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SELLING AUSTRALIA

Mission to put

Pressure is mounting for the nation to have a unified Australian brand. The Sun-Herald challenged four advertising companies to come up with an ad that sells Australia as a brand. **Matthew Benns** reports.

THE Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, is about to receive a delegation from the country's major exporters calling for a "Brand Australia Council".

The man pulling it all together, the managing director of the Tourism and Transport Forum, Christopher Brown, said it would cost "bugger all" to put the back-up in place to help the many organisations selling Australia to the world. "Australia is one of the most recognisable country brands on Earth, and the brand has been valued at around \$800 billion. In context, the most valuable corporate brand in 2008 was Coca-Cola, valued at \$50 billion," he said. "Coca-Cola has tens of thousands of people worldwide looking after its brand, but at the moment we are going into the market without a marketing department."

"Tourism has been doing the heavy lifting in terms of selling Australia to the world. There needs to be a co-ordinated, integrated approach which will see the marketing efforts of all Australian businesses, artists, musicians, actors, sportspeople, designers and more, leverage off each other, under a unified Australian brand."

Mr Brown said the forum had been working on the proposal for an Australian brand for a couple of years. "We have spoken to the Prime Minister informally, and we intend to go back within a short while with the proposal."

Two weeks ago in *The Sun-Herald* the designer Hans Hulbosch, who made over the Qantas kangaroo, called for a unified Australian brand. The challenge was given to four Sydney advertising agencies.

Mr Hulbosch said: "The Paul Hogan 'Throw a prawn on the barbie' ad was the first time we really captured who we are, and since then we have lost the plot."

"Our brand is our people. Australians are loved around the world because we don't take ourselves too seriously."

Mr Hulbosch said the Australian brand needed to capture the unique, untouched by man, sense of space that made Australia so different from the "claustrophobic" feeling of places such as London and Paris.

"That physical space creates a wonderful space in my head. Out there we are the envy of the world. Our country is a phenomenon. In the middle of Sydney we have 100 beaches, our weather is always beautiful, the restaurants superb, the food always fresh and we have space."

Lorraine Jokovic, of the ad agency Loud, responded to the challenge with an ad, "A long way from the everyday", that showed people the reward they would get for coming to Australia.

"Obviously it targets the UK market with the Underground sign but it is highly flexible and can be tailored to any individual market," Ms Jokovic said.

"We have an iconic landscape and it is the physical beauty of Australia that is our brand."

The director of Believe Adver-

BEFORE YOU DECIDE
WHETHER AUSTRALIA
IS WORTH VISITING,
EAT THIS FIRST.



MAYBE WE'LL SEE YOU SOON. MAYBE WE WON'T.

AUSTRALIA
FOR THE LUCKY FEW

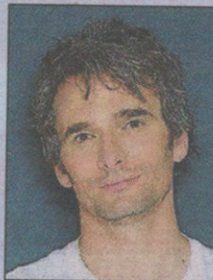
Idea in a jar ... happy little tourists wanted (from The Furnace).

THE VERDICT



HANS HULBOSCH, brand expert who designed new Qantas logo

BEST Loud - A long way from the everyday. "Now here's an ad with a promise. The idea of walking through the London underground with a million people and seeing this ad ... would entice me to think about Australia."
WORST Believe Advertising - Escape while you can. "It's a really dumb ad. This ad doesn't get it at all."



TODD SAMPSON, Gruen Transfer star and chief executive of Leo Burnett

BEST Loud - A long way from the everyday. "I liked the use of the tube sign, something familiar in the UK. It is a beautiful picture. The strategy behind it is clear, escape."
WORST Believe Advertising - Escape while you can. "This is the worst because it is very open to interpretation. What does it mean?"



RUSSEL HOWCROFT, Gruen Transfer star and chairman and managing director of George Patterson's Y&R.

BEST: Play Communications - Google Australia. "The most likely ad to work. A nice prompt which will give the reader a very clear action point."
WORST: Believe Advertising - Escape while you can. "I don't understand escape while you can - apologies to the author for my stupidity."

tising, Adrian Falk, took a different tack with the "Escape while you can" ad that was aimed at a younger audience. "Who wants to spend another Christmas or family holiday with the parents when you could come and escape to Australia instead?" he said.

