Strawberrytoo

Strawberrytoo was launched by its sister company, Strawberry, in 2014 in attempts to nurture the local talent in Hull. One of their main ethics was to employ and support local talents by creating an entire studio run by graduates, interns and apprentices. It now consists of 10 employees; however, their team are almost on a constant turnover as most of their employees are on yearlong placement – sometimes this can result in a full-time position however their main aim is to get the talent out and working for within the local studios.

I believe working with such a fast turnover of staff opens doors for Strawberrytoo as well as their clients to experience such a large variant of different creative skills, cultures and views. However, this does also come with its downfalls. Having worked with them previously, I know from experience how frustrating it can be from a client's perspective to have to re-explain your entire brand and 'vision' to a new person after having your main contact with them finish their yearlong placement. Due to this, I believe this practice may work best for short term projects rather than on-going ones.

Their website and branding use a very loud, young style of language that gives you a transparent insight into their company and who runs it.

Strawberry

Strawberry was established in 1993 they're a creative digital agency with a team of 35 highly talented staff – this includes the staff from Strawberrytoo. They're based at the modern C4DI buildings in Hull.

Their approach to collecting clientele is very sales focused rather than client based, this is shown through the way they talk about their awards and results opposed to customer satisfactory. On their 'why us' section of their website, their main topic of discussion is completely based on success opposed to actually showing what they can do for you as an individual client. This implies that their main client base could potentially be start-up businesses looking to get their foot in the door in marketing or boost their sales.

Here's an article I found on Drum that featured Strawberry's Dominic Love and his view on whether Yorkshire has an agency scene within its region.

Drum – "Is there a recognisable agency scene in the region, and how does the area's output measure up against work from the rest of the UK?"

Dominic Love, creative director, Strawberry – "I would say so, yes, but it's in clusters at the moment. Being based in East Yorkshire means we're at the end of the line. With that comes the need to create our own buzz. It's happening in Hull and, as a city, real investment is going into digital and the creative sector. At the moment, Yorkshire is creating some cracking work, but that spans across the north as a whole now."

Full article here: https://www.thedrum.com/news/2014/10/30/yorkshire-focus-there-agency-scene-region

With Strawberry and Strawberrytoo being interconnected companies looking toward the differences of them was interesting, you can clearly see a difference in the work that they create and a clear contrasting business model. I believe the reason for the Strawberry & Strawberrytoo divide seems to purely be based on budget for both Strawberry and their clientele. Strawberry are focused on the high-end clients, considering what they want specifically and creating work that is tailored to a use and a brief, they seem to build a high-end partnership with the companies and for this they pay premium.

Strawberrytoo are a company that are brought in to create specific pieces for companies whether this is for social media or otherwise. Whereas the company I worked for had a partnership with Strawberrytoo, it was minimal, and they were instructed with what pieces we wanted to be created. This discount option gives clients a taste of the work done by the Strawberry family and thus would help drive business towards the main studio. Strawberrytoo also always Strawberry to incubate and cherry pick people they believe have potential, moulding them into employee's that already understand the company and its ethos.

Split

Split was established in 2007, they're a creative-led design studio based in the centre of Leeds. Their a small team of 4, however after looking through their work it's been made clear that they have a select few of regular third-party photographers and designers that they work with too.

What really drew me was the definition of their studio name, Split, that was found on their 'about' section;

"None of us is a single thing. We all exist between any number of extremes. As both individuals and communities, we embody conflicts, complexities and contradictions. Our identities flex depending on the context or time. We demand both romance and pragmatic function; we want simplicity and clarity, but not at the expense of the messy truth.

— We are all Split."

I feel that having such an open, expressive explanation of what the company stands for really allows anyone looking from the outside in to get a grasp on what they're about as a studio. The openness displayed here also reflects in the work they've created as each piece has a clear message and a clear-cut style about it. I really enjoy their story-telling nature behind each piece. I particularly liked the branding created for Yorkshire Dance & That Old Chestnut as these two projects demonstrated the possibilities of telling a story through deliberate choice of the shapes and colours used. Each element chosen to showcase the brand had a reason behind it, some were obvious, but some were left for the viewer to find on their own and I really like that. I feel that their approach to design is very much in line with my own in the sense that they breathe life and fun into each piece created to tell the story of a brand, a concept or an opinion.

Each element of their studio is extremely detail orientated and driven with purpose. From their graphics all the way to their glass shaped business cards, you can see the efforts they've put in to ensure that they provide their clients with an individual, unique experience each time they make an exchange.

They've also included a shop section on their website where they've displayed their personalised projects which completely differ from their business designs. This leads me to believe that instead of the sole business to business selling as seen in the other two studios, they would rather see their work as pieces of art, created by them for the public directly.

Conclusion

Overall, I feel that all these studios have completely different ways to connect with their audiences. The Strawberry family look to drive business to business sales and their main goal seems to be profit and business turnover. They seem to look towards what their clients desire and create exactly that in a fast-efficient way. Really taking on board the wording of "Agency". This seems to contrast to the artistic approach of Split, they seem to investigate the projects more and attack it with much more artistic flair while creating the clean images that tell a story. They call themselves a "Studio", they approach each project and task as a piece of art rather than a piece of work and I believe this really shows within the work that is created.