brands such as Cartier, Borden Milk, Cunard Luxury Cruise Lines and McCormick Spices, come in the form of humorous short films, which will be hosted on The Gate's website and social channels. Each film sees a Gate representative outline the 'story' behind the agency-client fallout, and assures the brand's current marketing teams that lessons have been learned.



For example, in a message to Buitoni Pasta, The Gate apologises for their work on the brand in the 1960s, which accidentally made Americans believe that the business had ties to the Mafia.



For Borden, The Gate apologises for an ad campaign it created 80 years ago, admitting that launching the 'Lucy the Lactose-Intolerant Cow' mascot may not have been the wisest decision when Mad Cow Disease was gripping the nation.



And in a message to Cunard, The Gate apologises for the scandal that the agency President caused on a Cunard ship 100 years ago, which ended up costing them the account.



Of course, the farfetched stories are actually false, but the clients and timings were real – highlighting The Gate's history of handling illustrious accounts. Here's to another 150 years more...