The agency's first ad, depicting two mating kangaroos with the

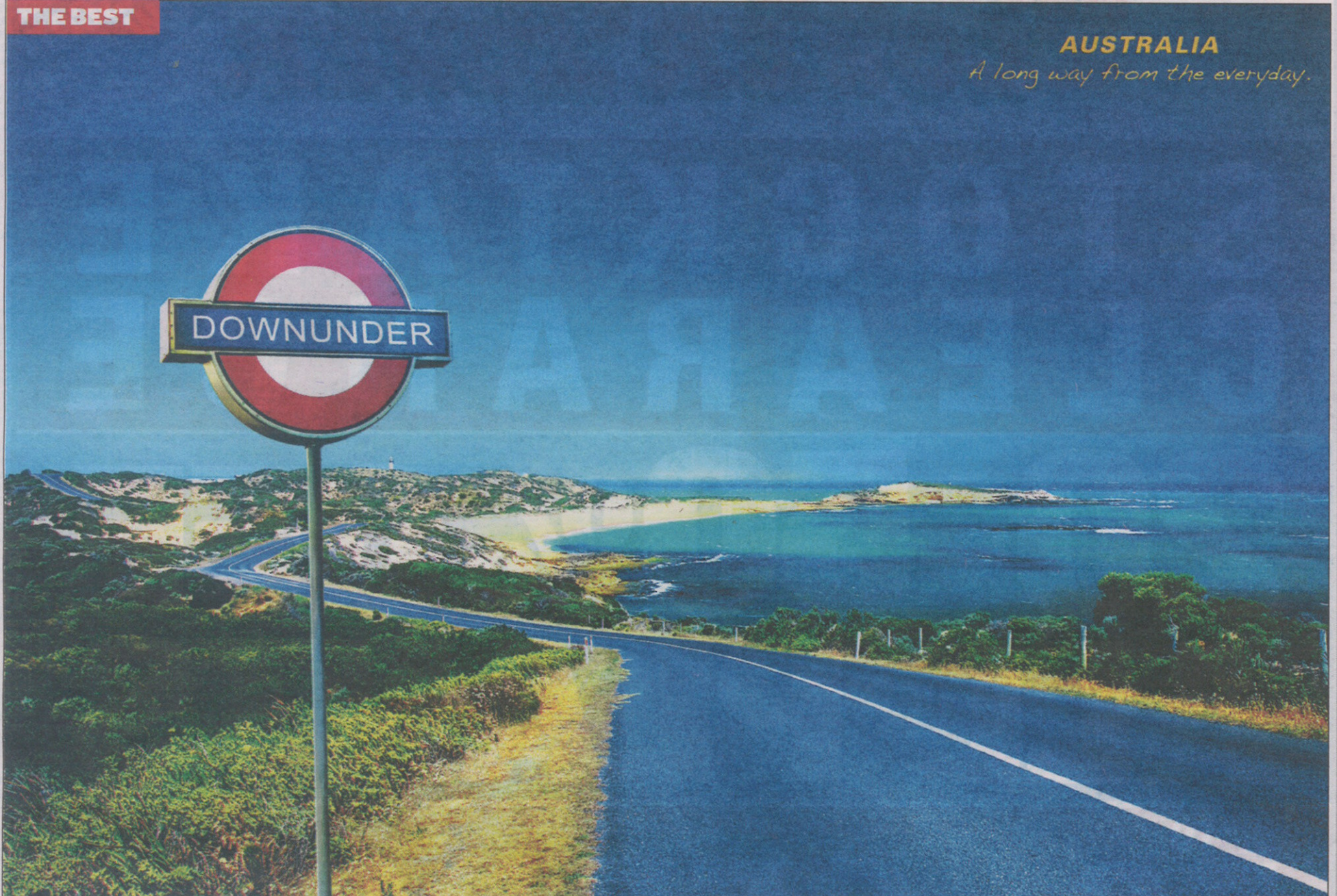
tagline "Enjoy the wildlife", was rejected on grounds of taste. Play Communications' "Google Australia" ad was designed with the rationale that Australia was here to be discovered.

The business development manager, Brendan Fearn, said it aimed to start a conversation with consumers by embracing

SELLING AUSTRALIA

the grand into our brand

THE BEST



AUSTRALIA

A long way from the everyday.

Going underground ... this campaign targets riders of The Tube in Britain, but its designer says the theme can be tailored to any individual market (Loud).

THE WORST



Great escape ... who wants to spend another holiday with your parents? (from Believe Advertising)

modern advertising techniques. The creative director of The Furnace, Rob Martin Murphy, submitted three ads including a Vegemite-themed one and another that features the Great Barrier Reef and the long-haul flight involved in reaching it. "Australia took millions of years to develop into the amazing won-

der that it is. Surely spending a few extra hours getting here won't hurt you," he said.

The Gruen Transfer panellist and chief executive of Leo Burnett, Todd Sampson, said: "None of them really tackled the rebranding issue or had the wow factor. They tended to do what has already been done before.

The challenge facing Australia now is to find its own space in people's heads.

"Just like Las Vegas instantly means adult playground, so Australia needs to find its own brand."

➤ A most precious brand: Editorial, Page 16 in Extra

IT TOOK 40 MILLION YEARS TO PERFECT.
AND YOU'RE COMPLAINING ABOUT A LITTLE 24 HOUR FLIGHT?



Island paradise ... it's worth the wait, and the price of a ticket (from The Furnace).



NEED A HOLIDAY?

GOOGLE 'AUSTRALIA'

Look online ... a country waiting to be discovered (from Play Communications).